Fascism first emerged in Italy in 1919 and the National Fascist Party (PNF) was founded in 1921. It spread in various forms to many other countries and over different continents; its German mutation caused WWII and was defeated after millions of deaths.

However, to what extent it was really defeated? Contemporary political events show that anti-democratic ideologies hardly disappear forever, and ideological networks – even if composed only by a scant minority – can survive as karst rivers, that continue irrigating parts of the society and re-emerge on the surface at specific critical junctures. In this lecture, Professor Andrea Ruggeri will bring together several of his research projects to discuss and show the relation of fascist violent practices and their long-term legacies.

First, he will articulate and empirically show how the violent practices of fascism before the March on Rome were tolerated and then supported by incumbent coalitions for political purposes. Second, he will discuss how the killing of civilians by the Nazi foreign invaders was also within a logic of Fascist political survival. Third, he will develop how the armed resistance against fascism related with the collapse of the fascist mythology of its own army, alternative ideological networks, and emotional shocks. Fourth, he will discuss how the legacy of local armed resistance against fascism did have a long-lasting effect on democratic practices and voting behaviour in the Italian democratic republic. He will conclude showing how the local experience of first Fascist mobilization in the 1920s had a legacy effect on the neofascist violence during the Years of Lead in Italy.

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