

# The culture of consent

Mass organization of leisure in fascist Italy

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## The organization of consent

The “normal” exercise of hegemony on the classical terrain of parliamentary regimes is characterized by a combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally without force ever prevailing too much over consent . . . In the period following the World War, the hegemonic apparatus cracked apart, and the exercise of hegemony became permanently difficult and aleatory.

A. Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*

The question of “government by consent” became for the first time an overriding concern of political and economic elites in Europe as they sought to reestablish the bases of their rule after the enormous disruptions of World War I. With what authority could reconstruction be undertaken after the great upsurge of labor unrest in 1918? On what foundations could old governing coalitions be reconstituted as the sheer numerical force of the left parties threw the exclusive liberal caucuses into disarray? With what incentives could workers be induced to cooperate in retooling for peacetime production now that factory councils and militant industrial unions pressed their demands for “democracy in the workplace”? Conservatives, liberals, and technocrats naturally differed in their proposed solutions, debating the merits of consultations and negotiated compromises with organized labor, more active appeals to build responsive voter blocks, or a radical operation of social engineering. But whatever the political perspective, it had become clear that, with the end of the war, the era of laissez-faire capitalism – of disorganized labor, rigid management hierarchies, long working hours, and restricted consumption – was closed. The age of employer absolutism, as the economist Luigi Einaudi recognized, had ended. The economic, political, and social conditions of what liberal observers called a “compulsive capitalism” no longer existed.<sup>1</sup> The new age, that of an expansive, consumer-oriented, organized capitalism, called for rule by consent.

In the long run, the major possibility of building this consent depended on the degree to which traditional class alignments could be

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sidestepped and appeals for political support or social cooperation made on the basis of new, seemingly nonclass identities. Economic redistribution and changes in social stratification alone might make identification as, say, a consumer, or small property owner more compelling than that as a "proletarian." But the exploitations of these identities to form new political allegiances required that they be placed in a new frame of reference. To give a distinctively ideological cast to social experiences outside of the workplace – to unite "war veterans," "taxpayers," "sports fans," or "national citizens" – demanded the creation of a nationwide political culture that might persuade people that their shared goals transcended petty economic haggling, regional and ethnic disputes, or age-old social animosities. In short, the politics of the postwar era were premised on what might be called a "culture of consent" that, operating at all levels of the society, might play a decisive role in shaping those responsive though depoliticized mass constituencies necessary for the stabilization of advanced capitalist societies.

The effort to create such a supraclass national identity was not of course entirely new. Since the late nineteenth century, the "nationalization of the masses" had, in one form or another, been a constant goal of ruling elites.<sup>2</sup> In the years before World War I, liberal reformers had pressed for a modern civic culture by supporting the extension of paternalistic, usually privately run schemes to inculcate in the lower orders the duties of diligent work, service to the nation, and the proper exercise of the newly acquired right to vote.<sup>3</sup> In the postwar years, however, the terms in which the old dominant culture of "uplift" was conceived and organized were fundamentally transformed. This was partly in reaction to mass labor unrest and partly a response to the ever more complicated demands of an organized capitalism for workers to become disciplined consumers, as well as diligent operatives, conduct a "rational" family life, and use their leisure in an efficient way. It was also the result of advances in radio and film technology that created new, formidably powerful agencies of ideological influence. In the process of forming a new dominant culture with mass extensions, the old distinctions between a separatist "high" culture and bourgeois schemes for worker uplift were dissolved; the line between state intervention and public control and the private, parochial interests traditionally behind upper-class philanthropy was blurred; finally, with the addition of sports and amusements to attract and entertain the "masses," diversion was given equal weight with projects for skill training and moral improvement. Out of the new schools, agencies, and institutions of "high" and "low" culture, out of the changing

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relations between the traditional and the new, and among popular, working class, folk and mass cultures, out of the fusion between the previously narrow sphere of politics proper and the ever broadening domains of ideological intervention, there emerged a distinctively new politics of culture. From the twenties on, as the sociologists of the Frankfurt School realized so presciently, this politics was to be as important to the stability of capitalist rule as the process of political decision making itself.<sup>4</sup>

This book studies the effort to form a culture of consent in Italy between the world wars: how Italy's fascist rulers were impelled to confront the inadequacy of force as their primary means of government; the methods they devised to translate a policy of persuasion into an entirely new cultural practice; and the institutional and ideological deformations that resulted from their systematic and dictatorial intervention in the development of mass culture in Italy.

Consent, however, is a term that has to be defined specifically in the context of fascist rule.<sup>5</sup> In Italy, once Mussolini had been installed in power in 1922, government did not have to face demands for democracy in the workplace, much less engage in debates about the legitimacy of parliamentary institutions. The breaking of the labor movement by *squadristi* violence and the subsequent outlawing of the antifascist opposition removed these from discussion. But the problem of consent intruded into fascist politics all the same. It can be identified, in the first place, with that vague perception, shared by many "fascists of the first hour," that the liberal state, by its failure to "nationalize the masses," was mainly responsible for the unruliness of Italian workers and the general disorder of Italian political life: For many fascist ideologues the overriding goal of their national revolution was to make the "masses adhere to the state."<sup>6</sup> But in the early twenties, the practical content of this slogan was so variously interpreted – as license for blackshirted thugs to beat workers into line, but also as some design for fascism to become "soul and conscience" of a new "national democracy" – that it can hardly be seen as representing any coherent concern or consistent program, much less as a totalitarian cultural policy.

In a second moment in the mid-twenties, the problem of consent presented itself in a more compelling way, in terms not so different from those faced elsewhere in Europe by liberal-democratic regimes in the process of stabilizing their rule. Mussolini had his own shaky conservative-fascist coalition to maintain, his own difficulties in balancing the conflicting interests of his major supporters in big business

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and his many followers in the middle and lower bourgeoisie. To compete in world markets, Italian capital required at least as thoroughgoing a reconstruction as that proceeding in the rest of Europe by 1925; the costs of stabilizing the economy in the absence of any effective union movement were easily shifted onto workers and small consumers through wage cuts, accelerated work rhythms, high rates of unemployment, and austerity measures that, altogether, had the effect of pushing back the working class standard of living to prewar levels.<sup>7</sup> Yet without the disciplined support of these same “masses,” the fascist leadership could not hope to pull the economy out of its chronic crisis; and without success in this endeavor, it could not expect to consolidate its own political base.

In this context, the need for a broader consent was brought home to the regime, a need that initially was very explicitly understood in terms of the regime’s immediate economic priorities. Thus consent, for the production workers, meant a silent industriousness and acquiescence to pay reductions and speed-ups – no more could be expected from those whom Mussolini in 1927 characterized as the “generation of the irreconcilables”;<sup>8</sup> for peasants, it meant an active involvement in “battles” to increase agricultural output in spite of price drops that under other circumstances would have sent them in precipitous flight from the land; for petty state functionaries, it meant political support, although their own professional status was being degraded with the rapid expansion of the tertiary sector. Consent thus acquired multiple specific meanings according to the responses demanded from different sectors of the society at different times. It can be said to have acquired a general meaning as well: as the sustained effort by the fascist regime to make the working population as a whole respond to and endure the terrible and contradictory pressures of a distorted economic growth taking place in a country in which the distance between government and governed was vast, regional differences sharp, and class and political divisions especially bitter.

The creation of this culture of consent in Italy was distinguished by the emphasis the fascist regime placed on mass organizing. This emphasis, although certainly exaggerated by the internal political dynamics of dictatorship, must be seen as a response to two basic conditions. First, fascism had to come to terms with its obvious inability to appeal to workers as *workers*. Insofar as political allegiance followed class lines, Mussolini’s regime could never hope to outbid the left. What is more, any too-explicit appeal to workers as “producers,” or any too-close imitation of old strategies of socialist or syndicalist labor organizing always carried the risk of reduplicating within fascism’s own

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corporatist institutions the class-based division of leftist politics – something fascism had to avoid if it was to maintain the support of the traditional elites. Second, the fascist regime faced a real obstacle to developing appeals on the basis of nonworkplace identities because of the absence of what might be called the natural modes of producing mass culture: through the growth of consumption, the extension of the mass media, and increased civic participation in state institutions and in the voluntary associations of the dominant class.<sup>9</sup> Italian economic growth, largely as a result of the regime's own policies, provided little or no basis for the rapid expansion of a mass domestic market. Geared to developing basic industries, to manufacturing producer goods at the expense of consumer commodities, it would in no way satisfy the wants of the lower middle class, fascism's only spontaneous base of support, let alone support the creation of a worker aristocracy or prosperous small peasantry. Moreover, in Italy, at least until the mid-twenties, the mass media were still only minimally developed, and the standard of living generally so low, that the state itself had to support their growth before the regime could exploit them to inculcate the proper fascist virtues of discipline, obedience, and struggle. Finally, the fascists lacked any solid base of mediating institutions that could readily be converted to their goal of making the "new Italian"; for the liberal elites had largely failed not only to establish the basic social and educational instructional services of the modern capitalist state, but even to form the literate public that elsewhere in Europe was considered to be the natural underpinning of a conservative civic culture.<sup>10</sup>

Organizing thus became central to the fascists' effort to build consent: organizing to build an institutional base and to compensate for abysmally low levels of consumption; organizing to discipline the recalcitrant and rouse the apathetic; organizing to prevent the accumulation of power in the fascists' own, sometimes menacing trade union federations; organizing, in sum, to mediate the sharp class conflicts and ideological divisions of Italy as it emerged into the era of rationalized industry, with all of the contradictions of its part-feudal, part-small entrepreneurial, part-monopoly capitalist base. Moving beyond the casual manipulations of worker community and home life typical of laissez-faire capitalism, and the empirical and local practice of nineteenth-century paternalists, the regime's own efficiency experts, moral reformers, government planners, and political functionaries scrutinized for their susceptibility to organizing an entire range of social activities, from sports and entertainment to child-rearing practices. From the mid-twenties on, with the foundation of the fascist trade union organizations as state institutions and the establishment of new

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party and government agencies, the social and the private domains were inexorably drawn into the public sphere, to be opened in the process to political manipulation by the Italian political and economic elites.

Nonetheless, fascism's decision to organize the "masses" outside of its original, almost wholly middle and lower middle class constituency, matured very slowly. Like all of the Duce's policies, the impulse behind it was pragmatic, or, better, opportunistic. It was a decision that ultimately was forced on the dictator by the need to confront a still lively popular opposition to his rule; taken to appease the "second wave" revolutionists among the syndicalists and "intransigents" in his own party; and fundamentally conditioned by big industry's demands for "order and hierarchy in all social relations."<sup>11</sup> Without these compelling pressures, it is doubtful whether Mussolini would ever have exceeded his original conservative mandate. His government would have continued to rely on his movement's "destructive" powers to subdue labor rather than exercising its "creative" energies to build a mass constituency. It would have persisted in seeing its own syndicalist organizations as a sort of momentary affliction – what in 1923 Mussolini had called a "physiological need in the growth of fascism" – seeking instead some base of labor support through those "experts in organizing" within the reformist leadership of the old General Confederation of Labor.<sup>12</sup> In the early twenties, certainly, the sole intimation of fascism's later zeal for organizing, besides its lukewarm support for an Italian variant of business unionism, was its avowed intent to "make the masses adhere to the state."

Vague though this slogan was, it summed up with typically inflated rhetoric two widely shared perceptions about the character of associational life in prewar liberal Italy, myths of an imperfect past that were exploited by the fascists with their self-serving claims to be fulfilling the Risorgimento project of national unity. One was that liberal agnosticism had perpetuated a void between the state and the masses; the other, that this void had been filled by the antinational forces of socialism, bent on subverting national sovereignty by promoting an autonomous state within a state. These views found expression in various ways: in the complaints of a conservative liberal like Antonio Salandra, who decried the lack of "civic sentiment" among the Italian masses;<sup>13</sup> in the vehement denunciations by industrial spokesmen of workers whose "perceptions of the world" – unlike those of docile Anglo-American operatives – had been "deformed by expectations, aspirations, and superstitions totally extraneous to the economic functioning of society";<sup>14</sup> and, in a most comprehensive form, in the dooms-

day prophesying of Nationalists, like Alfredo Rocco, later the regime's foremost ideologue, who by late 1920 was predicting the imminent total crisis of the state as it "dissolved into a mass of particles, parties, associations, groups, and syndicates."<sup>15</sup> Whatever the differences among these views, the diverse interests they expressed, and the various solutions they implied, all shared a common perception: that a proper civic spirit was wanting and labor discipline entirely inadequate in the face of the competitive pressures on the resource-scarce Italian economy and the political ambitions of its leaders. For Italy to maintain its status among the great powers, for it to rebuild after war, for it to fulfill some immanent national mission, there was an impelling need for a strong authority to mobilize the nation's productive forces and to put an end once and for all to the "disruptive individualism" of the liberal polity and the "bolshevik anarchy" of the left.

These assessments of liberal "disorder" cannot, of course, be accepted at their face value; there was in fact no real vacuum between state and civil society in prefascist Italy in the sense that intermediate associations were lacking. Those that existed, however, as Rocco himself well understood, reflected the class conflicts of a rapidly industrializing society in far too transparent a way to act in what might be called a "Tocquevillian" sense; that is, as socially stabilizing, politically moderate forces.<sup>16</sup> The hundreds of bourgeois benevolent societies, the lay and ecclesiastical *oratori*, the secularized congregations of charity and the Catholic *opere pie* – the heritage of centuries of Christian almsgiving, of burgher and guild solidarity – frequently worked at cross purposes. Moreover, they were far too parochial in their effect to reestablish the influence of the Italian elites in the face of an increasingly politicized worker sociability.<sup>17</sup> Rather than suffering from a scarcity of institutions, civil society in prewar Italy, if we use the categories of liberal sociology, might be said to have become "overpoliticized" from the failure to develop one particular kind of mediating institution: the apolitical and intraclass civic association that in a now vast literature on voluntary associations is identified as the hallmark of a healthy liberal social order for its ability to involve citizens, regardless of class background or political belief, in common projects of self- and social betterment.<sup>18</sup> From another perspective, it could be said that the economic affirmation of Italy's new industrial elites had failed to find a corresponding ideological expression in their social and cultural agencies: Unlike industrial America, whose self-confident business leadership early affirmed its preeminence in civic society through the likes of Rotary clubs and the YMCA, the elites of old Italy, as the Italian marxist Antonio Gramsci observed in the early

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thirties, conserved their preindustrial institutional heritage in jesuitical networks and freemasonic allegiances.<sup>19</sup>

The failure in liberal Italy to develop what one reformer described as “more modern, effective, and rational” forms of social solidarity,<sup>20</sup> testified above all to the deep social and ideological divisions within the prefascist ruling class – between rural and industrial, Catholic and lay, liberal and conservative. Industrial growth in Italy had come later and been far less intense than in England or Germany; the business classes, ruling over insular company villages or settled in long-established towns, were never confronted with the overwhelming bleakness of the Manchesters or Liverpools or the menacing gap between riches and squalor that impressed a “class consciousness of sin” in the Victorian mind and, as Beatrice Webb suggested, inspired the British bourgeoisie to its displays of philanthropy.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, in Italy, after the turn of the century, in response to the rapid growth of the socialist movement, several prominent nationalists and liberal reformers had called for a complete overhauling of the institutions of private beneficence through the enactment of a nationwide Poor Law and the long-overdue reform of the state educational system.<sup>22</sup> But there could be no agreement on a single project: The socialists naturally resisted any additional state regulation, on the entirely legitimate ground that any measure justifying further government restrictions on associational activity was bound to be used by the prefects to harass socialist workingmen’s clubs; the Catholics were equally opposed for fear that the liberals would use such means to curb church influence; while the industrialists too resisted, claiming that government regulation would infringe on private enterprise in addition to swelling what they considered to be already superfluous expenditures on social welfare.<sup>23</sup> Before the fascists could even contemplate developing any new institutional base for their own consolidation of power, they would first of all have to unify the Italian elites themselves around some single project of reform.

This unity was initially constructed, if only in a very superficial and negative way, in the bourgeois *jacquerie* led by the fascist squads in 1920–1 against the prosperous club life of reformist socialism. The primary target of this violence was the far-flung network of perhaps ten thousand party sections, unions, cooperative ventures, friendly societies, “popular” universities, reading circles, and so on, loosely grouped under the banner of Italian socialism. Though they were rarely the hotbeds of revolution the fascists claimed them to be, they had indeed given an enormous impetus to the worker offensive in the “red

years” of 1919–20, as the centers of what can only be described as a socialist “counterculture.”<sup>24</sup>

The flourishing club life of the industrial suburbs, artisan *borgate*, and rural towns of the northern agricultural plains was truly national when Italian politics as a whole was still parochial and personalized; democratic, when most Italians were excluded from the vote; genuinely popular when the public and private institutions of the liberal state were class-bound and exclusive. Membership, like that in the socialist party itself, extended beyond the industrial proletariat proper, which in 1914 still comprised under a fifth of the active population, to embrace many of the have-nots of liberal society: those who, as the statutes of one rural club indicated, “for lack of sufficient means, must earn their living principally through labor in the fields and workshops, from small commerce, or from low-paid work as elementary school teachers, town clerks, and the like.”<sup>25</sup> So field laborers and factory operatives mixed along with their families in the “peoples’ houses” at the city edges, easing the split between urban and rural life; craftsmen and shop floor mechanics met in the town chambers of labor, uniting older traditions of artisan mutualism with the new militant mass labor unionism. In Italy, the socialist leadership exercised none of the stern regulatory authority used by German social democracy to define the operations of its auxiliaries. Consequently those functional distinctions of a “modern” and specialized kind – among party offices, trade union locals, theater groups, or mutual funds – remained for the most part blurred, with single associations comprising the entire range of social and cultural activity supporting the workers’ struggle for emancipation – from aid to the sick and disabled and advice to emigrants to economic defense and political propaganda. Individually the circles had thus achieved a remarkable degree of autonomy by the “red years,” and not only because of their basic self-sufficiency. In a very real way, they had remained outside of an admittedly still very inefficient bourgeois state, escaping attempts by the central government to control their conduct by refusing, as required by national law, to register their statutes with the public authorities.

In times of movement, this confusion of initiatives in single clubs naturally lent an extraordinary vitality to the worker advance; in times of reaction, however, it left the neighborhood meeting place, the rural circle, the small-town people’s house highly vulnerable to attack. For the social and cultural life of workers was identified by local elites as being as much culpable for their “intransigent” conduct as their strictly economic organizations; the reading club and the local press were

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ultimately as threatening reminders of the fragility of bourgeois attainments as the explicitly economic pressure of the trade union local or the agrarian league. This explains why the social and cultural organizations of the Italian labor movement – the consumer cooperative, the recreational hall, the popular library, the uniformed gymnastic and bicycle squads – provoked such violent antipathy; and why the pillars of what one despairing reform socialist called that “marvellous construction . . . for a new world of civilization and justice” proved the first targets of the fascist bands, rather than the better protected, openly revolutionary communist sections.<sup>26</sup> Whether a more disciplined club life might better have resisted fascist attacks is beside the point; in the unequal battle that pitted paramilitary forces against defenseless peasants and workers, “the lorry against the *case del popolo*,” the provincial outposts of the socialist movement fell one after another. By the end of 1921 the much-feared socialist state within a state lay in ruins.

Even when the working class associations had been smashed, the mixed forms of popular sociability they embodied remained a constant reference point for the fascists themselves: the models against which the newly emergent plans and politics of the modernizing fascist state had to be measured; and ultimately the structures onto which any new fascist system of mass organizing would be grafted. In the early twenties, certainly, fascism’s reaction against the mix of economics and politics in working class associational life strongly reinforced its productivist concept of organizing labor. Whether this took the form of nationalist theorizing or came out of first-hand observations of worker club life by the provincial party bosses, the fascists’ reasoning went much the same: The combination of political aspirations and economic demands in the socialist labor movement had confounded the ingenuous minds of the proletariat, leading it to make demands that the struggling Italian economy could not possibly sustain. To end this confusion, the fascists called for a new leadership for the working masses that would demonstrate the operations of what the syndicalist leader Rossoni called the “dinamica produttiva.”<sup>27</sup> It would instruct workers in a simple lesson to the effect that nothing could be gained by causing Italy to lose her competitive edge in world markets and much could be won by supporting her economic aggrandizement through self-discipline on the job, moderation in demands, and whole-hearted cooperation with employers. In the corporate bodies that, for the fascists, would ideally replace parliamentary institutions as well as the organizations of an autonomous labor movement, labor and capital – the “active forces of production” – would finally obtain their direct and accurate representation. This corporatist model did not, however, take

into account that only a fraction of the population was actually employed in the industrial-type enterprises to which it was best adapted, nor the many nonsyndical social and economic functions of the pre-fascist working class movement. But so long as there was no immediate prospect of implementing the corporations, as was the case in the early twenties, the fascist movement could ignore the complexity of working class associational life, together with a more fundamental dilemma: Insofar as any production-based organizing reflected the real economic interests of workers, it was inimical to capital; to the extent that it reflected those of business, it was odious to many workers.

The mid-twenties, however, saw a shift in fascism's labor policy from a simple strategy of "disorganizing" to a more sustained attempt, in Mussolini's often-repeated words, to "bring the masses into the state"; the focus on production that had characterized the fascist syndicalists' schemes in the early twenties was gradually extended to organizing outside of the workplace through the fascist party's auxiliaries. The initial incentive was economic. From 1922, Mussolini's rule had been graced by prosperity that was as much the result of the reopening of international markets as of his laissez-faire policies. By late 1924, however, Italy, like other European countries, faced inflation and increasingly competitive foreign markets. Elsewhere in Europe, the resulting monetary instability had exposed serious cracks in post-war governing coalitions, with the middle classes, identifying the causes of unsound currency in inflated wage schedules and unbalanced budgets, forming antilabor coalitions with big business.<sup>28</sup> In Italy, obviously, Mussolini did not have to appeal to any parliamentary majority, for elections were effectively abolished after January 1925. Nonetheless, by the middle of 1926, as the lira dropped to 155 to the pound sterling, the fascist dictator had become convinced that this regime would survive or fall over the question of sound currency; Mussolini, writing to his Finance Minister Volpi in August 1926, vowed he would disprove that "authoritarian regimes are incapable of saving depreciated currencies and overcoming the social role of the postwar period," this without having recourse to "ostentatious collaborations" to rally public support.<sup>29</sup> Acting on the assumption that police measures could handle any opposition, Mussolini committed his government to pegging the lira at *quota novanta*, or 90 lire to the pound, a goal that was achieved fourteen months later after a jolting deflationary crisis. Simultaneously, the regime stepped up its intervention in the economy to correct some of the imbalances that were identified as underlying causes of monetary instability: industry's dependency on imported producer goods and raw and semifinished materials, the lack of capital

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for industrial investment, the inadequacy of agricultural output to meet internal demand, and finally, the narrowness of the domestic market. Through a combination of tariffs, subsidies, tax incentives, and support for research and resource exploitation, the regime laid the basis for what recent studies of the fascist economy have characterized as a “dynamic though distorted” period of growth.<sup>30</sup>

The definition of what the economist Saibante characterized as the “fascist reorganization of production”<sup>31</sup> had both immediate and long-term implications for developing a specifically fascist strategy of mass organizing. In the first place, it created an immediate need for an institutional network that was both responsive to the government and had numerous local extensions. The revaluation crisis, experienced by industrial workers from 1926 to 1929 in the form of real wage losses of 25 percent, work speed-ups, and unemployment rates of 15 percent produced such a spate of strikes and other “demonstrations of illegality” that Mussolini was led to describe 1927 as a “particularly gray and difficult year” for his regime: For the dictator the crisis was indeed far worse than the “political–moral” one after the Matteotti assassination in 1924;<sup>32</sup> and perhaps it seemed so because he himself had been so confident of the efficacy of the strong-arm tactics that had reached their legal extreme with the passage of the special police laws of November 1926. What seemed to disturb Mussolini most, however, was neither worker agitation in itself, nor even the taunts of antifascists about the futility of coercive measures – “castor oil can’t intimidate Wall Street and city bankers,” “iron bars won’t raise foreign exchanges”<sup>33</sup> – but rather, the negative response of most Italians to official exhortations. For Mussolini, as for his chief economic advisor, Minister of the National Economy Belluzzo (a wartime engineer at the Ansaldo Ironworks), the success of national retooling required “battles”; and battles for the lira, for grain, or for national savings could evidently not be won without what Mussolini in mid-1926 characterized as the “general economic mobilization of [Italy’s] citizens as means and agents of production,” meaning, as he further specified, the “real conscription, a real civic and economic recruitment of all Italians.”<sup>34</sup>

In conceptualizing the kind of institutional transformation that had to accompany economic retooling, the fascists substituted the more current metaphors of industrial modernity for the vocabulary of wartime mobilization. Thus they appropriated the term “rationalization,” which was commonly used throughout Europe by the mid-twenties to refer specifically to industrial cost-cutting. Used indiscriminately with other terms and techniques associated with the most advanced capitalist technology – Americanism, fordism, scientific management –