

# Massimo Legnani

Massimo Legnani, who worked tirelessly to promote research into modern Italy, has died at 64 years of age. He was born in Milan in 1933 and taught modern Italian history at the University of Bologna from 1976. He was appointed administrative director of the Istituto Nazionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione in Italia (INSMLI) in February 1967, shortly after the Institute had finally attained legal recognition, and held this post until 1982 when, following the decision to restructure the directorship, he became 'direttore scientifico'. He was in charge of the Institute's journal *Italia Contemporanea* from 1978 until the time of his death. As such, Legnani was very much the focal point of the Institute's research activities for over 30 years: whether directly or indirectly, he exercised an influence on the work of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of researchers. He himself published a number of monographs, as well as many chapters in collaborative volumes, and gave countless papers at conferences in Italy and Europe. Probably his best known works are the two major volumes he published in the mid-1970s: *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1948. Lotte politiche e sociali* (Loescher, Turin, 1973) and *Profilo politico dell'Italia repubblicana 1948-1974* (Marano, Naples, 1974) along with the volume on the anti-Fascist press in the Laterza series *Storia della stampa italiana*. My lasting memory of him will be the sight of him sitting at one of the Institute's rather worn desks, furiously hitting the keys of a manual typewriter. His untimely death has robbed us of one of Italy's most charismatic and committed historians.

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