

Storia e Futuro

Environmental History in Italy. Some considerations on historiography.

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Abstract

Questo articolo presenta una breve rassegna della storiografia storico-ambientale, un settore di studio che stenta ad affermarsi all'interno dell'accademia italiana. Dopo un breve periodo (tra la seconda metà degli anni '90 del Novecento e il primo decennio di questo secolo) in cui sembrava prendere forza, la storia dell'ambiente ha perso slancio ed oggi è divenuta una sorta di periferia storiografica. Il saggio discute alcuni problemi epistemologici e di metodo che, secondo l'autore, contribuiscono alla marginalizzazione della materia: la difficile ibridazione dei saperi tecnico-scientifico e storico-sociali; la prevalenza di un approccio ecocentrico, fortemente ideologizzato; l'esiguità di istituzioni interessate all'approccio storico-ambientale e la difficoltà a reperire le fonti e i materiali su cui lavorare.

Abstract english

This article presents a short review of historical-environmental historiography, a field of study that is struggling to establish itself within the Italian academy. After a brief period (between the second half of the 1990s and the first decade of this century) in which it seemed to gain strength, the environmental history has lost momentum and today has become a sort of historiographical periphery. The essay discusses some epistemological and methodological problems which, according to the author, contribute to the marginalization of the subject: the difficult hybridization of technical-scientific and historical-social knowledge; the prevalence of an ecocentric, highly ideological approach; the small number of institutions involved in the historical-environmental approach and the difficulty in finding the sources and materials to work with.

In Italy, the environmental history – understood as the “study of the interactions of people with nature through time” (Worster 1988; Merchant 2002; Hughes 2006) – has found its first academic systematization in an essay by Alberto Caracciolo of 1988, *L'ambiente come storia*. Caracciolo highlighted the reluctance of historians in paying attention to “environmental phenomena” (Caracciolo 1988, 7-8) and underlined the non-anthropocentric character of environmental historiography which, “if it must exist, it is born not only outside, but in contrast with general and economic history, etc.” (Caracciolo 1988, 24-25). According to him, in order to build an *environmental history* it was not enough to devote books and essays “to facts pertaining to the environment”, but it was necessary to generate a “historiography of prediction” capable of telling and analyzing the intervention of man “upon the environment at the end of successive generations” (Caracciolo 1988, 27-30).

In 1999 – after a decade during which environmental history remained largely ignored (Bevilacqua 2000, 7) – a book edited by Angelo Varni (*Storia dell'ambiente in Italia tra Ottocento e Novecento*) was published, whose objective was to “place environmental history within the phases of development of Italian society between 1800 and 1900, or to understand the reciprocal conditioning factors emerged among the fundamental phases of transition of political, economic, social and cultural life in the Country and the [...] necessary environmental adaptation” (Varni 1999).

In 2001 a second collective volume appeared (Andrea Filippo Saba and Edgar H. Meyer, *Storia ambientale. Una nuova frontiera storiografica*) which contained an important contribution to methodology where Giorgio Nebbia put forward fifteen historical-environmental research sectors and, on the bases of studies published till then, he defined *environmental history* as such as “a sort of history of geography and landscape intertwined with the history of agriculture, forestry and land use” (Nebbia 2001, 11-35). According to Nebbia, the privileged object of environmental history – of which he stressed the multidisciplinary vocation deriving from the contact among the disciplines of natural sciences, history, sociology, geography, city planning – was represented by the complex interactions between anthropic activities, environment, nature and artificial ecosystems (cities and industrial districts). In 2004, Marco Armiero and Stefania Barca published the first Italian handbook on environmental history presented by the authors “as a project aimed at questioning the entire epistemological statute of historical science, with a challenge: to put back nature into history, and to re-write books looking at the way in which groups, societies, nations, individuals and cultures have interacted with their own environments and have been influenced by the same” (Armiero, Barca 2004, 19).

Armiero and Barca singled out the peculiarities of Italian environmental historiography in close relationship with agricultural history and economic history; in the resulting approach “strongly historicized, the result of the combined action of socio-economic and natural factors”; in the restricted development of the fields of research (in essence restricted to the history of the use of resources, to the history of environmental damages and to the history of environmentalism); in the scarce attention paid to «major themes» such as that of urban areas and industries, instead thoroughly covered by other environmental historiographies (Armiero, Barca 2004).

This gap was filled beginning from a 2005 publication of an important collection of essays by Simone Neri Seneri (*Incorporare la natura. Storie ambientali del Novecento*) which shifted the balance of contemporary Italian environmental history towards urban and industrial development, regarded as the *engines* of the epochal transformation of “ge-long trims which were based on relationship between social systems and ecosystems and, specifically, between town and country, between urban and rural areas”.

As Neri Seneri explained

Therefore, environmental history in contemporary times stems largely from urban development, from the methods of construction of the modern city. But it is not just the history of the new forms of pollution that accompany development, since pollution is the epiphenomenon, the symptom of a critical juncture in the use of resources, which is to some extent contingent and it can be absorbed by a more 'efficient' mode of exploitation of technical and social resources.

Environmental history in contemporary age is, in the first place, the history of the new ways in which – by virtue of urban industrial development – the acquisition of 'natural' resources interacts with the mechanisms of reproduction of ecosystems. This means that it must begin from a reinterpretation of cultural, technical and political paradigms which have guided the development of the city between 1800 and 1900: the paradigm of hygienic sanitation and, later, that of functional planning further transformed in the second half of the last century in the paradigm of territorial government. If the first two were essentially mechanistic and organicist and sought to separate city and nature to affirm the autonomy of the first from the second, the third sanctioned the pervasiveness of the multifaceted urban fabric, as the final result of that epochal transformation. The history of transformations and environmental policies is to be found in those paradigms (Neri Serneri 2005, 38).

Between 2007 and 2009, the publication of two collective volumes dedicated to the city and industrial areas – edited by Simone Neri Serneri with Gabriella Corona and Salvatore Adorno –has deepened and broadened the reflection on the relationship between urban-industrial development and the environmental-historical approach (Corona, Neri Serneri 2007; Adorno, Neri Serneri 2009). The researches contained in the first volume – dedicated to the relationship between city and territory, namely the construction of urban and territorial structures – helped to highlight how the history of the environment in contemporary age engages firmly in the radical innovations in the process of "incorporation of parts of nature in the social processes of production and reproduction". So, the history of the environment became "the history of the new mode of acquisition of natural resources and of the interaction with the mechanisms of reproduction of ecosystems" (Corona, Neri Serneri 2007).

Corona and Neri Serneri explained

This is the most original result of studies related to the *environmental history*: the awareness that not only there is a twofold historicity – that of nature and that of human society – but the transformation dynamics of the one and the other are strongly intertwined, since they share – in human time, as well as in geological time – portions of their reproductive processes. This is the deep meaning of the concept of incorporation: human societies are developed by incorporating parts of nature without severing ties (physical, biological, ecosystem) with the remaining complexity of the natural system, which therefore affect more or less markedly reproductive processes. Hence comes the eminently historical relations between nature and society. This historiographical approach [...] has set aside the ambitions of a radical epistemological re-foundation, but remains a formidable challenge bearer of knowledge and discipline, because it requires the historians [...] to communicate not only with other social sciences, but also with many so-called technical-scientific disciplines (Corona, Neri Serneri 2007, 11).

The essays collected in the second volume broaden the view over environmental history of industries, intended not only as a "history of emissions", but as "history of the economic actors in competition for resources, and of the political actors called to regulate such impact". A history – declare the two editors – "that demands to be understood by marrying the history of technology and social history, business history and history of territory, history of resources and of public policies, but whose environmental specificity stands in the ambition of re-running [...] the interaction between human processes and ecosystem processes" (Adorno, Neri Serneri 2009, 16).

A new generation of environmental historians (very small, to tell the truth) has started exploring new fields of investigation. Saverio Luzzi (2009) has published what may be regarded as a first history of the environment in twentieth century Italy, from an innovative perspective: the damages to health caused by pollution and by environmental alterations. This is a social history of change in the relationships between man and nature observed through the evolution of the historical scenario of public health in Italy: the author approaches to his study with the analysis of 'old rooted diseases' (pellagra, tuberculosis, malaria...) and then he faces the relationship between pollution and the onset of new pathologies. In Luzzi's book there is much more: political history (Fanfani's ecologism 'by chance'; the discovery of the environmental issue by the Italian Communist Party; the birth of *Legambiente* and of the 'Italian Greens'); social history (cholera in Naples; the oil shock and 'sundays on foot'; the anti-nuclear energy movement; civil committees and the debate on Nimbyism); industrial history (Seveso, Manfredonia); the history (in the broader sense) of science (Ogms, relationships between pollution and pathogenesis). A second field of research which is (slowly) developing in Italy consists of studies on the relationship between transport and environment (*environmental mobility studies*) whose aim is to bring closer together environmental history, transport history and social sciences in order to analyze with an environmental approach the various aspects of mobility (Paolini 2005, 2011 and 2012).

Thirty-one years after Caracciolo's book, Italian environmental historiography has achieved significant scientific results by focusing mainly on the study of natural resources (Agnoletti 2001; Armiero 2013; Barca 2010; Bevilacqua 1988 and 1995; Gaspari 1994; Malanima 2006; Malfitano 2011; Raimondo 2000), disasters (Boschi 1995; Guidoboni 1989; Parrinello 2015; Reberschak 1983), environmentalism (Della Porta, Diani 2004; Della Seta 2000; Della Valentina 2011; Meyer 1995; Piccioni 1999); industrial pollution (Centemeri 2006; Milani 2015; Poggio, Ruzzenenti 2012; Ruzzenenti 2001; Ziglioli 2010 and 2016), urban environment (Corona 2007; Dell'Aquila 2013; Paolini 2014; Nucifora 2018) and waste (Corona, Fortini 2010; Massarutto 2019; Scarpellino 2018; Sori 1999 and 2001; Ruzzenenti 2004).

Despite of the scientific results achieved, environmental history in Italy continues to be a marginal discipline. Proof of this is the small number of environmental-historical sessions, featuring in the programs of *Cantieri di storia Sissco* (*Italian Society for the Study of Contemporary History*; *Società italiana per lo studio della storia contemporanea*), the main event regarding Italian contemporary history: out of 227 panels presented in the nine editions organized to date only 3 (1.32% of the total) concern the environmental historyⁱ. The picture is not brighter if we consider the annual conference which, since 2006, *Sissco* devotes to PhD researches (the *Seminario nazionale dottorandi* called *Storie in corso*): out of 156 papers presented, only 3 (1.92% of the total) tackle study subjects which lead to suppose a connection with environmental historyⁱⁱ.

Expanding the subject to the *Associazione italiana di storia urbana* (Aisu, Italian Association of Urban History) we note how the broadest opening to themes of environmental history occurred on the occasion of the 4th conference (*La città e le reti*, Milan, 19-21 February 2009) which enjoyed the presence of a mega-session centered on "environmental networks"ⁱⁱⁱ. Two years after, the 5th conference (*Fuori dall'ordinario. La città di fronte a catastrofi ed eventi eccezionali*, Rome, 8-10 September 2011) has devoted a mega-session to "natural disasters"^{iv}. The 6th conference (*Visibile e invisibile, percepire la città tra descrizioni e omissioni*, Catania, 12-14 September 2013) has only hosted a single historical environmental panel centered on quantitative sources^v.

Needs to say that the marginality of the discipline does not depend solely on the lack of consideration that this has within the Academy and to the inability of the environmental movement to take roots within the social fabric (thus also in university departments). In Italy scientific structures that continuously promote research in environmental history are very rare (the most important are the *Istituto di studi sulle società del Mediterraneo* of the CNR of Naples and the *Fondazione Luigi Micheletti* of Brescia) and the narrow environmental-historical community appears not so inclined to open up to study issues that are not those most consolidated within historiography: for example, the volume *Nature and History in Modern Italy* – edited by Marco Armiero e Marcus Hall (2010) – does not take into consideration the most recent studies on public health and on transport and it restricts itself to re-launch the research carried forward by what may be called the *core group* of environmental history in Italy; as to the objects of study, what is surprising is the scarce interest in the environmental history of consumption (Paolini 2018).

In Italy, also, a significant part of the research on environmental history is carried out by scholars who are only occasionally concerned with the history of the environment, and this contributes to hampering the emergence of long standing synergies bent on generating work teams capable of conferring visibility to Italian environmental historical research inside and outside national borders (Graf von Hardenberg W., Korjonen-Kuusipuro K., Pál V. 2009).

The environmental history suffers from an evident problem which concerns the epistemology of the discipline. At an international level, environmental history appears to be the monopoly of a technical-scientific approach. Furthermore, the strict connection between the environmental history and the environmental movement has lent a militant image to the discipline and this has conferred a markedly eco-centric character to the subject (Armiero, Barca 2004, 26). With the passing of the years, the bridges between the environmental history and anthropocentric histories – such as political history, social history, cultural history – seem to have mellowed down. Attending international conferences^{vi} one has the feeling that man has been excluded from environmental history: in recent years we have witnessed the exponential multiplication of analysis which – just to give an example – tell of the negative effects of a dam on a river ecosystem or point out the negative consequences produced by the replacement of a native tree species with an allogeneic one. And yet, detailed descriptions of sewage systems and complicated numerical series that attempt to measure the urban metabolisms or cause and effect relationships between consumption and oil extractions. In all this, the political, social and cultural processes inevitably end up in the background, giving the feeling that in order to explain the complex relationship between man and nature it is sufficient to apply the laws of thermodynamics or unorthodox calculations of gross domestic product in a perspective of historical ecology. In short, it seems that environmental history has fallen into the trap of determinism, a risk about which Marco Armiero and Stefania Barca gave a warning

Concepts such as *sustainability, entropy, ecosystem, energy and material flows, carrying capacity* are now present in many environmental history researches. But, more generally, the greatest debt contracted by environmental history with the natural sciences is an inclination to see things from an holistic point of view. Using biology, genetics, phytogeography, climatology and zoology to tell the story of men – and maybe comparing the performance of different civilizations – is a very dangerous exercise. Determinism is still there when the environment becomes history (Armiero, Barca 2004, 34).

Environmental-historical determinism should not surprise since the environmental history is not a humanistic discipline in the traditional sense of the term, being widely practiced by scholars who come from the natural sciences, from exact sciences and technical and scientific disciplines. It should not therefore surprise, if this knowledge has introduced a deterministic outlook into the discipline.

In an article published in 2002 in “Contemporanea”, Donald Worster has underlined the epistemological difficulties encountered by environmental history in declaring its status of new discipline deriving from the hybridization between technical-scientific and social-historical knowledge

[...] The new history has failed to create a method radically different from traditional history. Its themes may be new, but its methods are familiar and continue along well-established lines in political, economic, social and cultural history. Much of the American environmental history – though not all – continues to be located within the borders of the nation state and to follow familiar patterns of periodization and time scales. What did not happen – and what some of us have long waited to happen – is a vigorous hybridization between environmental history and natural sciences, especially ecology. Although some scientists have begun to look at the past through the lens of human bio-geography, ecology or epidemiology [...] historians have rarely joined in that effort. If environmental history should have helped to break the division between the ‘two cultures’ – which widens between the natural and the human or social sciences – this actually has not happened yet. Environmental historians read more studies of natural sciences, but generally those readings have not led to new questions and to new research techniques or new geographic or temporal scales. Undoubtedly the fact is due to the separation that persists in American university. Students graduated in history have little opportunity or are insufficiently encouraged to become better educated in science, nor the scientists frequently encounter history in the course of their training. Consequently, environmental history has become not just a new species in a forest, but a new branch on an old tree (Worster 2002, 138-142).

In substance, Worster’s opinion can be shared: scrolling through the programs of international conferences there is a feeling that the social sciences, the humanities and technical and scientific knowledge embark on the environmental history through the oxymoron of parallel convergences: are all represented, but find it difficult to hybridize and studies that use technical-scientific and naturalistic approach seem to prevail over those whose starting assumptions are rooted in the socio-political approach. At the Seventh Conference of the European Society for Environmental History (August 2013), sessions with a socio-political approach have been 13 on 112, at the Second World Congress of Environmental History (July 2014) 20 out of 134 and the 2015 Annual Conference of the American Society for Environmental History (March 2015) 19 out of 101. In 2018, the 115 panels of the American Society for Environmental History Annual Conference mainly focused on technical-scientific issues (52), methodological aspects (13), water (11), environmental justice (8), economics (7), agriculture (6), animals (6), forests (6), gender and race (3), war (3).

The gap (analytical, methodological, and of content) between the technical-scientific approach and the socio-political is evident and is perceived by the same scholars who place their studies in the environmental history.

On one hand, on the occasion of the Ninth International Conference on Urban History (Lyon, 27-30 August 2008), Genevieve Massard-Guilbaud (EHESS Paris) e Richard Rodger (Edinburgh University) organized a session entitled *Environmental and Social Inequalities in the City since 1800* whose objective was, as we read in the introduction to the volume which came out of it, “to help create bridges between perspectives that should never have been separated: the social and environmental dimensions of inequalities” (Massard-Guilbaud, Rodger 2011, 4)^{vii}. Evidently, some environmental historians perceive the partiality and incompleteness of the perspectives become conventional (mainstream) in the environmental history. On the other, one of the sessions presented at the ASEH 2014 Conference – *Back to Humans, in the end? The challenges of the Environmental Humanities*, organized by Marco Armiero (ISSM-CNR

Environmental Humanities Lab, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden) – it has expressed concern for a possible distortion of environmental history due to an excessively anthropocentric approach which would end up with frustrating the original objective, i.e. that of shifting the focus of historical discipline from man to nature placing the latter at the centre of historical analysis. The session has put forward a contribution to overcoming the dichotomy between the anthropocentric and the ecocentric approach through a new perspective named ‘environmental humanities’

I would say that we have had several kinds of environmental history, each of them with different approaches, priorities, and narratives, and, therefore, with a different degree of «anthropocentrism». There is no doubt that historically environmental historians have pursued the ambitious project to overcome the great divide which separates hard sciences from humanities; geologists, foresters, biologists, ecologists were their first interlocutors. The other side of the coin has been a rather difficult relationship with history and in general with the humanities. However, instead of thinking in a dichotomous way of nature and humans, there has also been a different approach which speaks of socio-nature and looks at hybrid constructions of culture and the environment. In the last few years several universities around the world have started new initiatives dedicated to the environmental humanities. In this round table we want to engage a discussion among some of them. Our aim is to address both the theoretical challenges connected to the environmental humanities project and the concrete possibilities offered by the raising of this field of studies in terms of training, research and outreach activities. In particular we want to address the following issues: 1) what are the environmental humanities today?; 2) which are – or might be – the relationships between environmental humanities and environmental history?; 3) where is the environment and where is the human in the environmental humanities?; 4) which are the plans that those centers are pursuing?^{viii}

In short, the debate within environmental history is open and there is a feeling that the much hoped for hybridization is far from being realized even (and especially?) for the evident epistemological difficulties that separate technical-scientific knowledge from the humanities, as well as the ecocentric perspective from the anthropocentric.

In this international context studying environmental history in Italy is objectively difficult and it is so because working on mainstream issues as indicated by international historiography one will be marginalized within the Italian academy which – evidently – does not recognize the themes as object for research within the historical disciplines; at the same time, an Italian historian who attempts to work on environmental issues with an anthropocentric perspective higher than the average tolerated by the international historiography, will be marginalized at extra-Italian level because – equally clearly – his approach is not considered as belonging to environmental-historical epistemology.

This situation is contributing in a decisive way to the marginalization of environmental history in Italy: after a decade of growth (2001-2010) the environmental-historical approach is declining. The marginalization of the discipline – and also the epistemological cul-de-sac in which it finds itself – has induced some precursors and other researchers who had approached the subject during the 2001-2010 decade to return to more traditional research inspired by an essentially political-historical approach.

In the initial decade of the 21st century, environmental history in Italy has been able to distance itself from its most frequented sectors – the analysis of the ecosystems, which Gorgio Nebbia (2001,16) has called a “sort of history of geography and landscape, crossing with the history of agriculture, of forestry and land use”, and the environmental movement (and in particular the vicissitudes of Italian conservatism and national parks) – embracing the history of urban areas, of transport, of health. Now this fervor – limited to a small number of scholars – appears to be dozing off. Yet, study subjects are not lacking: as Nebbia (2001, 11-35) reminded us, environmental histories waiting to be written are still many and concern the history of environmentalist associations, the history of the debate on the ‘limits of the Earth’, the history of the workers struggles for health and the work environment, ecological economics history and of environmental right, the history of environmental technologies, the history of environmental education and information, the political character of protest movements, the history of the ‘ecology of masters’, the history of the relationships between the Church and the environment, the history of environmental negationism, the history of heterodox environmentalism. Many of these histories have a decidedly anthropocentric character since influenced by social, political and economic dynamics: one may therefore rightly ask, whether to this marginalization of environmental history is also contributing the militant ecocentric approach, which contributes to distancing those scholars interested in studying environmental issues, but not equally keen to contributing to a historiography which identifies itself with a sort of academic rib of political environmentalism whose path – beginning from the 1990s of the 20th century – has taken an increasingly more antagonistic minority stand.

Antagonistic environmentalism places ecological problems into an essentially dichotomous interpretative framework which simplifies questions by opposing to a number of evils (industrial production, neo liberalism, western consumption patterns...) some axioms identified as resolute (the degrowth, the a priori protection of some landscape patterns, the ‘slow food’, the opposition from the bottom to infrastructure deemed excessively impacting ...).

Some environmental historians have endorsed this pattern that fits well with the ecocentric perspective. However, environmental issues seldom follow a dichotomous dynamic, but they tend to be far more complex. The onset of an ecological problem and its eventual resolution does not follow a course of cause-effect because – very often – we deal with the result of processes mediated by quite complex social and cultural dynamics.

From this it follows that an inflexible ecocentric approach or – on the contrary – strictly anthropocentric, be limited to producing partial or deterministic explanations of phenomena and contribute to the polarization of the discipline between promoters of the ecocentric approach and supporters of the anthropocentric. In turn this polarization contributes – at least in Italy, but not only – to the marginalization of the discipline.

Finally, a long-standing problem that contributes to hampering the development of environmental history is that of sources. Giorgio Nebbia always highlighted the “need for a historical record” noting how “the writing of one or more stories of the various movements and ecological events [presupposed] access to very different materials, partly published in books accessible in public libraries, in part now almost impossible to find, and partly contained in documents, reports, articles buried in archives or dispersed in countless newspapers and magazines, in part now lost”. For these reasons Nebbia hoped that the meeting of 1997 “offered an opportunity for a strong request for the establishment of a national historical archive of ecology and the environment” (Nebbia 2001, 33-35). Since then little has been done, for the lack of interest shown by institutions and by the same environmental organizations.

i The data are drawn from the web site of Sisso (www.sisso.it). The three environmental panels are: *Ambiente e risorse nell'Italia contemporanea: i luoghi, le*

periodizzazioni, i problemi (Coordinators: Marco Armiero, Patrizia Dogliani; Panelists: Marco Armiero and Stefania Barca, Luigi Piccioni, Simone Neri Serneri, Gabriella Corona; Cantieri I 2001); *Industrie, ambiente e territori nell'Italia del Secondo Novecento* (Coordinator: Simone Neri Serneri; Panelists: Simone Neri Serneri, Roberto Tolaini, Federico Paolini, Salvatore Adorno; Cantieri IV 2007); *Ambientalismo, ambientalismo: aspetti di storia del movimento ecologista in Italia 1970-2010* (Coordinator: Federico Paolini; Panelists: Catia Papa, Luigi Piccioni, Federico Paolini; Cantieri VI 2011). Four other panels – *Il petrolio nella storia del Novecento: tra business history, storia sociale e storia ambientale* (Coordinator: Elisabetta Bini, Cantieri V 2009), *Una modernizzazione a quattro ruote: automobili, società e ambiente nel Novecento* (Coordinator: Federico Paolini, Cantieri V 2009), *Le città nella grande trasformazione. Territorio, ambiente e società nella Golden Age italiana 1945-1975* (Coordinator: Melania Nucifora, Cantieri VIII 2015), *Le declinazioni dello sviluppo nei lunghi anni Settanta* (Coordinator: Ilaria Zamburlini, Cantieri IX 2017) – hosted four environmental papers: Roberto Tolaini, *Petrolio e ambiente: note storiche sulla raffinazione degli idrocarburi in Italia tra sviluppo, degrado del territorio e sostenibilità*; Sigfrido Ramirez Perez, *Un'automobile più verde e sicura? Il ruolo della Comunità Economica Europea nella definizione degli standard europei. Contraddizioni politiche e motivazioni socio-economiche*; Gabriella Corona, *La crisi urbana nell'età ecologica: quale governo? Linee generali*; Sara Lorenzini, *Alle radici dello sviluppo sostenibile: il rapporto ambiente-sviluppo negli anni Settanta*.

ii The data are drawn from the web site of Sisso (www.sisso.it). The three doctoral theses are: Irene Borgna, *Tra le acque, in Alta Valle Gesso. Ambiente, turismo e identità nel villaggio alpino di Entracque dal secondo dopoguerra a oggi* (Storie in corso VI 2011); Eleonora Cesareo, *La riforma fondiaria e le modificazioni territoriali: un caso di studio, il Metapontino* (Storie in corso VII 2012); Giacomo Bonan, *Lo Stato nei boschi. Comunità, istituzioni e risorse forestali in una regione alpina nel primo Ottocento* (Storie in corso XI 2016).

iii The session – organized by Simone Neri Serneri and Rosa Tamborrino – hosted six panels: *Le reti di città in Europa: collaborazione, buone prassi e politiche urbane sostenibili* (Coordinator, Laura Grazi); *Le città a motore. La mobilità come fattore di trasformazione ambientale nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra* (Coordinator, Federico Paolini); *Reti ambientali e sviluppo urbano: il caso di Napoli* (Coordinator, Gabriella Corona); *Questioni ambientali, uso dei suoi ed aree produttive dismesse nell'Italia del Novecento* (Coordinator, Augusto Ciuffetti); *Territori, spazi aperti, paesaggi* (Coordinator, Rosa Tamborrino); *Risorse ambientali e reti degli insediamenti tra Otto e Novecento* (Coordinators, Simone Neri Serneri, Rosa Tamborrino).

iv The session *I disastri di origine naturale* has been organized by Marco Folin, Emanuela Guidoboni, Melania Nucifora. The panel closer to environmental history was *Città, territori e società urbane di fronte ai disastri naturali nel XX secolo*, organized by Giacomo Parrinello, Ines Tolic e Stefano Ventura.

v *Quali fonti quantitative per la storia ambientale urbana?* (Coordinator, Federico Paolini); Antonio Parmeggiani, *L'evoluzione ambientale tra Otto e Novecento, l'esempio di Velletri*; Giacomo Parrinello, *Conoscere per governare: la produzione tecnico-scientifica sulla natura urbana tra Otto e Novecento*; Mariagrazia d'Emilio, *Misurare la "mal'aria": l'evoluzione della ricerca scientifica e delle metodologie di campionamento nello studio dell'inquinamento atmosferico*; Gianni Silei, *Uso delle fonti, stampa e costruzione sociale dei rischi e dei disastri naturali nelle aree urbane*.

vi The most important international conferences are organized by the American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) and by the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH). The American Society has organized its first conference in 1982 (UC Irvine) and now conferences occur annually. The European delay consists of almost twenty years: the ESEH has organized its first conference in 2001 in St. Andrews (Scotland), followed by those of Prague (September 2003), Florence (February 2005), Amsterdam (June 2007), Turku (June-July 2011), Munich (August 2013), Versailles (June-July 2015), Zagreb (June-July 2017). The 2009 conference did not take place because of coinciding with the 1st World Congress of Environmental History (Copenhagen and Malmö, August 2009); the second World Congress of Environmental History took place at Guimaraes, Portugal, from 8 July 2014 to 12 July 2014. In 2006 the Sociedad Latinoamericana y Caribena de Historia Ambiental was instituted, which organizes a biennial symposium now arrived at its sixth edition (Santiago, Chile, July 2003; La Habana, October 2004; Carmona-Spain, April 2006; Belo Horizonte, May 2008; La Paz, Baja California Sur, June 2010; Villa de Leyva-Colombia, June 2012; Quilmes Gran Buenos Aires, October 2014; Puebla, Mexico, August 2016; Liberia, Costa Rica, July 2018). An Association for East Asian Environmental History has been instituted, which calls a biennial international conference (Taiwan: October 2011 and October 2013; Takamatsu, Kagawa, Japan, October 2015; Jinnan, Tianjin, China, October 2017).

vii The papers presented in the session are: Christoph Bernhardt, *At the limits of the European Sanitary City: Aspects of water-related environmental inequalities in Berlin-Brandenburg (1918-1939)*; Hugo Billard, *Les inondations de la Seine à Paris (1802-1910): une «double peine» environnementale et sociale?*; Craig Colten, *Floods and Inequitable Responses: New Orleans before Katrina*; Chloé Deligne, Wanda Balcers, *Les luttes contre les pollutions en Belgique (ca 1850-1930): vie et mort d'un combat urbain à populaire*; Barry Doyle, *Our smoke is our prosperity: Managing and contesting industrial pollution in Middlesbrough 1880-1940*; Ewa Kokoszka, *The return to nature: striving for environmental and social justice of the vegetarian social and health reformers in Berlin 1880-1914*; Simo Laakonen, *Environmental justice in historical perspective: experiences of cross-section analysis*; Richard Oram, *Social Inequality in the Supply and Use of fuels in Scottish Towns*; Leonard Schwartz, Jeremy Boulton, *The Early Epidemic Streets*; Marie-Claire Vitoux, *Ségrégation socio-spatiale et inégalités environnementales à Mulhouse (XIX-XXI siècles)*; Geoffray Buckley, *To promote the material and moral welfare of the community: Neighborhood Improvement Associations in Baltimore, Maryland, 1900-1945*. Cf. <http://eauh.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/param/eauh.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/files/Prog-EAUAH.pdf>.

viii [http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/aseh/aseh14/index.php?](http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/aseh/aseh14/index.php?click_key=1&cmd=Multi+Search+Search+Load+Session&session_id=206626&PHPSESSID=nsemcj3gonmdr6bj3rqnrjrd6g5)

[click_key=1&cmd=Multi+Search+Search+Load+Session&session_id=206626&PHPSESSID=nsemcj3gonmdr6bj3rqnrjrd6g5](http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/aseh/aseh14/index.php?click_key=1&cmd=Multi+Search+Search+Load+Session&session_id=206626&PHPSESSID=nsemcj3gonmdr6bj3rqnrjrd6g5) (20 March 2014).

Biography/ Biografia

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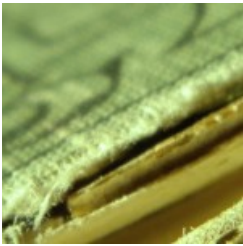
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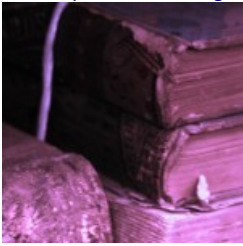
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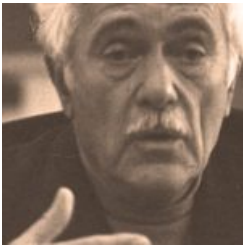
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