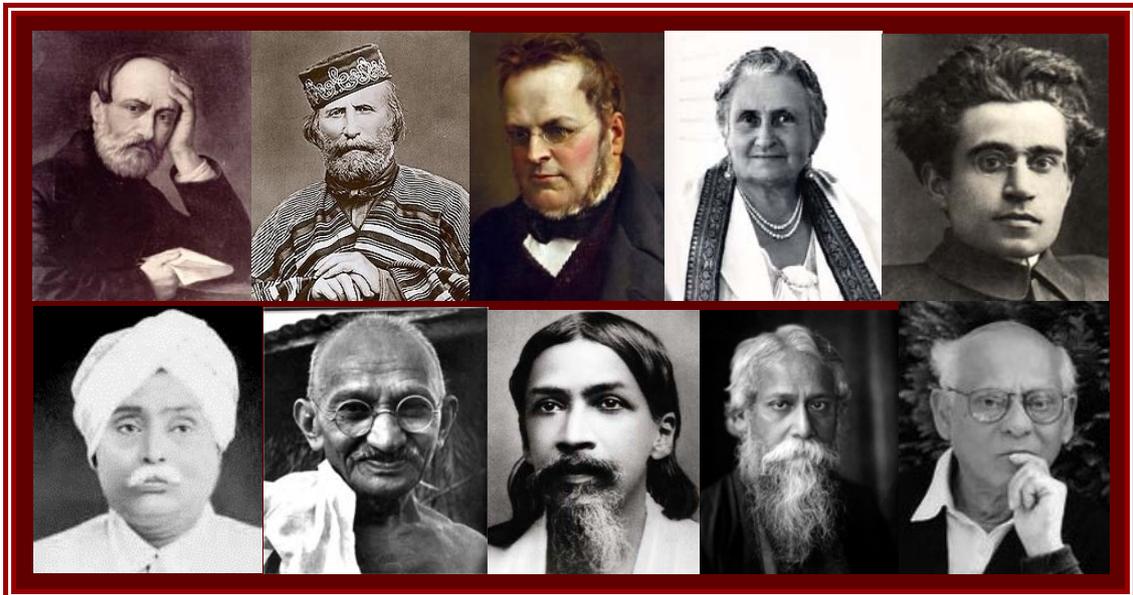


Colloque international/ International Conference

***D'UNE INDÉPENDANCE À L'AUTRE :
L'INFLUENCE DES INTELLECTUELS ET DES MODÈLES
POLITIQUES ITALIENS SUR L'INDE, DE GIUSEPPE MAZZINI À
ANTONIO GRAMSCI***

***ITALY & INDIA:
INTELLECTUAL CONNECTIONS AND THE CIRCULATION OF POLITICAL
MODELS IN THE 19TH-20TH CENTURIES***



Vendredi 2 décembre 2011

EHES-CNRS, Le *France*, salle 638, 6^e étage,
190 avenue de France 75013 Paris

Organisateurs : Tiziana Leucci et Claude Markovits

À l'occasion du 150^e anniversaire de l'indépendance et de l'unité de l'Italie, nous proposons de revenir sur un chapitre peu abordé de l'histoire indienne : l'influence des intellectuels italiens sur ceux de l'Inde. Nous partirons de l'impact des théoriciens (G. Mazzini) et acteurs (G. Garibaldi) de l'unité italienne (1861) sur les voies de l'indépendance formulées pour l'Inde coloniale par Gandhi et les *freedom fighters*. Nous verrons que la réception des auteurs italiens fut multiple, certains en retenant les stratégies de mobilisation citoyenne de longue durée, d'autres l'emploi de la lutte armée. À l'autre extrémité, les années 1960-80 ont vu l'usage des écrits du marxiste critique – et antifasciste – Antonio Gramsci par les historiens des *Subaltern Studies*, pour théoriser un dépassement de l'historiographie nationaliste. Entre-temps, de nombreux intellectuels italiens ont fait le voyage en Inde pour y enseigner ou fuir le fascisme, comme la psychiatre-pédagogue M. Montessori, dont l'influence est encore présente en Inde aujourd'hui. À l'opposé de l'échiquier politique, certains auteurs indiens s'inspiraient, eux, du fascisme pour structurer leurs propres mouvements. À travers six interventions, la journée d'études se propose d'aborder ces différents aspects dans une perspective inspirée de celle des « *connected histories* ».

ITALY & INDIA:

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THE 19TH-20TH CENTURIES**

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PROGRAM

09.45, **Presentation** by **Aminah Mohammad-Arif** for the Direction of CEIAS

Morning session, « AROUND MAZZINI : ITALIAN MODELS AND INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT »

Chair: Sanjay Subrahmanyam, UCLA/CEIAS

10.00, Introduction by **Tiziana Leucci** and **Claude Markovits**

10.15, France Bhattacharya (Professor Emeritus, INALCO Paris)
“Fortunate and Unfortunate Encounters : Italy and Bengal 1875-1928”

10.45, Claude Markovits (Senior Research Fellow Emeritus, CNRS/CEIAS)
“Turning Mazzini on his head : Gandhi’s polemics against Savarkar in *Hind Swaraj*”

11.15, Coffee break

11.30, Marzia Casolari (University of Perugia)
**“Hindutva Foreign Tie-ups in the 1930: the connections between Hindu fundamentalism
and the Italian fascist regime from unpublished archival sources”**

12.00-12. 30, Discussion

12.30-14.00, Lunch

Afternoon session, “AROUND GRAMSCI: INDIAN RESPONSE TO ITALIAN INTELLECTUAL TRENDS”

Chair: Jean Boutier, EHESS-Marseille

14.00, Jacques Pouchepadass (Senior Research Fellow Emeritus, CNRS/CEIAS)
“Readings of Gramsci and the Intellectual Course of Subaltern Studies”

14.30 Marianna Scarfone (Universities of Venice and Lyon 2)
“The reception of Gramscian concepts in the Subaltern Studies Collective”

15.00, Tiziana Leucci (Research Associate, CEIAS)
**“Maria Montessori in India: the application of her pedagogic method in the local fine
arts, music and dance schools”**

15.30, Coffee break

15.45-16.15, Discussion

16.15-16.30, Conclusion

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SPEAKERS' ABSTRACTS & BIO-DATA

Fortunate and Unfortunate Encounters: Italy and Bengal 1875-1928

By France BHATTACHARYA

In Bengal, taken as an example for India, there was a deep interest in Mazzini's life and works among the Western educated middle-class at the end of the nineteenth century. His admirers, according to their varied political agendas, praised and wished to emulate his ethico-religious republicanism, his call for Unity, or his appeal to do away with autocratic rulers. Later, in the second decade of the twentieth century, the greatest Bengali man of letters, Rabindranath Tagore, somewhat unable to resist the lure of the Hero, hobnobbed for a while with Mussolini and his Fascist Movement at some cost to his reputation in democratic Europe.

France Bhattacharya is Emeritus professor of Bengali language, literature and culture, Inalco, Paris. She is a member of the CEIAS. She researched and published on pre-modern Bengali literature and also on nineteenth century Bengali intellectual history. She translated into French Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Rabindranath Tagore and Bibhuti Bhushan Banerji.

Turning Mazzini on his head : Gandhi's polemics against Savarkar in *Hind Swaraj*

By Claude MARKOVITS

The paper focuses on the way Gandhi deals with Italy's independence struggle in a passage of his famous book *Hind Swaraj* (1909), the only "theoretical" text he ever wrote. It focuses more particularly on his use of the figure of Mazzini, the most beloved icon of the Risorgimento, whose popularity in India was astonishing. Recalling rapidly the trajectory of Indian "mazzinianism" in the four or five preceding decades, I emphasize the central place occupied by the Italian hero in the political imaginary of Indian revolutionary nationalists, in particular of V.D. Savarkar. The latter is crucially linked to the writing of *Hind Swaraj*, as the text was hastily penned by Gandhi in the aftermath of the assassination in London of a high British official by an Indian student who had been inspired by the writings of Savarkar. Gandhi's aim in writing that book was to counter the tendency amongst young Indian nationalist students to embrace violent means to fight British imperialism. To advance his own agenda of a non-violent struggle, Gandhi has to discredit the Indian upholders of violence, who claim to be inspired by the example of Italy's Risorgimento. Therefore, in a chapter of his book, he confronts them directly by presenting the recent history of Italy in a light that is completely different from the one found in the dominant narrative: far from being the shining example of a victorious fight for independence, the Italian struggle is shown to be a sham, the simple substitution of indigenous tyranny for foreign yoke. This debunking of the myth of the Risorgimento is achieved, paradoxically, through the deployment of Mazzini as a weapon against his Indian admirers, a rhetorical feat which I analyze in some detail. I conclude on the ambivalent meaning of Gandhi's exercise, at the same time an open debunking of the myth of the Risorgimento, but also a homage to an icon that retained its power over Indian imaginations.

Claude Markovits, an Emeritus Directeur de Recherche (Senior Research Fellow) at the CNRS, Paris, is a historian of colonial India and the author, in particular, of *The Un-Gandhian Gandhi: The Life and afterlife of the Mahatma*.

Hindutva Foreign Tie-ups in the 1930: the connections between Hindu fundamentalism and the Italian fascist regime from unpublished archival sources.

By **Marzia CASOLARI**

This is a synthesis of a research work regarding Italian foreign policy in India during the fascist regime. This policy aimed at creating connections with Indian political anti-British environment. Italian propaganda in India was directed mainly to the Bengali radical nationalism but, ultimately, it had a wider influence and could reach Marathi Hindu political radicalism. While the fascist regime could develop a strong political cooperation with the Bengali environment, with the Hindu radicalism there was no active cooperation. Nevertheless, Marathi Hindu politician were fascinated by the fascist regime, especially by its political structures and social organisation. In 1931 B.S. Moonje visited Italy and met Mussolini. This event is described in Moonje's unpublished notebooks. The core of this study is represented by the political consequences determined by this contacts in terms of the influence from fascism as an ideology and a political system on the organisations of Hindu radicalism in the 1930s and 1940s.

Marzia Casolari is a Lecturer in *History of Asia* at the University of Perugia (Italy). Since 2010 she is chairman of *Asia Maior*, an Association for the study of South, Eastern and South-eastern Asia. She spent several years doing historical research in India. She has been a fellow of the *Indian Council of Historical Research* (ICHR).

Readings of Gramsci and the Intellectual Course of Subaltern Studies

By **Jacques POUCHEPADASS**

Over the last half-century, Gramsci's unsystematized and essentially fragmentary written heritage has been used in widely divergent theoretical constructions. An illustration of this is provided by Subaltern Studies, which has consistently staked its claims to Gramsci's thinking notwithstanding the radical theoretical and political turn it has taken halfway through its course. Intellectual influence is of course predicated on predisposing expectations and sensitivities, themselves shaped by complex interplays of subjective and contextual elements. The Subaltern Studies project took shape in the wake of a highly troubled Indian decade when the young bourgeois democratic state seemed at times about to collapse, and the Indian communist movement was rocked by ideological infighting and a succession of splits, with profoundly unsettling effects on the intellectual and academic left. This was notably the case in Bengal, where the CPI(M) was prevailing over the CPI only to see prestigious Calcutta colleges become hotbeds of Naxalite activism. Gramsci appeared on the scene through the mediation of English-translated selections of his writings and of publications of the Gramscian British New Left, of which the affiliates of the British radical historians' group (including E.P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm) were themselves vocal members within or outside the British Communist Party. While the affinities of the initial phase of Subaltern Studies with this Eurocommunist Gramsci are fairly identifiable, its overall orientation after the postcolonial turn of the 1990s is more akin to the further re-interpreted Gramsci divulged under the label of postmarxism, which partly traces back to the leading Gramscian theorists of the British cultural studies (Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall).

Jacques Pouchepadass is a Senior Research Fellow (emeritus), CNRS and associate member of the Centre of South Asian Studies, Paris. He specializes in modern Indian history while also currently working on subaltern and postcolonial studies.

The reception of Gramscian concepts in the Subaltern Studies Collective

By **Marianna SCARFONE**

In the preface to the first volume of “Subaltern Studies. Writings on South Asian History and Society”, we find a reference to the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci, to which the mainly Indian scholars of the *Subaltern Studies* group claim to take their inspiration from. As is clear, it is the concept of subalternity, or better of “subaltern groups”, that links these two poles of reflection on the condition of marginality: on the one hand we have the solitary Marxist thinker, writing his Notebooks in a prison in Italy in the Thirties, and on the other the Collective of “marginalized academics” based in India in the Eighties, wishing to investigate through an alternative perspective the archives of counter-insurgency and to refuse historical narratives deaf to voices “other” than those of the dominant groups. This paper deals with the reception of Gramsci’s thought in India. It aims to evoke the stages of this reception – the first translations available, the first figures involved in popularizing Gramsci’s concepts, mainly in the academic field, the birth of the *Subaltern Studies* Collective – and the historico-political context of this appropriation and re-elaboration. It also tackles the Gramscian concepts and categories that have turned out to be useful for analysing and reading Indian colonial and then national postcolonial reality, as the subaltern-dominant dialectic, the idea of progressive autonomy, the notion of hegemony, the formula of passive revolution.

Marianna Scarfone is a PhD student in *Contemporary History* at the Universities of Lyon 2 and Venice (*Ca’ Foscari*). The subject of her research is the history of psychiatry in the Italian and French colonies during the first half of the 20th century. In 2009, she obtained a double degree in *Contemporary History* at the Universities of Bologna and Paris 7. She worked on the reception and elaboration of gramscian concepts in the Subaltern Studies collective.

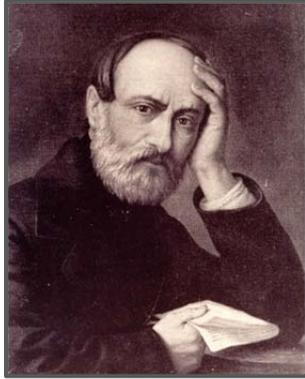
Maria Montessori in India: the application of her pedagogic method in the local fine arts, music and dance schools.

By **Tiziana LEUCCI**

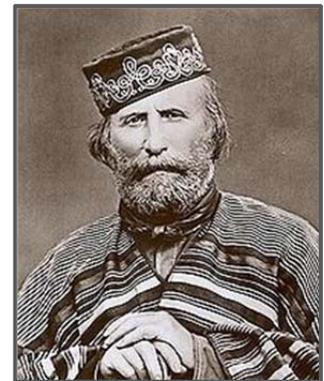
My presentation starts by a mere observation: the widespread presence and reference to the “Montessori teaching method” in South Asia. In India in particular, mostly in the states of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, but also in the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh. The large number of Montessori schools I came across in Madras (Chennai) during the years of my study there (1987-1999) amazed me, they are perhaps more than those that one can find all over Italy itself. Till today, that city is one of the major international centre for the teachers’ training in the Montessori system. After a brief illustration of some schools in Chennai, I will focus on the historical reasons for such ‘implantation’ as well as the ‘adaptation’ of the system to the specific Indian socio-cultural context. The psychiatrist and pedagogue Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was the first woman medical graduate in Italy. Being herself an anti-fascist, in the early 1930s, she was forced to leave Italy after refusing to Mussolini to compromise her principles and “to make the children into soldiers”. She firstly went to Spain and lived there until 1936 when the Spanish Civil War broke out. After that she moved to the Netherlands and stayed there till 1939 when she went to India along with her son Mario Montessori. Invited at Adyar (today an area in Chennai) by the president of the *Theosophical Society*, George S. Arundale, and by his wife Rukmini Devi, who established in 1936 *Kalakshetra* (a school of fine arts, music and dance), Maria Montessori lived in India during the entire period of the Second World War. There, she conducted a number of training courses for local teachers and laid a strong foundation for the application of her system in South Asia. In 1946, she left India and settled in the Netherlands where she died in 1952.

Tiziana Leucci graduated in *History of Performing Arts* and *Indology* at the *University of Bologna* (Italy). She spent twelve years in India (1987-99) to learn and do research on the history of *Bharata Nāṭyam* and *Odissi* dances. Ph.D. degree holder in *Social Anthropology* at the EHESS, Paris, she is a Research Associate to the *Centre d’Etudes de l’Inde et de l’Asie du Sud* (CEIAS, Paris). At present, she teaches *Social Anthropology* at the *Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches pour la Petite Enfance* (CERPE, Aubervilliers), and Indian dance at the *Conservatoire de Musique et Danse ‘Gabriel Fauré’*, (Les Lilas).

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**GIUSEPPE MAZZINI
(1805-1872)**



**GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI
(1807-1882)**



**CAMILLO BENSO, COMTE DE CAVOUR
(1810-1861)**



**MARIA MONTESSORI
(1870-1952)**

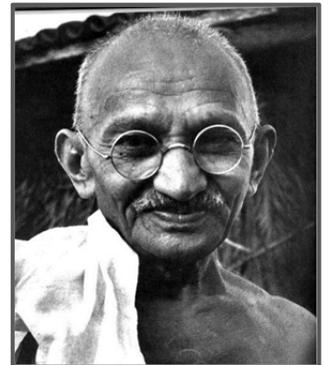


**ANTONIO GRAMSCI
(1891-1937)**

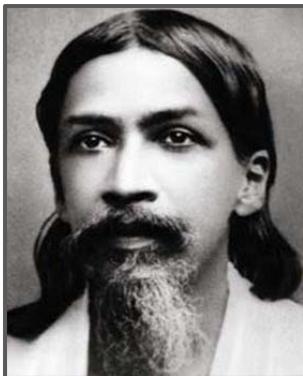
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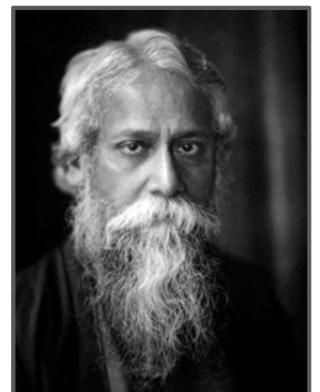
**LALA LAJPAT RAI
(1865-1928)**



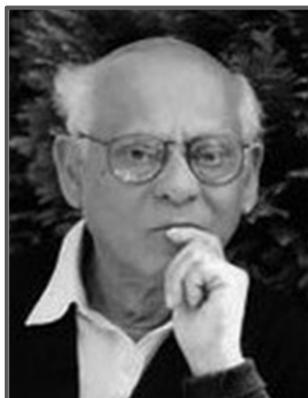
**MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
(1869-1948)**



**AUROBINDO GHOSH
(1872-1950)**



**RABINDRANATH TAGORE
(1861-1941)**



**RANAJIT GUHA
(1923-)**

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