



Modern Italian History seminar series, jointly organised by the British School at Rome, l'École Française de Rome and the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome.

FREE ENTRANCE

LANGUAGE

English

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LECTURE

Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome

Wednesday 14 February 2018, 17.30 h.



NICK CARTER

'BALBO'S GHOST'

Remembering Italo Balbo in contemporary Italy

This lecture explores the contemporary memory of one of Fascism's 'most glamorous and competent leaders', Italo Balbo. Possessed with 'immense demagogic and organisational abilities', Balbo rose to prominence in the early 1920s and played a critical role in the March on Rome, which brought Mussolini to power. It was as Air Force minister that Balbo cemented his heroic reputation, leading round-trip transatlantic military flights to Brazil (1930-1) and the United States (1933) that turned him into an international celebrity. Balbo was killed by Italian friendly fire over Tobruk, Libya, in 1940.

Since the early 1990s, Balbo has been immortalised in bronze, remembered in exhibitions, portrayed on stage, and subject to toponomastic commemoration. Perhaps surprisingly, his public rehabilitation has been driven not so much by the Italian 'New Right' as by the post-communist 'New Left' and the Italian air force (the Aeronautica Militare). In his lecture Nick Carter explores the reasons for this, and argues that while Balbo has enjoyed something of a memory 'makeover', an 'indulgent memory' of the former *quadrumvir* has persisted through much of the post-war period.



Followed by drinks.

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