

## Gaetano Salvemini

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Salvemini told his friend, Mary Berenson, that he had lived several lives: at least three, or even five. Each one began with his relocation to a new place that was different from the previous one: the first life spanning into his adolescence in the village of Molfetta in Puglia, the next in Florence as a college student and traveling throughout Italy for years as a professor. His third life began after an immense tragedy, the 1908 earthquake in Messina, which claimed from him his five children, his wife, and his livelihood. He spent his longest life, however, in exile from 1925 to 1949, when at the age of seventy-six he returned to Florence and Sorrento<sup>1</sup>.

### From Molfetta to Florence

Countless relocations characterized the 'regular' mobility of Salvemini's life prior to exile. He was born on 8 September 1873 in Molfetta, a small coastal village on the Adriatic in the region of Puglia. His parents, Ilarione and Emanuela Turtur, small landowners, had fallen into poverty during the economic crisis of 1887. The second of twelve children, of whom only nine survived, Salvemini had been steered toward an ecclesiastical career thanks to his uncle, Mauro Giovanni, a priest who was politically aligned with the Bourbons and who had instilled in Salvemini an interest in study. After passing the exams for his high school diploma brilliantly, he managed to leave the seminary in Molfetta, winning a modest scholarship at the Regio Istituto di studi superiori pratici e di perfezionamento [Royal Institute of

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<sup>1</sup> Salvemini mentioned the idea of having lived multiple lives to Mary Berenson in a letter from 14 October 1925 (contemplating how the first life was the life in Florence; the second after Messina; the third in exile), as well as in a letter from 15 March 1935, where he expanded the number of temporal articulations. See Iris Origo, *Lettere inedite di Gaetano Salvemini a Mary e Bernard Berenson. Parte I*, «Nuova Antologia», 550, 2143, 1982, pp. 166-215: pp. 210-211, and *Parte II*, «Nuova Antologia», 551, 2144, 1982, pp. 146-170: pp. 146-147.

Practical and Advanced Studies] in Florence<sup>2</sup>. So began his «second life» in 1870<sup>3</sup>. Aside from economic hardships, his Florentine period was intellectually fruitful, especially due to the instruction of a few teachers whom he would always consider to be central to his formation, going as far as to pay homage to them in the inaugural address that he delivered in 1949 upon his return to Florence after exile: Gaetano Trezza, professor of Italian literature; Girolamo Vitelli, professor of Greek literature; the historians Achille Coen and Pasquale Villari; the paleographer Cesare Paoli<sup>4</sup>.

The years at the Institute in Florence also were the years in which he aligned himself with militant Socialism and in which he created important friendships – with Ernesta Bittanti, Cesare Battisti, the brothers Ugo e Rodolfo Mondolfo – in addition to his engagement to Maria Minervini, the daughter of an Apulian engineer who had moved to Florence and who would become his wife in August of 1897. Moreover, during those years, thanks precisely to one of his teachers, Pasquale Villari, who was a model to him of both historical methodology and political activism, Salvemini came into contact with the Anglo-Florentine world, which revolved around the cosmopolitan intellectual Carlo Placci and which centered around the villa I Tatti on the hills of Settignano, the residence of the art critics Mary and Bernard Berenson<sup>5</sup>.

### **Wanderings throughout Italy**

His studies completed and his thesis published, Salvemini took the national examination in 1895 to obtain a teaching position in the *ginnasio inferiore* (middle school in the current school system). He turned down a position in Matera, where it would have been too difficult for him to continue his

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<sup>2</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *Una pagina di storia antica*, «Il Ponte», 6, 1, 1950, pp. 116-131: p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Enzo Tagliacozzo, *Gaetano Salvemini nel cinquantennio liberale*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, 1959, pp. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> G. Salvemini, *Una pagina di storia antica*, cit., pp. 120-126.

<sup>5</sup> For a deeper understanding of the relationship between Salvemini and the Anglo-Florentine group, see Alice Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra. Un antifascista in esilio*, Rome, Donzelli, 2020, pp. 13-17.

historical research<sup>6</sup>. On the first of October 1895, he began teaching Latin at the *ginnasio* Garibaldi in Palermo. In 1896, he obtained a teaching position in History and Geography at the Torricelli in Faenza, and in the autumn of 1898, he requested a transfer to the high school Pietro Verri in Lodi, where he would be closer to a university and where he took his brother to live with him so that he could study at an agricultural school. Salvemini succeeded in his intent to return to Florence in March of 1900, thanks to funding awarded by the Accademia dei Lincei<sup>7</sup>. Just a year later, in November of 1901, he once again left Florence with his family for Messina, where, at the age of 28, he had obtained a professorship in Medieval and Modern History at the local university. He would remain there until the greatest tragedy of his life: the earthquake on 28 December 1908, in which his wife Maria, his sister, and his five children died. Physically unharmed, the consternation he experienced would never leave him again.

### **After Messina: the «third» life**

Villari had retired in 1905, and Salvemini had hoped to take over his position in Florence. He was profoundly disappointed, therefore, when Carlo Cipolla was preferred to him, and even more so when he read the justification provided by Villari himself: Salvemini's political agenda, particularly active in the fight for universal suffrage and for middle school reform, represented an obstacle for his nomination, as had probably been the case in the other two job openings he had applied for that year, for university positions in Milan and Turin. He had so much as thought to abandon his academic career, although he had continued to publish important works like *Mazzini* and *La rivoluzione francese*<sup>8</sup>.

In December of 1908, he had lost everything due to the earthquake, even his

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<sup>6</sup> E. Tagliacozzo, *Gaetano Salvemini nel cinquantennio liberale*, cit., p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-26; Gaetano Salvemini, *Carteggio 1894-1902*, ed. Sergio Bucchi, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1988, p. 23, 93 and pp. 322-323: letter to Francesco Torraca, 13 March 1900.

<sup>8</sup> Id., *Carteggi 1895-1911*, ed. Elvira Gencarelli, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1968, pp. 321-337.

position at work: the University of Messina, severely damaged, had been closed down<sup>9</sup>. His friend, Carlo Placci, encouraged him to spend a period of time in Grenoble, and after a new university appointment in Pisa in 1910, he fully resumed his academic activity<sup>10</sup>. The following years were characterized by intense political and intellectual participation: his definitive break with the Socialist Party, his *anti-Giolittismo*, his candidacy in Molfetta's local elections, his support for democratic interventionism, and his enrollment as a volunteer during the First World War, which did not last long since he was hospitalized and shortly discharged after time in the trenches.

From a personal and academic standpoint, there were three crucial changes: in June of 1916, he married Fernande Dauriac, a French writer and translator and the ex-wife of Julien Luchaire, the director of the French Institute in Florence; following the sudden death of Carlo Cipolla, he finally became professor of Medieval and Modern History at the University of Florence; lastly, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies from a list of servicemen. He left the Chamber with the dissolution of Parliament in 1921. He would never run again.

### **Enthusiasm for Anglo-American circles**

In Florence, Salvemini was reconstructing his life after the tragedy in Messina. Toward the beginning of the 1920s, he was fully integrated within the Anglo-Florentine intellectual circles. He had contributed to the founding of the British Institute, thus expanding his network of contacts: in addition to the Berensons, Vernon Lee, Pasquale Villari and his English wife Linda White, his acquaintances included the journalists Linda and Aubrey Waterfield, Janet Trevelyan, and Marion Cave, an English teacher and the future wife of Carlo Rosselli.

In August of 1922, encouraged by these relationships, he departed on a study

<sup>9</sup> Charles Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, Westport (CT), Praeger, 2001, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggi 1895-1911*, cit., pp. 402-406: Salvemini to Carlo Placci, 27 May 1909; Placci to Salvemini, 23 June 1909; Salvemini to Placci, 21 July 1909.

trip to London and the surrounding area<sup>11</sup>. He was a guest at a country home in Chilling, near Southampton, where he was initially welcomed by Mary Berenson's daughter, the suffragist Ray Strachey, and by his friend's sister, Alys Russell. He then chose to live in Brighton as a paying guest in order to study the language (there were too many Italians in London)<sup>12</sup>. Isabella Ormston Ford, a suffragist friend of Vernon Lee, helped him acquaint himself with the world of trade unions and factories in Leeds. Thanks to Janet Trevelyan, Salvemini was invited to give a lecture on Mazzini at the British Italian League, and also met influential journalists, among them Francis Hirst, the editor of the «Economist», George Peabody Gooch of the «Contemporary Review», and Ernest Barker, the rector of King's College London, securing a series of guest lectures that he would hold the following year in Cambridge, Manchester, and London<sup>13</sup>.

He had clearly expressed his feelings to his wife:

I really like this country, which interests me enormously. [...] It seems like I have returned to being sixteen years-old, when the world was new to me, having just left my childhood home and arriving in Florence. For me, London is to Florence today what Florence was to Molfetta thirty years ago<sup>14</sup>.

And again, on 14 October 1922, he announced to his wife in a prophetic manner:

When Mussolini removes me from my professorship, I will come to England and give lectures at five guineas apiece. [...] I need to prepare another way of earning a living for myself: and knowing English, I will find it in England or in America<sup>15</sup>.

Disillusioned by Giolitti's politics and by the parties of liberal Italy in general – above all, the Socialist Party – Salvemini believed that Mussolini's government

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<sup>11</sup> The account of his stay abroad between 1922 and 1923 is based on A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 17-22.

<sup>12</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, ed. Enzo Tagliacozzo, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1985, pp. 67-79.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81: Salvemini to his wife, 22 September 1922; *Ibid.*, pp. 230-233: Salvemini to Ugo Ojetti, 28 July 1923.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74 (p. 74): Salvemini to Ernesto Rossi, 6 September 1922.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90-92 (p. 91): Salvemini to his wife, 14 October 1922.

would continue the workings and politics of the previous ones, and that it was not destined to last long<sup>16</sup>.

### Exiled in his homeland

In the days during the March on Rome, Salvemini was on his way back from his trip to London, stopping off in Paris, where his wife Fernande had gone to find her children from her first marriage: Jean and Ghita<sup>17</sup>. As the situation came to a head, he debated whether to stay abroad or to return to Florence. As one infers from the intense exchange of correspondence with his Florentine friends, he had asked for advice. As part of his plans, he thought about briefly returning to Florence, asking for a period of leave from the university, and then returning abroad until the situation would be stable again<sup>18</sup>. However, once he was back in Italy, in mid-November, he realized that his request for a leave of absence had not been sent to the Faculty, and also that friends and colleagues were opposed to his travel abroad, since this could easily be interpreted as an escape<sup>19</sup>.

It seems that Salvemini remained in Italy not because he had gone back on his decision<sup>20</sup> but, rather, because the people he trusted had advised him not to leave. Convinced that Mussolini's demise was imminent, he had assumed a wait-and-see attitude and continued his academic activity as if he were «exiled in his homeland», like Piero Gobetti had been. He interrupted this «exile» only by participating in the meetings of the *Circolo di Cultura* [Cultural Club], which the young anti-fascists close to him were promoting<sup>21</sup>. During

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<sup>16</sup> Salvemini's point of view in relation to the first years of fascism is illustrated well in Gaetano Salvemini, *Memorie e soliloqui. Diario 1922-1923*, ed. Roberto Pertici, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001.

<sup>17</sup> For more on the relationship between Salvemini and Fernande's children, and in particular the sequence of events regarding Jean Luchaire, who was condemned to death by firing squad for conspiracy in 1947, see Filomena Fantarella, *Un figlio per nemico. Gli affetti di Gaetano Salvemini alla prova dei fascismi*, Rome, Donzelli, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 111-113: Salvemini to Ernesto Rossi, 5 November 1922.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 145- 148: Salvemini to Gaetano Mosca, 22 November 1922.

<sup>20</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 176.

<sup>21</sup> In regard to the Circolo di cultura, see in particular the contributions published in «Quaderni

that period Salvemini expressed his antifascism mainly in private – he used to write about it in a diary<sup>22</sup> – or in restricted circles of trusted friends.

In the summer of 1923, however, he got a taste of what would happen to him in the following years. He was scheduled to hold a series of lectures in Great Britain about Italian foreign policy during the time of the Triple Alliance. At the moment of departure, though, Mussolini personally denied his passport to London<sup>23</sup>. Mussolini was probably worried that the professor could exploit his growing popularity to spread ideas against fascism.

### **The clandestine expatriation and the «surreptitious» passport**

Salvemini left anyway, secretly crossing the French border with an *unofficial* document:

It was easy to enter France, very difficult to enter England. But only death does not have a cure. In Paris, there was a common market, let's say, for passports – let's say it was very common. I bought one – for 150 francs, if my memory doesn't deceive me – one with an absolutely authentic signature from consul Nardini [...]: it wasn't a fake document, but a surreptitious document; with that I triumphantly entered England<sup>24</sup>.

As he had written at the end of July to Ugo Ojetti, he had no intention to speak about fascism during his stay abroad, just as he had refrained from doing so publicly in Italy<sup>25</sup>. In fact, in the following months, he focused his efforts mainly on networking: along with Carlo Rosselli, he participated in the Summer School at the Fabian Society in Hindhead, Surrey, from 3 to 27 August, and began to strengthen his contacts with liberal circles connected

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del Circolo Rosselli», 41, 141, 2021 (*Intellettuai e politica negli anni dell'avvento del fascismo*, ed. Massimo Tarassi); Patrizia Guarnieri, *Italian Psychology and Jewish Emigration under Fascism. From Florence to Jerusalem and New York*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 81-83.

<sup>22</sup> The reference here is to the pages cited above, later published under the title *Memorie e soliloqui*.

<sup>23</sup> ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Salvemini Gaetano», Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect of Florence, 1 July 1923.

<sup>24</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, ed. Mimmo Franzinelli, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2002, p. 5. Also see the corresponding account recorded in Id., *Memorie e soliloqui*, cit., p. 396.

<sup>25</sup> Id., *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 230-233 (p. 231): Salvemini to Ugo Ojetti, 28 July 1923.

with the Labor Party. His long-awaited lectures at King's College, in Manchester, and at the British Italian League gained wide coverage in the press and solidified his reputation as an esteemed intellectual. His meeting with the editor of the «Manchester Guardian», Charles Prestwich Scott, would prove to be essential. This encounter was facilitated by Lina Waterfield and the editor's nephew, Geoffrey Scott, who was an assiduous attendee of the villa i Tatti<sup>26</sup>.

With this second trip to Great Britain, Salvemini understood where he could find hospitality if things were to go badly in Italy.

### **Shocked out of inertia**

On the eve of his London lectures, on 4 October 1923, the leadership of the Fascist Party in Florence issued a statement denouncing Salvemini's secret and illegal expatriation and asking that he be prevented from returning to the city<sup>27</sup>.

In his memoir published in the 1950s, he would affirm that he had started «being an exile in the summer of 1923», exactly when he had first taken into consideration the opportunity to oppose fascism from abroad<sup>28</sup>. As he confided to Carlo Sforza: «While remaining abroad, I would organize antifascist propaganda in England, in America, and in Europe: if I subscribe to a certain issue, I become an intolerable man»<sup>29</sup>. All in all, the charges of the Fascist Party ended in nothing; Salvemini therefore returned to Italy, as expected, in the beginning of December and resumed his academic activity, distant from political matters.

The assassination of Giacomo Matteotti «proved to be a shock», to him as well<sup>30</sup>. The urgent need to move from substantial political inertia to a

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<sup>26</sup> Id., *Memorie e soliloqui*, cit., p. 399; A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., p. 22.

<sup>27</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Id., *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 256-258 (p. 258): Salvemini to Carlo Sforza, 21 September 1923.

<sup>30</sup> Id., *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 7.



decidedly more active and committed position resulted in the publication of the secret newspaper «Non Mollare» [Don't Give Up], which began in January of 1925<sup>31</sup>. Events then precipitated: on 8 June, while he was at the Istituto superiore di Magistero in Rome, he was placed under arrest and taken to the Regina Coeli prison, from which he was transferred to the prison in Florence on 13 June<sup>32</sup>. After more than a month in prison, his trial began on 15 July and soon ended in a postponement, as the main witness for the prosecution, the typographer Renzo Pinzi, who had acted as a spy, was himself on trial as a printer of the secret newspaper. Salvemini was therefore released on bail: upon leaving the court, some of his supporters, including his lawyer Nino Levi, and even some of his fellow professors, were violently attacked by *squadristi* [fascist militants], who, however, spared the accused<sup>33</sup>.

### Support from British intellectuals

In prison, Salvemini had received letters of support from Ray Strachey, Bolton King, John Maynard Keynes, George Macaulay Trevelyan and Thomas Okey; some of them had spoken up publicly at the request of Piero Gobetti and the «Rivoluzione liberale», which had launched an appeal in favor of Salvemini<sup>34</sup>. Important English newspapers also concerned themselves with his case, among them the «Manchester Guardian», the «Times», the «Daily Herald» and the «Daily News». The editor of the «Review of Reviews», Henry Wickham Steed, who was in contact with Luigi Sturzo, an exile in London since 1924, consulted with Arthur Ponsonby, the former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the one hand, together with the historian and member of Parliament Herbert Fisher, they organized an informal meeting in the

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<sup>31</sup> See «Non Mollare» (1925). *Con saggi di Gaetano Salvemini, Ernesto Rossi e Piero Calamandrei*, ed. Mimmo Franzinelli, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2005.

<sup>32</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> The circumstances around the case and related trial procedures are recounted in Id., *Il Non Mollare*, in «Non Mollare» (1925), cit., pp. 3-42: pp. 13-18.

<sup>34</sup> A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, ci., pp. 23-27. For the account of what followed also see Gussoni.

House of Commons to discuss Salvemini's situation; on the other hand, they brought the matter directly to the Foreign Office, requesting intervention from the British Ambassador to Rome, Ronald William Graham. The ambassador therefore warned Mussolini that, while not intending to interfere with Italian domestic politics, the detention of or any form of violence against Salvemini could damage the Duce's image in Great Britain, given the esteem and popularity that surrounded the Italian historian. While maintaining that every interference from abroad would damage Salvemini's position, Mussolini reassured Graham that the accused would be released without consequences, and that he would even benefit from an amnesty that would be declared in the coming months<sup>35</sup>. In essence, English pressure had guaranteed Salvemini an unscathed departure from court.

### **Fleeing from Florence**

It must be said that Salvemini had fortuitously escaped an ambush plan hatched by Florentine fascists, who had disobeyed Mussolini's orders more than once. Suspicious of the police officers' behaviors, the professor took refuge at Rosselli's house: the next day, shortly after closing the door when he was leaving, the house was ransacked by the fascists<sup>36</sup>. At that point, Salvemini understood that he could not stay in Florence while awaiting amnesty. He instructed Ugo Ojetti to inform the prefect that he was departing for Rome; the latter assigned him two police officers. Between the middle of July and the beginning of August, accompanied by those whom he ironically called «guardian angels», Salvemini went to Rome, Naples and Sorrento, to visit friends, namely the meridionalist Giustino Fortunato, and Carlo Ruffino and Teresa Ruffino-Martini – owners of the villa La Rufola, where Salvemini would return as a guest during the final years of his life. He then headed north to Santa Margherita Ligure, to the home of Maria and

<sup>35</sup> See the documents in The National Archives, UK (NAUK), *Foreign Office (FO)*, f. 371/10790, 23 June 1925; ASMAE, GAB, b. 1, f. «Colloqui di Mussolini», 26 June 1925.

<sup>36</sup> G. Salvemini, *Il Non Mollare*, cit., p. 18.

Raffaele Rossetti, with whom he would later share his exile, and finally to Milan, where he managed to cover up his tracks from the two officers. He took a train to Novara and then another to Aosta, where awaiting him were the then-young scholars Federico Chabod, Carlo Guido Mor, and Natalino Sapegno. They drove him to Modane in the very first days of August, enabling him to cross the French border<sup>37</sup>.

### Waiting in London

Salvemini was still not fully aware that he had begun a life in exile. He, in fact, maintained the hope that he would be able to reenter Italy and, above all, resume his professorship in Florence<sup>38</sup>. He settled down between Paris and Abbaye de Pontigny, where his wife, Fernande, was; but his immediate intention was to go to London and not remain in France: a logical choice, given his positive past experiences.

He once again asked Steed and Strachey for assistance in setting up courses for him to hold in the fall. He needed to work. On 13 July 1925, in conjunction with the «Non mollare» trial, the rector of the University of Florence communicated to him the injunction of «suspension from his position without salary effective the 6<sup>th</sup> of June», as well as the obligation to repay 2,000 liras that he had «wrongly» received for the month of June<sup>39</sup>.

On 2 October, he received good news: thanks to the amnesty, his suspension was lifted. He would be able to return to Florence and reclaim his professorship and his salary. A couple of days later, though, he learned of the fascist expeditions to Florence, during the so-called Night of Saint Bartholomew, which ended in the murders of Gustavo Consolo and Gaetano

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<sup>37</sup> Id., *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 21-23. The accounts given by Salvemini in *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito* and by Tagliacozzo in *Gaetano Salvemini. Un profilo biografico* do not match. In particular, the involvement of Gobetti is mentioned by Tagliacozzo, but not by Salvemini. See the introduction to *Gaetano Salvemini, Lettere americane 1927-1929*, ed. Renato Camurri, Rome, Donzelli, 2015, p. XLIII.

<sup>38</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., pp. 203-204.

<sup>39</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., p. 345: the rector of the University of Florence to Salvemini, 15 July 1925.

Pilati, both of whom were connected to the «Non Mollare» network<sup>40</sup>.

This climate of violence definitively convinced Salvemini to remain outside Italy. Carlo Rosselli, worried about the void that the professor would leave behind, asked him to return and continue to educate the young generations, playing a crucial formative role that only he could play, but this heartfelt appeal was not enough to make him return. Others, such as Piero Calamandrei and Ernesto Sestan, while aware of the loss, warned him of the dangers that his return posed<sup>41</sup>. «After long, anguished hesitations», as he told Mary Berenson, he had decided. He was ready to confront the eventual loss of citizenship and the confiscation of assets – these were, once again, premonitory phrases – but he was also determined to use his privilege of freedom to make known the true nature of the fascist regime to those abroad<sup>42</sup>.

### **Removed from the professorship**

Having therefore made his final decision, he began to live as an exile. He did not intend to stay in Paris, but his passport was still that «surreptitious» one that he procured in 1923. In order to enter Great Britain, he would again need the help of Steed and Ponsonby, who turned to the Chief Inspector of the Home Office's Foreign Department, Haldane Porter. A permit allowed him to reach London at the beginning of October. From London, Salvemini sent his famous letter of resignation to the rector of the University of Florence on 5 November:

The fascist dictatorship has, by now, completely suppressed those conditions of liberty in our country, without which the university-level teaching of history – as I understand it – loses all dignity, since it necessarily ceases being an instrument of free, civil education and reduces itself to servile flattery of the ruling party, or to mere erudite

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<sup>40</sup> Id., *Il Non Mollare*, cit., pp. 22-32; Andrea Giaconi, *La Fascistissima. Il fascismo in Toscana dalla marcia alla notte di San Bartolomeo*, Foligno, Il Formichiere, 2019.

<sup>41</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 419-428: Carlo Rosselli to Salvemini, 29 September 1925; Piero Calamandrei to Salvemini, 5 October 1925; Ernesto Sestan to Salvemini, 6 October 1925.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 435-436: Salvemini to Mary Berenson, 14 October 1925.

exercises, irrelevant to the moral conscience of the teacher and of the pupils. I am, therefore, compelled to separate myself from my students and from my colleagues, with great pain but with a clear conscience of fulfilling an obligation of loyalty toward them, which comes before an obligation of consistency and respect for myself. I will return to serve the country within the school system once we have regained a civil government<sup>43</sup>.

It is important to underline not only the explicit criticism of the regime, but also the personal suffering expressed in the forced separation from his pupils, whom he wanted to educate, as likewise requested of him by Rosselli. But even more distressing was the controversy that ensued<sup>44</sup>. On 25 November, the rector of the University of Florence communicated to Salvemini that the Faculty Senate had unanimously voted for a protestation, denying that «pressure» had ever been applied to «disturb» the contents of his lessons; moreover, the rector himself deplored the fact that Salvemini had made his letter public in the «New Statesman». Salvemini retorted that the freedom to think for oneself had been abolished throughout the country, and that the Florentine Faculty Senate had furthermore surrendered to the will of the fascists, limiting the freedom of expression, including his own. He listed a few exemplary instances: their cancellation of his commemoration of Pasquale Villari; their suspension of him after his arrest in 1925, as had been expressly requested by the newspaper of the local Fascio; the rector's suggestion that he ask for a leave of absence, to avoid unrest. The freedom of the press was in great force in Great Britain, contrary to what was taking place in Italy. Therefore, he had taken the opportunity to acquaint a foreign audience with the issue at hand, and he would do the same also in the future<sup>45</sup>.

In the meantime, the Minister of Education, Pietro Fedele, who was also a

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 469-470: Salvemini to the rector of the University of Florence, 5 November 1925.

<sup>44</sup> Salvemini gave an account of the controversy in *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 26-33.

<sup>45</sup> The contents of the exchange, the resolutions of the Faculty Senate, and the removal of Salvemini from his position were also reported by the «Manchester Guardian» (*Signor Salvemini: Resolution by Florence University Senate*, 28 November 1925, p. 10; *Signor Salvemini: Dismissed from Florence University*, 2 December 1925, p. 9) and the «Times» (*Italian Professor Dismissed*, 2 December 1925, p. 14).

university professor of history, decided not to consider Salvemini's resignation and instead to take into account the complaint from the Faculty Senate at the University of Florence. He therefore established the retroactive dismissal of the professor on account of the «abandonment of office effective 16 October 1925», of which he was alerted on 4 December 1925. He even demanded reimbursement of the salary that Salvemini had received up until 31 October (approximately 1,400 liras)<sup>46</sup>. Noting that he was still awaiting arrears due to him, Salvemini declared himself available to cover the eventual difference<sup>47</sup>.

The matter received widespread attention in Great Britain. Janet Trevelyan took care of relaying the news to the «New Statesman»; Ernest Barker wrote a letter denouncing the Faculty Senate's sanction in the «Times», George Peabody Gooch published the correspondence between the professor and the University of Florence in the «Contemporary Review»<sup>48</sup>.

### **A free man among the free in London**

Salvemini began to plan his life in London. He wrote to his friends, the Berensons:

Dear B.B. and dear Mary, do not cause yourselves any grief thinking about my «exile». I would feel so much more like an exile if I were in Italy. When I am in London, I am not an exile: I am in my home, I am in my heart's homeland, a free man among the free, a person among people. In Paris I feel more like an exile. But I hope to settle down in London. Who knows if I can find a steady job in London or in England starting in 1927<sup>49</sup>.

He had a constant preoccupation, common among many exiles: «how would I

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<sup>46</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., p. 514: the rector of the University of Florence to Salvemini, 4 December 1925.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 519: Salvemini to the rector of the University of Florence, 19 December 1925.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 478: Janet Trevelyan to Salvemini, 7 November 1925; Ernest Barker, *Academic Freedom*, «Times», 4 December 1925, p. 10; G.P. Gooch, *Professor Salvemini and the Fascists*, «Contemporary Review», 129, 1926, pp. 181-185.

<sup>49</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 481-482: Salvemini to Mary Berenson, 11 November 1925.

have been able to make ends meet at my age without my salary as a teacher, upon which I had always lived?»<sup>50</sup>. His relocation also depended on this concern:

France was a country lacking in manpower, and every worker, from whichever part of the world he emigrated, found employment without delay and on good terms. But there was an overabundance of native intellectuals, and there was nothing but hunger for the immigrant intellectual. In England, where I had friends whose generosity I was already familiar with, I was able to solve the economic issue with less difficulty<sup>51</sup>.

In addition, some countries had a strategic importance in his plan to spread antifascism abroad. He had already sensed it on his trip in 1923; at the end of 1926, after a year of intense activity in London, he would reiterate: «The key to antifascism is not in Italy, and it is not in France. The key is in England and in the United States. We must concentrate our efforts in these countries»<sup>52</sup>.

### **The choice of London**

His choice to settle in London, therefore, ran counter to the majority of antifascist exiles, who poured into French cities, especially starting in 1926, the year of the so-called «emigrazione dei partiti» [party emigration]<sup>53</sup>. Even his wife Fernande Dauriac, who was French, had moved permanently from Florence to Paris, and housing in France was cheaper than in Great Britain. But the two spouses, about whose relationship there is little information, rarely lived together, and Salvemini – of notoriously difficult disposition – desired to be in absolute tranquility when working<sup>54</sup>. During the instances in which he had returned to France, he dedicated himself to writing and he had lived in significant isolation, away from antifascist circles, which were composed mainly of Italian refugees. Likewise, he kept his distance from the

<sup>50</sup> Id., *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 25.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>52</sup> Id., *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., p. 549: Salvemini to Umberto Zanotti-Bianco, 14 December [1926].

<sup>53</sup> Aldo Garosci, *Storia dei fuorusciti*, Bari, Laterza, 1953, pp. 26-54.

<sup>54</sup> See an account from Marion Rawson, *Some Notes on Salvemini's Life in England*, 19 November 1965, in Reading University Library (RUL), *Papers of Marion Rawson* (MS 1244), M.24.

antifascist networks of Little Italy in London, but he maintained close relationships with a few Italians whom he believed were capable of influencing British intellectual circles. Among these was Angelo Crespi (1887-1949), a journalist who had moved to London in 1904 and had begun to work as a correspondent for the «Corriere della Sera». After a period of time spent at the University of Basel, Crespi had returned to Great Britain in 1916 and had also contributed to «Il Popolo» and «Il Messaggero». Of the Catholic faith, he was one of the main points of contact between Salvemini and Luigi Sturzo. Also noteworthy is Raffaele Rossetti (1881-1951), an engineer and recipient of the gold medal for military valor for having sunk the Austro-Hungarian ship *Viribus Unitis* during the First World War, choosing later to return the medal as a gesture of opposition toward fascism. Together with his wife Maria, he went into exile in London at the end of 1925 upon suggestion from Salvemini, and eventually followed him to the United States. Finally, Alessandro Magri MacMahon (1895-1981), an Irishman who moved to London to become a teacher in 1927, was recommended to Salvemini by Luigi Emery, a contributor to «Non Mollare» and the Berlin correspondent for «Il Tempo». Magri often served as a secretary to Salvemini for the London chapter, founded in 1929, of the *Concentrazione antifascista* [Antifascist Action Concentration]. This group's main operational headquarters had been in Paris since 1927, with Luigi Campolonghi, Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani, Claudio Treves among others. Salvemini believed that it would be more useful to obtain the support of British intellectuals to spread opposition to fascism<sup>55</sup>.

### **The British network**

The years between 1925 and 1934 have been seen as a transition period,

<sup>55</sup> Some references to Salvemini's sporadic contacts with the milieu of Little Italy can be found in Alfio Bernabei, *Esuli ed emigrati italiani nel Regno Unito*, Milan, Mursia, 1997; Stefania Rampello, *Italian anti-Fascism in London 1922-1934*, «Modern Italy», 20, 4, 2015, pp. 351-363. Regarding the Italian intellectuals selected on account of their influence in British intellectual circles, see A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 44-46 and 79-85.



preceding the one in which Salvemini became an American citizen<sup>56</sup>. Yet, they were years of spasmodic activity, only recently brought to light: he was a paid lecturer, he published numerous articles and letters in major British newspapers, he organized public appeals and lobbied via the press, and he engaged in the support of exiled antifascists and in secretive actions that aided those remaining in Italy who opposed the regime<sup>57</sup>. All of this occurred especially due to an intellectual network that had its origins in the Anglo-Florentine contacts, which expanded during his travels of 1922 and 1923 and strengthened through the show of solidarity specifically during the «Non Mollare» trial and throughout his dismissal from the professorship.

At the heart of this network, initially, was Alys Russell, Mary Berenson's sister and the ex-wife of Bertrand Russell (whose last name she kept), who was very active in the Fabian Society and in the Labor Party and an inexhaustible source of contacts. It was her who introduced Salvemini to a great number of influential figures, among whom were the political analysts Graham Wallas, Harold Laski, and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson; the suffragist Millicent Garrett Fawcett; and the Classics scholar Gilbert Murray of Oxford University. Besides Russell, Salvemini's network in Great Britain was made up of at least three other female intellectuals: Marion Rawson, a translator; Virginia Crawford, a journalist; and Isabella Massey, a lecturer of German at Bedford College. They were not Salvemini's secretaries or assistants – as they have been defined at times – but rather advisers, inspirers, and a real driving force in his antifascist campaigns<sup>58</sup>.

While lecturing throughout Great Britain, Salvemini meticulously dismantled the falsehoods spread by Mussolini's regime through the leading London-

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<sup>56</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 209.

<sup>57</sup> See A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit.

<sup>58</sup> For an in-depth biographical analysis, for the way in which they came into contact with Salvemini, and for the overlapping of Salvemini's and Sturzo's networks, see *Ibid.*, pp. 63-70; the introduction to Luigi Sturzo and Gaetano Salvemini, *Carteggio (1925-1957)*, ed. Giovanni Grasso, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2009; the introduction to *Fra le righe. Carteggio fra Carlo Rosselli e Gaetano Salvemini*, ed. Elisa Signori, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 28-36.

based fascist propagandist, Luigi Villari<sup>59</sup>. Ironically enough, he was the son of historian Pasquale Villari, the very teacher who had first introduced Salvemini to the Berensons' intellectual circle and had further inspired his interest in the Anglo-Saxon world. Plunged into a diplomatic career and already a consul in the United States, Luigi Villari was in London for the duration of Salvemini's exile, sent by Mussolini himself in order to strengthen fascist propaganda abroad<sup>60</sup>. The two ended up confronting one another constantly, in person and in the press<sup>61</sup>. Salvemini admitted to having written *The Fascist Dictatorship* – released in the United States in 1927, and in a revised edition in Great Britain a year later – in order to counter Villari's text, *The Awakening of Italy*, released in 1924<sup>62</sup>.

### Conference speaker in London

On 19 January 1926, Salvemini held a conference at the National Liberal Club of London, presided over by Graham Wallas, in which he contradicted one of the cornerstones of Mussolini's propaganda, that being that fascism had saved Italy from an imminent revolution of the Bolshevik kind<sup>63</sup>. In regard to the ideas expressed by Salvemini, the fascist daily newspaper «Impero» – without mincing words – expressed the hope that the professor would be assassinated<sup>64</sup>. Alys Russell and Ernest Barker publicly protested this in the «Times» and advocated for a protection service for the professor, so that he could continue his conference circuit at places like the Parliamentary Labour Club, also in London, and at the Oxford branch of the League of Nations Union, headed by Gilbert Murray. 23 March 1926 was his official debut,

<sup>59</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., p. 543: Salvemini to Umberto Zanotti-Bianco, 14 December 1926.

<sup>60</sup> Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s*, Oxford-New York, Berg, 2003, pp. 9-10.

<sup>61</sup> A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 77-79.

<sup>62</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 86.

<sup>63</sup> *Italy's Perpetual Night*, «Manchester Guardian», 20 January 1926, p. 12.

<sup>64</sup> *Come si deve colpire Slavemini* [sic], «Impero», 24-25 January 1926, p. 1; these threats were also reported in the «Times» (*Fascist Press and Its Opponents*, 18 February 1926) and in the «Manchester Guardian» (*Italian Exiles Warned*, 18 February 1926, p. 12).

strongly desired by Russell: the «great lecture» in London's Essex Hall – a paid appearance, with two security guards positioned at the entrance – was sponsored by twenty influential intellectuals supporting Salvemini, who presented on *What is Fascism*. It was a success<sup>65</sup>.

Mussolini did not stand by idly and watch. In addition to unleashing Villari's counter-propaganda, he imposed on Salvemini both a loss of Italian citizenship and the confiscation of his assets via a decree, citing his various accusations and, above all, that the professor was «carrying out a criminal campaign abroad against the National Regime, [...and] portraying Italy as a land of oppression and tyranny»<sup>66</sup>.

### **A candidate without a victory**

Meanwhile, after teaching a course on nineteenth-century Italy, uncompensated, at King's College,<sup>67</sup> Salvemini considered applying for a professorship in Modern History at Bedford College, the same institution at which Isabella Massey was a lecturer in German. It was Massey herself who took care of this process and of almost all the applications that Salvemini would submit in the following years. However, despite having gathered the testimonials of Benedetto Croce and Elie Halévy, he preferred not to submit his candidacy. Perhaps he feared that had he failed to obtain the position, this could be exploited by the fascist press, and he knew that he was not well-versed enough in British history. He did the same for a professorship in History in Leeds, at what was then Westfield College, now Queen Mary University of London. In only one case did he go all the way: he reapplied for a position at Bedford College in 1930, backed by testimonials from Charles Seignobos, Elie Halévy, Charles Previt  Orton, and by references from Ernest

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<sup>65</sup> *Prof. Salvemini on Fascism*, «Manchester Guardian», 24 March 1926, p. 14; see A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 72-75.

<sup>66</sup> RD n. 1753, 30 September 1926, *Inflizione della perdita della cittadinanza italiana con la confisca dei beni al prof. Salvemini Gaetano* (GU n. 243, 19 October 1926).

<sup>67</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 415-416: Ernest Barker to Salvemini, 14 September 1925.

Barker, George Macaulay Trevelyan, and Arthur Schlesinger. In the cover letter, Salvemini admitted that he had no publication on British history, and yet he was driven to apply by a deep desire to return to teaching, and to be among students. The outcome of his application process was not a positive one: Salvemini said he was relieved, because preparing himself to teach British history would have meant sacrificing part of his antifascist duties<sup>68</sup>.

Meanwhile, in October of 1926, the agent of the Foreign Policy Association, William Feakins, introduced to Salvemini by Francesco Saverio Nitti, had offered him to hold a series of lectures in the United States on fascism, guaranteeing him a handsome fee. Salvemini was able to obtain a visa through the intervention of Walter Lippman, an influential American journalist, and a friend of the Berensons. The Foreign Ministry tried to prevent it, but the US Department of State underlined the «legal impossibility» of denying him a visa, since he was not identifiable within the categories of anarchist or communist, not to mention that «provoking a Salvemini case» was certainly not desirable. The Italian consul in Washington, DC protested, anticipating an «incident» in the «Italian-American communities» aligned with fascism<sup>69</sup>.

### **Life in this country is absurd...**

Salvemini set sail for New York on 29 December 1926<sup>70</sup>. In a letter to Isabella Massey, which he wrote aboard the steamship that brought him overseas, he said that he was very sad to have to leave London, and that six months away from friends seemed too long<sup>71</sup>.

His first impression was awful:

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<sup>68</sup> Regarding all the job applications listed here, see the account in A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 168-170.

<sup>69</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 50. ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Gaetano Salvemini», cable n. 245320, 23 October 1926.

<sup>70</sup> G. Salvemini, *Carteggio 1921-1926*, cit., pp. 539-543: Salvemini to Ernesto Rossi, 14 September 1926.

<sup>71</sup> A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., p. 55.

I had no idea about what the United States was like, where the distance between Lisbon and Berlin is as short as the path to the kitchen garden [TN: idiom to express that an undertaking is all but simple and brief]. My agent whisked me along from New York to Columbus (Ohio) in a night, and the night after to Portland (Maine); then from Boston (Mass.) to Montreal (Canada), then from Montreal to New York, making me travel by night and speak by day – me, who if I didn't have ten uninterrupted hours of sleep in my bed, I would feel like a wreck the day after. How I survived, I don't know<sup>72</sup>.

After about a month, he again wrote to Massey: «No danger I become a Yankee. Rather than live in this country I should commit suicide. And I am counting one by one the days which divide me from that of sailing. [...] I am so tired. Life in this country is absurd»<sup>73</sup>. His letters of the following weeks recount his despondency and his nostalgia for Beaufort Street, which was Massey's home address in London<sup>74</sup>. It is not by chance that *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, published in New York in 1927, bore the following words as the dedication: «To my English friends, who have caused me to realize that I have two countries: my own and England»<sup>75</sup>.

### Conference speaker in the United States

On 5 January 1927, the first day he set foot in New York, he gave an interview to the «New York Times» in which he honestly said that he needed «to earn a living by giving public lectures, but at the same time, [he intended] to give the American public honest information about Italy under the fascist regime»<sup>76</sup>. He participated in question periods and especially in debates, which, in the words of Salvemini, was

a discussion between two wretched people, of whom one presents a thesis, and the other an opposite one; then, the audience participates by asking questions of one debater and the other, looking to embarrass

<sup>72</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 52.

<sup>73</sup> AISRT, *Fondo Gaetano Salvemini* (GS), *Carte Isabella Massey*, f. 7/1, Salvemini to Massey, 5 February 1927. Special thanks to Fondazione Rossi-Salvemini, particularly to professor Luigi Pepe, for the access to this document collection.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, Salvemini to Massey, 12 February 1927; Salvemini to Massey, 26 April 1927.

<sup>75</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, New York, Henry Holt & C., 1927.

<sup>76</sup> *Id.*, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 50. For the account of Salvemini's activities see C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 210-215.

each one; and by applauding, keeping quiet, laughing, or muttering they show if they find the answer convincing<sup>77</sup>.

The propagandist chosen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to oppose Salvemini was Bruno Roselli, professor of Italian literature at Vassar College and former attaché to the Italian Embassy<sup>78</sup>. Protests and riots by Italian-American fascists did not lack on some occasions.

In conclusion, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plainly said that Salvemini's tour had certainly turned out to be a failure<sup>79</sup>. Instead, Salvemini actually managed to meet with local antifascist groups, assisted by Raffaele Rossetti who had joined him from London, and was convinced that much could be done to counter the fascist propaganda, even in the United States. But, for the time being, he remained of the mind that he would not be able to make a living in that country.

### **Among Parisian exiles**

He embarked for London on 29 April and returned to Paris by the summer, where he found a very large group of antifascist leaders. It was at that time, between 1927 and 1928, that Salvemini attempted to form a collaboration with the exiles in France, thus providing external support to the Antifascist Action Concentration. It was his idea to participate in the international press exhibition in Cologne, Germany, in 1928, with a section dedicated to antifascist newspapers<sup>80</sup>. Spies ended up infiltrating the project, even if in that ideological climate it seemed to him impossible to proceed in a unified manner. In a bitter letter to Turati, he concluded: «I misled myself into

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<sup>77</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 53-54.

<sup>78</sup> ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Gaetano Salvemini», memorandum of Bruno Roselli, 19 November 1926; the consul of New York to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 22 November 1926. The shorthand record of the debate between Salvemini and Roselli on 22 January 1927 in Boston is included in the appendix of G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 147-189.

<sup>79</sup> ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Gaetano Salvemini», cable n. 21666, 6 April 1927.

<sup>80</sup> Regarding Salvemini's relationship with the Concentrazione antifascista [Antifascist Concentration], see Santi Fedele, *Dalla concentrazione antifascista a Giustizia e Libertà*, in *Il prezzo della libertà. Gaetano Salvemini in esilio (1925-1949)*, ed. Patrizia Audenino, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2009.

thinking that it would be possible to find people in Paris capable of understanding the *moral* value of an *objective* exhibition. I deceived myself. You cannot work together with people you do not trust. Then the work doubles»<sup>81</sup>.

On the contrary, he had complete trust in his group of loyal antifascist women in London, to whom he entrusted even risky tasks: trips to Italy in order to obtain firsthand information about the political situation, support for exiles who found themselves under arrest, even the planning of the escape of Carlo Rosselli, Emilio Lussu, and Francesco Fausto Nitti from the *confino* in Lipari<sup>82</sup>.

### Overseas again

Meanwhile, Salvemini continued to hold lectures and give speeches, even though he was unable to obtain a permanent academic position. After using up the money that he had earned lecturing in the US in 1927, he once again crossed the Atlantic in January of 1929. Alvin Johnson, the director of the New School for Social Research in New York, had invited him as a visiting professor for a course comprising twelve lectures on Italian foreign policy, the same one that Salvemini had held at King's College in 1923<sup>83</sup>. Salvemini did not rely on an agent this time. Instead, he himself organized a series of public lectures also on the West Coast, where he was the guest of Joseph Ettor, a trade unionist of Italian origins who scheduled other events for him with the Italian-American community<sup>84</sup>. In fact, he was «convinced that [...] he would find there the moral and financial support necessary for a vast struggle against fascism outside and within Italy», but he clashed with the

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<sup>81</sup> The letter is reproduced in Santi Fedele, *Filippo Turati e i corrispondenti italiani nell'esilio 1927-1932*, Manduria, Laicata, 1998, pp. 198-201. For more on the circumstances, see G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 83-85; A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 53-54.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104-114 and 123-132.

<sup>83</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 88; C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 222; ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Gaetano Salvemini», telegram n. 953/34, 8 January 1929.

<sup>84</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 223-224.

conservatism or pro-fascism of the so-called «prominenti»<sup>85</sup>.

### Essential encounters

In any case, the trip of 1929 was important: it allowed him to meet Roberto and Maritza Bolaffio in California, a married couple from Friuli who had moved to the United States to escape fascist persecution and would remain among his closest friends for the rest of his life. Subsequently, in Cambridge (MA), Salvemini made the acquaintance of Giorgio La Piana, professor of ecclesiastical history at Harvard<sup>86</sup>. Finally, on the way back to New York, he was contacted by Lauro De Bosis, a young poet and secretary of the Italy-America Society, who mentioned to him the idea of flying over Rome and dropping antifascist pamphlets<sup>87</sup>.

These American encounters would prove to be essential. However, a few days after arriving in New York, Salvemini continued to repeat hyperbolic ideas of suicide to Massey: «this country makes me sick, though it gives money»<sup>88</sup>. He felt uprooted, and he absolutely ruled out the possibility of relocating there permanently. He prepared for an important academic job application in England, in the meantime: Thomas Okey, an elderly professor of Italian, had retired from his position as *Serena Professor* at Cambridge, and Salvemini put his candidacy forward with the usual testimonials from Elie Halévy, Charles Previt -Orton, Charles Seignobos, and Benedetto Croce, along with the availability of Ernest Barker to serve as a reference<sup>89</sup>. He was turned down. Given the more favorable environment toward fascism at Cambridge, a candidate aligned with Mussolini was expected to get the job. Furthermore, the professorships of Italian in the United Kingdom were largely occupied by openly fascist professors, engaged in propaganda

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<sup>85</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 89.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>88</sup> See A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 56-57.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.



activities: Cesare Foligno at Oxford, Camillo Pellizzi at University College London (UCL), and Piero Reborja at Manchester<sup>90</sup>. Instead, the prestigious position was awarded to Raffaello Piccoli, an expert in literature who already had experience at Oxford and Cambridge and who had views proximate to antifascism, even if he did not display them as much as Salvemini. On the one hand, the choice of Piccoli was probably linked to the preference of a man of letters to a historian, but it is clear that the choice of Salvemini would have been riskier from a political point of view.

### **The «discovery of America»**

With the possibility of having a position in Cambridge, UK, set aside, an opportunity opened up in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Thanks to Giorgio La Piana and the historian Arthur Schlesinger – who could not be persuaded otherwise by the unfavorable opinion of the rector, A. Lawrence Lowell<sup>91</sup> – Salvemini was appointed to teach at Harvard for four months: the same course from 1923 brought him 5,000 dollars and guaranteed him two years of economic independence. He made, at that point, his personal «discovery of America», as he described it in his memoir in the 1950s. He described the environment at Harvard in an absolutely positive way, affirming that he had spent «five happy months», particularly due to his friendship with La Piana and Michele and Hélène Cantarella, based out of Smith College in Northampton (MA). He was also able to utilize the very well-stocked Widener Library and enjoyed the rapport he had with his students<sup>92</sup>.

Before, he would have gladly avoided going to the United States. But once he settled at Harvard, an intellectually stimulating environment, he began to express a desire to stay there, although he kept writing to Massey that he was too far from London, which he called home, and that he actually felt like

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., pp. 174-176. See Tamara Colacicco, *La propaganda fascista nelle università inglesi. La diplomazia culturale di Mussolini in Gran Bretagna (1921-1940)*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2018.

<sup>91</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 242.

<sup>92</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 111-117.

an exile in America<sup>93</sup>.

### «The usual dietary reasons»

His return in the summer of 1930 was marked by a long illness that forced him to stay in Paris. It was «a cursed year»: the wave of arrests – including those of Ernesto Rossi and Riccardo Bauer – seriously compromised the activity of Giustizia e Libertà in Italy. For the «trial of the intellectuals» in 1931, Salvemini mobilized the press and his British acquaintances, so that those on trial would not be sentenced to death<sup>94</sup>. After all, he had done this before: in 1927, during the trial against Parri and Rosselli for the illegal expatriation of Filippo Turati; in 1928, against the indiscriminate arrests of antifascists after the assassination attempt on the king; and in 1929, he had celebrated the escape of Lussu, Nitti, and Rosselli from Lipari. Furthermore, that year, «Italy To-day» started its publication in Great Britain and the United States, as he had greatly desired: this was a series of monthly brochures in English, edited by Virginia Crawford, in which widespread messages of fascist propaganda were examined and promptly disproven<sup>95</sup>.

In the battle for a stable academic job, however, there was little progress in Great Britain. Salvemini did not always try for it; fascist professors of Italian certainly obstructed him<sup>96</sup>. Instead, on the other side of the ocean, in 1931, he secured himself a visiting professorship at Yale University for the following year and reiterated his willingness to return to Harvard to Giorgio La Piana, also in order to address his persistent lack of funds<sup>97</sup>.

He had come to understand that Great Britain would not offer him the opportunity of a stable job. Even when the *Serena Professorship* at Cambridge,

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<sup>93</sup> A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 56-57.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 141-153; G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 124-133.

<sup>95</sup> See A. Gussoni, *Gaetano Salvemini a Londra*, cit., pp. 153-166.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>97</sup> See the letters to La Piana published in G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane 1927-1949*, cit., pp. 34-39 (24 December 1930); pp. 50-52 (4 April 1931); pp. 54-57 (27 August 1931); pp. 78-80 (18 September 1932).

the position that Salvemini had applied for in 1929, once again became vacant following the untimely death of Raffaello Piccoli in February of 1933, he had very little chance for success in that environment. And in fact, the professorship was assigned to Edward Bullough, who enjoyed the favor of the regime<sup>98</sup>.

When all seemed lost, and every door in England closed, another opened up, which finally ensured him access to Harvard.

### **The Harvard years: a «medieval monk»?**

Some stereotypes, recently deemed outdated, had been posthumously constructed regarding Salvemini's American years, the origin and duration of which should be questioned more thoroughly. The first concerns the «monastic» lifestyle that Salvemini maintained at Harvard, isolated from the surrounding world, confined to the Widener Library and his room in Leverett House. Such an image is mainly due to the biographical profile published in 1963 by Enzo Tagliacozzo, who was himself an exile in the United States due to racial reasons<sup>99</sup>. It is difficult to give a definitive answer as to the reason for this misleading impression; what is certain, however, is that it is surprising to find it in the work of Tagliacozzo, a close collaborator of Salvemini's in his American years, who was surely aware of the intense activity and network of contacts woven by the professor in those years, especially with important people in academia, politics, and American journalism<sup>100</sup>.

In addition to focusing his attention on his publications, Salvemini had an excellent relationship with his students and colleagues, traveled, gave speeches, developed projects, and established and maintained contacts that

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<sup>98</sup> In reference to the reasons for Bullough's appointment, see Uberto Limentani, *Leone and Arthur Serena and the Cambridge Chair of Italian, 1919-1934*, «Modern Languages Review», 92, 4, 1997, pp. 877-892.

<sup>99</sup> E. Tagliacozzo, *Gaetano Salvemini. Un profilo biografico*, cit., p. 83. Regarding the consolidation of this stereotype in other works, see the introduction by R. Camurri in G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane 1927-1949*, cit., pp. XXXIII-XXXVI.

<sup>100</sup> On Salvemini's expansive American network, *ibid.*, pp. XLIX-LIII.

he exploited for the benefit of the antifascist cause.

### **Among exiles**

As obvious from his rich correspondence during the Harvard years, Salvemini never stopped doing all that he could for other exiles that shared his same situation. For example, he took steps to have some of Emilio Lussu's writings published, with the help of Professor Arthur Livingston; he asked judge Felix Frankfurter for a job for the Bolaffios; he sought help from La Piana to provide a placement for one of his former students who had come to the United States, Luisa Nordio. He also asked a testimonial from La Piana, this time for Alberto Tarchiani; he asked one from Hamilton Fish Armstrong for Carlo Rosselli<sup>101</sup>.

The title of «medieval monk» is even more surprising if we consider the central role that Salvemini played in the foundation of an antifascist organization such as the Mazzini Society, indeed the result of his convictions, which was based on the participation of Italians who had obtained American citizenship, and which involved the aforementioned Michele Cantarella and Roberto Bolaffio from its inception, in addition to Renato Poggioli, professor of Comparative Literature at Brown University, and Lionello Venturi, an art historian at Johns Hopkins University. Max Ascoli, a Jewish philosopher of law at the New School for Social Research who had arrived in the United States in 1931 thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation and had obtained American citizenship in the meantime, was named president of the Society. Among the main duties of the New York-based association was not only the opposition, through the press, to the widespread fascist propaganda, but also the assistance of exiles and the development of contacts with American intellectuals. The Mazzini Society became progressively concerned with

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<sup>101</sup> See the correspondence in *ibid.*: Salvemini to Arthur Livingstone, 1 and 5 October, 20 November 1929, 24 February 1931, pp. 10-14 and 41; Salvemini to Giorgio La Piana, 29 August, 30 September, 20 October, 5 and 27 November, 30 December 1930, pp. 25-39; Salvemini to Felix Frankfurter, 5 April 1931, pp. 52-53; Salvemini to Hamilton Fish Armstrong, 11 March 1935, pp. 114-115; Salvemini to La Piana, 11 June 1936, pp. 128-129.

political issues; as had happened with *Giustizia e libertà*, Salvemini definitively distanced himself from his own creation in 1942, often entering into conflict with Ascoli himself. The two had diverging views regarding the involvement of Italian-American communities' leaders and regarding relations with the Allied powers: Salvemini was convinced that it was necessary to create a «Free Italy» committee, comprised of exiles (and not of American citizens) who could more directly influence the politics of postwar reconstruction, safeguarding the ability for self determination for the Italian people<sup>102</sup>.

### **The Harvard years: a permanent position?**

A second long-lasting cliché, albeit an easily verifiable one, concerns Salvemini's academic position. It is well known that at the end of 1933, the actress Ruth Draper proposed to Harvard to finance a lectureship in the History of Italian Civilization in memory of her fiancé Lauro De Bosis, who had died at sea at the age of thirty after dropping antifascist pamphlets over Rome. To honor his heroic antifascism, Draper suggested that the position be assigned to Salvemini, despite the political opposition from the chair of the Department of Romance Languages, Jeremiah D.M. Ford. It was La Piana who convinced James B. Conant – the new president of the university, who had more open views than the previous one – to hire Salvemini starting in the spring semester of 1934 for six lessons and a seminar, yielding a salary of 2,000 dollars, which increased to 2,500 dollars<sup>103</sup>. It was not, therefore, a professorship or a permanent position, but rather a contract for a semester, renewable from year to year. In fact, it was constantly renewed until 1948. In retrospect, as present in his memoirs, Salvemini himself unintentionally contributed to fueling the misinformation, identifying the assignment as «the permanent solution to the [...] economic problem», since it actually gave him

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<sup>102</sup> Maddalena Tirabassi, *Salvemini e la Mazzini Society*, in *Il prezzo della libertà*, cit., pp. 91-111.

<sup>103</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., pp. 241-242.

a salary for fourteen years<sup>104</sup>. But at the time, he did not have any job security: his was a precarious position without a very high salary, since he was a «lecturer» without being a «Faculty member»<sup>105</sup>. In a letter to Mary Berenson, again describing the «wonders» of Harvard, he added:

The generosity of the people that You know – alluding to Draper – can only offer 2,000 dollars. I need to earn 3,000 dollars to cover my and Fernande's expenses. That is to say, I need to look for «lectures» here and there. This keeps me from dedicating myself to my studies in the way I would like. But no harm done. And since I manage to make ends meet, I have no reason to be unhappy, and I thank those who provide me with these years of peace and happy work<sup>106</sup>.

On the eve of his inaugural lecture, in order to jeopardize the already precarious position that Salvemini had received from Harvard, the fascist regime circulated the rumor that he had collaborated in an assassination attempt in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Salvemini challenged Mussolini by asking to be extradited to Italy and tried; which clearly did not happen since the accusations against him had all been fabricated<sup>107</sup>.

### **Not only Harvard**

Salvemini taught graduate students every other year and taught undergraduates every year, alternating among courses on the history of the Renaissance, of the Risorgimento, and of Italian diplomacy only during the spring term. This allowed him to work on his publications and to take on other teaching jobs in order to supplement his salary and to better provide for himself, his wife, and the antifascist cause<sup>108</sup>. In 1935-36, he returned to the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research in New York, founded by Alvin Johnson, in part due to the interest of Hamilton Fish

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<sup>104</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., p. 138.

<sup>105</sup> C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 246; R. Camurri, *Introduzione*, in G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane 1927-1949*, cit., pp. L-LI.

<sup>106</sup> I. Origo, *Lettere inedite di Gaetano Salvemini a Mary e Bernard Berenson. Parte II*, cit., pp. 148-149.

<sup>107</sup> G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 139-140; C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 244.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

Armstrong, president of the Wilson Foundation that sponsored the initiative<sup>109</sup>. In the lectures of 1935, Salvemini again addressed the theme of «Europe and the Triple Alliance (1882-1915)», and the following year he concentrated on the period between 1919 to 1935, on the rise of fascism, and on its internal and foreign policy<sup>110</sup>. In February of 1936, he wrote to Costantino Panunzio (from Molfetta like himself), professor of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles, asking if it were possible to obtain him a position there from September 1937 to February 1938<sup>111</sup>. In 1938, he held a series of four lectures at the University of Chicago regarding questions of method<sup>112</sup>.

In 1939, he would reach the age of retirement at 66 year-old<sup>113</sup>. He was worried, even though Harvard would offer him an extension from year to year. In a letter to Guido Ferrando, a friend from his time in Florence who then lived and taught in California, he confided:

I will no longer be appointed to Harvard in a year, since I will have passed the age limit. They have already made me a generous concession not to fire me this year. [...] Up until now, I have been adding to Harvard's 2,500 dollars [...] with another 1,000 dollars I earned by giving public lectures, but even this income source is running out, because my aged heart can no longer bear the stress that it once could. With 3,500 dollars a year in income, I could send 1,000 dollars a year to my wife, use 1,500 dollars for my own expenses, and give myself the luxury of paying anyone who aided me in my research, translated, typed, etc. This year I will only make 2,500 dollars. Then, nothing more. I do not despair that I will obtain some positions as a visiting professor here and there. Above all, I do not despair that I will die<sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>109</sup> G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane*, cit., p. 116: Salvemini to Hamilton Fish Armstrong, 12 May 1935.

<sup>110</sup> See the catalogue of courses offered at the New School for the 1935-36 and 1936-37 academic years, in The New School Archives, Digital Collections, *New School Course Catalog Collection*, Schools of Public Engagement, General Course Catalogs, respectively <<https://digitalarchives.library.newschool.edu>> and <<https://digitalarchives.library.newschool.edu>> (accessed 18 June 2021).

<sup>111</sup> G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane*, cit., pp. 119-120: Salvemini to Costantino Panunzio, 5 February 1936.

<sup>112</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *Historian and Scientist. An Essay on the Nature of History and the Social Sciences*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 1939.

<sup>113</sup> G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane*, cit., pp. 150-151: Salvemini to Max Ascoli, 5 March 1938.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 188-190: Salvemini to Guido Ferrando, 28 May 1940.

He could not imagine that he would live another seventeen years, and that his career would conclude in Italy.

### **In Italy as an American citizen**

Salvemini obtained American citizenship in 1940. As mentioned, he had been stripped of Italian citizenship in 1926, following a provision by the regime, which was then revoked in 1932 thanks to the amnesty that was granted to celebrate the March on Rome's tenth anniversary<sup>115</sup>.

During the Harvard years, Salvemini rarely returned to Europe, and only for brief visits, in 1935 – when he participated in the Congress of Writers for the Defense of Culture, in Paris – and in the summers of 1937-38<sup>116</sup>. He visited his wife in Paris and Massey in London. It was really the latter who represented his primary connection with Europe: together they used to discuss matters of foreign policy and the British government's attitude regarding fascism<sup>117</sup>.

In 1947, after the war, Salvemini returned to London before stepping foot in Italy again for the first time, making a stop in Paris to see Fernande (whom he saw only once more afterward, in 1949)<sup>118</sup>.

After 22 years of exile, between July and October 1947, Salvemini traveled along the country from north to south, keeping a diary, in order to understand the political, social, and economic situation of post-liberation Italy with his own eyes and, naturally, to once again embrace his life-long friends<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> RD n. 1510, 17 November 1932, *Revoca di precedenti decreti con i quali si era inflitta la perdita della cittadinanza italiana a diciassette persone*, GU n. 278, 2 December 1932. Also see ACS, CPC, b. 4551, f. «Gaetano Salvemini», cable 24041 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 24 November 1932. Also see G. Salvemini, *Dai ricordi di un fuoruscito*, cit., pp. 136-138.

<sup>116</sup> The Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search, ad nomen* <<https://heritage.statueofliberty.org>> (accessed upon registration 23 November 2021).

<sup>117</sup> See the numerous exchanges in G. Salvemini, *Lettere americane*, cit., but also the substantial correspondence in AISRT, GS, *Carte Isabella Massey*, f. 7/1.

<sup>118</sup> Fernande Dauriac died on 2 April 1954. As portrayed by F. Fantarella, *Un figlio per nemico*, cit., pp. 135-159, the tragedy of her son Jean Luchaire marked a progressive separation between the spouses, even if Salvemini never failed to send financial support to his wife.

<sup>119</sup> See Gaetano Salvemini, *Diario italiano luglio-settembre 1947*, ed. Alberto Merola, «Belfagor»,



Shortly after the fall of Mussolini, and for about three years at that point, he had been considering the possibility of resuming his professorship in Florence, as provided for by the Royal decree law of 6 January 1944, regarding the reintegration into service of those Italian citizens «dismissed or dispensed for political reasons». The opportunity was initially suggested by Piero Calamandrei, who in the meantime had become the Vice Rector (and rector by January of 1945) of the University of Florence. It is worth considering his complicated return to Italy at length in order to dispel any idea that this was a linear, obvious, or painless process.

### Considering a return to Florence

At the end of September 1944, Piero Calamandrei was the spokesperson for the «desire expressed by many that Gaetano Salvemini be reinstated to the Florentine professorship that he had lost as a result of fascist intolerance», and he had invited the Faculty of Letters to support him. It should be noted that what the Faculty unanimously expressed was a vote of «hope», and nothing more than that, that Salvemini could return to teach in Florence, as evidenced by documents that Calamandrei himself signed<sup>120</sup>. After informing Salvemini, Calamandrei received a letter in response that set a condition for the historian's possible return, despite him being moved by it, namely that his return would be supported primarily by the students, and that he should not renounce his American citizenship<sup>121</sup>. On the other hand, his friends, especially Ernesto Rossi, began to pressure him to return and contribute to

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22, 6, 1967, pp. 696-713, and 23, 1, 1968, pp. 99-116. Also see the correspondence from that time, especially Gaetano Salvemini, *Lettere dall'America 1947-1949*, ed. Alberto Merola, Bari, Laterza, 1968, pp. 87-116.

<sup>120</sup> ASUFI, AC, SD, f. «Salvemini Gaetano», minutes of the meeting of the Council of the Faculty of Letters, the first meeting after the Liberation, 29 September 1944, and the letter from Piero Calamandrei to the Allied Military Government, Education Office, Florence, 20 October 1944. Particularly regarding the reconstruction included here, special thanks go to Patrizia Guarnieri, both for her collaboration in the drafting of this text and for her research carried out on primary texts, thus far neglected.

<sup>121</sup> Gaetano Salvemini, *Lettere dall'America 1944-1946*, ed. Alberto Merola, Bari, Laterza, 1967, pp. 25-28: Salvemini to Piero Calamandrei, 13 October 1944.

the reconstruction of the country, especially to the education of young people. As he wrote to Calamandrei, Salvemini began thinking in December 1944 that he would be able to visit Italy the following summer, and at that point he would likely accept a visiting professorship in Florence, if the Faculty were to offer it<sup>122</sup>.

Subsequently, news began to bounce back and forth in a long and complex manner between Calamandrei, the Ministry of Education, the Italian ambassador to the United States – Alberto Tarchiani, an antifascist well-known to Salvemini – and Ernesto Rossi. For reinstatement, Salvemini had to submit an application to reacquire Italian citizenship, renouncing the American citizenship, and he had no intention of doing so<sup>123</sup>. One of his letters to the historian Augusto Torre explained that his intentions were not economic in nature, because he had not enjoyed any certainty at Harvard in that regard: «In America I have to live a life of intense work in order to keep myself afloat financially. My professorship consists of teaching no more than two hours a week for three months of the year. It is more of an honor than an earning». His reluctance was more linked to the general concern for post-war prospects, for the risk of continuity with the forces and interests of fascism. And then he did not want to humiliate himself by asking for a reinstatement, listing all his credentials, submitting to a rule that he defined without hesitation as «fascist» and which required him to regain citizenship. In fact, he wrote: «Science knows no national borders. If in Rome they are unable to abolish even this relic of the fascist regime in the universities, I do not see why I should adapt today to a fascist law that I condemned yesterday»<sup>124</sup>.

### **A persistent indecision**

Salvemini's state of mind, deeply conflicted over the decision that he should

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., pp. 49-57: Salvemini to Piero Calamandrei, 7 December 1944.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., pp. 149-152: Salvemini to Ada Rossi, 4 June 1945.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., pp. 213-215 (p. 213): Salvemini to Augusto Torre, 12 February 1946.

make, began to change with the approach of the institutional referendum of 2 June 1946: in the event that the majority of Italians had chosen the Republic, he would have been willing to give up his American citizen status to aid in reconstruction. He would not have supported any political party, but he would have dealt with concrete issues. Everything was not dependent upon him or even the University of Florence – according to its rector, Piero Calamandrei – but rather, upon the ministry<sup>125</sup>.

In the summer of 1946, after the positive outcome of the institutional referendum, Calamandrei proposed that Salvemini held a special course of fifteen lessons, starting in the following autumn, and added the possibility of a stipend of 15,000 liras and the reimbursement of all travel expenses<sup>126</sup>. Salvemini postponed everything for a year for he had committed himself to delivering the publisher his *Prelude to World War II*, otherwise facing the return of a 1,500-dollar advance. He invoked the usual financial issues in order to hide the truest reasons for his indecision: «I suffer so much at the thought of having to experience firsthand that I have become a complete stranger to my country of origin, whereas as long as I am here, only my imagination is at work»,<sup>127</sup> he admitted to his Apulian friend Egidio Reale (1888-1958), who had been an exile in Switzerland since 1926. He said he was certain that the return would be «the most distressing period» of his life, despite his joy at the thought of hugging his friends again.

He finally arrived in Italy in the summer of 1947, but upon the advice of the Bolaffios, he gave up his lecturing at the University of Florence in the fall, primarily due to respiratory problems, which offered him a way out of a situation of which he was still not convinced<sup>128</sup>. He confessed to Ernesto Rossi:

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., pp. 260-263: Salvemini to Piero Calamandrei, 19 April 1946.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., pp. 344-346: Piero Calamandrei to Salvemini, 7 August 1946.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., pp. 376-379 (pp. 377-378): Salvemini to Egidio Reale, 19 September 1946.

<sup>128</sup> G. Salvemini, *Lettere dall'America 1947-1949*, cit., pp. 39-42: Salvemini to Ernesto Rossi, 19 March 1947.

I cannot believe that I found within the dangers of bronchitis a reason for exempting myself from teaching in Florence. Everyone tells me that young people are skeptical, indifferent, cynical, fascist. Why should I waste two months with students of that kind and with the risk of causing uproars that would be of no use to anyone? At the first hint of disorder at the first lesson, I would definitely leave without worrying myself at all. And then the idea of encountering certain colleagues, opening up to and telling me all the pain they suffered in these twenty-two years when they put on the black shirt and went to guard the shrines of the fascist revolution, – an experience of this kind would be extremely painful and repulsive to me. This, of course, stays between us<sup>129</sup>.

### **An uninviting environment**

He did not speak in hypotheticals. The purging processes of the «accomplices and profiteers of the regime», already invoked in 1944, were ending in annulments, appeals and rehabilitations after a few years; so was also happening in the universities of Florence, Turin and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the allegedly guaranteed reintegration of the politically and racially persecuted people turned out to be a humiliating experience, especially for those who had taken refuge abroad, even among those whom Salvemini himself knew: they would go to Italy in order to see for themselves, and they would discover that they were considered embarrassing obstacles instead of assets and, with heavy hearts and their dignity in hand, they would turn back, as did Massimo Calabresi and his sister Renata Calabresi, both well known to Salvemini.

Nonetheless, upon returning to Harvard, Salvemini asked Rossi to inquire if the University of Florence was still willing to offer him a position for the 1948-49 academic year<sup>130</sup>. At the beginning of January 1948, Rossi informed him of a draft decree that called for university professors who were no longer Italian citizens to regain their passports ex officio once reinstated. Salvemini was against it, since he did not intend «to work both sides of the street»:

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp. 67-69 (p. 69): Salvemini to Ernesto Rossi, 7 May 1947.

<sup>130</sup> Ernesto Rossi and Gaetano Salvemini, *Dall'esilio alla Repubblica. Lettere 1944-1957*, ed. Mimmo Franzinelli, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2004, pp. 287-289 (p. 288): Salvemini to Rossi, 18 December 1947.

If I were reinstated to my professorship without a condition of any kind and then, on my own initiative, took the necessary steps to bring my legal citizenship in accordance with my moral citizenship, I would be completely fine with my conscience.<sup>131</sup>

The decree, approved on 7 May 1948, allowed university professors who had been dismissed from service to be reinstated even without reacquiring citizenship, provided that they were allowed to teach in the country of which they were citizens, as in his case<sup>132</sup>. As published in the «Gazzetta ufficiale», the legislative decree did not take effect for another three months; in August, Salvemini was finally able to submit the reinstatement application to the Ministry of Public Education<sup>133</sup>. He was now 75 years old.

Harvard University, which had already renewed his position past the age limit several times, had also decided to grant him a pension of about 2,000 dollars in 1948. He would have needed additional income to live in the United States with this amount, but he would have been able to live peacefully in Italy without the need of an additional salary<sup>134</sup>.

### **Bureaucratic delays or interference?**

The provision of Salvemini's reinstatement ran aground until November 1948: the professor feared that there was interference of a political nature, having often «proved his unwillingness to wise up»<sup>135</sup>. In effect, some of his colleagues seemed rather alarmed by and opposed to the idea that Salvemini would return amongst them, so much so that the dean of Florence's Faculty of Letters at the time, ex-fascist Paolo Lamanna, who had emerged unscathed from the purge procedures, took special care to comfort them:

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-300 (p. 299): Salvemini to Rossi, 31 January 1948.

<sup>132</sup> *Decreto legislativo n. 1033, 7 May 1948, Disposizioni aggiuntive alle norme sulla riassunzione in servizio dei professori universitari già dispensati per motivi politici o razziali*, GU n. 181, 6 August 1948.

<sup>133</sup> E. Rossi and G. Salvemini, *Dall'esilio alla Repubblica*, cit., pp. 374-378 (p. 376): Rossi to Salvemini, 25 August 1948.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., pp. 322-326 (p. 323): Salvemini to Rossi, 17 April 1948; C. Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini*, cit., p. 321.

<sup>135</sup> E. Rossi and G. Salvemini, *Dall'esilio alla Repubblica*, cit., pp. 400-402 (p. 401): Salvemini to Rossi, 28 October 1948.

Salvemini was old; he would hopefully not be reinstated to his professorship, but rather placed in supernumerary<sup>136</sup>. They had done the same with Momigliano, who, however, had been back for years.

For his part, Rossi continued to reassure Salvemini that the delays were due solely to a malfunction of the bureaucratic machine and not the desire to hold up the provision. In fact, this process ultimately had the support of the Minister of Education, Guido Gonella, who bypassed the Faculty<sup>137</sup>. Salvemini said that he was ready to leave as soon as the decree was approved but no later than the end of October, otherwise his course in Florence would only be announced after enrollment closed and, consequently, he would have no students. Despite Rossi's timely communication that the decree had been approved on 30 October, Salvemini had a health problem, and from New York, where he was supposed to embark for Italy, he returned to Cambridge. He remained hospitalized until February 1949<sup>138</sup>.

### **The return at 76, in supernumerary**

He left from New York on 21 July 1949, accompanied by Maritza and Roberto Bolaffio, and, after a brief visit in Paris, made his return to Italy. He gave the aforementioned speech at the University of Florence on 16 October, in which he paid homage to his teachers, recalled the years of his life as a student, and gave his last, affectionate salute to the friends that he had tragically lost: Cesare Battisti, Nello and Carlo Rosselli, and Camillo Berneri<sup>139</sup>. At the age of 76, he resumed teaching with a course on the Risorgimento.

However, contrary to common belief, he was not reinstated to the

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<sup>136</sup> See the account by P. Guarnieri, *Italian Psychology and Jewish Emigration Under Fascism*, cit., p. 197 and note, on the basis of the archives of the University of Florence, Biblioteca umanistica, Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia, *Verballi delle adunanze*. See in particular the minutes of 13 november 1948, with the exchange between Lamanna and Paolo Salmi, who was dean at the time of the racial laws.

<sup>137</sup> E. Rossi and G. Salvemini, *Dall'esilio alla Repubblica*, cit., Rossi to Salvemini, 19-20 November 1948.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 403-412: Rossi to Salvemini, 30 October 1948; Salvemini to Rossi, 15 November 1948; Rossi to Salvemini, 19-20 November 1948; Salvemini to Rossi, 26 November 1948.

<sup>139</sup> G. Salvemini, *Una pagina di storia antica*, cit., pp. 116-131.

professorship that he had obtained in Florence in November 1916, and from which he had been declared as resigning in November 1925 while being replaced by Nicola Ottokar. The papers in his dossier are unequivocal: just as his former fascist colleagues had hoped, Salvemini «was rehired in supernumerary service as Professor of Modern History» with ministerial decree n. 172 of 5 January 1949, and retroactively in effect from 15 February 1948, as precisely indicated by a note from the rectorate<sup>140</sup>.

He returned to the United States only one other time, during the summer of 1951, in order to collaborate with Michele Cantarella, but again fell ill and ended up in the hospital. Rossi affectionately reprimanded him: «But what are you even doing, blessed man, fluttering from one continent to another as if you were still twenty years old?»<sup>141</sup>. His return from America in December of 1951 was his final stage. In the warm, comfortable climate of Capo di Sorrento, at Villa La Rufola, he was welcomed by Donna Titina Ruffino and by her daughter Giuliana Benzoni: there, he spent his final few years, among friends who visited frequently. He died on 3 September 1957<sup>142</sup>.

### Major publications

A large part of Salvemini's publications are collected in the eighteen volumes of his *Opere*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1961-1978. For the sake of completeness, see *Bibliografia salveminiana 1892-1984*, edited by Michele Cantarella, Rome, Bonacci, 1986.

- *Magnati e popolani in Firenze. Dal 1280 al 1295*, Florence, Tipografia G. Carnesecchi e figli, 1899.

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<sup>140</sup> See ASUFI, AC, SD, f. «Salvemini Gaetano», on letterhead of the University of Florence, typed copy from 9 November 1957 which, in response to a request from the Ministry of Education on November 7, two months after Salvemini's death, summarized his academic career, from the time when he was appointed full professor with RD of 19 January 1911.

<sup>141</sup> This occurrence is mentioned in the introduction to Michele Cantarella (ed.), *Bibliografia salveminiana*, Rome, Bonacci, 1986, p. 13; also see E. Rossi and G. Salvemini, *Dall'esilio alla Repubblica*, cit., letter from Rossi 4 November 1951, p. 551.

<sup>142</sup> Iris Origo, *Gaetano Salvemini: The Man Who Would Not Conform*, in *A Need to Testify. Portraits of Lauro de Bosis, Ruth Draper, Gaetano Salvemini, Ignazio Silone and an Essay on Biography*, London, HBJ, 1984, pp. 128-190: p. 183.

- *I partiti politici milanesi nel secolo XIX*, Milan, Editori dell'Educazione politica, 1899.
- *La rivoluzione francese (1788-1792)*, Milan, Pallestrini & C., 1905.
- With Alfredo Galletti, *La riforma della scuola media. Notizie, osservazioni, proposte*, Milan, Sandron, 1908.
- *Il ministro della mala vita. Notizie e documenti sulle elezioni giolittiane nell'Italia meridionale*, Florence, Edizione della Voce, 1910.
- *Problemi educativi e sociali dell'Italia d'oggi*, Catania, Battiato, 1914 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1921).
- *Mazzini*, Catania, Battiato, 1915.
- With Carlo Maranelli, *La questione dell'Adriatico*, Florence, Libreria della Voce, 1918.
- *Dal patto di Londra alla pace di Roma. Documenti della politica che non fu fatta*, Turin, Piero Gobetti, 1925.
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