



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



British military encounters with Italian civilians, 1943-1946

AHRC PhD Studentship in collaboration with Imperial War Museums (IWM) and The University of Reading

Reference GS17-007

Applications are invited for an AHRC-funded PhD at the University of Reading: British military encounters with Italian civilians, 1943-1946. This is offered under the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership programme. The partner institutions are the University of Reading and IWM. The studentship will be supervised by Professor Hilary Footitt and Dr Daniela La Penna at the University of Reading, and Suzanne Bardgett, Head of Research and Academic Partnerships at IWM London. This full-time studentship, which is funded for three years at standard AHRC rates, will begin on 1 October 2017.

The Studentship

The Italian campaign produced a notable literary output from British soldiers who were there. Gordon Lett's *Rossano* (1955), Eric Newby's *Love and War in the Apennines* (1971), Stuart Hood's *Pebbles from my skull* (1973) republished as *Carlino* (1983), all made strong impressions in the UK when they appeared. More recently James Holland's *Italy's Sorrow: A Year of War 1944-45* (2008) has provided a new slant on how Italians experienced the end of the Second World War. This project would seek to examine the encounters that took place between British soldiers and Italian civilians, mining this rich seam of social history for new understandings of encounter in time of war.

IWM has a wealth of material on this subject. Official photographs and film document the course of the campaign in exceptional detail; personal letters and diaries, and oral history interviews provide strong evidence; and several of the official war artists were deployed in Italy – including Edward Ardizzone and Edward Bawden.

The student – with input from their co-supervisors – would decide how best to focus on a manageable and meaningful segment of this story. They might take a regional focus (a city or rural area where there was intense activity or a strategic base); a type of encounter – prisoner of war escapes, partisan activity, efforts at reconstruction, encounters with women, the Indian Army presence; a theme such as hunger and displacement; or a particular month of the war – in other words, a snapshot of activity at a particular juncture in the war.

The project offers the opportunity both for detailed historical research and also to engage with the theory and practice of oral history in Italy and the student would be expected to visit relevant archives and where possible to conduct their own oral history interviews.

Subject to AHRC eligibility criteria, the scholarships cover tuition fees and a grant (stipend) towards living expenses. The national minimum doctoral stipend for 2017/18 has been set by Research Councils UK as £14,553 plus £550 additional payment for Collaborative Doctoral Students. For more information visit: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/skills/phdstudents/fundingandtraining>.

Students are also eligible to draw additional funding from a Student Development Fund to support the cost of training, work placements, and other development opportunities that will benefit the student's doctoral research and future career development.



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In addition, the student is eligible to receive up to £1,000 a year from IWM and will be able to apply to Reading University School funding to support research activities.

How to Apply

Applicants should have a good 2:1 or distinction in BA History and/or Modern Languages and/or a Masters in History or Modern Languages (Merit or distinction). A good working knowledge of Italian is desirable (B2 or C1 European Framework). An IELTS score of 7.0 will be required for applicants who are non-native speakers of English.

Applicants must be a resident of the UK or European Economic Area (EEA). In general, full studentships are available to students who are settled in the UK and have been ordinarily resident for a period of at least three years before the start of postgraduate studies. Fees-only awards are generally available to EU nationals resident in the EEA. International applicants are normally not eligible to apply for this studentship.

Applicants should submit via email a curriculum vitae (no more than 2 pages), transcripts of degrees, a sample of writing, a candidate's statement outlining their qualification for the studentship, and the names and contact details of two academic referees to Melina Aston (m.aston@reading.ac.uk) **no later than 5pm on 3 March 2017**. All documents should be submitted in either a MS Word or PDF format. Please ensure the subject line of your email appears as 'surname, first name – IWM/Reading studentship.'

Interviews are scheduled to be held at the IWM in London on the **27th March 2017**. Prior to this, shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete an application for a PhD in Italian Studies to the University (see <http://www.reading.ac.uk/graduateschool/prospectivestudents/gs-how-to-apply.aspx>). When prompted as part of this online application, candidates should provide details of the funding source they are applying for, quoting reference GS17-007.