

## Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani

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Lawyer of the civil party in the trial of Giacomo Matteotti's killers, in Parliament he courageously lashed out against the fascists. Now the target of insults and violence, in 1926, he left Italy and fled to France. During his almost twenty-year-long exile with his wife Vera, many were his trips on account of his political militancy, which all led up to the anti-fascist propaganda and fundraising trip to the United States. A socialist and a Jew, in Vichy France, he proudly reported himself for his *quatre quartiers d'ascendance juive* [four quarters Jewish ancestry], and after the French armistice he fled to Switzerland. He returned to Italy in 1944, at the age of 72.

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### The influence of progressive Jewish culture and his studies

His father Flaminio descended from wealthy Roman Jews – bankers and mine owners in Sardinia. As a convinced monarchist, he bestowed the name of Giuseppe Emanuele on his eldest son, born in Livorno on 28 October 1872,<sup>1</sup> followed by Margherita Olimpia, Umberto Isacco, and Amedeo, the future painter, who always remained Dedo or «the *piccinaccio*» for his family. As the mines dried up, Flaminio became a representative of the timber and coal, then of the spice industries. In the context of the post-unification crisis of all traders in Livorno, the activity was modest and uncertain<sup>2</sup>.

His mother Eugenia Garsin was a language teacher – Carlo Rosselli remembered her private lessons with great emotion –, a translator and the

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<sup>1</sup> ASUPi, *Carriere Studenti*, f. «Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani», «Certificato di nascita di Emanuele Giuseppe Alberto Modigliani», Municipality of Livorno, 9 June 1891. Special thanks to Patrizia Guarnieri, who provided us with the copy of this file and other archival resources in ACS that we used in this research.

<sup>2</sup> Donatella Cherubini, *Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani. Un riformista nell'Italia liberale*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 1990, pp. 29-38. In 1884 the family was about to undergo a foreclosure just when Amedeo was born; all the assets of the house were placed on the mother's bed since by law, it was not possible to foreclose the assets of a woman in childbirth.

ghostwriter of an American novelist, perhaps Joyce S. Kennard. Of Central European ancestry and from Marseille, the secularized Garsins (Garçins) were more enlightened than the Modiglianis and had shared cultural, linguistic, and artistic values with their children. These values reflected the typical climate of the progressive Jewish bourgeoisie, particularly lively in Livorno, a city with deep-rooted communities of various origins. Although respectful of his father's traditions, Giuseppe always remained firmly secular.

A brilliant pupil, he attended the Regio Liceo Niccolini Guerrazzi in Livorno, where Giovanni Pascoli taught. To please his father, in 1890 he enrolled in the Faculty of Mathematics of the University of Pisa, but he soon transferred to Law School, which was immersed in the positivist culture that had brought many students to socialism. Former secretary of a monarchical youth club, he had assimilated evolutionary theories and had become a socialist, so much so that he participated in the foundation of the Livorno socialist section. He attended the lectures of Enrico Ferri and, in December 1895, he graduated with full marks in front of a committee made up of famous jurists also for political reasons, including Adolfo Zerboglio, Lodovico Mortara and Carlo Francesco Gabba among others<sup>3</sup>. His degree thesis was published among the popular socialist works<sup>4</sup>.

He counted on a cosmopolitan and polyglot background: he was fluent in German, communicated in Yiddish with American Jews while he had some difficulties with English; and French was his maternal language.

### **A socialist lawyer in Parliament**

After completing his military service in Florence, Modigliani continued his political militancy in Livorno, a commercial city that was becoming industrial,

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<sup>3</sup> ASUPi, AC, SS, f. «Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani», «Processi verbali delle lauree per l'a.a. 1894-95», 4 December 1895; and his degree certificate, Pisa, 18 January 1896.

<sup>4</sup> Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani, *La fine della lotta per la vita tra gli uomini*, Milan-Palermo, Sandron, 1900.

and proposed an early analysis of the national industrialization process<sup>5</sup>. As a city councilor and alderman, he supported the trade union organization, leading the bottle makers to the first Italian collective bargaining agreement. As secretary of the Regional Socialist Federation, he defended workers and artisans in labor disputes and political causes and was himself subjected to preventive arrest and sentenced to forced domicile<sup>6</sup>.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Modigliani sided with the reformist current and established a lasting relationship with its leader, Filippo Turati. More intransigent than the latter, Modigliani argued against Giovanni Giolitti's government policy and sided with Gaetano Salvemini in the request for effective political reforms. His original contribution is evident in the party's leadership and congresses, in interviews in the press, in articles in the national newspaper «Avanti!».

In 1908, he married Vera Funaro, sixteen years younger than him. In 1913, he was elected to parliament and moved to Rome with his wife. He possessed authority, fluent oratory and an unmistakable long beard: Ignazio Silone called it «the beard of a prophet», but for his opponents it was a stigma of his nineteenth-century political ancestry<sup>7</sup>. A skilled swordsman, as a man of the nineteenth century he challenged Benito Mussolini to a duel. Mussolini, who, now out of the party and a fiery interventionist, had slandered him in his «Popolo d'Italia», later retracted his allegations.

Engaged by now in the anti-militarist campaigns, Giuseppe Modigliani immediately took sides against the colonial war in Libya. In the face of the First World War, he was a neutralist like all Italian socialists. In the name of anti-imperialism, he did not accept the motivations of the Triple Entente,

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<sup>5</sup> Id., *Lo sviluppo del capitalismo industriale in Italia*, «Critica sociale», VIII, 16 March 1898, pp. 88-90.

<sup>6</sup> See Donatella Cherubini, *Alle origini dei partiti. La Federazione socialista toscana 1893-1900*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 1997, pp. 262-264.

<sup>7</sup> Gaetano Arfé, *La figura di G.E. Modigliani nella storia del socialismo italiano*, in *G.E. Modigliani e il socialismo italiano*, Rome, ESSMOI, 1983, especially pp. 11-22.

since in all countries the industrialists would have enriched themselves with the war. He denounced the inequity in the alternation of troops at the front, the oppression of the officers on the soldiers, and the role of heavy industry in the ownership of newspapers and in war propaganda. Since 1914 he had been registered in the Central political record of the Ministry of the Interior. Between 1914 and 1918 he went to Lugano in order to declare «war on war»; in Bern, he participated in the first international socialist conference and undersigned the «Zimmerwald Manifesto», which invited the proletariat to «common peace action». That manifesto, which Lenin also undersigned in order, however, to transform war into revolution, always remained an essential ideal reference for Modigliani.

During the war, he had already hoped for a European federation, which would lead to disarmament and therefore to peace, paving the way for socialism. Even in the Italian Parliament he had evoked the United States of Europe together with his party mate Claudio Treves, whereas he had many doubts about the position of US President Woodrow Wilson: the League of Nations seemed to him a dangerous incentive to nationalism and conflicts between the European peoples.

### **The «paix quelconque» and the divisions**

The unconditional pacifism of Modigliani, known as Menè, led him to request a «paix quelconque», drawing condemnation from the broad interventionist front. In defending democracy against anti-parliamentarism he opposed the myth of the «mutilated victory», but also the revolutionary demands of the «biennio rosso» [two red years; a period of social unrest in the aftermath of World War I]<sup>8</sup>. He always maintained his confidence in the advent of socialism according to gradual stages, despite the increasingly evident crisis of Italian reformism. He continued to be very active in political and trade union

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<sup>8</sup> See Luigi Albertini, *I giorni di un liberale. Diari 1907-1923*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000; and G. Arfé, *La figura di G.E. Modigliani*, cit.

organization, also in his own city,<sup>9</sup> and as a deputy reconfirmed in 1919, he kept fighting for democratic objectives: from the proportional electoral system to women's suffrage, to the reform of the House rules<sup>10</sup>. In 1921 he came in first among those elected to his Tuscan College, despite his reformist position in a period of profound revolutionary ferment: he asked for social reforms, the Constituent Assembly and the institutional transformation of the Kingdom of Italy, but his «Republichetta» was criticized and derided by the revolutionary maximalists and the reformists themselves.

After the communist split, he tried to maintain the unity of the socialists but also to negotiate with fascism to defeat it: he was among the promoters of the «pact of pacification» between fascists and socialists in August 1921, and had envisaged a possible government collaboration with the liberal democrats and the Catholics. These objectives prompted the maximalists to immediately expel the reformists from the party. On 4 October 1922, he was one of the founders of the Unitarian Socialist Party, heir to the reformist tradition and led by the young Giacomo Matteotti. Modigliani had experienced the division of his political family as a personal defeat and had pledged to reunite it.

In January 1920 he was hit hard in his family affections; upon the death of his brother Amedeo, he went to Paris to take his daughter, little Jeanne – not even two years of age – back with him.

### **In the sights of the fascists**

Modigliani appeared to be an emblem of anti-patriotic «defeatism». He was therefore insulted, laughed at, thrown out of public places, in a crescendo of episodes that have been repeatedly told:<sup>11</sup> «*With Menè's beard – we will make*

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<sup>9</sup> See *L'on. Modigliani dimissionario a Livorno per un voto patriottico al Consiglio Comunale*, «Corriere della Sera», 3 May 1918.

<sup>10</sup> *Atti parlamentari, Camera dei deputati (AP, CD), XXV Legislatura del Regno d'Italia*, «Estensione alle donne delle leggi sull'elettorato», Act C.322 of 23 March 1920, first signatory Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani.

<sup>11</sup> These events were recently recalled in John Foot, *Un pacifista intransigente*, «Internazionale»,

*brushes to clean shoes – to Benito Mussolini*». On 21 July 1920 he was beaten with clubs, together with his maximalist colleague Alceste Della Seta, near the print shop of «Avanti!», which had been set on fire the previous day. The affair was denounced in Parliament by Modigliani's future exile companion Nullo Baldini, an executive of the League of Cooperatives and deputy of the Unitarian Socialist Party<sup>12</sup>. After a rally on 1 May 1921, he was attacked by a «screaming fascist mob» on the Pisa-Viareggio train while he was with the mayor of Livorno, Uberto Mondolfi, and his wife Vera: accused of defeatism, he was asked to shout, «Long live Italy!». He replied, «Under threat, I would not even shout, "Long live socialism"»<sup>13</sup>.

At the first speech as Prime Minister, Benito Mussolini delivered the famous «discorso del bivacco» [bivouac speech], which defined the parliamentary chamber as «deaf and grey». Modigliani interrupted him by shouting «Long live the Parliament!». He himself was then interrupted and mocked, while Parliament approved the electoral law which gave Fascism a large majority. After a rally in Alessandria, he was chased by «an angry mob» of *squadristi*, until he took refuge in his hotel and left secretly in his car<sup>14</sup>. In February 1923, in the Court of Livorno where he was defense lawyer in a trial, he was attacked and humiliated, but in the press the fascist intimidations were silenced and falsified, or exalted:

There were over two hundred fascists, all excited [...] Officials, agents and *carabinieri* tried, but in vain, to prevent the invasion. But the impetuous avalanche, strong in numbers and audacity, did not stop [...]. One hand, grasping the long-winded beard of the Hon. Modigliani, appeared to have torn off a tuft, and another, smeared with paint or tomato paste, soiled the deputy's face<sup>15</sup>.

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1342, 20 March 2020 <<https://www.internazionale.it>> (accessed 5 April 2020).

<sup>12</sup> AP, CD, Legislature XXV, «1<sup>a</sup> Sessione – Discussioni», session of 22 July 1920.

<sup>13</sup> Vera Modigliani, *Esilio*, Milan, Garzanti, 1946, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>15</sup> *Clamoroso incidente al palazzo di Giustizia. L'onorevole Modigliani alle prese coi fascisti*, «Il Telegrafo», 5 February 1923. Also see *L'on. Modigliani cacciato da Livorno dai fascisti*, «Corriere della Sera», 4 February 1923.

### His role in the Matteotti trial

In the dramatic political consultations of 6 April 1924, he was re-elected one last time from the list of Unitarian Socialists of the Tuscan electoral district. During the first sessions of the new Chamber presided over by Alfredo Rocco, he opposed the major exponents of fascism, demanding procedural compliance<sup>16</sup>.

It was Modigliani who, alerted of the disappearance of Giacomo Matteotti, on 10 June 1924, reported it to the Rome Police Headquarters<sup>17</sup>. On the political level, he animated the Aventine parliamentary protest; as «prosecutor for the civil party [...] in the criminal proceedings against Amerigo Dumini and others for the killing of the Hon. Giacomo Matteotti», he represented the family<sup>18</sup>. The history of the trial is well known: it took place in Chieti and lasted nine days as long briefs – in fact fake evidence to condemn the alleged perpetrators and to exonerate fascism – piled up. The secretary of the National Fascist Party also participated in the proceedings; Roberto Farinacci led a fierce political attack against Modigliani, who was forced to leave office. On 24 March 1926, the Court reached a decision and imposed mild sentences, which were quickly condoned. Modigliani sent a copy of the investigative proceedings to Salvemini, who had already fled to England and with whom he maintained a close relationship even though they held opposite positions regarding the first world conflict. The adventurous delivery of the papers probably took place through the diplomatic suitcase of the brother of the liberal anti-fascist Umberto Zanotti Bianco, who worked in

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<sup>16</sup> Ministero dell'Economia nazionale, Direzione generale della statistica, *Statistica delle Elezioni Generali Politiche per la XXVII Legislatura (6 Aprile 1924)*, and AP, CD, Legislature XXVII, «1<sup>a</sup> Sessione – Discussioni», session of 30 May 1924 (suspension of validation of the elections), Rome, Libreria dello Stato, November 1924.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from the Rome *questore* [commissioner] to the King's prosecutor regarding the denunciation of Matteotti's disappearance forwarded by Modigliani, Rome, 12 June 1924, cit. in Donatella Cherubini *et al.* (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani. Pace Europa e libertà. Mostra storico documentaria, Roma-Livorno, ottobre-dicembre 1997*, Rome, Fratelli Palombi - ESSMOI - ACS - Fondazione Giuseppe e Vera Modigliani, 1997, p. 104.

<sup>18</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 1, f. 10, «Deduzioni della parte civile Velia e Giancarlo Matteotti nel procedimento contro Amerigo Dumini e altri», sent to the Court of Appeal of Rome, cit. in D. Cherubini *et al.* (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 107.

a French consulate<sup>19</sup>.

On the assassination of Giacomo Matteotti, Modigliani published a short essay by the same title in 1945, in Italy with «Avanti!» editions, and in New York with the Italian-American Labor Council<sup>20</sup>.

### **The painful choice of exile: Vienna**

Once the trial was over, Modigliani was on his way to Naples for Easter with his wife and some comrades. However, Roberto Farinacci and a group of black shirts were travelling on the same train. The result was a brutal beating, on 3 April 1926, which left Modigliani «dripping with blood»<sup>21</sup>. On 7 April, a fascist squad broke into his home in Rome and ransacked it, while he luckily managed to hide.

By now comrades, family members, friends feared for his safety and tried to persuade him to go abroad. No other decision was possible: having obtained a passport for Austria, Menè and Vera left Italy. The official excuse was a spa cure in Carlsbad, in Bohemia, but everything was ready to welcome them to Vienna. The couple arrived by train after a stop in Milan also to greet Filippo Turati, and a stop in Igls, near Innsbruck. In the early days they changed two hotels<sup>22</sup>. The consul in Vienna reported their presence to the Ministry of the Interior as early as 23 May 1926<sup>23</sup>. They would remain there until October.

That period began which Vera described in her memoirs *Esilio*, and which lasted almost the same years as the fascist regime. Modigliani was subjected to constant surveillance, even if the information provided to the Italian

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<sup>19</sup> Mauro Canali, *Il delitto Matteotti*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> See Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani, *L'assassinio di Giacomo Matteotti*, Rome, Edizioni Avanti!, 1945, and New York, Italian-American Labor Council, 1945.

<sup>21</sup> V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., p. 24. It has been suggested that with this action, Farinacci intended to attract the attention of Mussolini, who had dismissed him from the post of secretary of the National Fascist Party.

<sup>22</sup> Modigliani first moved to the Hotel Holzwarth at Mariahilferstrasse 156, then to the Hotel Holler, Burggasse 2. See D. Cherubini *et al.* (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 113.

<sup>23</sup> See ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», letter from the consul to the Ministry of the Interior, Vienna, 25 August 1926.



authorities was not always reliable: the police informants would write that «he lodged for free in a small house owned by an old friend of his, a certain Haver», then it appeared that he actually lived in the house of «a certain Alois Trampus»<sup>24</sup>. It is certain, instead, that he received his mail at the headquarters of the socialist newspaper «Arbeiter Zeitung», 97 Rechte Wienzeile, Wien<sup>25</sup>. By now his name had been listed in the «Rubrica di frontiera» [Border directory] of the political registry, which included the «subversives» who had moved abroad and about whom Italian border police had been alerted.

His choice of the Austrian capital was due to his many connections with the socialists, not only Austrian, who, in the post-war period, animated «red Vienna» with political and organizational activities. In order to face his new life as an exile, he could count on Valentino Pittoni, a socialist and cooperator from Trieste who was editor of the «Arbeiter Zeitung». Karl Kautsky, the historical father of European reformism, also lived in Vienna. He hosted Modigliani in his house and had with him an affectionate relationship<sup>26</sup>.

Modigliani's main connection was with the new Sozialistische Arbeiter-Internationale / Labor and Socialist International (SAI/LSI) of reformist and social democratic origin, presided over by the Austrian Friedrich Adler. From 1926 it had its headquarters in Zurich, and Modigliani was held in high esteem there for his activity among the pacifist minorities. After the birth of the Unitarian Socialist Party, from 1923 he represented Italy in the Executive Committee and also in its Bureau, together with Claudio Treves, with the major European Social Democrats, from the Austrian Otto Bauer to the Belgian Émile Vandervelde. As a collaborator of the LSI periodical «Informations internationales», he was in constant contact especially with

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., letter from the Royal Prefecture of Livorno to the Minister of the Interior with a copy of the letter between Modigliani and lawyer Funaro in Livorno, Livorno, 21 July 1926.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> A photo of them with a dedication by Modigliani to Kautsky, 21 August 1896, can be seen in the digital archive of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam <<https://iisg.amsterdam>> (accessed 10 December 2020).

Adler.

### Salvemini from London, Turati from Milan

In the months he spent in Vienna, Modigliani maintained close correspondence with friends and comrades who supported him, even in economic difficulties; they provided him with job opportunities and worked with him on political reorganization.

Gaetano Salvemini gave him some suggestions from London:

Italians abroad can represent an excellent market for a publishing house [...]. The rich and well-educated Italians who live abroad are almost all fascists: and they will boycott you; [...] II. As regards the headquarters of the Society, it seems clear to me that it must be in France, where 1,200,000 Italians live [...] <sup>27</sup>.

Filippo Turati, on the other hand, reproached him for his «incredible epistolary reticence»; tired of this «life that was no life» while waiting for the revolution, he said he was concerned not so much with fascism as with «general quiescence», and recommended to Vera:

You and especially Mr. Menè, if you are not broken corpses too (the free Austrian air should have re-tuned you a little), could help us somewhat, first, by sharing some general views with us, second, by sending us some useful material, since now we are so cut off from the world that it is as if we lived in Sirius <sup>28</sup>.

Constantly followed and surveilled, Modigliani now looked to France as a stable landing place for his anti-fascist commitment, ready to mobilize also in the trade unions and in cooperation, given the presence of so many emigrant workers <sup>29</sup>.

After leaving Austria, he made a brief stop in Switzerland, on the occasion of the executive session of the Socialist International of Zurich in August 1926.

While the Italian authorities intended to remove his passport, <sup>30</sup> in October

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<sup>27</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 4, f. 24, letter from Gaetano Salvemini to Modigliani, London, 17 June 1926.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, letter from Filippo Turati, Milan, 21 August 1926.

<sup>29</sup> See ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», letter from the consul in Vienna to the ministry, Vienna, 25 August 1926.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Minister of the Interior with a request

1926 he settled in Paris, where he would spend most of his exile with his wife. France was the «homeland of the exiles»<sup>31</sup> and, after all, his maternal family came from Marseilles while Paris was also the city where his brother had lived and died.

Wherever he went, he was constantly under surveillance.

The newspapers gave the news that the Hon. Modigliani settled in Vienna. Inexact. The Honorable Modigliani has instead taken up residence here, and has his office at that of the Honorable Nullo Baldini, rue de la Tour d'Auvergne. [...] It is said that the Hon. Modigliani is short of money and indeed has had to resort to loans from his friends to get by. No other news<sup>32</sup>.

Informants reported his movements at the end of 1926, but even on the date of his arrival in Paris the news disagrees.

However, the correspondence confirms the address and presence of Modigliani at the former fellow Representative's, Nullo Baldini (1862-1945), who was also forced into exile in Paris where he headed some Italian labor cooperatives that had transferred to France for some time<sup>33</sup>. At his Union des Coopératives, the leaders of reformist socialism, Treves, Modigliani and Turati, would meet; here, Modigliani's wife Vera and others organized «La Popote des proscrits italiens», a cooperative-trattoria in rue de la Tour d'Auvergne 16, where the anti-fascists ate, drank, and argued<sup>34</sup>.

### The Anti-fascist Action Concentration

Over the years in Paris, the Modigliani family managed to create a network of

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to revoke the Hon. Modigliani's passport, 23 October 1926.

<sup>31</sup> Joyce Lussu, *Fronti e frontiere*, Bergamo, Edizioni U, 1945, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», letter from Paris to the Minister of the Interior on the Hon. Modigliani, Paris, 27 October 1926; among the many documents, see also a telegram from the Italian Fasci abroad to the head of the Rome Police on the arrival of Modigliani in Austria, 26 November 1926; letter from the Prefecture of Rome to the Ministry of the Interior on the presence of Modigliani in Austria, Vienna, 4 December 1926; copy of a royal document from the Italian Embassy in Paris, 31 December 1926; and ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 5, f. 26, in the s.f. entitled «Matteottiano», postcards from Carlo Bazzi to Modigliani in Paris, 1926.

<sup>33</sup> V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., p. 46.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-61.

relationships that often led from the political level of anti-fascism and socialism to the private one, and vice versa. In her *Esilio*, Vera Modigliani recomposes the many streams and entanglements of this experience, which concerned Italian anti-fascism and Jewish culture: they frequented the spouses Dario and Ada Vera Viterbo, who would host their niece Jeanne, after she had fled from Florence<sup>35</sup>. Among «the Friends of Rue des Plantes», at their home, were the art historian Lionello Venturi, the writer Paolo Milano, Carlo Rosselli, and many others.

By now the major socialist and democratic leaders had escaped to France and were reconstituting their political and trade union organizations<sup>36</sup>. To support themselves, Claudio Treves, Filippo Turati and Modigliani himself resorted above all to their savings; some, like Sandro Pertini, also carried out humble jobs in order to earn a living, while others, like Rosselli and Francesco Saverio Nitti, could count on greater family incomes. During his exile, Modigliani authored articles that were published or translated as far as the USA and South America, and collaborated with various organizations and periodicals, including the «Corriere degli italiani», which was published «in Paris because fascism has suspended the freedom of the press in Italy» and was edited by Giuseppe Donati, of the Catholic Popular party<sup>37</sup>.

From his collaboration with the Labour and Socialist International, in 1927 he received a salary of 2,000 francs a month for the drafting of the «Bollettino d'Informazione antifascista» [Anti-Fascist Information Bulletin]<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> See here Patrizia Guarnieri, Elisa Lo Monaco, *Ada Vera Bernstein Viterbo* (2020).

<sup>36</sup> Aldo Garosci, *Storia dei fuorusciti*, Bari, Laterza, 1953; Santi Fedele, *Storia della Concentrazione antifascista 1927-1934*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976, pp. 3-27.

<sup>37</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 4, f. 24, «Giuseppe Donati», letter from Giuseppe Donati on the page of «Corriere degli Italiani», Paris, 12 October 1926; Bruno Tobia, «*Il corriere degli Italiani*»: la parabola di un quotidiano antifascista in Francia, in Pierre Milza (ed.), *Les italiens en France de 1914 à 1940*, Rome, École française de Rome, 1986, pp. 285-321 <<https://www.persee.fr>> (accessed 15 December 2021).

<sup>38</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», note for the Divisione affari generali e riservati [General and Confidential Affairs Division] (DAGR), Rome, 23 November 1927.

### For the European federation

In 1927 Modigliani participated in numerous meetings about Europe, and intensified his missions in Provence and on the French riviera to sensitize Italian exiles and migrant workers and to promote socialist propaganda<sup>39</sup>.

At the end of April 1927, he and his wife should have gone to Chiasso or Lugano on 1 May to prepare actions against the government: some informers even feared an attack on the Duce. Rejected at the border – which caused turmoil among the Ticino socialists – he went to Geneva for a meeting and left for Paris. One of the most important meetings he attended was in Brussels for the anniversary of Matteotti's death. There, Modigliani spoke out against fascism in Italy and the difficult situation of the exiles<sup>40</sup>.

The unity of the Italian socialists remained among his main objectives. Precisely to encourage the reunification between PSULI [Unitarian Socialist Party] and PSI [Italian Socialist Party], in 1928 Modigliani founded and edited the newspaper «Rinascita socialista», which came out on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of each month from the editorial office on Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne. On its pages, he also promoted the Europeanization of the League of Nations and the federation of European countries, inviting the leaders of the socialist parties – Adler and Vandervelde, the Frenchman Léon Blum, and the Englishman Arthur Henderson – to support his proposals<sup>41</sup>. «Rinascita socialista» dedicated ample space also to the political organization of Italian

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., letter from the Consulate of Italy to the Ministry of the Interior, Liège, 12 August 1928. On 20 May, in the Gymnase of Argenteuil, he was a speaker with Treves, Nenni, Di Vittorio and others at a socialist rally. On 22 May, he went to Riel for another rally and to Berlin in order to meet some members of the Social Democratic Party and discuss fascism. On 7 June, he was in Brussels where he represented the Italian socialists (ibid., telegram from the Consulate of Italy to the Ministry of the Interior, Marseille, 19 November 1927).

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., note of the Political Police Division for the General and Confidential Affairs Division, Rome, 22 May 1927.

<sup>41</sup> Donatella Cherubini, *Presentazione*, in *Rinascita socialista, quindicinale del PSULI. Parigi 1928-1930*, anastatic reprint, Manduria, Lacaita, 2002, pp. 1-3; see Ead., *Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani from the «Paix Quelconque» to the Europeanisation of the League of Nations*, in Marta Petricioli and Donatella Cherubini (eds.), *Pour la Paix en Europe. Institutions et société civile dans l'entre-deux-guerres*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2007, pp. 307-340.

socialism and Italian workers abroad,<sup>42</sup> and to the analysis of the Italian situation, which expanded the much more synthetic one on «Informations internationales». Each time, Modigliani provided data and opinions which refuted the social achievements of fascism, debunked its successes in internal economic policy, and attested to its undemocratic character; he also carefully examined fascist foreign policy. Crucial points remained, in Modigliani's thinking, a strong pro-European attitude and belief in socio-economic evolution.

On 7 March 1928 he was removed from the Board of lawyers of the Court of Appeal<sup>43</sup>. About six months later, he lost his father: he learned about it on 28 September 1928 from a telegram from his brother Umberto and his sister Margherita<sup>44</sup>.

### **Political and private life**

In 1930 he finally saw the socialist reunification and entered the new Directorate of the Italian Socialist Party, which Pietro Nenni led<sup>45</sup>. Different by generation, training, cultural and political influences, in the 1930s Nenni and Modigliani had quite a few disagreements within the PSI, about the terms of collaboration with the other components of democratic and socialist anti-fascism, and the relations with the Communist Party and consequently with the Third International.

He had an open discussion with Carlo Rosselli, whom he had known for a very long time. Although they shared socialist and democratic beliefs and a political openness towards the middle-class, Rosselli considered Modigliani

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<sup>42</sup> *Propaganda e organizzazione. Il Congresso della Federazione di Sud-Ovest*, «Rinascita socialista», 1 July 1929; *I lavoratori stranieri in Francia*, *ibid.*, 1 January 1930.

<sup>43</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», note of the General and Confidential Affairs Division, Rome, 7 March 1928.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, telegram from Umberto and Margherita Modigliani to their brother, Livorno, 20 September 1928.

<sup>45</sup> Gaetano Arfè (ed.), *Il Partito socialista italiano nei suoi congressi*, vol. IV, *I congressi dell'esilio*, Milan, Edizioni Avanti!, 1963, p. 47. Leonardo Rapone, *Pietro Nenni e la politica dell'Internazionale operaia e socialista (1930-1939)*, in Enzo Collotti (ed.), *L'Internazionale operaia e socialista tra le due guerre*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1985, pp. 135-175.

and the older reformists to be the «old beards of Italian socialism», who had not effectively fought fascism.

Living with a suitcase in hand also made life more difficult. In Paris, the Modiglianis changed their address several times: from rue de la Tour d'Auvergne they moved to rue de la Glacière, boulevard Blanqui, a couple of kilometers from the Gare d'Austerlitz. They then lodged in a boarding house on rue Madame near Luxembourg, then on rue de Passy, in the studio of an Italian who lived in America; lastly, from a small house in Enghien-les-Bains, they landed in another wing of the building at 8 boulevard Ornano, where they finally stayed for almost ten years<sup>46</sup>. Private and political ties continued to intertwine: Filippo Turati and the unionist and reformist deputy Bruno Buozzi lived in the same building, the latter with his wife. At the same time, Modigliani always tried to maintain contact with his sister Margherita, who lived in Florence with Jeanne, in the district Le Cure: they knew that their correspondence was intercepted and «reviewed» by the prefecture who then sent it to the Directorate General of the State Police: in fact, also Margherita was under surveillance «for her obstinate aversion to the Regime»<sup>47</sup>.

After Turati's passing in 1930 and Treves' death in 1934, the Antifascist Action Concentration was dissolved following a crisis accelerated by the autonomist thrust of Rosselli's movement, which led to a contrast between Modigliani and a young *Giustizia e Libertà* member, Emilio Lussu.

It was a hard blow for Modigliani:

You have made me live these days as some of the worst of my exile. And the more I think about it, the more I suffer from it. I suffer because you have offended what I hold dearest, as a memory – blessed Turati and Treves who did not have to read you! – as a title of pride, as a document of coherence, as reasons for hope. I suffer because – once again! – I had foreseen that we would have to swallow more poison and other... even worse things. I did not believe that this would come from you, nor to such an extent!<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> The addresses can be found in V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., *passim*.

<sup>47</sup> A dossier also existed for her in the CPC [Casellario politico centrale, Central political registry]: ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3328, f. «Modigliani Olimpia Margherita 1932-1940».

<sup>48</sup> Archives of the Istituto storico toscano della Resistenza e dell'età contemporanea (AISRT),

### The journey to the United States of America

Representatives of Local 89, which was part of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), the union in the women's clothing sector, invited him to New York. In 1934, at Madison Square Garden, Local 89 celebrated the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment and its leaders, Serafino Romualdi and Luigi Antonini, were very keen on the participation of Modigliani, «the most representative of anti-fascist intellectuals», who was to be welcomed «with open arms». They reassured him that he could speak in Italian, at most in French or in German, and that he would be aided by an interpreter. If he had accepted, he would have had «what is needed for travel and preparations». Eventually, Modigliani agreed to leave.

In August 1934, together with Vera, he renewed the passport valid for the European states and North Africa; then both asked for an extra-quota visa for a temporary visit to the United States of America. On 17 November, they obtained the necessary documents from the Consulate General in Paris<sup>49</sup>. Four days later they were on the Olympic, a 2,764-passenger ocean liner, and landed in New York on 27 November<sup>50</sup>. He was received triumphantly. In the presence of the mayor Fiorello La Guardia, at Madison Square Garden, together with Luigi Antonini, Giuseppe Lupis, Serafino Romualdi and the president of ILGWU David Dubinsky, Mr. and Mrs. Modigliani attended the annual party of the Ladies Garment Workers Union, an organization of female workers in large part immigrants. Apparently, 15,000 people were in attendance<sup>51</sup>.

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Florence, *Archivi di Giustizia e Libertà*, Section I, f. 1, sf. 75, n. 5, letter from Modigliani to Carlo Rosselli on the conflicts within the Concentration, 4 March 1934.

<sup>49</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 9, f. 51, letter from Local 89, New York, 22 October 1934; in relation to the renewal of the spouses' passport, ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», letter from the Consulate of Italy in Paris to the Minister of the Interior, Paris, 23 August 1934, and letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Minister of the Interior, Paris, 14 November 1934.

<sup>50</sup> See The Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Foundation, *Passenger Search*, «Modigliani Giuseppe» [sic] <<https://heritage.statueofliberty.org>> (accessed upon registration 10 December 2021). They gave the ILGWU as their reference in New York.

<sup>51</sup> Viviana Simonelli, *Giuseppe Emanuele e Vera Modigliani. Due vite, un impegno, un diario*, in Fondazione Modigliani <<http://www.fondazionemodigliani.it>> (accessed 4 April 2020); ACS, MI,



The Italian Embassy kept him under strict surveillance and constantly relayed information from Washington, DC and the local consulates: he went from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast, stopping in about a dozen cities, including Boston, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Toronto, Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Los Angeles; he spoke on the radio and attended meetings; he was welcomed everywhere. To his comrades in France he reported his observations on American trade unionism, the situation of Italian immigrants and anti-fascism<sup>52</sup>.

Inevitably, he found himself at the center of the opposition between Italian-American anti-fascism and pro-fascism<sup>53</sup>. On 6 April 1935, the pro-fascist newspaper «Il Grido della stirpe» criticized Modigliani's «wandering» through France and his fundraising in the United States, which was to the detriment of the workers, subjected to Jewish Freemasonry<sup>54</sup>. Another newspaper even published the check for ten thousand dollars, for the funds raised during the trip to America, writing: «Lo and behold! Defamation with a full belly – of undeniable evidence – Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani collects 10 thousand dollars... to slander Italy»<sup>55</sup>. In New York, in those years, the Italian-language and openly anti-fascist newspaper «Nuovo mondo» was published. Antonini intended to entrust the chief editorship of the newspaper to Modigliani, who declined because he wanted to return to France, so as not to be too far from Italy.

On 22 March 1935, the General Council of the Italian Waist & Dressmakers'

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DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», telegram dated 30 November 1934 received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a copy sent by the Chief Director of the Political Police Division to the Director of Section I of the CPC, Rome, 11 December 1934.

<sup>52</sup> Luisa Montevercchi, *L'esilio. Il viaggio di propaganda antifascista negli Stati Uniti d'America*, in D. Cherubini et al. (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 135.

<sup>53</sup> See Stefano Luconi, *La frattura sull'antisemitismo: la contrapposizione tra intellettuali antifascisti e lavoratori italoamericani di fronte ai provvedimenti razziali del 1938*, in Patrizia Guarnieri (ed.), *L'emigrazione intellettuale dall'Italia fascista. Studenti e studiosi ebrei dell'Università di Firenze in fuga all'estero*, Florence, Firenze University Press, 2019, pp. 73-87.

<sup>54</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 9, f. 51, clipping of the article in «Il Grido della stirpe», New York, 6 April 1935.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, the article appeared in «L'Italia», the publication of the Italian communities of Canada, Montreal, 27 April 1935.

Union appointed him honorary president of Local 89<sup>56</sup>. In April Modigliani returned to France with Vera. In four months he had given perhaps a hundred lectures. In Washington, DC, in New York at the Eagles Auditorium; wherever he went, he spoke out against fascism<sup>57</sup>. At the end of this tour Dubinsky himself handed him a check for 10,000 dollars, which had been collected in all the meetings as an American contribution to the Matteotti Fund for anti-fascist activities outside Italy and «for the support of refugees from the Mussolini regime»<sup>58</sup>. It was Antonini who pointed out that the Italian anti-fascists had not been included in the fundraising that ILGWU had earmarked for German and Austrian socialist refugees. On Antonini's recommendation, the Jewish Labor Committee even financed the publication of the newspaper representing the socialist party in exile, «Il Nuovo Avanti», and also Giustizia e Libertà, regardless of the internal divisions among the socialists. The commitment made through what was called the «American Modigliani Fund» was only the beginning.

### **The return to France and the Nazi invasion**

Events of ever more dramatic significance struck him in terms of his affections, but also pushed him out of the political organization that had been the basis not only of his anti-fascism, but of his lifelong political commitment. The hardest blow for the entire anti-fascist movement, and for the exiles in France, was the assassination at the hands of fascist hit men of Carlo Rosselli, with his brother Nello, in June 1937 while he was active in the cause of the Spanish Civil War. Even Modigliani then began to take an interest in new means and channels of anti-fascist propaganda: it seems that from

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., letter from the Italian Waist & Dressmakers' Union, Local 89, New York, 25 March 1935.

<sup>57</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», cable dated 19 January, 1935, sent by the Correspondence Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of the Interior, copied to the CPC, Rome, 2 February 1935. ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 9, f. 51, poster of the gathering of 24 February 1935, New York.

<sup>58</sup> This quote is reproduced by Catherine Collomp, «I nostri compagni d'America». *The Jewish Labor Committee and the Rescue of Italian Antifascists 1934-1941*, «Altreitalia», 28, 2004, pp. 71-72.

the beginning of 1938 he collaborated with Vera on an Italian-language radio program for the French radio, in which Angelo Tasca, Giuseppe Faravelli, Andrea Caffi, Nicola Chiaromonte and Mario Levi, who would later marry Jeanne Modigliani, participated.

By 1939, the IOS initiative was on its way to a failing epilogue.

After the Socialist Party joined the «pact of unity of action» with the communists, Modigliani made his decision. It was 4 April 1939:

Dearest friends of the leadership of the Italian Socialist Party,  
I have been in the party for 45 years, almost day by day. I have represented it in the International since this was reconstituted. I have been in the Executive since the unity was reconstituted. Therefore, if today I find myself compelled to give up the positions I hold both in the IOS and in the Executive, you will easily believe me if I tell you that I do not do it without feeling a great sorrow and – what is more important – without having weighed the pros and cons for a long time<sup>59</sup>. [...] Circumstances required [...] that I take a more uncompromisingly «Zimmerwaldian» position in the face of the possibility of war<sup>60</sup>.

### **Fear and aid from the United States for refugees in France**

Modigliani had always traveled a lot by choice and for work; from the late 1930s, he organized himself to flee. On 9 June 1939, a letter from the Political police attributed to him even the intention of returning to Italy and staying «quietly» in some corner of Tuscany because he was «extremely tired of the exile»<sup>61</sup>. Often the informers were not very reliable, but the situation was getting worse: the war, the French surrender to Germany, anti-Semitism. Partly fascistized and partly invaded by the Nazis, France was now a dangerous place for socialists and Jews like them. At the beginning of June 1940, the order came to leave Paris. The Modiglianis asked for a safe-conduct; since they were foreigners, they could not travel without French

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<sup>59</sup> ACS, *Archivio P. Nenni Nenni*, b. 10, f. 631, letter from Modigliani to the members of the leadership of the Socialist Party, Paris, 4 April 1939; quote taken from D. Cherubini *et al.* (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 158.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>61</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», note of the Political Police Division of 23 June 1939, with a copy sent by the Chief Director of the Political Police Division to the Director of Section I, 6 July 1939.

documents in order. Apparently, Modigliani was looking for help to get his passport, but it seemed really difficult to get it<sup>62</sup>.

In July 1940, when the situation of European refugees in France became increasingly dangerous, the Jewish Labor Committee collected a list of about 400 names of democratic refugees, among the representatives in New York of the various national groups – Polish, German, Austrian, Russian –, to be sent to the State Department in Washington, DC in order to request that they be given a visa for the United States, saving them from the Gestapo. For the Italian anti-fascists, about fifty names were included in the list; some were identified by Lionello Venturi, who headed the Italian Emergency Rescue Committee in New York, others by Modigliani who was in France and who also sent his list to the US Consul in Marseille<sup>63</sup>. In his list, revised several times, were, among others, the young historian Franco Venturi, son of Lionello; the journalists Nicola Chiaromonte, Giuseppe Faravelli and Alberto Tarchiani; Emilio Lussu, Aldo Garosci and his wife Madeleine, Silvio Trentin, who were all with *Giustizia e Libertà*, and the republican Randolfo Pacciardi, as well as Modigliani himself and his wife Vera. She insisted on leaving, as her letters asking for help to American friends reveal. Antonini and Romualdi telegraphed from New York to convince him, who instead resisted. The Italian political police continued to surveil him and believed that it was he who served as an intermediary and fiduciary<sup>64</sup>. Among those whom the Jewish Labor Committee managed to get to America, the Italians were few.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., letter from the Ministry of War to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, 18 November 1940, copied to the director of Section I of the CPC, Rome, 28 November 1940.

<sup>63</sup> G.E. Modigliani to the Consulate of the United States, Marseille, 31 July 1940, in Robert Wagner Labor Archives, Bobst Library, New York University, *Jewish Labor Council Records*, b. 39, f. 1; the circumstances, including all the references, are reconstructed in C. Collomp, «*I nostri compagni d'America*», cit., pp. 66-82.

<sup>64</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», note from the Political Police Division of 10 August 1940 directed to the DAGR, with a copy sent to the director of Section I, Rome, 10 September 1940.

### On the run through France

Meanwhile, the Modiglianis moved towards the South of France making various stops: Tours, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Marseille and finally Nîmes<sup>65</sup>. In Marseille they found their old friends, the Viterbos, also on the run<sup>66</sup>. Vera began to collect and rearrange her memories of exile; she would publish them in Milan in 1946<sup>67</sup>.

In Bordeaux they received a regular passport, complete with an exit visa, and met their niece Jeanne again. Together they fled to Toulouse, a city that had already welcomed hundreds of Belgian refugees and thousands of fugitives from occupied France.

According to a complacent report by the informants, Modigliani was «madly afraid, as a Jew and as an anti-fascist, of being handed over to the Italian authorities, as the French government had already done with some anti-Nazi exponents, who had been brought back to the German border»<sup>68</sup>.

In her diary Vera recounted the «terrible memory» of the round-ups of Jews between July and August 1942, first in the occupied zone, then in the free zone: it was the hunt for foreign Jews, the very ones who «had thought they would find in France a safe harbor»<sup>69</sup>. Even on their hotel in Nîmes, where they had stayed for a few months, one day they saw the Nazi flag flying. They were helped to rush to another modest hotel (Colisée in place des Carmes). And it was there that Joyce Salvadori, Emilio Lussu's partner, went to pick them up. They did not have to fear, she would help them escape, even with false papers, if necessary. They changed lodgings and villages again, in Castres, in Lisle-sur-Tarn, in the countryside: every ring of the door startled

<sup>65</sup> Luisa Montevicchi, *L'esilio. Dalla Francia alla Svizzera*, in D. Cherubini et al. (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 169.

<sup>66</sup> P. Guarnieri, E. Lo Monaco, *Ada Vera Bernstein Viterbo*, cit., p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> Luisa Montevicchi, Viviana Simonelli (eds.), *L'album dei volti e dei ricordi. L'esilio nei pensieri, immagini, ricordi di Vera Modigliani*, Rome, ESSMOI, 1999 <<http://www.fondazionemodigliani.it>> (accessed 15 December 2021).

<sup>68</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», note dated 30 March 1941 from Nice, from the chief director of the Political Police Division to the DAGR, copied to the CPC, Rome, 17 April 1941.

<sup>69</sup> V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., pp. 399-401.

them<sup>70</sup>.

### **Between «fronts and borders»: refugees in Switzerland**

On 20 November 1942, the Swiss Consulate in Marseille wrote to Modigliani:

I have the honor to inform you that, according to a telegram from the Federal Police for Foreigners in Bern, you and your wife Vera are authorized to travel to Switzerland for an as yet unspecified period of time. So please send me your passports and the sum of fr. [...] to cover stationery costs<sup>71</sup>.

They tried to cross the border twice, on the same day, 22 March 1943. They were also stopped and interrogated by two Italian carabinieri with whom they pretended to be French. On the third attempt they succeeded, on the morning of 24 March 1943.

They went from one refugee camp to another, from Les Cropettes to camp Charmilles, which was a former school; they filled out questionnaires; they answered other interrogations, slept in dormitories; sitting on the benches they ate «cabbage and potatoes, potatoes and cabbage». Then they were moved to camp Champel<sup>72</sup>.

The Consulate of Italy in Bern sent the following information, signed by a lieutenant colonel:

About three weeks ago, the Italian exile Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani, son of Flaminio [Modigliani], born in Livorno on 28 October 1872, arrived clandestinely in Switzerland from France [...]. Modigliani – who is accompanied by his wife Vera – is currently in the concentration camp of Bout du Monde (outskirts of Geneva). He has already reached out to Swiss personalities, such as the National Council members E.P. Graber and Roberto Grimm, who are making every effort to get him out of the camp and allow him to stay in Switzerland. The Swiss Socialist Parliament is also working towards this<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 408-415. See also J. Lussu, *Fronti e frontiere*, cit.

<sup>71</sup> ACS, *Archivio G.E. Modigliani*, b. 9, f. 45, letter from the Swiss Consulate in Marseille to Modigliani, 20 November 1942, in D. Cherubini *et al.* (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 178.

<sup>72</sup> V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., pp. 435-463. The move to the camp of Bout du monde, to which the Consulate General of Italy refers in the brief cited in the following note, is not included here.

<sup>73</sup> ACS, MI, DGPS, DAGR, CPC, b. 3327, f. «G.E. Modigliani», letter from the Consulate of Italy to the Ministry of Interior, Bern, 12 April 1943.

Certainly, he had contacts with men and women of the Swiss Socialist Party, with Pierre Graber (1908-2003), future president of the Swiss Confederation, and also with Regina Fuchsmann Kägi (1889-1972), a Jewish teacher, who headed the Swiss Workers' Relief (Schweizerisches Arbeiterhilfswerk) founded in 1936, which from 1940 began to provide assistance also to war refugees<sup>74</sup>.

The Modiglianis were released into «controlled» freedom in April 1943. Liberation, like asylum, was not a right but a kind of concession and the freed had to comply with certain rules<sup>75</sup>. A year would be spent in Geneva: they felt «a bit like we were tolerated... “behave”, we feel like we are told at every moment, “behave, otherwise...”»<sup>76</sup>.

### **The return and the Republic**

On 13 October 1944 Modigliani and his wife were brought back to Italy. Ignazio Silone also returned on the same military plane bound for Naples from Annecy, in the French Haute-Savoie<sup>77</sup>. Modigliani was 72 years old, and he was sick. He was appointed in the category «Former deputies of the XXVII Legislature, who were dismissed by fascism and were in the opposition in the Chamber», and served on the National Council. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, he obtained 6,162 preferential votes in the electoral College XVI of Pisa-Livorno-Lucca-Apuania (Massa Carrara) and was elected in the single electoral College.

When in February 1947 the Socialists faced a new split, he joined the social-democratic Socialist Party of Italian Workers (PSLI), of which he was president

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<sup>74</sup> In *Terra d'asilo, i rifugiati italiani in Svizzera (1943-1945)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993, Renata Brogginì does not speak of Modigliani, but in the note on p. 250, she mentions a correspondence between him and Regina Fuchsmann. See Markus Bürgi, *Kägi-Fuchsmann, Regina*, in *Dizionario storico della Svizzera (DSS)*, 26 November 2014 <<https://hls-dhs-dss.ch>> (accessed 9 December 2021).

<sup>75</sup> On liberation as a concession, see R. Brogginì, *La frontiera della speranza. Gli ebrei d'Italia verso la Svizzera*, Milan, Mondadori, 1998.

<sup>76</sup> V. Modigliani, *Esilio*, cit., p. 494.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 510. See Margherita Martelli, *Il ritorno in patria: la «repubblichetta» diventa Repubblica*, in D. Cherubini et al. (eds.), *Giuseppe Emanuele l'altro Modigliani*, cit., p. 183.

and group leader of the parliamentary group. His critical health conditions prevented him from effective activity in the Constituent Assembly. He died before the completion of the Assembly's works, in Rome, on 5 October 1947.

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