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The “Irresponsibility of the Outsider”? American Expatriates and Italian Fascism

Isabelle Richet

Introduction

- 1 “American expatriates” sounds almost like an oxymoron given the historical identification of the United States as a refuge for millions of immigrants, exiles and expatriates from around the world. Yet, since the early nineteenth century, there has been a continuing, although more limited, flow of people out of the United States, as millions of Americans have chosen to leave their country and settle abroad, temporarily or permanently, for a diversity of motives, be they private, political, economic or cultural (Wilson, 1991, 269-372; Dulles, 1966, 11-20; Dulles, 1964). Their experience has so far not been the object of any serious study apart from the rather limited group of lost generation literary expatriates who haunted Montparnasse and Montmartre in the nineteen twenties (Benstock, 1987; Cowley, 1951; Monk, 2008; Pizer, 1998). They are, however, representative of the transnational movements of people that have recently drawn the attention of historians and their expatriate experience can shed an interesting light on the formation and transformation of American identity in contact with other cultures (Irye and Saunier, 2009).
- 2 According to Warren I. Susman, expatriation “involves at least two separate but related acts: the rejection of the homeland and the embracing of another country” (Susman, 1971, 171). Yet, for the literary expatriates of the 1920s who, until recently, seemed to epitomize the expatriation experience, abandoning their homeland was often a necessary step to rediscovering it, and expatriation was for them essentially a process of self-discovery as Americans (McCarthy, 1974, 11-13). There is no clear evidence either of their “embracing of another country” as they rarely if ever engaged with the broader society of their host country and its problems. Indeed, according to Eugene

Bagger, "the exiled American enjoy[ed] the special privileges of an outsider," and "the irresponsibility that goes with the status of outsider constitutes, no doubt, one of the subtlest charms of exile" (Bagger, 1929, 480, 483). Can the experience of the several million Americans who have chosen to leave their country and settle abroad since the creation of the United States be subsumed in the story of this rather small group of writers and artists? If not, how did it differ? They too decided to leave the United States, but what were their reasons for doing so? Having settled in another country did they all embrace and enjoy the "irresponsibility of the outsider"? As a first, partial attempt to answer these questions, I propose to focus on American expatriates who lived in Italy during the twenty years of the Fascist dictatorship. Not only were they quite numerous but they also represented a broader social spectrum, and their motivations for leaving the United States as well as their mode of engagement with Italian society were extremely diverse. So were their attitudes toward the fascist dictatorship.

- 3 In what follows, I will combine a biographical and typological approach to identify the various stances adopted by American expatriates and their motivations. The biographical approach seems particularly appropriate to offer a concrete illustration of the personal, cultural and political dynamics that drove the expatriate experience and shaped attitudes toward the Fascist dictatorship. In so doing, I am following the recommendations of a number of historians of the Resistance in France and Italy who have suggested paying more attention to the complex articulation between the individual and the surrounding world, in order "to reconstruct the real experiences" that eventually led people to become politically active in risky circumstances (Belot 1998; Belot, 2007, 57; Piketty, 1998; Piketty, 2007; De Luna, 1995). The biographical approach is also justified by the nature of the sources available, essentially personal diaries, memoirs, private letters and individual police files. As for the typology, it was constructed from the many studies dedicated to the attitude of Italians during the Fascist dictatorship. Indeed, despite Mussolini's rather successful efforts to "manufacture consent," support for his régime was never unanimous and varied over time (Cannistraro, 1975; Thompson, 1991; Grandi 2001; Bosworth, 2005; Duggan, 2012). Likewise, opposition to the dictatorship took many shades. While it led to open resistance only for a small minority of activists, historians have identified numerous instances of what some have called "existential" antifascism that expressed itself in the family, the community and friendly networks (Delzell, 1961; De Luna, 1995; Rapone, 1997; Gabrielli 2009). In line with those studies, the typology therefore tries to encompass the possible postures towards the regime: active pro-fascist; passive pro-fascist; passive anti-fascist; active anti-fascist.
- 4 As many historians have demonstrated, official and popular support for the fascist regime was quite widespread in the United States at least until the Abyssinian war (Alpers, 2003; Diggins, 1966; Diggins, 1972; Schmitz 1988). Like their fellow citizens at home, most expatriates followed the evolution of the situation in Italy through the American press which, for the most part, provided a very favorable coverage of the Italian dictatorship until well into the thirties (Mariano, 2000). Expatriates were also directly or indirectly influenced by the attitudes of American diplomats in Italy. While not all of them became Mussolini enthusiasts like Richard Washburn Child who went so far as to ghost-write the Duce's autobiography in English, all of them saw in the Fascist régime a serious bulwark against bolshevism and recommended strong support by the U.S government and financiers (Child, 1925; Mussolini, 1928; Jones, 1981). Of course,

none of those who praised Mussolini suggested that his regime would be suitable for the United States, but most saw his iron rule as good for business and good for those rebellious Italians who needed to be taught discipline and hard work. To what extent was this "view from America" shared by those Americans who lived directly under the strictures of the dictatorship? In answering this question, it is essential to remember that expatriation is a process through which identities and values are reinforced or transformed. It is therefore important to study how the intertwining of values imbued at home, ideological leanings, personal connections and political influences from within and without the expatriate milieu shaped the attitudes of American expatriates in Italy toward the Fascist dictatorship.

George Nelson Page: An American in Black Shirt

- 5 George Nelson Page best represents the "active pro-fascist" stance. He was "the most fascist of fascists" according to Richard Massock who, as the Rome Associated Press correspondent at the beginning of World War II, had to submit the text of his dispatches for approval to Page then in charge of controlling radio broadcasts abroad at the Ministry of Popular Culture (the "MinCulPop"), Mussolini's propaganda ministry (Massock, 1943, 156-57).
- 6 George Nelson Page descended from one of Virginia's oldest planter families. His family belonged to the large group of Southern expatriates who could not envisage living in the post-slavery South and chose to settle in Latin America and Europe after the defeat of the Confederacy (Moore Page, 2009, 81-82).¹ His grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Page played a crucial role in the defense of the Confederate States during the Civil War, but after the defeat of the South he settled with his family in Rome and invested in the Italian banking system. His son, George Blunt Page built a successful career in Italy, becoming the first foreign director of the *Banca Commerciale Italiana*. He married an Italian woman born in Argentina, but they registered their son George, born in 1902, as an American citizen at the United States Embassy in Rome (Page, 1950, 18-19). Young Page was raised in a privileged aristocratic milieu, whose conservatism was rooted both in the Southern tradition of his American family and the Italian conservative aristocracy. His family also had strong links with the "black" nobility close to the Catholic Church, the future Pope Benedicte XV being a close friend of his father (Page, 1951, 19-22, 41-56). What is more, in 1913, his great-uncle, Thomas Nelson Page, close friend of Woodrow Wilson and eulogist of the Old South, was appointed United States ambassador to Italy, a position he occupied until 1919 (Page, 1923). From an early age, George Nelson Page was used to moving with ease within the privileged circles of the wealthy American expatriates who, for years, had been buying the splendid palaces of historic Rome and various nobility titles for their daughters, the salons of the Italian aristocracy and the circles of secular and religious power (Page, 1950, 19-41, 74-75; Amfiteatrof, 1980, 88-110). Suffice it to say that Pope Benedicte XV blessed his First communion and nicknamed him "l'Americano di Roma"—the title Page chose for his autobiography—and that during President Wilson's triumphant visit to Rome in 1919 prior to the Versailles Peace Conference, he rode in the U.S. Ambassador's car just behind that of the President whom he met personally in the numerous receptions organized in his honor (Amfiteatrof, 1980, 74-75).

- 7 Page first came into contact with fascism at his high school—the Liceo Visconti—during the *biennio rosso*, the two years of intense social struggles that followed the war. In the Page family, as was the case in many American expatriate circles, the strikes and factory occupations foreshadowed “the end of the world” (Page, 1950, 97; Ampfiteatrof, 1980, 120-30; Vance, 1989, 313-14), and George had no hesitation in joining the fascist student group in his school, proudly wearing the black shirt. When his student fascist group mobilized him to participate in the March on Rome in October 1922, he informed his father who made no secret of his sympathy for Mussolini while voicing his concerns about the illegal dimension of the fascist movement. Young Page took part in the March on Rome and when he returned home, the King having asked Mussolini to form the new government, father and son were reconciled in their support for the new regime which, they were convinced, would restore order at home and the prestige of Italy abroad (Page, 1950, 123-31).
- 8 While at university, he developed a taste for hard drinking and relentless gambling in the fashionable haunts of the Via Veneto. However, these years of “dolce vita” were not entirely wasted. He used them to consolidate his network of influential acquaintances, among them young count Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini’s future son-in-law and high-ranking official of the fascist regime (Page, 1950, 159). For several years, Page hesitated about the choice of a career, dabbling in journalism, making a first disappointing visit to the United States, apparently torn between his American citizenship and his Italian education. As he entered adulthood, he faced the choice every expatriate has to make at one point or another. Should he go back to the United States? It was the country of his ancestors, but was it truly *his* homeland? Should he settle for an easy life in the American colony in Rome without paying attention to what was happening in the real Italy? Should he become Italian and participate fully in a political experiment he admired? If he opted for the last solution, it was not without conflict as he was aware that his choice implied an inexorable estrangement from the land of his ancestors (Page, 1950, 280-93, 388-419).
- 9 Always alert to a good propaganda opportunity, the Duce immediately saw how he could take advantage of the “conversion” of a relative of a former U.S. ambassador who belonged to one of America’s most prestigious families. He suggested he become a kind of ambassador at large of fascist Italy that he would promote through cycles of conferences in the United States. However, Page’s first visit to New York after his decision to become Italian became public in 1933 was a total fiasco. Used to seeing millions of Europeans becoming Americans, the U.S. press launched a violent attack against what it saw as an act of treason. In addition to his choice of becoming Italian, the press stressed Page’s embrace of the Mussolini regime which he proclaimed in many incendiary remarks praising the order and discipline imposed by fascism and deriding the liberalism and freedom of the press that existed in the United States.²
- 10 Needless to say, this disastrous visit put an end to Mussolini’s plan for George Nelson Page in the United States, but not to his career in the fascist propaganda machine. When he returned to Rome, Galeazzo Ciano, head of the Duce’s press office presented him with an ambitious scheme: “Shortly, I will create an organization that will become the most important in Italy,” Ciano explained. An organization that would control every piece of news and would promote Italy around the world... “We will use the radio, the theatre, the cinema. And of course we will use the press” (Page, 1950, 437; Guerri, 1979, 91-92). The plan corresponded to Mussolini’s desire to present a positive image of

his regime abroad in order to win the support of international public opinion. Apart from controlling what the many foreign correspondents present in Rome could write, Mussolini also intended to use short-wave radio transmissions to have a direct control over what foreign audiences—and the millions of Italian immigrants abroad—could hear about the “new” Italy. All these services were regrouped in September 1934 within the Ministry of Popular Culture, the famous MinCulPop. George Nelson Page became the head of the Radio section that monitored the overseas program (Cannistraro, 1975, 198-99; Garzarelli, 2004, 31-58; Luconi and Tintori, 2004).³ In this new capacity, he met regularly with Goebbels, his alter ego in Berlin, and he travelled to the United States to sign various broadcast agreements with the main American networks. After the humiliation of his 1933 trip, Page seems to have particularly appreciated his first visit to the United States “as an Italian citizen and what’s more as an official representative of the government” (Page, 1950, 472, 550-56). Indeed, this must have tasted as sweet revenge against the homeland he had rejected, and that had rejected him in return. “One night in Rome, he [Page] poured out to me his bitterness against America for treating him so badly,” recalled the famed American European correspondent William L. Shirer (Shirer, 1943, 401).

- 11 With the Second World War approaching, the activities of the MinCulPop escalated. In addition to the control of Italian foreign broadcasts, Nelson Page was now in charge of the monitoring of all the radio dispatches sent by foreign correspondents from Rome, and he is a haunting presence in the Memoires of American journalists who reluctantly submitted to official censorship, all the more so as the censor was an American wearing a black shirt (Massock, 1943; 177-79, Packard, 1975; Rolo, 1942, 133-40). Nelson Page was also closely associated with the pro-fascist, anti-American and anti-Semitic war broadcasts of American poet Ezra Pound, himself a convinced fascist who had settled in Italy in 1925 (Redman, 1991; Corrigan, 1972, 767-81). According to Philip Cannistraro, the foreign propaganda division headed by Nelson Page was not only entrusted with the explanation of Italy’s role in the war but also had to contribute to the propaganda of the Axis (Cannistraro, 1975, 260). It accomplished this task in total agreement with the Germans who, after January 1942, gradually took over the running of the Italian government. As for Nelson Page, he continued to travel to Berlin in order to coordinate his activity with Goebbels who was in charge of Nazi war propaganda (Massock, 1943, 288; Page, 1950, 653-54).⁴
- 12 In view of the above, it should come as no surprise that George Nelson Page was arrested by the agents of the Counter-Intelligence Corps after the entry of the Allied troops in Rome in June 1944. But unlike Ezra Pound, later arrested by Italian partisans and transferred to the United States to be tried for treason, Page was sent to the Padula internment camp with other *Italian* fascists (Page, 1950, 737-51; Page 1956; Shirer, 1943, 397-404).⁵

Iris Cutting Origo: A fascination for “the most constructive aspects of fascism”

- 13 The figure representing the passive pro-fascist stance is Iris Cutting Origo, well-known for her numerous biographies and her celebrated war diary, *War in Val d’Orcia*. Ignoring her own recipe for a good biography—“do not suppress anything”—, she kept a rather embarrassed silence on the twenty years of the fascist regime in her autobiography.

She only noted as an aside that together with her husband, with whom she managed a 7 000 acre estate in the Province of Sienna, she had been "brought into contact with one of the most constructive aspects of Fascism and with some of its most sincere adherents" (Origo, 2001, 25; Origo, 2002, 8).

- 14 Iris Cutting belonged to another important group of American expatriates, the members of the "leisure class": heirs to old and new fortunes, rich collectors and aesthetes, who for decades had bought the Renaissance villas on the hills of Fiesole and considered Florence as "a theme park of the past" (Acton, 1948, 9; Black, 2003, 7). Although born in England in 1902, Iris Cutting was an American citizen. Her father, Bayard Cutting was the heir of a wealthy family from the merchant aristocracy of New York and her mother, Sybil, was the heiress of an Anglo-Irish landowning aristocratic family. Of a cosmopolitan mind, her parents travelled extensively, often visiting Italy where, for a while, her father was American vice-consul in Milan (Barolini, 2006, 257-58; Moorhead, 2000, 4-12; Origo, 2002, 8, 77-80). Bayard Cutting died prematurely in 1910, and in one of his last letters to his wife he recommended she brought up their daughter in a "completely foreign country" so that she would be "free from all this national feeling which makes people so unhappy [...]. Somewhere where she doesn't belong [...]. So that she can be really cosmopolitan, deep down." Sybil Cutting settled with her daughter in the splendid Villa Medici in Fiesole near Florence (Origo, 2002, 88; Campbell, 2009, 139-45). Iris Cutting spent her childhood and adolescence in a sheltered environment, a sort of early gated community where the Anglo-American expatriates lived their privileged existence without any contact with Italian society except through their cooks and gardeners (Dunn, 2001, 41-45). Even the First World War did not disturb the artistic concerns and the social and personal intrigues of this "paradise of exiles" (Origo, 2002, 135).⁶
- 15 Such was not the case, however, for the social agitation of the post-war years. As was the case for the Page family in Rome, the *biennio rosso* in Italy echoed the "red scare" at home and was perceived as a direct threat for the interests of the leisure class expatriates who welcomed the October 1922 March on Rome with immense relief. The *Florence & Italian Mail*, a new weekly published jointly in Florence by the British and American Chambers of Commerce, heartily cheered the crushing of the worker's movement and the return of social stability thanks to the iron grip of Mussolini and the bludgeons of his militias.⁷ As for the privileged expatriates on the hills of Fiesole, they too saluted the regimenting of the "Reds" and did not conceal their admiration for the man who had put the country back to work and guaranteed that the trains arrived on time (Hibbert, 2004, 288; Acton, 1948, 234; Waterfield, 1961, 196). Iris Cutting herself wrote to a friend in England in the aftermath of the March on Rome: "We've had an exciting and amusing autumn with the fascisti [...]. It has been interesting watching an *opera buffa* revolution being transformed into a serious government, and Mussolini is a very remarkable man to have been able to do it and more remarkable still if he can make it last" (Moorhead, 104). Admiration for Mussolini seemed to have been widespread at the Villa Medici as Bernard Berenson, from the neighboring Villa I Tatti, informed his wife, deploring that Sybil Cutting, Iris's mother, "had gone native" and expressed her wholehearted support for the regime, even after the murder of the Socialist Member of Parliament Giacomo Matteotti in June 1924.⁸
- 16 Instead of choosing a life partner among her Anglo-American transatlantic milieu and living the cosmopolitan existence her father had wished for her, in 1924 Iris Cutting

married Marquis Antonio Origo, a good-looking but penniless Italian aristocrat with strong nationalist leanings. As a second generation expatriate, she seemed to suffer from the rootlessness imposed on her by her parents' choice and her desire to belong led her to establish solid bonds with her adopted country through marriage and the acquisition of a vast land estate. However, she retained her American nationality as the recently passed *Married Women's Act* of 1922 allowed her to do (Moorhead, 2000, 91; Cott, 1998, 1464-65). Thanks to her inheritance, the Origos bought 7,000 acres of farming land in the Val d'Orcia near Sienna, which they exploited under the sharecropping system (the "mezzadria"), a semi-feudal and paternalistic arrangement that Iris would always paint with nostalgia (Barolini, 2006, 246-49; Origo, 2002, 246-47; Fresta, 2003; Generali and De Simonis, 2003).

- 17 It is in their capacity as landowners of the *La Foce* estate that Iris and her husband came into contact with what she called "one of the most constructive aspects of fascism," namely the policy of land reclamation (the "bonifica") launched by Mussolini in order to strengthen rural Italy and stop the population drift toward the cities. If land reclamation did have some positive aspects, it worked mostly to the advantage of the large landowners who received the bulk of the public subsidies to improve their estate. Indeed, there was little land redistribution and when the government abandoned the policy in 1940 the income of the sharecroppers had actually declined (Origo, 2002, 221-23; Sereni, 1971, 311-37; Gasparri, 1976, 14-16; Neville, 2004, 78-79).
- 18 As Iris Cutting-Origo insisted in her autobiographical writings after the war, it is possible that Marquis Origo was essentially interested in the management of his estate, choosing to ignore the less palatable aspects of the regime and to collaborate with the policies he considered to be positive. Yet, Iris Origo's authorized biographer Caroline Moorehead, mentions a "distinct taint of Fascist complicity" that Antonio "was never, for the rest of his life, entirely able to escape." From the available evidence, it appears that Antonio Origo, like the other large landowners of the area, was in close and constant contact with the local fascist administration and the ministry of Agriculture in Rome as Vice-President of the *Consorzio di Bonifica della Val D'Orcia*, and he often had the visit of high-ranking Fascist officials who praised his estate as a model to follow. On such occasions, with Iris at his side, Origo—and his young son—donned the black shirt, the fascist uniform, yet it is impossible to establish with any certainty whether he was a member of the National Fascist Party, the archives of the party for the province of Sienna having been lost (Moorhead, 200, 145-49; Antonio Origo, 1937).
- 19 It is also possible as she wrote in her autobiography, that Iris Cutting-Origo had little interest for politics in general. This much comes out of the more than two thousand letters she and her lover, Colin Mackenzie, exchanged in the second half of the 1920s. They mention Emily Dickinson, Leopardi, Dante, music, paintings, but not a word about Mussolini, which led her biographer to conclude that "given the times they were living in, this is sometimes hard to understand" (Moorhead, 2000, 143). What comes out of the rest of her correspondence and her diaries is also her very active social life within the circles of Roman and Florentine high society that brought her into regular contact with the top echelons of the regime. Her godfather, William Phillips, was appointed American ambassador to Rome in 1936 and she attended many of the numerous dinners he organized for the dignitaries of the regime (Vance, 1989, 351). She also met Mussolini on several occasions and never concealed her great admiration for the man and the leader. On such an occasion, in Florence at the beginning of the thirties, she

attended an opera performance in honor of the Duce. She wrote to a friend that beyond Mussolini's caricature of himself, "something very fine remained—firmness and a reality which I had somehow not expected—and a sense of complete remoteness and loneliness... there was someone on a larger scale than most people, something that made all the histrionics and the noise, which he himself utilizes, seem quiet irrelevant and unimportant." A few days later, Iris and Antonio met again with the Duce. They had separate private conversations with him, and she once more "was very much impressed by him—he gives one a real feeling of greatness, as well as tragic isolation." But when she mentioned the few antifascists that she occasionally met at the Berenson's or in Rome, she dismissed them into insignificance: "One feels, yes, these are enlightened, high-principled courageous people, but they are not, as yet, of any importance" (Moorhead, 2000, 152-54; Origo, 2002, 232).

- 20 She also appears to have been totally engulfed in the patriotic effervescence that accompanied Mussolini's war on Abyssinia. After a visit from Iris in London, Virginia Woolf wrote in her diary on January 10, 1936, "Origo rather contorted; says Italy is blind red hot devoted patriotic. Has thrown her wedding ring in the cauldron too" (Woolf, 1984, vol. 5, 6). Iris, who had chosen to retain her American nationality, participated in the highly patriotic ceremonial whereby Italians were asked to exchange their gold wedding rings for ordinary iron rings in order to finance Mussolini's imperial adventure in Abyssinia (Moorhead, 2000, 200-1).
- 21 In addition to her personal desire to belong that led her to identify with her country of adoption, class and professional interests together with political and social conformity appear to have guided Iris Origo's attitude toward Mussolini: a passive approval that was never militant, but imposed blinkers and prevented her from acknowledging the true nature of the regime until well into the war. In late August 1939, surrounded by the rumors of impending conflict, she and her husband crossed the border back to Italy from Switzerland and she recalled laconically in her autobiography: "The pole of the barrier swung slowly back behind us. I realized that I had made my choice." The choice to embrace her adopted country's fate even when it eventually meant being at war with both her countries of origin—Great Britain in June 1940 and the United States in December 1941. This situation that could have led to potential divided loyalties is only very briefly alluded to in her *Memoires* (Origo, 2002, 230, 234).
- 22 After July 1943 and in the following months that witnessed the fall of Mussolini and his restoration at Salo', the formation of the post-fascist Badoglio government, the occupation of Italy by the German Army, the development of the resistance and the landing of the Allies, Iris and Antonio Origo rapidly adapted to what was to say the least an extremely chaotic situation. Their estate in the Val d'Orcia found itself for many months at the crossroads of different front lines, and they were caught up in many confrontations, some tragic, some comical. Soldiers of all the various camps passed at one point or another by La Foce, often at the same time. This made for a fascinating human story that Iris has brilliantly told in her celebrated war diary, describing with vivid details the political confusion of the time and the peasants' resourcefulness, the hopes and fears, the remarkable solidarity in front of hardship and danger, her own and her husband's dedication and generosity (Origo, 1984). The historians of the war and resistance in the province of Sienna confirm much of her tale, but they add a political dimension that is missing in *War in Val d'Orcia*. They show how the large landowners tread a careful path in this uncertain situation as local power shifted

between the representatives of the Badoglio government and those attempting to establish the authority of the Republic of Salò—who sometimes were actually the same people (Gasparri, 1976, 41; Orlandini, 1994). They also stress the landowners' concern to ensure continuity through a smooth transition that would preserve their political and economic supremacy, and Antonio Origo is often mentioned as quite instrumental in this process (Gasparri, 1976, 40-43, 68-69, 233-37).

- 23 Once again, Iris Origo chose to ignore—or to suppress—these developments, preferring to stress the “one good thing that this period brought about [...], a closer relationship with our tenants and our neighbors [...]. At last, the old barriers of tradition and class were broken down, and we were held together by the same difficulties, fears, expectations and hopes.” She must have known she was deluding herself. A few pages later she was forced to acknowledge the “swift end to the temporary mutual solidarity and union produced by times of crisis” and to admit that, at La Foce, “ill-feeling ran so high for several years that, if we met two or three of our *contadini* [peasants] together, they would refuse even to greet us” (Origo, 2002, 240-41, 246-47).

Bernard Berenson: An aesthete's love of Italy and hatred of Mussolini

- 24 The passive anti-Fascist category is represented by the art expert Bernard Berenson who spent nearly 70 years of his life in Florence where he died. Among American expatriates, Berenson was a transition figure from the leisure class of wealthy dilettantes to the professionals, in his case the experts connected to the international art market. He drew his considerable income from the wealthy American collectors and museums whom he advised for their acquisitions of Italian art, thanks to his expertise built on his intimate knowledge of Italian Renaissance paintings and of the local market. Permanent residence in Italy was therefore a requisite and, despite his immediate and thorough rejection of fascism, it would dictate his pragmatic attitude toward the Mussolini regime.
- 25 Born in 1865 in Lithuania to a Jewish family that immigrated to Boston in 1875, Berenson studied at Harvard where he specialized in art history and thoroughly absorbed the liberal ethos of the university. A brilliant but impoverished student, he attracted the attention of wealthy benefactors such as Isabella Stewart Gardner who financed his first year in Europe where he intended to pursue his artistic education (Secrest, 1980, 54-71). Arriving in Italy in 1887, he immediately felt a tremendous aesthetic attraction to the peninsula and decided that he would spend the rest of his life admiring and studying its natural and artistic beauties and dedicate his life to “connoisseurship” (Kiel, 1962, 36; Berenson, 1949, 60). Applying the analytical method of scholarship devised by Giovanni Morelli, which consisted in scrutinizing minor details of a painting in order to identify the “hand” of the artist, he started compiling systematic lists of the authentic works of Renaissance painters. His lists gradually acquired what Kenneth Clark has called a sort of “magical” authority. They seriously alarmed collectors and dealers alike who feared that the value of some of their Old Masters might be questioned (Ferne, 1995, 103-15; Anderson, 1987, 49-55; Clark, 1960, 381-86). Benefitting from the desire for the authentication of existing collections and the growth of potential collectors during the Gilded Age of fast fortunes, Berenson made it his business to sell certificates of authenticity—and some say his soul when he

- accepted to work for a retainer with the international art merchant Joseph Duveen. Material success followed rapidly and by 1900, he was able to rent then acquire the Villa I Tatti on the hills of Settignano near Florence, where he was a neighbor of Iris Cutting Origo and her mother (Samuels, 1979, 283; Clark, 1974, 137-40; Brown, 1979).
- 26 His wife Mary Smith Costelloe whom he met in London in 1890 strongly encouraged and aptly seconded him in his lucrative career as an art expert. Born in Philadelphia in a Quaker family, Mary studied at Smith College and Radcliff in Boston where she met her first husband Frank Costelloe, an Irish Catholic. They married in 1885 and moved to England. From their Quaker background Mary and her sister Alys, who married the British philosopher Bertrand Russell, inherited a strong belief in the equality of the sexes and were dedicated supporters of the suffrage movement. The Costelloes also embraced Henry George's single-tax movement and Bellamy's utopian socialism and moved in the left-liberal circles associated with the Fabian movement of Sydney and Beatrice Webb who were close friends (Secrest, 1980, 95-110; Samuels, 1979, 115, 197-200; Strachey, 1982, 110-22). Although he preferred the "religion of culture" to the "religion of socialism," Berenson found a convivial milieu in the Smith-Costelloe household and eventually seduced Mary who abandoned her husband and their two daughters to join him in his aesthetic quest in Italy (Secrest, 1980, 109). They married in 1900 after Costelloe's death and established their personal, social, and professional base at Villa I Tatti which soon became an important hub of the international art world (Weaver, 1997).
- 27 Unlike the expatriates of the leisure class, Bernard Berenson did not stand aloof from Italian society. His main connection to his country of adoption was of course through its artistic treasures and he travelled extensively around the peninsula to compose his famous lists. In doing so, he established strong intellectual relationships with a number of Italians associated with art history and the art market. He also developed a close friendship with two Florentine intellectuals, Carlo Placci and Gaetano Salvemini, who were not directly connected to the art world but would play a crucial role in his apprehension of political developments in Italy during and after the First World War. Carlo Placci was a wealthy cosmopolitan dilettante writer who had studied at Oxford and frequented all the intellectual circles of Europe. He immediately took to Berenson and introduced him to all his acquaintances, in Italy and abroad. It was through Placci that he met Gaetano Salvemini, freshly arrived from Puglia to study history at the University of Florence and who would become Italy's most renowned historian and a major political figure of the pre and post war period. He became intimate with both Bernard and Mary Berenson who appreciated his volcanic personality and brilliant mind (Colby, 2003, 98; Gunn, 1964, 149-53; Tosi, 1984, 147-91; Berenson, 1952, 23-24; Berenson, 1964, 278; Killinger, 2002).
- 28 According to his secretary-companion Nicky Mariano, Berenson did not show any particular interest for politics prior to World War I. He eventually grew increasingly critical of the vociferous nationalism demonstrated by a sector of Italian society and echoed by his friend Carlo Placci, who called for Italian intervention into the war as a means of achieving territorial expansion. When the U.S. joined the conflict in April 1917, Berenson felt it his duty to contribute to the war effort and he went to work as an advisor and translator for the American Embassy in Paris. There, he met again with a number of his old Harvard friends and made new acquaintances. One of those was Walter Lippmann with whom he struck a lasting friendship which was buttressed, after

the war, by their common opposition to fascism (Mariano, 1966, 26, 36, 106, 111; Berenson, 1983, 236; Steel, 1998, 154-58, 178-79).

- 29 While Berenson resumed his activities on the international art market after the war, the rise of the Fascist movement, the March on Rome, and the rapid instauration of the dictatorship strained his relationships in Italy. The Fascist squads were particularly violent in Tuscany and Florence witnessed several episodes of bloody confrontations, which forced people to take a stand (Snowden, 1989, 139-45; Marcolini, 1993, 15-19). Political clashes with his friend Placci, whose virulent nationalism aligned him with the new regime, were frequent and their relationship became quite stormy. At the same time, Berenson grew closer to Gaetano Salvemini who has often been presented as the first Italian anti-Fascist.⁹ Nicky Mariano recalled that Berenson stopped "seeing any staunch upholders of the regime who were probably equally anxious to avoid him," and as a consequence the Berensons' circle of Italian acquaintances was more and more reduced (Mariano 1966, 111). They realized, during a visit to Rome in the fall of 1924 after the assassination of the opposition MP Giacomo Matteotti, that the doors of Roman society and diplomatic circles were closed to them, BB—as Bernard Berenson was known—"being at that time already too much considered an outspoken anti-Fascist to make contacts with him desirable." But he made a point of visiting major anti-Fascist figures, such as Giovanni Amendola, the leader of the Aventino opposition in Parliament who some months later would die of wounds received at the hands of Fascist bullies (Mariano, 1966, 111-12). This, in turn, increased the tensions with some of his Florentine acquaintances and the Villa I Tatti, having become a haven for the opponents of the regime, also became the target of intense surveillance by the Fascist police. "There is in Florence a clique that meets each week to elaborate schemes detrimental to fascism and to Italy, plotting and diffusing the most hostile propaganda abroad," an agent wrote to the Secretariat of the Duce in 1925. "They are in permanent contact with the United States, England, Belgium and France. Their meeting place is almost always the villa Berenson."¹⁰
- 30 As editor of the first anti-Fascist underground magazine, *Non Mollare* [Do not Yield], Salvemini was arrested in June and tried in July 1925. After the case against him was dismissed on a technicality, the Fascists were infuriated and put pressure on all those who had expressed support for Salvemini. This was the case for the Berensons who helped Salvemini when, that summer, he decided to leave the country for England. They supported him financially during his first months in exile, and Mary's sister, Alys Russell, offered him a home when he arrived in London. Well aware of the situation, the Fascist authorities expressed their irritation and asked the American Consul in Florence to convey their warnings to the residents of Villa I Tatti. They threatened not to allow them to return to Italy the next time they left the country (Marcolini, 1993, 54-60; Delzell, 1961, 30-32; Killinger, 2002, 192-204; Salvemini, 2002, 44).¹¹
- 31 Bernard and Mary Berenson faced a dilemma. Out of personal taste and professional interest, permanent residence in Italy was essential; but the open expression of their strongly felt anti-Fascist opinions endangered their status as foreign residents. However reluctantly, they decided to "privatize" their anti-Fascism. "For us silence is best" Mary wrote to Lipmann in early 1926, advising him not to visit them for a while, the presence of one of the few American editorialists who published sharp critiques of Mussolini being likely to strengthen the hostility of the Italian authorities towards the Berensons. Such was also the case for Alys Russell who would not visit I Tatti for several

years so as not to arise suspicion on its permanent residents (Berenson, 1983, 260-64; Samuels, 1987, 330-52; Steel, 1998, 251-52).

- 32 Mary's letters to Walter Lippmann stating that they had "ceased to be in opposition" referred to their public stance. Indeed, in private, the "anti-Fascist diatribes" were part of the daily fare at I Tatti as recalled by the British art historian Kenneth Clark, who worked as an assistant to Berenson in 1926-1927 (Clark, 1974, 153). The Berensons continued to spend time in summer with Salvemini in England, and wherever he travelled in Italy BB was "sure of meeting kindred spirits" among a close private network of anti-Fascist intellectuals (Mariano, 1966, 118).¹² On the other hand, most of his business-related foreign visitors were totally enthralled by the Duce and his "anti-Bolshevik" regime. "They seem to think wrong in all public questions," wrote Mary Berenson, but it was pointless to try to convince them otherwise.¹³ When Thomas Lamont came to Italy on behalf of the J.P. Morgan bank to negotiate a loan that would contribute to stabilizing and legitimizing the fascist government, Berenson tried to inform him of the true nature of the regime by having him meet anti-Fascist intellectuals. But to no avail, for he was already "too indoctrinated" according to Nicky Mariano (Mariano, 1966, 112).
- 33 His public silence allowed Berenson to weather the years of the Fascist regime in Italy while pursuing his business transactions abroad. To a certain extent, his international fame and his many influential connections in Great Britain and the United States protected him. Despite fears to the contrary, he was not seriously affected by the passage of the racial laws in 1938 or Italy's entry into the war against the United States in December 1941, apart from a further restriction of his circle of Italian acquaintances (Berenson, 1983, 302-04; Samuels, 1987, 462-64; Mariano, 1966, 244-52). Only after the occupation of Italy by the Nazis, in September 1943, was he forced to hide in the villa of the Ambassador of San Marino to the Holy See outside Florence, where he remained until the end of the war.
- 34 "Just a month ago war was declared between the country and people I most love on earth and the people to whom I owe whole-souled allegiance" Berenson wrote in January 1942 (Berenson, 1942, 80). His attitude toward fascism can only be explained in terms of this dilemma: the liberal values absorbed in the United States sustained his unmitigated opposition to the Mussolini dictatorship, while his love of Italy convinced him to keep this opposition private.

Robert Winston Wiley: A Midwest radical in the underground antifascist opposition

- 35 As an example of the active anti-Fascist stance, Robert Winston Wiley is certainly less well-known than the three previous figures, but he is the only American citizen who has an exceptionally thick personal file in the archives of the Fascist political police in Rome. A radical activist from the Mid-West, he appeared on the radars of the Fascist police in the spring of 1937 after the publication of nine articles—under the assumed name George Burnett—in the anti-Fascist weekly *Giustizia e Libertà* published in exile in Paris by Carlo Rosselli (Giovana, 2005; Pugliese, 1999). The articles described episodes of spontaneous popular resistance to the regime in Italy and revealed an intimate knowledge of different social milieus. They unleashed a frantic search on the part of the Fascist police, which eventually unraveled a long story of political engagement on

the part of Wiley in Florence, and led to the arrest of the opposition group he had assembled in that city.¹⁴

- 36 From the scarce biographical data gathered by the police, we can ascertain that he was born Robert Winston Wiley in 1908, in a small town in Minnesota, that he obtained a passport in Washington D.C. in 1932—renewed in 1936 by the American Consulate in London—, and that he spent six years abroad, mostly in Italy, while also travelling freely in Europe.¹⁵ According to the radical New York magazine *Common Sense*, for which he worked as a free-lance European correspondent, he graduated from the University of California before moving to Europe, although his field of studies is not clear.¹⁶ Journalism? French and Italian Studies? He was fluent in both languages, and he intended to make a living writing about these two countries.¹⁷ In that sense, he belonged to the group of young intellectual expatriates who flocked to Europe in the inter-war period, hoping to live cheaply and to write in a rich cultural environment. Unlike most of his compatriots, however, he chose Italy rather than France and seemed more interested in politics than literature and art.
- 37 His articles and his activities in Italy testify to the radical opinions that he brought with him from the United States. He grew up in a radical state of the Mid-West that saw the emergence of a left-leaning Farmer-Labor Party, and he was a student at the beginning of a radical decade, the 1930s that witnessed a strong polarization to the left of the political spectrum on the part of those who opposed what they considered the salvaging of American capitalism by Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal (Pells, 1973, 61-140; Valelly, 1989; McCoy, 1958, 1-60). *Common Sense*, the outlet for his articles on Europe was created in 1932 by Alfred Bingham to promote a sui generis form of American socialist alternative in the United States (Rawick, 1974, vol. 2, 450-56; Miller, 1979, 3-87).¹⁸
- 38 What Wiley also brought from the United States was a pragmatic approach to political action, which Carlo Rosselli found "refreshing" because it was free of the "excessive ideological superstructures" that burdened European anti-Fascism and, therefore, could facilitate the contact with popular elements in Italy (Garosci, 1973, vol. 2, 339-40). Wiley did show a lot of pragmatism in his attempts to penetrate various milieus—intellectuals, artisans, workers. When he first arrived in Florence in spring 1933, he had not had any previous contact with the several anti-Fascist organizations in exile in Paris. It was a dire period for the opposition whose various components—Communist, Socialist, *Giustizia e Libertà*—had all but been crushed by the Fascist police, and there was scarcely any organized activity left inside Italy (Delzell, 1974, 85-130; Franzinelli, 2000, 91-124; Thompson, 1991, 28-66). Yet, as many historians have observed, "the story of parties and organized groups is not the whole story of anti-fascism [...], for it does not take into account those forms of spontaneous rebellion, of passive resistance, of mute and unorganized aversion for the regime that were quite frequent among the lower classes" (Spini and Casali, 1986, 133-34). Other historians have described the small informal antifascist networks that survived in Florence among workers and artisans in the popular neighborhood of San Frediano and some artistic and intellectual circles (Cantagalli, 1981, 125-26; Timpanaro, 1975, 16-17; Gabrielli, 2006, 35).
- 39 When he arrived in Florence, Wiley settled in San Frediano, first in a pension on Piazza Santo Spirito, then in an apartment in Borgo San Jacopo that he shared with his girlfriend Elvira Rapaccini, a convinced anti-fascist. Later, in 1935, they moved to an apartment in Via delle Farine, another artisan neighborhood beyond the Piazza della

Signoria. Through the American art students milieu in Florence he came into contact with a number of local artists, intellectuals and journalists interested in things American, such as the writers Antonio Sorelli and Eliseo Tealdi, the painters Renato Paresce and Giovanni Baldwin.¹⁹ He became quite close to Baldwin, an American artist born in Ohio who had moved to Florence with his widowed mother in 1901 at the age of 12. Baldwin introduced Wiley to the group of people who worked at *Il Conventino*, an old convent in San Frediano that had been transformed to offer workshops and studios to artisans and artists. In this bohemian milieu, opposition to the regime was widespread although it rarely led to openly militant action. A number of the residents had read and distributed the first underground magazine *Non Mollare* in 1925. In the more somber 1930s, they led intense private discussions around the literary and philosophical books banned by the regime or participated to political debates with the former Socialist MP Gaetano Pieracini. During his years in Florence, Wiley became a regular visitor and brought political material from Paris that was discussed at *Il Conventino* and disseminated in other circles (Miniati, 1978, 14-26, 58, 146; Francovich, 1980, 584-91, Spini and Casali, 1986, vol. 2, 134).

40 Wiley struck a close friendship with Bruno Sardelli, a young worker who wanted to become a tourist guide and frequented *Il Conventino* to learn more about art history (Miniati, 1978, 146). Sardelli also participated in the political discussions and appeared ready to adopt a more militant stance against the regime. He introduced Wiley to a number of his acquaintances, mostly young workers or artisans from San Frediano, who shared their ideas and started meeting regularly at the flat Wiley shared with Elvira Rapaccini, officially for English tuition classes. One or two had had contacts in the past with either the Socialist or Communist Parties, but most expressed a spontaneous opposition to the regime which, given the circumstances, had not until then found any political outlet. As they regrouped around Wiley, their activity became more regular and determined but remained quite modest in scope. In addition to his own, the American acquired a second typewriter, and after discussing antifascist articles from Paris, they reproduced them and distributed them among their acquaintances. With the beginning of the Abyssinian war in October 1935, they decided to publish a weekly information bulletin. They also collected money that they forwarded to political prisoners and their families.²⁰

41 Until early 1936, they did not seem to have had any formal contact with the exiled opposition. This changed after a trip Wiley made to Paris where he met Carlo Rosselli. The leader of *Giustizia e Libertà* had always stressed the priority of acting inside Italy, hence his interest for anyone who could travel freely around the peninsula and had connections with groups of people opposed to the regime (Giovanna, 2005, 351-79, 403-27; Pugliese, 1999, 138-39, 172-73; Garosci, 1973, vol. 2, 339-40). Upon returning to Italy after Easter 1936, Wiley started receiving material from *Giustizia e Libertà*, and worked to convince some of his Florentine friends to be regular distributors of the journal and leaflets in their area. He also travelled to Milan and Venice to try to re-establish contacts with sympathizers of the movement who would accept to receive propaganda material from Paris.²¹ On behalf of *Giustizia e Libertà*, Wiley also introduced a duplicator in Italy that was hidden at *Il Conventino*. Working with Carlo Rosselli's organization, Wiley demonstrated once more his pragmatic approach for, according to the various testimonies of his Florentine friends, he seemed to have professed Communist or Trotskyist ideas rather than the Liberal Socialism of *Giustizia e Libertà*.

However, he believed that anti-Fascist activists should put aside their ideological differences and focus on their common opposition to the dictatorship.²²

- 42 While the contact with *Giustizia e Libertà* gave some cohesion to the small group that met in Wiley's and Rapaccini's flat in Florence, it was also the cause of its undoing. Indeed, the Italian Embassy closely monitored the anti-Fascist press published in Paris and the various exiled organizations were bristling with Fascist agents of the ill-famed OVRA. The OVRA agents in Paris were immediately mobilized after the publication of Wiley's articles in *Giustizia e Libertà*, and it took them a couple of months to identify the person hiding behind the alias Burnett. In the meantime, having returned to Italy, Wiley continued to try to organize a network of *Giustizia e Libertà* sympathizers.²³ Yet, during his next trip to Paris, in May 1937, he noticed that his mail was being monitored, and realizing he had been identified—by OVRA agents infiltrated in the G&L organization—he did not return to Italy. Working with Aldo Garosci, Rosselli's lieutenant in G&L, he tried to maintain contacts with the group in Florence through Elvira Rapaccini. Unfortunately, their emissary turned out to be an OVRA agent who led to the arrest of 17 people at the end of July 1937, 5 of whom were sent to the prison islands for five years and three for two years.²⁴
- 43 In many ways Robert Wiley's experience in Fascist Italy was paradoxical. His American-grown radicalism led to his determined engagement against the dictatorship which, in turn, led to his estrangement from his host country and the destruction of his small Florentine network. No "irresponsibility of the outsider" in this case, quite the contrary. Yet the dire consequences of his engagement did not flow from his antifascist stance, but rather from the totalitarian context that strove to crush even the most timid acts of opposition, as his Italian companions well understood.²⁵

Conclusion

- 44 The fascist dictatorship was a revealing test for values absorbed at home that were either reinforced or altered in the process. In the case of Page, Southern aristocratic conservatism morphed quite easily into fascist nationalism. Confronted with the "sincere adherents of fascism" Irigo's aristocratic aloofness gave way to blind conformity to the tenets of the regime. Berenson who had never been political before the war understood very early on how fascism threatened the liberal ethos that provided him with a solid compass to choose his side. As for Robert W. Wiley, his radicalism aligned him naturally with the victims of the dictatorship. The diversity of the American expatriates' attitudes toward the Fascist dictatorship in Italy indicates that no sweeping generalizations, such as those proposed by the studies of the inter-war literary self-exiles, can encompass the expatriate experience. The notion of "outsider," in particular, obscures more than it reveals and cannot explain the nature of the expatriates' engagement with their host society. Adopting a transnational approach that focuses on the circulation of peoples and ideas, this paper has paid particular attention to "the social space they inhabited, the networks they formed and the ideas they exchanged" (Clavin, 2005, 422), thereby illustrating the complex articulation between several determinants: personal and family trajectories, social background, values imbued in the United States, professional and economic interests, contacts with the host country, the dialectical tension between rootlessness and belonging, nationalism and transnationalism.

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NOTES

1. More than 40,000 Southerners chose to leave the United States after the victory of the Union, making up the largest group of American expatriates in the nineteenth century (Harter, 2000; Guterl, 2008, 80-92).

2. "George N. Page To Join Fascists," *Washington Post*, September 19, 1933, 2; "G.N. Page To Drop Citizenship Here," *New York Times*, September 19, 1933, 23; "Page Scion Converted To Fascism," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1933, 3.
3. « Relazione sull'attività dell'Ufficio Radio », October 1935, Min. Cul. Pop., b. 95, fasc. 14 Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.
4. For an official report on his last trip to Berlin in October 1942, see Min Cul Pop b. 87, fasc. 1, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.
5. "Allies Seize Former Yank, Rome Radio Aid," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 16, 1944; "Allies Arrest Radio-casters of Fascist Era," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 17, 1944; "Allies in Italy Hold George Nelson Page," *New York Times*, July 16, 1944, 17; "Allies in Rome Seize Former U.S. Citizen," *Los Angeles Times*, July 16, 1944; "8 Americans on Axis Radio Indicted Here For Treason," *Washington Post*, July 27, 1943. Page benefited from the generous Togliatti amnesty of former fascists and participated until his death in numerous extreme-right groups and subversive activities in Italy generally sponsored by the C.I.A.
6. This often-used expression in reference to Italy is borrowed from Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Julian and Maddalo: A Conversation," <http://www.bartleby.com/139/shel115.html>, l.57 (last accessed on 08/04/2013).
7. The *Florence and Italian Mail* was published from December 1922 to September 1932.
8. Letter from Bernard Berenson to Mary Berenson, December 23, 1924, Berenson Archives, I Tatti.
9. Mary Berenson diaries, Wednesday 25 October, 1922, Tuesday 7 November, 1922, Berenson Archives, I Tatti. Mary Berenson's diaries show that Salvemini visited I Tatti several times a week in the early 1920s before his forced exile.
10. Segretario particolare del Duce, ins. Ugo Ojetti, November 2, 1925, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.
11. Letters from Mary Berenson to Walter Lippmann, February 18, 1926 and April 19, 1926 in Berenson, 1983, 259-60.
12. Mary Berenson's diaries, 1927, 1930, 1931, Berenson Archives, I Tatti.
13. Letter of Mary Berenson to Mrs. Berenson, April 30, 1928, in Berenson, 1983, 271-22.
14. The nine articles were published under the title "Viaggio in Italia" in *Giustizia e Libertà*, February 9, 12, 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19, April 30 and May 7, 1937.
15. Polizia Politica, fasc. personali, b. 1461, fasc. Wiley, Winston Robert, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.
16. Introduction to R.W. Wiley, "The Opposition to Mussolini," *Common Sense*, January 1937.
17. Letter from Wiley to Elvira Rapaccini, May 22, 1937, Polizia Politica, b. 1461, fasc. Wiley.
18. "What Does our Platform Means?," *Common Sense*, December 29, 1932.
19. Final Report, August 11, 1937, Polizia Politica, Wiley. Eliseo Tealdi worked as a translator; Antonio Sorelli was a journalist and essayist who published a book on the United States, *Questa è l'America* (Milan, 1945); Renato Paresce was a well-known painter associated with the Italians of Paris—De Chirico, Severini, Modigliani—who also wrote a book after a long visit to the United States in 1935, *L'Altra America* (Trois, De Rosa, 2004).
20. Final report, August 8, 1937, Polizia Politica, Wiley; George Burnett [R.W. Wiley], "Viaggio in Italia - La lotta contro il fascismo", *Giustizia e Libertà*, March 19, 1937, 4.
21. Letter from Police Inspector D'Andrea to the Chief of the Political Police in Rome, May 5, 1937, Polizia Politica, Wiley.
22. George Burnett [R.W. Wiley], "Viaggio in Italia - Firenze", *Giustizia e Libertà*, February 12, 1937, 2; George Burnett [R.W. Wiley], "Viaggio in Italia - la lotta contro il Fascismo" *Giustizia e Libertà*, March 19, 1937, 4; R.W. Wiley, "The Opposition to Mussolini", *Common Sense*, January 1937.
23. Letter from Paris, April, 19, 1937; letter from the Chief of Police to Inspectors in Milan, Bologna and Roma, May 11, 1937, Polizia Politica, Wiley.

24. Final Report, August 11, 1937, Polizia Politica, Wiley.
25. Letter in English from Florence, dated July 9, 1937, no signature but probably from Sardelli, telling Wiley he had been right to publish the articles in *Giustizia e Libertà*, Polizia Politica, Wiley.

ABSTRACTS

The article looks at expatriation as one of the many borderlands where Americans have been brought into contact with other cultures and social realities. In trying to make sense of the relationship expatriates have established with their chosen country, it questions the notion of an "outsider status" often claimed by the self-exiled writers of the 1920s. It looks instead at the contradictory personal and social dynamics that have determined the nature of the expatriates' engagement with their host society. It focuses on expatriates in Italy during the twenty years of the fascist regime and combines a typological and biographical approach. It analyzes four possible stands toward the dictatorship —active pro-fascist, passive pro-fascist, passive anti-fascist, active anti-fascist—through the experience of four expatriates: George Nelson Page, scion of the famous Virginia planter family; Iris Cutting Origo, raised among the wealthy Anglo-American colony of Florence; the art critique Bernard Berenson and Robert Winston Wiley, a young radical from the Mid-West who contributed articles to the magazine *Common Sense*. This approach highlights the complex articulation of a number of personal, social and political determinants that fashioned the attitude these expatriates adopted toward the dictatorship. It also indicates that the expatriate experience does not lend itself to sweeping generalizations but needs to be carefully contextualized and historicized.

Cet article considère l'expatriation comme une des nombreuses frontières où les Américains sont entrés en contact avec d'autres cultures et réalités sociales. En essayant de saisir la nature des relations entre les expatriés et leur pays d'accueil, il remet en question la notion d'un statut d'« outsider » souvent revendiqué par les écrivains exilés volontaires des années 1920, pour prendre en compte les dynamiques personnelles et sociales contradictoires qui ont façonné les rapports entre les expatriés et la société où ils se trouvaient. Il s'intéresse au cas des expatriés américains en Italie durant les vingt années de la dictature fasciste en combinant une approche typologique et biographique. Il analyse quatre attitudes possibles face à la dictature — profasciste actif, profasciste passif, antifasciste passif et antifasciste actif — à travers l'expérience de quatre expatriés : George Nelson Page, descendant de la grande famille de planteurs virginiens, Iris Cutting Origo, élevée au sein de la riche colonie anglo-américaine de Florence, le critique d'art Bernard Berenson et Robert Winston Wiley, un jeune militant radical du Mid-West qui écrivait pour la revue *Common Sense*. Cette approche souligne l'articulation complexe d'un certain nombre de déterminants personnels, sociaux et politiques qui ont influencé l'attitude de ces expatriés face à la dictature. Il démontre aussi que l'expérience des expatriés ne se prête pas facilement à des généralisations hâtives et demande à être précisément contextualisée et historicisée.

INDEX

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