

# Nuova Rivista Storica

Anno C, Settembre-Dicembre 2016, Fascicolo III

## Abstracts

EUGENIO DI RIENZO, *Renzo De Felice: una vita difficile. Nel ventennale della scomparsa*

*Renzo De Felice occupies a central and controversial position in the contemporary Italian historiography. Some so called «Marxist historians» subjected his political biography of Mussolini to a hail of criticism; others think it looks suspiciously like a rehabilitation of the fascism. The controversy over his work is not confined to academic circles. Periodically, it emerges in the Italian media and in political milieu, as it did in the mid-1970s and again early in 1988. The public attention given to the issues raised by De Felice and his critics marks the depth and continuing political debate over the place of fascism, antifascism, liberalism and democracy in Italian society. The context of that debate also furnished an interesting case study in the political use of history.*

*The querelle on the De Felice work has stretched over a quarter-century. A great controversy broke out in 1974, when the volume, *Mussolini il Duce. I. Gli anni del consenso, 1926-1939*, appeared. In 1988, it re-erupted when De Felice called for an end to the established antifascist political culture that undergirded Italian political life since the end of World War II, but the argument quickly became absorbed in the larger debate over Stalinism and the Italian Left. By 1996, changes in both the cultural and political world had created a more receptive atmosphere for De Felice's historiography, although dispute and debate over his methods and conclusions continued.*

Keywords:

*Renzo De Felice*

*Italian political debate*

*Established antifascist political culture*

*Political use of History*