

Rinascita

A 'journal of politics and culture', *Rinascita* (Rebirth) was founded by Palmiro **Togliatti** in 1944 with the stated aim of providing ideological direction for the communist movement. Initially a monthly publication, it became a weekly in 1962. Although owned by the **PCI**, and playing a significant part in the education of its cadres, *Rinascita* was more than a party organ. It sought, often successfully, to play a significant role in political and cultural debate within Italy and internationally. It was in *Rinascita* that **Gramsci's** letters from prison were first published, as well as Togliatti's Yalta memorial and **Berlinguer's** formulation of the **historic compromise**. The journal reached its highest circulation during the period of the party's greatest success, the mid-1970s, with average sales of 60,000–80,000. Circulation subsequently dropped and publication was suspended in 1989 due to financial constraints. Relaunched in a new format in 1990, *Rinascita* survived another year, closing just after the PCI transformed itself into the **PDS**.

CLAIRE KENNEDY

Risi, Dino

b. 23 December 1916, Milan

Film director

Brother of poet Nelo **Risi** and father of one of the most impressive representatives of the **New Italian Cinema** in the 1990s, Marco **Risi**, Dino Risi graduated in psychiatric medicine, but soon tired of that profession and at first made a living by contributing to the satirical journal *Bertoldo* (founded in Milan in 1937). He then entered the film industry as assistant to directors Mario **Soldati** and Alberto **Lattuada**. After a period as film critic, he made his directorial debut with a series of realistic documentaries, one of which, *Buio in sala* (Darkness in the Movie Theatre) (1950), was appreciated enough by film producers to invite him to Rome.

Since the inception of his career, Risi has always been a director with a great feeling for actuality and contemporary issues, and has incessantly recorded each new phenomenon in Italian society with promptness and accuracy. In the 1950s he participated in the so-called *neorealismo rosa* (pink neorealism) with his *Pane, amore e ...* (Bread, Love and ...), (1955) and *Poveri ma belli* (Poor But Beautiful) (1956). Together with Luigi **Comencini's** *Pane, amore e fantasia* (Bread, Love and Fantasy) (1953) and *Pane, amore e gelosia* (Bread, Love and Jealousy) (1954), Risi's films dealt with poverty in postwar Italy but in a comic fashion, stretching the boundaries of **neorealism**. Tied too closely to the optimism of the 1940s and early 1950s, 'pink neorealism' was soon dismissed as facile and, under the heading of comedy, Italian directors began producing increasingly pessimistic critiques of contemporary society.

Thus in the 1960s Risi shifted to impressive yet grim portrayals of Italy in the chroes of the **economic miracle**, thereby creating some of the undisputed masterpieces of the so-called ‘comedy Italian style’ (see *commedia all’Italiana*, films such as *Una vita difficile* (A Difficult Life) (1961), *Il sorpasso* (The Easy Life) (1962) and *I mostri* (The Monsters) (1963) which always to some extent expanded and modified the genre.

With *I mostri*, Risi also initiated a trend in Italian film production called ‘film a episodi’ (films in several episodes made by different directors), a fashion which proved successful at the box office and attracted the participation of directors as diverse as **Rossellini, Fellini, Pasolini** and even the French director Godard in *RoGoPag* (1963).

In the 1970s, Risi’s humour darkened as his cinema came to reflect the ever more difficult times of Italian society. His themes became more utterly and explicitly dramatic: corruption and speculation in *Nel nome del popolo italiano* (In The Name of the Italian People) (1971), illness and suicide in *Profumo di donna* (Scent of a Woman) (1974) and **terrorism** in *Caro papà* (Dear Dad) (1979). Although Risi habitually treated his themes with detachment and scientific precision, with *Profumo di donna* and *Caro papà* his cinema became coloured with a tenderness that would eventually mark a regression during the 1980s with films such as *Scemo di guerra* (War Idiot) (1985).

MANUELA GIERI

Risi, Marco

b. 4 June 1951, Milan

Film director

Son of Dino **Risi**, one of the masters of the *commedia all’Italiana* (comedy Italian style), and nephew of director and poet Nelo **Risi**, Marco Risi came to the silver screen early in life as assistant director and scriptwriter. After a lacklustre apprenticeship with commercial film comedies, from *Vado a vivere da solo* (I am Going to Live on My Own) (1982) to *Soldati 365 all’alba* (Soldiers 365 Days Before Discharge) (1987), Risi’s cinema found its own voice in a retrieval of **neorealism** and its ethos of social critique. His later films also owe much to Francesco **Rosi**’s ‘cinema of denunciation’ and Pier Paolo **Pasolini**’s investigation of the subproletariat, both amply evident in his diptych on the underground world of Sicilian cities, *Mery per sempre* (Mery for Ever) (1989) and *Ragazzi fuori* (Boys Out) (1990). Among his later films, are *Muro di gomma* (Rubber Wall) (1991), *Nel continente new* (In the Dark Continent) (1992), and *Il branco* (The Herd) (1994).

MANUELA GIERI