

Research program:
“Italian nationalism the Anglo-American world”

Annex C

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Research program:

the research should address the relationship between Italian nationalism, considered not only as an Association and then political Party, but also as a broad and heterogeneous cultural orientation, and the new movements of the Anglo-Saxon Right, especially the imperialist wing of American Republicans and British Conservatives. Indeed the research should highlight both the ideological convergences and common cultural matrix and any direct relationship between some of these political figures. In fact, since the Spanish-American War and especially since the Anglo-Boer War, the “Anglo-Saxon model” fell into crisis in the liberal culture and its reinterpretation as “civilizing expansionism” begins paving the way to the nationalist one.

The candidate must then reconstruct the birth and the development of a radical right that, since the beginning of the twentieth century, tries to adapt the conservatism to the changes introduced by mass politics. For example, it should be necessary to consider Joseph Chamberlain’s followers and Arthur Milner’s ones (Milner was the leader of the "social-imperialists" group and the theorist of a "National party"), the youth movements such as Baden Powell’s Boy Scouts, the Lads Drill Association, the Duty and Discipline Movement and Lord Meath’s Empire day movement. Despite the diversity of their aims and methods, all those organizations aimed to educate the young generations to the cult of the nation and to prepare them to the imperialist competition. The same could be said with regard to the United States and the nationalist interest for Theodore Roosevelt’s “active life philosophy”. It should be important to focus on the role attributed to the political leader, which should be the guide both of the bourgeoisie and of the masses.

Prezzolini wrote in "Il Regno" that Italy had to follow the example of England and the United States, because «so far it has been missing an example and a voice: that is to say a man. We resolutely believe in the power of individuals on peoples’ history. Chamberlain is a proof of this. Let’s give to the Italian bourgeoisie a man as Chamberlain, but appropriate to it and able to wake up the class feeling and that selfishness, that defends, offends, enslaves or destroys» (La borghesia può risorgere).

The research should also outline the widespread image of the United States and England among the Italian nationalists, paying particular attention to the years between the constitution of the Nationalist Association to the immediate post-war period.

In addition to the analysis of the press (first of all “L’Idea nazionale”, but also other imperialist newspapers and magazines), the research should give the opportunity to track down archival documents and correspondence useful to outline the relationship between Italian nationalism and analogous Anglo-Saxon movements.

Research structure

The research should investigate the relationship between Italian nationalists and the English and American world through the analysis of magazines, publications and correspondence. The results of such a research should be presented in an essay.