

# Libraries and Archives of the Anarchist Movement in Italy

## 1. Introduction

The anarchist movement in Italy has a long and deep-rooted tradition. Indeed, the Italian section of the International came into being beginning in the summer of 1872, with a strong anti-authoritarian and federalist stamp in sharp contrast to the directives of Marx and Engels and the General Council in London. Throughout the twentieth century, anarchists were among the leaders of the political and social struggles of the proletariat. They passed the dark years of the fascist dictatorship working clandestinely or from exile, participating in the Liberation movement and have continued to be active even in post-war period, albeit suffering the dichotomous logic of the Cold War<sup>1</sup>.

Occupied by the struggle for a radical social transformation in the libertarian sense, anarchists have often given little thought to preserving their own memory, especially that accumulated in written documents (though not lacking in examples to the contrary, the names of such great bibliographers and bibliophiles as Max Nettlau and the Italians Pier Carlo Masini and Ugo Fedeli should be mentioned). Besides seriously underestimating the role played by historical memory in building a strong political identity, other factors have contributed to the loss of a significant part of this documentary heritage. The troubled history of many activists (subjected to searches, repeatedly imprisoned,

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exiled, etc.) has certainly not lent itself to the easy growth of archives and personal collections. Prudent caution and the fear of falling into a web of repression were responsible for the willful destruction of what could have been inconvenient evidence of political activity, sometimes carried out on extra-legal soil. Last but not least, a general distrust must be recorded towards anything with a hint of “museumification” as if these papers signify a burden rather than a blessing.

The tools produced for propaganda and the dissemination of ideas (flyers, brochures, newspapers, books) were set alongside the channels of oral communication through which much of the political-cultural formation of the activists passed – and were generally intended for immediate use. Not only did the anarchists often ignore the print repositories at public libraries, but even the last copy of these publications was often distributed, thus making them difficult to find even a short time afterward on the shelves of the libraries organized by libertarian groups and clubs, whereas these same publications, paradoxically, were carefully conserved in police archives.

It has only been since the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the struggles that marked a decided revival of political action, that in Italy these cultural institutions inside the movement have come about, combining a desire to save from a future and probable loss much of what had been produced within the sphere of the daily struggle and the need to preserve their own historical memory. These institutions soon found themselves facing difficulties – rising above them in some cases and being overwhelmed in others – related to a chronic lack of money, an inevitable reliance on volunteers, and, last but not least, the changing fortunes of the organizing groups.

The anarchist movement’s archives and libraries manage a select bibliographic patrimony that includes books, pamphlets, magazines, gray literature, posters, flyers, and other materials. In some cases, these items are rare, their rarity due to having been excluded from the usual commercial channels; there are exemplars of historical value, almost none of them earlier than the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The archival collections have come from groups, organizations, and individual activists or consist of documents of various origins and provenances collected at the institution that stores them. They also contain oral history recordings and material testaments of the history of the anarchist movement and the revolutionary left like flags, banners, and an assortment of other kinds of memorabilia.

The number of these institutions is now on the rise, with a good geographical distribution. Recently – but, in some cases, for several years now – they have worked to increase their visibility. By extending opening hours to the public, signing agreements with local authorities, and participating in cooperative systems at least at a local level, they provide a public service with professional expertise that is freely accessible to all. At present, the archival collections

are in the process of being inventoried. The bibliographic holdings are being catalogued according to national and international standards and are available through the OPAC of the National Library Service (SBN) or other union catalogs.

Here below we have focused on the histories, collections, and plans of the main archives and libraries of the Italian anarchist movement<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. *Archivio Famiglia Berneri-Aurelio Chessa***<sup>3</sup>

In 1962, upon the death of Giovanna Caleffi, the wife of the anarchist Camillo Berneri, their daughter Giliana decided to donate to Aurelio Chessa the documents kept by her mother. The donation included the valuable collection of letters that Berneri had exchanged with various exponents of anarchism and anti-fascism, including Gaetano Salvemini and Carlo Rosselli as well as his other private files, consisting of personal papers, notes, documents on various themes, and his writings, some unpublished, of a political, sociological, literary and philosophical nature.

Despite an acquisition proposal from the prestigious International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, Chessa decided to personally open a study center named for the Berneri family. To the documents he had received, Chessa added materials on Italian and international anarchism that he personally had collected since immediately after the end of the Second World War. Although located in Genoa-Sampierdarena under less than optimal conditions, the archives began to receive their first requests for consultation. From that moment on, the story of the institute ran parallel to the life of its owner, curator, and guardian, who devoted all his energy to the archives at the cost of personal sacrifice and exhausting confrontations, sometimes clashes, with various municipalities. However, especially in the beginning, there was also considerable indifference on the part of the anarchist movement that did not see as one of its priorities at that time the preservation of its memory.

In 1966, Chessa and the Berneri Archives moved to Pistoia, the first step in a long peregrination that, over the course of thirty years, involved various Italian regions. In this Tuscan city, the institute handled an increasing number of users: mainly researchers, scholars, and students, including many in their final year at the University of Florence. Chessa meanwhile set up shelving and furniture, saw to its opening daily, and began the work required to organize it. He proceeded to enlarge the collections by exchanging duplicates with study centers and collectors, making new acquisitions, and accepting donations that came through his extensive network of contacts in the international anarchist movement, with particular reference to a group assembled around the New York newspaper, «*L'Adunata dei Refrattari*».

As mentioned earlier, the archive had to contend with moving several times over the years: Iglesias, Genoa, again to Pistoia from 1980 to 1992, Canosa di Puglia, and finally Cecina, the last stop for Aurelio. Upon his death in 1996, the center's management was entrusted to his daughter Fiamma. Since 1999, the institute has been open to the public in Reggio Emilia under the name of the *Archivio Famiglia Berneri-Aurelio Chessa*. Acquired by the Panizzi Public Library, it is managed in independent premises by Fiamma Chessa.

The online catalogue of its holdings contains approximately 12,000 monographs and a rich newspaper library of 2,000 titles, particularly noteworthy for its collections – microfilmed in part – of anarchist periodicals in Italian published abroad. The library is constantly increasing, especially as regards those subjects that have become the institution's strengths, e.g., the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War and Revolution; women in the anarchist movement; and libertarian customs, pedagogy, and art. The archive section includes some 200 boxes of documents. In addition to the papers relating to Berneri-Caleffi family and Aurelio Chessa, its main collections include those dedicated to Leda Rafanelli, Pier Carlo Masini, Pietro Bianconi, Michele Damiani, Ugo Fedeli, Nella Giacomelli, Virgilio Gozzoli, Serge Senninger, Pio Turrone, Aldo Capitini, Cesare Zaccaria, Bartolomeo Vanzetti (photocopies), and several others. Lastly, of particular interest along with the posters (about 3,000), theses, dissertations, and gray literature is the collection of photographs that totals 15,000 prints, negatives, slides, and digital images, with about one third of them from the files of the photographer and anarchist activist Vernon Richards.

In recent years, the archives have organized several cultural events of national interest, including study days dedicated to Giovanna Caleffi, Camillo Berneri, Leda Rafanelli and Maria Luisa Berneri, followed by the timely publication of the event's proceedings.

### 3. *Biblioteca libertaria Armando Borghi*<sup>4</sup>

“Between socialist Imola and Republican Faenza lay the anarchist village of Castel Bolognese”<sup>5</sup>, Armando Borghi wrote in his memoirs, recalling the adolescence spent in this village in Romagna where he was born in 1882 and where, exactly one century later, activists and scholars launched an initiative to create the archive, later merged with the library, that bears his name.

The first traces of a libertarian library actually date back to 1916. It was founded by the anarchist group established by Nello Garavini and active during the “*biennio rosso*” until the advent of fascism. More than half a century later, in 1973, such elderly activists of Castel Bolognese as Garavini, Aurelio Lolli, and Giuseppe Santandrea, participants in the earlier project, came together with the new generations to introduce a similar initiative: the new *Biblioteca*

*libertaria*, located in Armando Borghi's house and open to the public. Later, in January 1982, libertarian scholars and activists organized an archive dedicated to Armando Borghi that gathered both his published and unpublished writings as well as all salvageable materials pertaining to the figure of this Romagnol anarchist. Finally, a few years later, the *Biblioteca libertaria* moved to new quarters. It was formally re-established as a cooperative, incorporating what had also been collected by the Borghi Archives. Meanwhile work began on computerizing the cataloging of the library's materials.

With an entrance under the arcades of Via Emilia in the historical center of Castel Bolognese, the *Biblioteca libertaria* has now settled permanently in its new quarters, received as a gift from Aurelio Lolli upon his death. The new structure was inaugurated on November 25, 2006. Gianpiero Landi runs the institute, together with other members of the cooperative of which Giordana Garavini is president. Its relationships with local institutions are governed by an agreement signed with the municipal administration that expires in 2020.

The library's holdings include the collections of various people and organizations, some of which have a certain import and substance. Of primary importance are the Armando Borghi Archives that include books, photographs, correspondence, manuscripts, copies of materials obtained through an exchange policy with the IISH in Amsterdam, and various kinds of documents received in large part from activists, scholars, co-workers, and Borghi's friends and comrades. Other collections are dedicated to Luce and Luigi Fabbri, Nello Garavini, Domenico Girelli, Giuseppe Mascii, Emma Neri Garavini, the *Organizzazione anarchica forlivese* (documents from the 1960s and 1970s), Maria Rossi Molaschi, and Aldo Venturini (as well Francesco Saverio Merlino's manuscripts). Also of note is the large quantity of material on a 20-years loan from the *Centro studi dell'abitare Oikos* in Bologna, including books, magazines, and archival records belonging to the anarchist-urban planner Carlo Doglio.

Over the years, the library has organized various cultural activities as workshops and conferences. Among the latter, for example, were those dedicated to Andrea Caffi, in 1993 and to Francesco Saverio Merlino in 2000. Currently open twelve hours a week, the library has about 7,000 monographs, 800 periodical publications, gray literature, various audio and audiovisual materials as well as ten archival collections. It is part of the OPAC-SBN national catalog and the ACNP Italian periodicals catalog.

#### **4. Centro studi libertari / Archivio Giuseppe Pinelli<sup>6</sup>**

In 1976, a proposal was made to establish a study center named after Giuseppe Pinelli, the Milanese anarchist who fell to his death from a fourth-floor

window of police headquarters immediately after the 1969 “*strage di Stato*” in Piazza Fontana. Based in Milan, the new institute has a twofold purpose: on one hand, to build an archive that will preserve the memory of anarchism and, on the other, to develop a libertarian culture able to face the problems of contemporary society by means of the most advanced ideas and practices within an anti-authoritarian framework. In other words, the supporters would like for the project to be a means of re-examining anarchism in light of the current social context, freeing it from its past by making it a credible alternative to the dominant culture of today. The aim is not so much to question its essence and core values but rather to revitalize it by opening it up, also critically, toward those genuinely libertarian expressions that have been arisen in the challenging contemporary world of the last few decades, starting from the social conflicts, the best intellectual thinking, and a new perception of everyday life.

The first endowment incorporated materials made available by the initiative’s self-same supporters (ascribable to the *GAF-Gruppi anarchici federati*), the *Circolo Ponte della Ghisolfia*, other activists, and some of the publishing houses affiliated or sympathetic to the anarchist movement in addition to the thousand volumes donated by Michele Damiani’s heirs. Of particular note is the Pio Turrone Collection, which constitutes the true foundation on which the center’s library holdings have been built as well as his private files that have now been reorganized and inventoried. An anarchist, the elderly Turrone supported and followed the study center’s activities with interest from the beginning.

After ten years, the institution was formally divided into two sections: the study center and the archives, which continue to work together and share quarters in a new location. At the same time, *Editions Elèuthera* was begun, following in the footsteps of the old *Antistato* catalog that the Milanese group had carried forward since 1975, but with a less “activist” slant and one more open to a broad cultural area sensitive to libertarian issues.

In 1992, the first issue of its semi-annual newsletters was published. Still published today, it contains information about the institute’s research activities, presents rare and unpublished material from the archives, publishes news reports and events of interest to the libertarian reader, and offers space for biographies, reviews, bibliographies, and short research papers<sup>7</sup>. The newsletter can be consulted online and downloaded from the study center’s website.

Over the years, its research and cultural activities have maintained a steady pace and superior programs, with particular attention to the international flavor of its debates. Following an interdisciplinary approach, several important, in-depth conferences and seminars have been organized that have permitted frank discussions between activists and scholars with different methodological and political approaches. Over the course of three decades, the topics covered have encompassed an analysis of the “new masters” (techno-bureaucracy); self-management; utopia; the subversive imagination; social ecology; libertarian

approaches to anthropology, architecture, and urban planning; the foundations of anarchist thought and its historical origins; anarchism's relationship to the law and to Judaism; and many others. A greater organizational effort however was required for the international anarchist gathering held in Venice in September 1984. It was conducted outside the movement's political structures and carried out in collaboration with the *Centre international de recherches sur l'anarchisme* of Lausanne and the Anarchos Institute of Montreal.

Among the documentary materials donated have been those of Luciano Farinelli, Raffaele Schiavina, and Michele Corsentino in addition to Luce Fabbri's magazines, about 600 microfilms left by Leonardo Bettini, and the Bartolomeo Vanzetti collection (photocopies). There are a total of 17 archival collections, a photo-iconographic archive of 2,000 documents, 150 recordings of interviews, conferences, and public debates, and about 1,500 periodicals for which a simplified paper catalog exists. Eight thousand monographs have been cataloged using PMB software.

The Center is a member of the IALHI – International Association of Labor History Institutions. It receives no institutional funding but is active thanks to the help of the many individuals who cooperate in carrying out its daily activities.

## 5. *Centro di documentazione anarchica*<sup>8</sup>

The *Centro di documentazione anarchica* was set up in Turin in January 1976 by some members of the *Circolo studi sociali E. Reclus*. Its approach has been characterized by a commitment to increasing awareness of and disseminating what different groups and collectives had developed within the anarchist movement, maintaining a firmly independent position towards those groups organized by the movement itself.

In 1981, the center's management passed from Turin to Rome, to the headquarters of the *Collettivo anarchico di Via dei Campani* (today dissolved). Materials from the *Collettivo anarchico*'s library and archive in Rome were added to that from Turin with the later addition of the holdings of the *Centro di documentazione Valerio Verbano*, including documents produced by the *Autonomia operaia romana* and over 3,000 texts on Marxism, the history of the communist movement and of the movements of the 1970s, armed struggle, feminism, and the means of mass communication.

With its subsequent growth thanks to donations and loans yet without receiving institutional funding, the center is now open to the public for over thirty hours a week. It shares space and an overall cultural program with the *Libreria Anomalia*. Its holdings consist of approximately 7,000 monographs; an extensive collection of magazines, newspapers, and single issues; political

posters; flyers; and 500 archival binders. The computerized catalog is nearing completion and is available on the center's website.

## 6. *Biblioteca Franco Serantini*<sup>9</sup>

The founding of the library dates back to 1979. At Franco Bertolucci's suggestion, Pisan anarchists decided to dedicate the collection taking shape on the premises of its political headquarters to Franco Serantini, a young man killed in a street battle by the police a few years before. The library initially maintained an "activist" approach that was directed at its use internally by the anarchist group itself. Soon, however, its supporters opened the doors to scholars and to a dialogue with the public, thereby laying the foundations for a lasting cultural plan marked by both social commitment and historiographic rigor.

Due to the non-renewal of its lease, the *Federazione anarchica pisana* was forced to leave its original premises in 1986. Forced to acknowledge the total lack of public spaces for associations, Serantini's curators occupied the nineteenth-century Palazzo Cevoli, which belonged to the city, and shared it with other citizens' associations. The response by the administration was an eviction order that was soon carried out. Only in 1992 did a way to resolve the problem finally appear with the Province of Pisa committing to the safeguarding and development of the library's holdings by finding it independent premises in the Concetto Marchesi school complex.

The collection was initially made up of books donated by the elderly anarchist worker Gino Giannotti. Covering politics, history, philosophy, economics, and literature, his collection of 1,500 items, published beginning in 1840, offer a glimpse of the readings and thus the cultural and political growth of a self-taught activist in the first half of the twentieth century. In addition to these holdings, the library began to collect more recent bibliographical material but also editions dating back to the dawn of the labor movement, with some noteworthy items because of their rarity. Its acquisition policy has been supplemented by numerous donations and specific key works remain independent collections that bear the donor's name. Of greatest interest among these personal collections are those of Joseph Cono, an Italian anarchist who emigrated to the United States, and of the historian Pier Carlo Masini, testament to the solid rapport of cooperation and friendship that was instrumental also in founding the «*Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*» (published between 1994 and 2004 and today continued in the series, «*Quaderni della Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*»).

Offering solid guarantees of rigorous practices, a critical approach as well as knowledge in library and archival management, the Serantini library has



managed to attract several documentary collections from friends, scholars, and activists in those organizations prominent in the anarchist and extra-parliamentary settings of the 1960s and 1970s. It should be noted that the library is also affiliated with the *Istituti storici della Resistenza* network.

The overall holdings of the library have reached more than 40,000 monographs (books and pamphlets) as well as 4,500 periodicals and single issues, with a considerable number of materials in foreign languages; about 6,000 photographs and picture postcards; 5,000 posters and dazibao (big-character posters); 30,000 pamphlets; 100 archival collections, with most considered to be of “significant historical interest” by the *Soprintendenza archivistica*; numerous sound and video recordings as well as paintings, plaster sculptures, lithographs; and protest materials like memorabilia, flags, pennants and banners. The library’s online catalog uses the open-source Koha software, and is an integral part of the national MetaOPAC Azalai.

Considering the collecting, sorting, and conservation activities closely related to historical research and the promotion of a libertarian culture in the contemporary debate, the Serantini library has been involved in both publishing (with *Edizioni BFS*) and the organization of conferences, exhibitions, seminars, and study days. From September 4-6, 2009, it hosted the XIV International Conference of FICEDL (*Fédération internationale des centres d’étude et de documentation libertaire*).

To highlight the contributions of the institute’s staff, an *Associazione Amici della Biblioteca* was formalized in 1995, providing volunteers and financial assistance in addition to publishing a monthly magazine<sup>10</sup>. The members come from various political and cultural backgrounds and are distributed throughout Italy as well as abroad. Unfortunately, the library recently has had to leave the premises where it was previously housed and, for the moment, all its materials are stored in the general archives of the University of Pisa. The curators, however, are working on an ambitious project to provide a suitable, new permanent location with sufficient space.

## **7. Archivio storico della FAI<sup>11</sup>**

Forty years after its foundation, which dates back to the September 1945 Congress in Carrara, the *Federazione Anarchica Italiana* (FAI) considered the need for its own historical archives. For the XVII Congress (Livorno, 1985), the fourth item on the agenda was a discussion regarding the “importance of memory”. The debate focused on two projects that could no longer be postponed. First was the publication of a book on the historical-political course of the federation and second, the establishment of a center to collect relevant documentary sources. The conference’s labors resulted in the appointment of

a Historical Archives Committee that established the archives in temporary quarters on premises shared with the anarchists of Pisa and the *Biblioteca Franco Serantini*.

The first documents to be deposited in Pisa for the newly created archives were a collection of twenty boxes, which contained internal FAI bulletins, the Committee's correspondence and various reports, flyers, tape recordings of the organization's meetings and conferences, over a hundred books, some magazines and a complete run of the periodical «*Umanità Nova*» from 1951 to 1973, with almost everything provided by the anarchists of Carrara.

Because of serious logistical problems on the part of the Pisa group, the historical archives were moved in April 1988 to Imola where they were located in premises leased from the town administration. Thanks to the efforts of the local anarchists and with the assistance of the *Istituto Beni Culturali dell'Emilia-Romagna*, the first steps to catalog and inventory the holdings were launched in 1993. The dual nature of the establishment was taking shape: on the one hand, it was to offer a documentation center on the history of anarchism as a public service and, on the other, to collect and preserve the internal records produced by the FAI as part of its own work. With regard to its finances, the *Gruppi anarchici imolesi* took charge of the expenses related to the center's rent and routine management, preventing these costs from being a financial burden on the federation.

Among the documents stored are the personal papers of leading members of the organized anarchist movement, like Umberto Marzocchi and Alfonso Failla (in the early 1990's, a proposal, later dropped, was circulated to dedicate the archives to the latter) as well as collections related to various activists like Guido Barroero (*Federazione comunista libertaria ligure*), Mario Mantovani, Giuseppe Mariani, Augusto Masetti, Mammolo Zamboni, and others. Recently, the *Soprintendenza archivistica* has attested to the "significant historical interest" of these collections, a recognition that will safeguard the integrity, preservation, and inalienability of the materials.

A specific group of papers focuses on the local situation as regards the history and biographies of the anarchists from Imola and Emilia-Romagna, which was collected through the painstaking work needed to uncover the documents in the State Archives and, more generally, to look for and select the documents. The library contains about 7,000 volumes. In addition, the growth of a well-nigh unique collection of historical anarchist flags should also be noted.

The promotion of historical research in recent years has led to the organization of two important study days. The first was in 1999 and focused on the Italian Anarchist Union (UAI) entitled "*L'esperienza dell'UAI dal biennio rosso alle leggi eccezionali, 1919-1926*". The other, in 2008, focused on the role of organized anarchism vis-à-vis the 1968 protest movement and was entitled "*Alla prova del '68. L'anarchismo internazionale al Congresso di Carrara*".

In November 2005, the historical archives opened its new, more hospitable and functional headquarters situated, as before, in a beautiful building in Imola's historical center. In the meantime, it has begun the online cataloging of books using PMB software.

## 8. *Arkiviu-Biblioteka Tamasu Serra* <sup>12</sup>

The idea of organizing an archive-library as a place to collect documentary material and as a reference point for the anarchist and revolutionary movement in Sardinia arose within the context of the social struggles of the 1970s, which were the starting point for the facility currently open in Guasila, in the province of Cagliari. At that time, Costantino Cavalleri, still one of the curators today, had chosen and collected some 500 specialized books and began to look for archival records. By the mid-1980s, the core of the first collection had significantly increased and was combined with materials collected by the elderly activist Tommaso Serra. After serving in the Resistance, Serra had settled in Barrali and had given birth to the original *Collettività anarchica di solidarietà*, basically a self-sufficient “commune” based on the principles of autogestion, solidarity, and a respect for the cycles of nature. There, he also established a library consisting of all the material he had collected upon his return to Sardinia (acquisitions and donations) together with the international anarchist publications that arrived regularly at the *Collettività*.

Upon Serra's death, the institute was named for him, opening officially to the public in October 1986. Initially located in the town of Guasila, whereas, it transferred permanently to premises owned by the organization in 1988. For nearly a decade, it was housed on the ground floor of the curators' accommodation, in rooms that had been suitably renovated yet were independent from the rest of the apartment. Later, in the late 1990s, the top floor was also occupied, its rooms given over entirely to offices and shelving. Previously, in 1989, in consultation with the *Soprintendenza archivistica per la Sardegna*, an early partial reorganization effort of Serra's private collection had taken place, which provided a starting point for later work as well as a significant increase in the number of documents as the result of, among other things, the acquisition of photocopies of all the papers found in the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato*.

In 1994, the institute's operations were formally reorganized with the establishment of the *Associazione culturale “Andalas de Libbertadi”* (whose name means “paths of freedom” in the Sardinian dialect). That same year printing and bookbinding machinery were also purchased in order to set up a printing center. The publishing and the library activities go hand in hand with the *Editziones* reprinting several rare documents kept in the archives-library, in addition to tackling an analysis of Sardinia's social problems, the historical

aspects of the local revolutionary movement, and the most current discussions of contemporary anarchism. The archive-library currently holds more than 10,000 books, 3,000 pamphlets, 2,000 periodicals and single issues as well as posters, pamphlets and gray literature. Sebina software has been used to enter cataloging data in the national catalog (*Polo SBN della Regione Sardegna*). The library collection has grown over the years as well through the acquisition of the personal libraries of such anarchist activists as Luigi Assandri and Alfredo Bonanno. The main archival collections are the two original ones of Serra and Cavalleri to which have been added materials from Giovanni Tolu, the long-time editor of the periodical «*L'Internazionale*», acquired and transferred from Genoa in 1991 along with his extensive private library and other documents of Sardinian anarchist activists like the one related to Pietrino Arixi.

### **9. Archivio storico degli anarchici siciliani<sup>13</sup>**

The *Archivio storico degli anarchici siciliani* was organized in 1994 as a section of the *Associazione culturale Sicilia Punto L* in Ragusa, bringing to fruition an idea that had been supported for many years by some activists receptive to the issue of preserving historical memory. The initial core of documents was formed by materials from the *Gruppo anarchico* of Ragusa, active since 1971. Its main center has been established in the same city while, in order to maintain a connection between the documents and their provenance, branches of the institute are hosted in other locations around Sicily.

The archives contain both historical as well as private collections of anarchist activities, of which odd volumes of documents may be consulted. Among the collections in Catania curated by Natale Musarra, the most interesting is the one related to Paolo Schicchi and his family (especially his brother Nicolò). It contains correspondence, personal papers, newspaper articles, pamphlets, and some periodical files, while Schicchi's library, including the notebooks he compiled in jail at the end of the nineteenth century, was seized by the police in the 1930s. The Ragusa location contains the archives of the periodical «*Sicilia Libertaria*». In 1996, it acquired a considerable quantity of documents from the anarchist Franco Leggio (who died in 2006), including the archives of *Edizioni Anteo*, *La Rivolta*, *La Fiaccola*, and *Altamurgia*. We should also mention the *Biblioteca di studi sociali Pietro Gori* in the city of Messina Sicily.

### **10. Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini<sup>14</sup>**

The *Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini* in Fano is named after a supporter of the local anarchist groups in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries. It specializes in both the anti-clerical sphere and, more broadly, religious criticism as well as the fortunes of the anarchist movement in the Marches and the province of Pesaro.

Established formally as a cultural association in December 2003, the archives-library began its work with material inherited from the *Circolo culturale Napoleone Papini*, with which it shared quarters in the heart of the city's historical center. Since September 2006, a general reorganization has been underway as a requirement for entrance to the national OPAC of the National Library Service (SBN). Recently, it has joined a network of special libraries in the province.

The library collection consists of approximately 6,000 monographs selected on the basis of areas of specialization, printed in Italy or abroad since the middle of the nineteenth century. To enhance the semantic content as well as the cataloging and its physical organization, the collection has been divided into two sections – the *Biblioteca del Libero Pensiero* and the *Biblioteca di Studi Sociali* – and with each individually following a multi-level organizational model specifically designed for those documents. In particular, the texts collected in the *Biblioteca del Libero Pensiero* are representative of the different shades of anticlericalism, from the subversive, anarchist or socialist to the bourgeois-liberal. Ranging over diverse issues of secularist analysis, they include philosophical, historical, and sociological works regarding the nature and social effects of religion (with a good number of works devoted to religious persecution). In addition, there are works of fiction, drama, satire, even sacred books and clerical propaganda relevant to a discussion of some issues.

In addition to the library's book holdings, there are thousands of politico-social magazines and other minor materials as well as some old posters and fliers produced by Fano's early anarchist groups plus about 700 local administrative and political posters from the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The archive section contains five collections, described in the Unified Information System for Archival Superintendencies (SIUSA). With reference to the themes of Free Thought, the *Archivio anticlericale* contains all the documents collected during the twenty-five years that the *Circolo Papini* was active. It consists of 45 files that contain posters, correspondence, preparatory materials, photographs, and other documents relating to the anticlerical meetings held in Fano from 1984 to 1998 and to the *Associazione per lo sbattezzo*. Other collections are those of the anarchist activists and the extra-parliamentary left that have been active beginning in the post-war period up to today and of the *Organizzazione Anarchica Marchigiana* (a federation active during the 1970s in several Marchigian towns). Finally, note must be taken of the collection of research materials, composed of dozens of envelopes and more than 70,000 digital photos, the fruits of a labor of research, selection, and reproduction carried out in many Italian and foreign libraries and archives.

## 11. Conclusions

There are small archives and libraries managed in relatively professional manner by anarchist and libertarian groups in many other cities. Unfortunately, these institutions, even the principal ones, are not yet interconnected through a strong cooperative network. Many are part of FICEDL (*Fédération internationale des centres d'étude et de documentation libertaire*), which provides international coordination, though it is fundamentally Eurocentric. Formed in Marseilles in 1979, the Federation's last meeting was held in Lisbon in 2011 with the next one scheduled for Lyon in 2013.

It is to be hoped that an effort be made to redefine the identity of these individual organizations without causing them to abandon their distinctive roots and characteristics. Rather, their value should be increased with each institution becoming an access point to the resources available throughout the entire network. Meeting this challenge of cooperation could lead to a significant impact at a cultural development level and perhaps open up new frontiers for historical and political research in the spheres of anarchism and libertarian movements. Projects could include the creation of bibliographic databases that would examine the contents of periodicals, coordinate acquisitions through a reliable document delivery and interlibrary loan network, set up a cooperative reference service currently available only at an informal level, and develop coordinated digitization policies – to offer only a few suggestions.

## NOTES

1. On the history of the anarchist movement in Italy, see: Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani: da Bakunin a Malatesta (1862-1892)*, Milan: Rizzoli, 1974; P. C. Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell'epoca degli attentati*, Milan: Rizzoli, 1981; Gaetano Manfredonia [et al.], *La Resistenza sconosciuta: gli anarchici e la lotta contro il fascismo*, Milan: Zero in Condotta, 2005; *Dizionario biografico degli anarchici italiani*, directed by Maurizio Antonioli [et al.], Pisa: BFS, 2003-2004.
2. On the cultural institutions of the anarchist movement in Italy, see: Luigi Balsamini, *Fragili carte: il movimento anarchico nelle biblioteche, archivi e centri di documentazione*, Manziana: Vecchiarelli, 2009; *Guida alle fonti per la storia dei movimenti in Italia (1966-1978)*, edited by Marco Grispigni and Leonardo Musci, Rome: Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, 2003.
3. Archivio Famiglia Berneri–Aurelio Chessa, via Tavolata 6, 42121 Reggio Emilia; [www.archivioberneri.it](http://www.archivioberneri.it); [archivioberneri@gmail.com](mailto:archivioberneri@gmail.com). See: Sara Pollastri and Alessandra Giovannini, *Documenti e periodici dell'Archivio Famiglia Berneri*, Pistoia: Archivio Famiglia Berneri, 1982; *Storie di anarchici e di anarchia: l'Archivio Famiglia Berneri-A. Chessa*, Reggio Emilia: Biblioteca Panizzi, 2000.

4. Biblioteca libertaria Armando Borghi, via Emilia interna 93/95, 48014 Castel Bolognese (RA); <http://blab.racine.ra.it>; [biblioteca.borghi@racine.ra.it](mailto:biblioteca.borghi@racine.ra.it).
5. Armando Borghi, *Mezzo secolo di anarchia (1898-1945)*, Catania: Anarchismo, 1989, p. 20.
6. Centro studi libertari/Archivio Giuseppe Pinelli, via Rovetta 27, 20127 Milan; [www.centrostudilibertari.it](http://www.centrostudilibertari.it); [centrostudi@centrostudilibertari.it](mailto:centrostudi@centrostudilibertari.it). See: *Guida alle biblioteche speciali della Lombardia*, edited by Giovanni Artero, Lilli Dalle Nogare and Vanna Salvadori, Milan: Bibliografica, [1991], p. 130-131; *I fondi speciali delle biblioteche lombarde: censimento descrittivo, a cura dell'Istituto lombardo per la storia della Resistenza e dell'età contemporanea*, v. 1.: *Milano e provincia*, Milan: Bibliografica, 1995, p. 128-130.
7. «Bollettino. Archivio Pinelli», Milan, [1], n. 1, January 1992- .
8. Centro di documentazione anarchica, via dei Campani 71/73, 00185 Rome; [www.libreriaanomalia.org](http://www.libreriaanomalia.org); [cda@libreriaanomalia.org](mailto:cda@libreriaanomalia.org).
9. Biblioteca Franco Serantini, Largo C. Marchesi s.n.c., 56124 Pisa; [www.bfs.it](http://www.bfs.it); [biblioteca@bfs.it](mailto:biblioteca@bfs.it). See: *Guida agli archivi delle personalità della cultura in Toscana tra '800 e '900: l'area pisana*, Florence: Olschki, 2000; *L'emeroteca della Biblioteca F. Serantini: catalogo dei periodici editi fra il 1846 e il 1961*, edited by Franco Bertolucci, Pisa: BFS, 2001; Luigi Balsamini, *Una biblioteca tra storia e memoria: la "Franco Serantini" (1979-2005)*, Pisa: BFS, 2006.
10. «La Biblioteca: mensile di informazione dell'Associazione Amici della Biblioteca F. Serantini», Pisa, [1], n. 0, September 1999- .
11. Archivio storico della Federazione anarchica italiana, via Fratelli Bandiera 19, 40026 Imola (BO); [www.asfai.info](http://www.asfai.info); [info.asfai@libero.it](mailto:info.asfai@libero.it).
12. Arkiviu-Bibrioteka Tamasu Serra, via M. Melas 24, 09040 Guasila (CA); [costantino.cavalleri@tiscali.it](mailto:costantino.cavalleri@tiscali.it). See: Costantino Cavalleri, *Catalogo dei periodici e numeri unici dell'Arkiviu-Bibrioteka T. Serra*, Guasila: Edizioni de su Arkiviu-Bibrioteka "T. Serra", 2001; «Anarkiviu: bulhitinu bibliografiku de s'arkiviu-bibrioteka de kultura populhari "T. Serra"», Guasila, 1, n. 0, July-August 1988- .
13. Archivio storico degli anarchici siciliani, Ragusa and Messina; [natalemusarra@tiscali.it](mailto:natalemusarra@tiscali.it).
14. Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini, via Garibaldi 47, 61032 Fano (PU); [www.bibliotecaliberopensiero.it](http://www.bibliotecaliberopensiero.it); [archiviotravaglini@libero.it](mailto:archiviotravaglini@libero.it). See: Luigi Balsamini, *L'Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini di Fano*, «Storia e problemi contemporanei», 21, n. 48, May-August 2008, p. 151-156; Luigi Balsamini, *Archivio-Biblioteca per gli studi sociali e il libero pensiero "Enrico Travaglini": la storia, le raccolte, i progetti*, «Culture del testo e del documento», n. 34, January-April 2011, p. 55-96.