



Mapping Italian Institutional Tourism Communication for International Visitors from the 1920s to the 1940s: A Historical Overview

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the tourism communication abroad produced by Italian institutions between 1919 and 1945, placing it in the historical and political context in which it was created. In particular, the paper describes the research of documentary and textual sources (brochures, magazines, etc.) carried out in the archives of ENIT and the ministerial institutions of the Fascist regime that supervised the tourism sector. Through the analysis of the documentation found and the literature review, the central institutional organisation of the Italian tourism sector in the inter-war period will be summarized. In addition, the work carried out by ENIT abroad in the field of tourism publications will be examined, with reference to quantitative data available. Particular attention will be paid to ENIT's promotional activities in English-speaking countries, highlighting how the institution gradually began to address the British and American public in different ways.

KEYWORDS: Tourism; Tourism Communication; Fascism; Foreign Tourism; Italy



INTRODUCTION

The objective of this PRIN project was to conduct historical research on documentary sources and promotional materials useful in reconstructing the framework of tourism communication by Italian institutions between 1919 and 1959. As part of the agreement between the Ca' Foscari University and ENIT,¹ it was possible to access all the material preserved in the Library and Archive. Research was also conducted at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato, where the fonds of the various ministries that successively oversaw the tourism sector were consulted.

With regard to promotional material, a corpus was created from a sample of these texts. The first selection criterion was to ensure that the corpus consisted of similar text types from consistent sources over time. In some cases, however, the texts did not indicate the date of printing, so it was necessary to estimate an approximate date of publication.

In some cases, the information contained in the text was crucial, such as references to the recent construction of buildings or roads², which allowed the publication period to be narrowed down to a few years. In the case of different editions bearing the same title, the information contained in the Institution's Reports proved particularly useful, where explicit reference was made to details such as the number of pages or the presence of specific illustrations.³ In other cases, the ENIT logo carrying the symbol of the Fascist party made it possible to date the document between the second half of the 1920s and 1943. As a result of this research, 343 texts related to the period 1919-1945 were digitized, including 291 brochures, 45 magazines, and 4 tourist guides (see Mauro in this issue).

TOURISM ORGANIZATION IN ITALY DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The inter-war period was a key period in the history of tourism in Italy. It was during this period that the debate on the national importance of tourism, which had begun at the beginning of the twentieth century, reached a significant conclusion, albeit somewhat later than in other countries (Berrino, 195-200). In this period, the tourism sector became an integral part of the State's institutional system with the establishment of ENIT in 1919, on the initiative of the first Nitti Government (Capuzzo 49-56). By statute, the Institution was tasked with both the production and coordination of the country's

¹ The names of Italian institutions are given in Italian. Their translations are given in a table at the end of the article. Quotations are given in Italian and my translation in brackets. Some texts cited in this article were sourced from the ENIT Library in Rome, whom we thank for granting us access to these as well as other materials.

² An example is the brochure *Venice*, dated 1929-32, as it mentioned the reconstruction of a building completed in 1928, but did not refer to the Venice Film Festival in the description of social life at the Lido, which began in 1932.

³ An example is the brochure *Art in Italy*, whose third edition found is listed among the editions produced by the ENIT in the 1933 report.



tourism promotion, proposing legislative measures for the sector, direct or indirect administration of the hotel government credit⁴ and the promotion and establishment of initiatives for professional education (Rdl 2099).

ENIT's functions were further defined in the following years through a 1921 agreement with the Ferrovie dello Stato, which assigned the management of representative offices abroad and in Italy to the institution (FFSS ENIT 2). The two entities also promoted the creation of the Consorzio Italiano per gli Uffici di Viaggio e Turismo, headed by Luigi Vittorio Bertarelli, then President of the Touring Club Italiano (Capuzzo 62-63). The Consorzio was created to manage and coordinate travel and tourism offices both domestically and abroad, with the dual purpose of functioning as ENIT offices, distributing promotional material sent from the central office, and operating as a travel agency by organizing trips around the country. Through this system, ENIT was able to act as a commercial concern bringing funds into the Institution's coffers, which then enabled the purchase of the Rome⁵ headquarters. However, the decision to merge commercial and public activities has been the subject of much criticism, mainly by the private travel agencies unhappy with the privileged position in which the Consorzio operated.⁶ Partly due to this deadlock, the government ordered the dissolution of the Consorzio (Rdl 1430) and the creation of the Compagnia italiana del Turismo (CIT) in 1927 (Rdl 226). From that point on, CIT was delegated to manage the commercial aspects of ENIT's activities (Bosworth 1-25; Cavalcanti 479-502). This regulatory intervention can be seen as the first step of the regime's interference in the tourism sector.

Between 1928 and 1934, through a series of decrees, ENIT was placed under the direct control of the State. The first occurred in 1928, when changes to the composition of the Institution's board deprived it of its private sector component, allowing only individuals appointed by the Ministero per l'economia nazionale to represent most of the tourism ministerial offices (Rdl 1166). In 1931, a Commissariato per il Turismo was created, who reported directly to the Prime Minister and was tasked with "dirigere e coordinare tutte le attività concernenti il turismo" ("directing and coordinating all activities concerning tourism", my trans.) (Rdl 371 2). With this new organization, ENIT lost much of its decision-making autonomy. Finally, in 1934, with the approval of a new statute, ENIT was relegated to merely executive functions and, following the abolition of the office of Commissioner, ENIT was placed under the jurisdiction of the Direzione generale del turismo, housed within the Sottosegretariato per la stampa e la

⁴ This is a government grant to hoteliers as an incentive for new construction.

⁵ ACS, PCM, Gab., Aff. Gen., Fasc. per cat., 1923, f. 3-2-1, Appunto per il Sottosegretario di Stato per la Stampa e la propaganda dal Capo di Gabinetto (Memorandum for the Undersecretary of State for the Press and Propaganda from the Chief of Staff), p. 1. The 1922 ENIT Budget reports revenues from the Consortium management amounting to 2,893,776.77 lire, compared to a state contribution of 500,000 lire (ENIT *Relazione* 1922 80-81).

⁶ ACS, PCM, Gab., Aff. Gen., Fasc. per cat., 1923, f. 3-2-1, Appunto per il Sottosegretario di Stato per la Stampa e la propaganda dal Capo di Gabinetto, (Memorandum for the Undersecretary of State for the Press and Propaganda from the Chief of Staff), p. 2.



propaganda (Rdl 1925). The DGT Director also assumed the functions previously held by the Presidency, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee of ENIT, effectively becoming its sole decision-making body.

In June 1935, with the elevation of the Sottosegretariato per la stampa e la propaganda to the rank of ministry (Rd 1009), later becoming the Ministero della cultura popolare in 1937, the Direzione generale del turismo was transferred to the new body without substantial modifications (Rd 1940). The following year, all national and local tourism organizations also fell under its jurisdiction (Rd 1834).

With the establishment of the Ministry, the Direzione per il turismo strengthened its relationship with the other directorates of the ministry and with foreign propaganda organizations, eventually managing some important propaganda initiatives in the United States, as we will explore further below. Moreover, the isolation caused by the war in Ethiopia and the subsequent withdrawal from the League of Nations also consolidated the role of tourism within the regime. The indirect political importance of tourism became central in countering international obstructionism:

C'è un'attività, che in questo periodo ha assunto un valore impreveduto: è il turismo. Quello che il turismo ha fatto in questi mesi decisivi della storia italiana e di acuta tensione internazionale non sarà facilmente dimenticato. [...] Non si trattava semplicemente di salvare un cespite di entrata e di difendere il nostro patrimonio di attrattive artistiche e naturali, ma di svolgere una funzione altamente politica sventando ogni manovra anti-italiana. (AP Camera 2690-2725) ("There is an activity that has assumed an unexpected value in this period: tourism. What tourism has done in these crucial months of Italian history and acute international tension will not be easily forgotten. [...] It was not simply about saving a source of income and defending our artistic and natural heritage, but about performing a highly political function by thwarting any anti-Italian maneuver", my trans.)

ENIT AND COMMUNICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

The establishment of ENIT marked the beginning of a national coordination of tourism communication and initiated a centrally organized institutional campaign for the production of tourism communication aimed both domestic and foreign audiences. From the early 1920s, this activity was divided into five major sectors: publications, press, graphic and photographic content, fairs and exhibitions, and travel. Between 1927 and 1928, additional sectors were added, including one dedicated to radio, one to aeronautics, and the film section was added to the photographic content sector. In this paper, I will provide a brief overview of ENIT's organization in the field of foreign communication, focusing particularly on the publications sector, with a digression into press communication in the specific case of the United States in the late 1930s, which will be explored in greater detail in the next section.



The publications⁷ sector was organized into general publications, regional publications, local publications, miscellaneous publications, and periodicals. General editions consisted of booklets dedicated to the entire country, in which the main attractions of Italy's regions, including colonies, were briefly described from north to south. The most notable among these, at least until 1933, was a booklet titled *Italia*, which was reprinted annually in different versions. The booklet was produced in several languages, in both economical and "deluxe" editions, and over the years ranged in length from 12 to 32 pages. Regional and local publications provided booklets specifically dedicated to regions or localities, understood both as administrative units (cities and regions) and as tourist areas (e.g., the Dolomites or the Ligurian Riviera). Miscellaneous publications included a diverse range of texts. There were texts that addressed specific activities such as sports, gastronomy, or art, as well as publications on places to visit throughout the country during different seasons, or that suggested itineraries for low-cost vacations in Italy. Most of these were produced in Italian and then translated into different foreign languages, but in some cases, particularly curated by the ENIT office in London, the texts were written directly in a foreign language.

The periodical publications were mostly produced in Italian and in collaboration with other organizations. For example, the magazine *Le vie d'Italia*, which became the official organ of ENIT, was produced in collaboration with the Touring Club. In some cases, these were periodicals of a statistical-informative nature, such as the *Annuario degli alberghi* (Hotel Yearbook). It was only in 1933 that a monthly magazine exclusively aimed at a foreign audience was produced, with editions published in three different languages: English (*Travel in Italy*), German (*Reiseland Italien*), and French (*Italie-Voyages*). This magazine was intended to serve as ENIT's new main promotional tool, replacing the illustrated booklet *Italia* (ENIT *Relazione 1933* 11).⁸ Shortly after this, the magazine *Italia* was also launched, consisting mainly of photographic material accompanied by brief captions in four languages: Italian, English, French, and German.

As shown in Graph 1,⁹ publications aimed at a foreign audience accounted for the majority of the total number of pages produced from the early 1920s, and this trend further strengthened in the following years. During this decade, publications targeted at a foreign audience increased from 55% of the total number of pages produced in 1920 to 95% in 1931.

⁷ In this sector, ENIT also included the production of artistic posters; for more information on this topic, see Barrese (15-31).

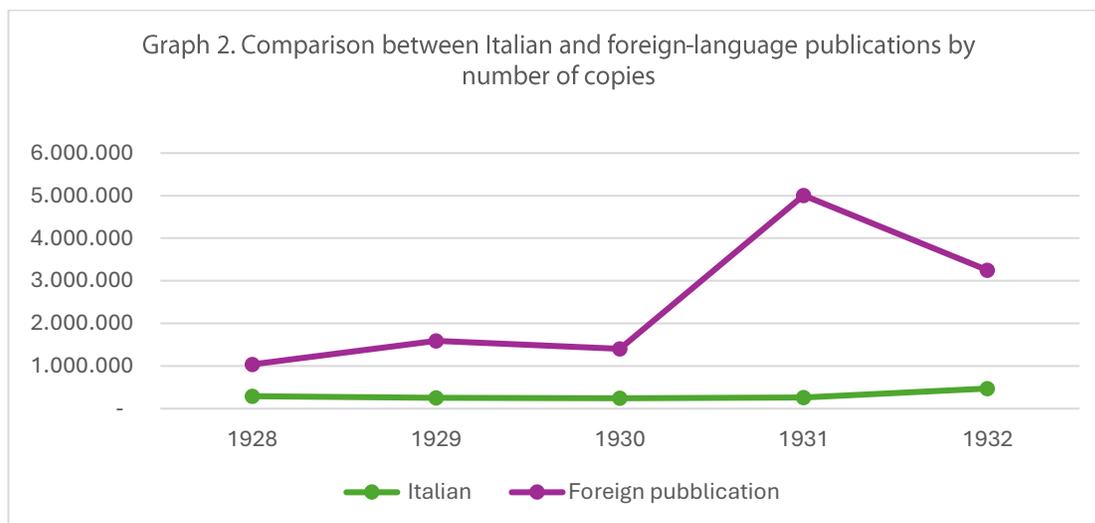
⁸ The magazine was not specifically aimed at a particular national audience. The fact that, as reported by Aliano (237), the head of the New York ENIT office, Romolo Angelone, praised its aspects of extreme interest to the American public seems to have primarily addressed the promotional needs of that particular office.

⁹ The data sourced from ENIT up to the early 1930s allows us to compare the production figures of texts in different languages, albeit with some specifications. From 1920 to 1929, only data on production by the number of pages for each language is available, while in 1930 and 1931, only the aggregated data for the Italian and foreign languages is available (see Graphs 1 and 3). From 1928 to 1931, data is available on the number of copies printed for each language, while for 1932, data is available on the number of copies sent by the Institution in each language (see Graphs 2 and 4).



Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1920-24, 1921, 1922, 1925-1931*).¹⁰

If we consider print runs and copies sent, the trend between 1928 and 1932 is similar. Foreign publications accounted for 78% of the total publications in 1928 and 87% of those sent in 1932 (see Graph 2).



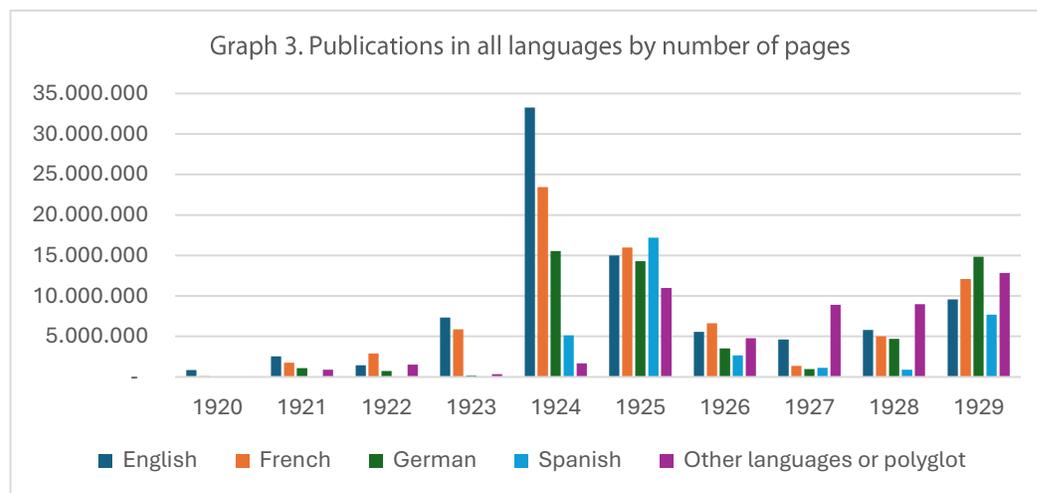
Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1928-1932*).

¹⁰ The figures reported here and in Graph 3, although partially derived from different sources, almost entirely coincide with those reported by Syrjämaa in Appendix IV of *Visitez l'Italie*. The discrepancies refer to the 1926 figures reported here, which are missing in Syrjämaa's text, and to the 1933 data, which Syrjämaa provides with the breakdown by language but is missing here.



The peak in foreign publications between 1924 and 1925 can be attributed to two different factors: the first economic-organizational, and the second opportunistic. In 1924, ENIT, in agreement with the Ferrovie dello Stato, decided to significantly increase the number of publications, especially in foreign languages, due to the anticipated increase in foreign tourist flows in those years. To achieve this, while aware of the lack of a corresponding increase in the budget to fund this strategic choice, the ENIT leadership opted for a reduction in the quality of publications. The editions defined as “lusso raffinato” (“refined luxury”, my trans.) in previous years were reserved for a few booklets with smaller print runs, while the majority of new publications followed “criteri più economici” (“more economical criteria”, my trans.), allowing the printing of materials on a larger scale for the same cost (ENIT *Relazione 1920-24* 20-22).

The other factor was the coincidence in 1925 with the Jubilee celebrations in Rome, which prompted ENIT to produce not only a greater number of general publications to meet the expected increase in foreign tourist arrivals but also a series of booklets dedicated to the event, with references to places of worship and sacred art itineraries (ENIT *Relazione 1920-24* 14). As shown in Graph 3, on this occasion, the Institution produced a much larger number of pages aimed at traditionally more Catholic audiences, such as the Spanish and French (ENIT *Relazione 1925* 11). In 1929, there was also a significant increase in absolute value in Spanish-language publications compared to 1928, which can be attributed not only to the small number of pages produced in this language in the previous period but also to the presence of an ENIT stand at the tourism exhibitions in Barcelona and Seville that year (ENIT *Relazione 1929* 19).

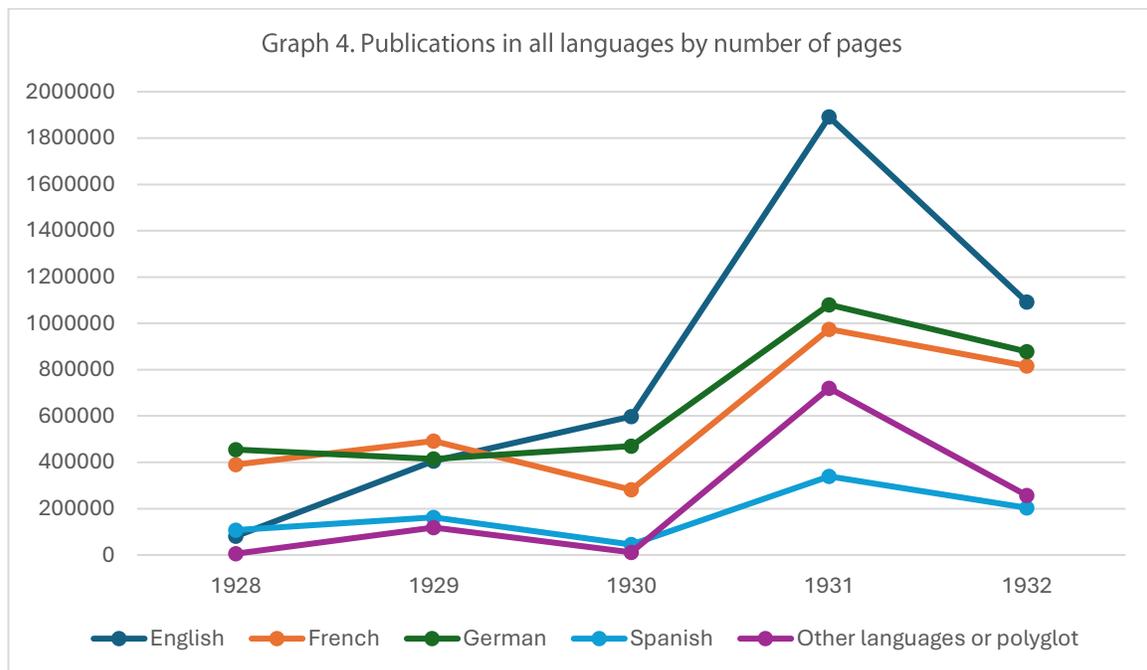


Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1920-24*, 1921, 1922, 1925-1931).

The general increase in print runs in foreign languages recorded in 1931 (see Graph 2), on the other hand, was intended to “fronteggiare gli effetti” (“counter the effects”, my trans.) (ENIT *Relazione 1931* 9) of the drastic contraction in international tourist movements following the global economic crisis of 1929. It is no coincidence that the marked increase in English-language publications in 1931 (see Graph 4) was



mainly driven by a substantial increase in editions dedicated to the American audience, for whom numerous copies of booklets were printed. This also aimed to support initiatives to promote the opening of a new ENIT office in New York in February of that year (ENIT *Relazione 1931 30-31*).¹¹ The increase in the generic category “other languages or polyglot” in 1931 is primarily attributable to the production of quadrilingual materials.¹²



Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1928-1932*).

The comparison between the data regarding the number of copies of these publications and those regarding the origin of foreign tourists in Italy during the same period, as reported in a recent essay by Battilani (115), reveals some interesting aspects.

Leaving aside the data on Spanish-language publications, whose production peaks we have already discussed, if we look at the trend of English-language publications, they accounted for an average of 22% of total foreign-language publications over the five-year period 1925-29, while the sum of tourist arrivals from Great Britain and the United States represented, on average, just over 28% of the total foreign arrivals in Italy. For German, the average of publications in the five-year period is 17% of the total foreign-language publications, while the arrivals of tourists from Germany and Austria in the same period averaged just over 25% of the total. In contrast,

¹¹ The first ENIT office in New York was opened in collaboration with the Ferrovie dello Stato in 1921 but being part of the Consorzio Italiano per gli Uffici di Viaggio e Turismo, it was assigned to CIT in 1928. From 1928 to 1930, ENIT had a correspondent in New York at the Italy America Society. In 1930, it planned the opening of the new office, which was inaugurated in February 1931.

¹² These were mainly copies of the *Annuario degli alberghi* and a map of the main communication routes to Italy (ENIT *Relazione 1931 114-117*).



regarding the presence of tourists from France, which fluctuated between 6% and 8% from 1925 to 1929, the number of pages produced in French in that same period accounted for an average of 20% of the total foreign-language production. Thus, while there is less English and German material produced compared to their share of incoming tourists, in the case of French, the relationship is reversed, and the gap between the two data points is much more pronounced. The proportion of French-language material produced is much greater than the percentage of foreign tourists coming from France. This is probably partly due to the fact that ENIT considered that the French-language publications would be useful for a broader, non-French, audience, given the role of French as a *lingua franca* in Europe at that time.

Unfortunately, after 1933, there is no data available. Nonetheless, a number of other documents do suggest a trend towards an increase in the range of languages in which the texts were produced and greater attention to the diversification of product according to the audience they were intended for, even if they spoke the same language.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

ENIT's communication activities toward English-speaking countries acquired particular importance from the very beginning. Among the offices opened in collaboration with the Ferrovie dello Stato starting in 1920, the London office was considered the "primus inter pares" (ENIT *Relazione 1920-24* 32), and its central role in ENIT's activities remained even after the institutional transformations.¹³ The activities of the London office were often praised by the Institution's leadership, who described them as "vigorosa, molteplice ed efficace" ("vigorous, diverse, and effective", my trans.), also due to their ability to establish "feconde relazioni" ("fruitful relationships", my trans.) (ENIT *Relazione 1931* 26) with the British press and travel agencies. Most of the English-language publications produced during the 1920s were directed at the British audience, and in some cases, they were written directly by the London office. Major William Stormont, director of the ENIT office in London since its opening, was the author of some of the Institution's flagship products, as well as some of the longest publications in terms of pages.¹⁴

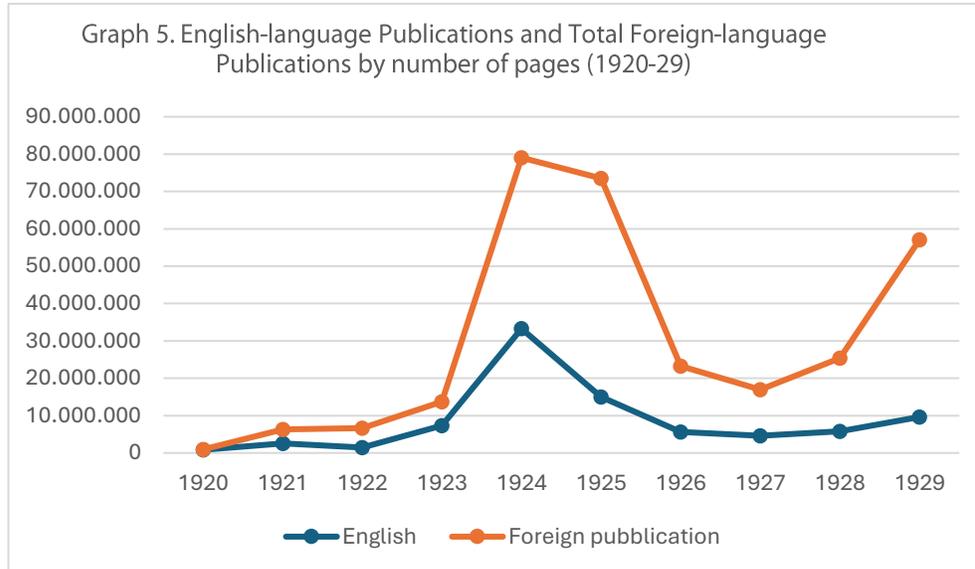
As noted earlier, in the five-year period 1925-29, English-language publications accounted for an average of 22% of total publications, but in the previous five-year period, this value was much higher, reaching 49%. This figure is particularly influenced by the publications written in ENIT's early years by Major Stormont. *Summer in Italy* and *Winter in Italy* were particularly long editions compared to ENIT's average consisting of 212 and 113 pages respectively. This fluctuation between the two five-year periods

¹³ With the dissolution of the Consorzio (1927), ENIT's travel and tourism offices were transformed into Delegations, often housed in embassies, consulates, or chambers of commerce, and converted into Italian Tourist Information Offices starting in the 1930s.

¹⁴ The publications attributable to Stormont are: *Winter in Italy*, *Summer in Italy*, *Italy* (1928), *Inexpensive Summer* and *Autumn Holidays in Italy*.

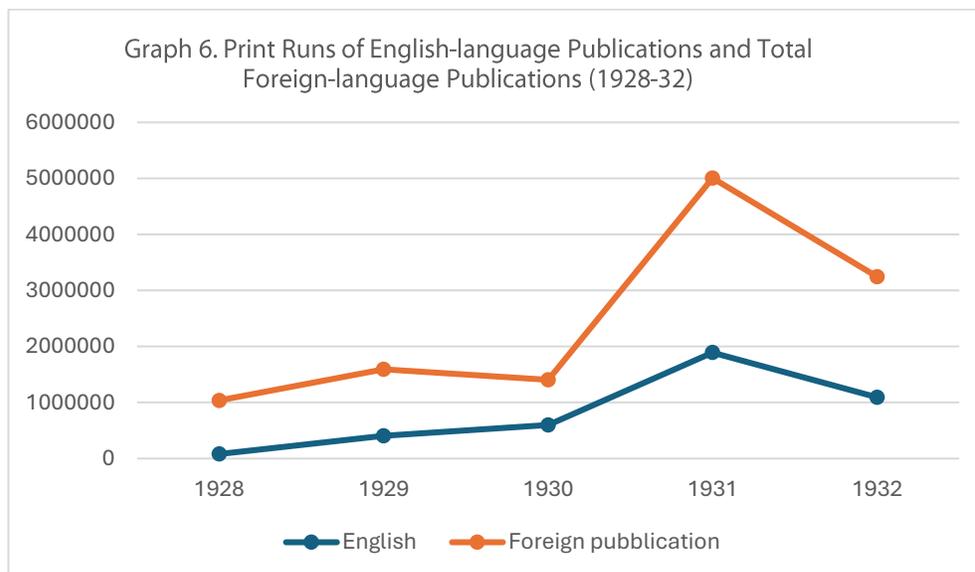


results in an increase in the average number of pages produced in English as a percentage of total foreign-language pages during the 1920s, reaching 36% (see Graph 5).



Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1920-1929*).

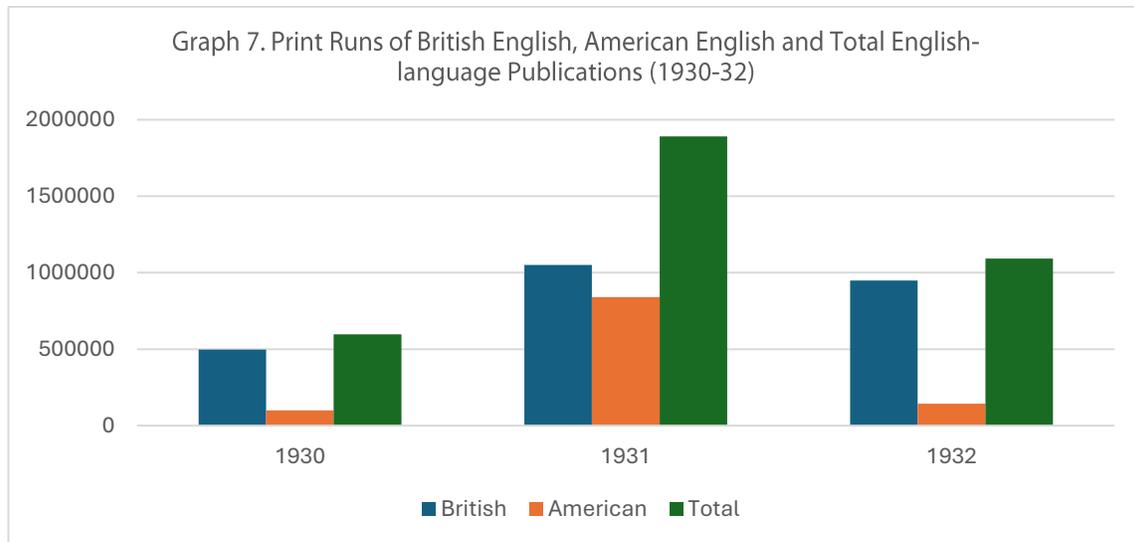
Since data of this type is not available for the 1930s, we will consider the print run data available for the five-year period 1928-32 (see Graph 6). In the late 1920s, the percentage of copies printed in English reached 8% in 1928 and 25% in 1929, averaging 17% of the total foreign-language print runs. With the beginning of the 1930s, the percentages rose significantly, producing a three-year average (1930-32) of 38% of copies produced in English out of the total foreign-language publications.



Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1928-1932*).



A significant component of the increase in English-language print runs can be attributed to the emergence of editions exclusively dedicated to the American audience (see Graph 7). A series of publications were systematically printed in “Americana” editions, distinct from the “Inglese” (“American; English”, my trans.) edition. In particular, in 1931 (see Graph 6), production for the American audience reached 840,000 copies, accounting for 44% of the total English-language editions that year (see Graph 7).



Source: Author's graph based on ENIT data (see ENIT *Relazione 1930-1932*).

In 1932, the General booklet produced for the American audience was titled *Your Trip to Italy*, and the Institution intended it to better suit the needs of this category of tourists with its less descriptive content and richer practical information (ENIT *Relazione 1932 12*).

In 1933, on the occasion of the Chicago International Exposition and the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome, ENIT prepared a type of publication that was previously unprecedented for the American audience. *Ten Years of Italian Progress*, a 32-page booklet, was produced to illustrate to the American audience the “progresso compiuto in Italia nel primo decennio del Regime, in tutti i campi della vita sociale e del pubblico benessere” (“progress made in Italy in the first decade of the Regime, in all fields of social life and public welfare”, my trans.) (ENIT *Relazione 1933 12*).¹⁵

In the mid-1930s, communications between the Italian embassy in Washington, ministerial propaganda representative and regime associations in the United State addressed the problem of regime penetration in this country, emphasizing the need to, on one hand, address topics that could not be directly linked to politics and on the other, use American experts already established in the American media landscape:

¹⁵ 1 million copies of the booklet were printed. For more information on the exhibitions, see Syrjämaa (191 308-314).



Non è questione di promuovere il Padiglione o di cercare di aumentare il numero dei visitatori, ma piuttosto di APPROFITTARE della partecipazione Italiana e di sfruttarla per creare un po' di simpatia e aumentare il nostro prestigio.¹⁶ ("It is not a matter of promoting the Pavilion or trying to increase the number of visitors, but rather to take advantage of the Italian participation and exploit it to create some goodwill and increase our prestige", my trans.)

La documentazione visiva e descrittiva delle formidabili realizzazioni del Regime nei campi della cultura, dell'assistenza sociale, delle opere pubbliche, presentata senza enfasi, troverà sempre le più favorevoli accoglienze da parte del pubblico americano.¹⁷ ("The visual and descriptive documentation of the formidable achievements of the Regime in the fields of culture, social assistance, and public works, presented without emphasis, will always be the most favorably received by the American public", my trans.).

Occorre curare che il materiale sia adatto alla mentalità americana e utile ai nostri effetti.¹⁸ ("We must ensure that the material is suitable for the American mindset and useful for our purposes", my trans.).

Numerous offers reached the ministry from American companies operating in the fields of publishing and public relations,¹⁹ proposing to manage advertising campaigns, including tourism campaigns.²⁰ The war in Ethiopia and the subsequent international isolation made the regime's need to influence international public opinion even more urgent.

The decisive push to adopt this type of solution came from the preparatory phases and subsequent approval of the Foreign Agents Registration Act by the U.S. Congress, which significantly reduced the scope for propaganda by foreign regimes. Every entity operating on behalf of a foreign institution had to register with the U.S. Department of State, thus making public the names of those involved in propaganda efforts for the Fascist regime.

On May 18, 1938, the Direzione generale dei servizi per la propaganda of the Ministero della cultura popolare informed the Italian Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General of Italy in New York²¹ of the signing of a one-year contract between the Italian Ministry and the "Hamilton Wright Advertising Syndicate". The contract was

¹⁶ ACS, MCP (1926-1945), DSGP, busta 231, f. l68/101-29, Da Ugo d'Annunzio ad Arturo Costantino (From d'Annunzio to Costantino), 21.11.1938.

¹⁷ ACS, MCP, Gab., Reports, b. 9, f. Report n. 101, Relazione al Ministro di Bernardo Bergamaschi (Report to the Ministry from Bergamaschi), 18.10.1935, p. 31.

¹⁸ ACS, MCP, Gab., Reports, b. 21, f. 30.6, Promemoria sulla propaganda dell'Ambasciata d'Italia a Washington (Memorandum on Propaganda from the Italian Embassy in Washington), 30.8.1935.

¹⁹ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 9, Report n. 101, Progetto Wendell P. Colton Company (Wendell P. Colton Company Project).

²⁰ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 9, Dall'ufficio del consigliere commerciale a Washington all'ambasciatore d'Italia a Washington (From the Office of Commercial Counselor in Washington to the Italian Ambassador in Washington), 26.2.1935.

²¹ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Nota della DGSP, "Propaganda negli Stati Uniti – Sindacato Hamilton Wright" (Note from DGSP "Propaganda in the United States – Hamilton Wright Syndicate), p. 1.



to be considered “segreto” precisely due to the need to conceal the company’s collaboration with Italian institutions.²²

The strategy implemented by the Italian authorities to keep this relationship hidden, also on the advice of Hamilton Wright²³ itself, involved payment of the monthly fee stipulated in the contract through ENIT to a frontman for the company, Marquis Nunziante, who then transferred the payments to the company. This stratagem, as highlighted by the Chief of Staff of the Ministero della cultura popolare, was adopted for “ragioni di carattere politico e di opportunità” and ensured that “non rendere di dominio pubblico il fatto che, sotto un’apparente sovvenzione vigeva, con l’Hamilton Wright, un regolare accordo riservato” (“Political and opportunistic reasons; it was not made public knowledge that, under the guise of an apparent subsidy, there was a regular secret agreement with Hamilton Wright”, my trans.).²⁴

According to the agreement, Hamilton Wright²⁵ committed to publishing news about Italy in newspapers, magazines, radio programs, and newsreels in the United States. The results obtained were particularly satisfying for the Ministry leadership,²⁶ who renewed the contract with the company twice, extending it until June 1940 and increasing the monthly fees from \$1,250 in May 1938²⁷ to \$4,250 in the last six months.²⁸ What pleasantly surprised the Ministry leadership was the ability to “pubblicare in speciale rilievo avvenimenti essenzialmente di propaganda fascista” (“Publish and highlight events essentially related to Fascist propaganda”) which, as the company itself explained, were accepted by American newspapers due to the professional regard that the agency enjoyed in the United States:

Ciò è dovuto alla profonda penetrazione negli ambienti giornalistici americani e soprattutto perché i giornali sanno che HWO non diffonde unicamente soggetti di pura propaganda, ma soggetti di grande valore giornalistico americano.²⁹ (“This is due to its deep penetration into American journalistic circles and especially because newspapers know that HWO does not

²² (Secret). On the significance of this contract for political propaganda in the United States, see Pretelli cap. IV; Luconi, Tintori 48; Di Legge cap. III.

²³ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Appunto della DGSP per la Direzione generale per gli affari amministrativi, gli affari generali e il personale (DGSO Memorandum for the General Directorate for Administrative Affairs, General Affairs, and Personnel), 1.10.1939.

²⁴ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Nota del Capo di Gabinetto del MCP alla Ragioneria Centrale (Note from the Chief of Staff of MCP to the Central Accounting Office), 21.11.1939.

²⁵ On the Hamilton Wright see Cutlip, chapter 4.

²⁶ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Appunto della DGSP per il MCP (DGSP note to MCP), 14.4.1939. ADE, F. 8000029839397, Dal DGSP al Sindacato Hamilton Wright, 7.6.1939, allegata al progetto per *Una campagna pubblicitaria negli Stati Uniti* presentato dalla HWO al Commissariato per il turismo nell’ottobre 1947 (From DGSP to Hamilton Wright, attached to the project *Una campagna pubblicitaria negli Stati Uniti* presented by HWO to the Tourism Commissioner in October 1947).

²⁷ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Nota della DGSP all’Ambasciata italiana a Washington, “Propaganda negli Stati Uniti – Sindacato Hamilton Wright” (DGSP note to the Italian Embassy in Washington, “Propaganda in the United States – Hamilton Wright Syndicate), 18.5.1938, p. 1.

²⁸ ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Nota della DGSP al Marchese Antonino Nunziante (DGSP note to Marquis Antonino Nunziante), 24.1.1940.

²⁹ ACS, MCP, Gabinetto, Report, busta 8, fasc. 81, Promemoria dalla HWO (Memorandum from HWO), undated.



exclusively disseminate pure propaganda topics but subjects of significant American journalistic value”, my trans.)

ENIT’s involvement in this contract was not limited to its role as a payment intermediary; in fact, during the first year, tourism communication constituted the main component.³⁰ The activities carried out by Hamilton Wright on behalf of ENIT³¹ ensured the publication of tourism-related content in several American newspapers, including the *New York Times*. These publications were considered particularly useful because they did not represent traditional advertising but were texts accepted by newspapers “as news, not publicity. Every article and photograph released by this office is published for its ‘News’ value”.³²

This communication tool was considered strategic by ENIT, which renewed the contract with Hamilton Wright even after World War II, maintaining it until the mid-1960s.

CONCLUSIONS

The reconstruction of ENIT’s activities in the field of tourism promotion highlights the growing importance assumed by this sector, to which, as we have seen, a specific directorate within the Ministero della cultura popolare was dedicated in the 1930s. Moreover, within tourism promotion, the foreign sector occupied an increasingly significant space, eventually becoming the main component of ENIT’s activities in the publications sector. Through the coordination and management of multiple foreign offices, the Institution has promoted a wide range of communication initiatives, from the production of brochures and magazines to participation in international fairs and exhibitions.

In particular, foreign-language publications not only increased steadily throughout the twenty-year period but also represented by far the most significant part of ENIT’s print production. This was accompanied by growing diversification, with a variety of texts referring to different localities in the country or specific activities and tourist attractions. There was also a gradual expansion of target languages and a differentiation of national audiences, especially concerning the English language. The introduction of magazines specifically aimed at the international audience also

³⁰ From October 1939, the General Directorate of Tourism first transferred half, and from January 1940, the entire amount of the contract to meet the needs of the DGSP. ACS, MCP, Gab., Report, b. 8, f. 81, Nota dal DGSP alla HWO (DGSP note to HWO), 5.10.1939; appunto dalla DGSP alla Direzione generale per i servizi amministrativi gli affari generali e il personale (DGSP Memorandum to the General Directorate for Administrative Services, General Affairs, and Personnel), 5.1.1940.

³¹ Some of these publications can be found in excerpt within ACS, MCP (1926-1945), b. 230, f. l. 68/92, and in ADE, F8000029839397, progetto per *Una campagna pubblicitaria negli Stati Uniti* presentato dalla HWO al Commissariato per il turismo nell’ottobre del 1947 (From DGSP to Hamilton Wright, attached to the project *Una campagna pubblicitaria negli Stati Uniti* presented by HWO to the Tourism Commissioner in October 1947).

³² ACS, MCP (1926-1945), b. 230, f. l. 68/92, Dalla HWO alla DGSP (From HWO to DGSP), 19.8.1938.



represented a clear indication of the centrality of promotion directed at foreign visitors. The case of the United States, in particular, shows how the ENIT's strategic choices were the result of an adaptation to the changing conditions of the international political and economic context.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ITALIAN</i>	<i>ENGLISH</i>	<i>ABBREVIATIONS</i>
Affari Generali	General Affairs	Aff. Gen.
Archivio Centrale dello Stato	Central State Archive	ACS
Archivio Documentale ENIT	ENIT Document Archive	ADE
Atti Parlamentari	Parliamentary act	AP
Busta	Folder	b.
Commissariato per il Turismo	Tourism Commissioner	
Consorzio Italiano per gli Uffici di Viaggio e Turismo	Italian Consortium for Travel and Tourism Offices	
Compagnia Italiana del Turismo	Italian Tourism Company	CIT
Direzione generale servizi di propaganda	General Directorate for Propaganda Services	DGSP
Direzione generale del turismo	General Directorate of Tourism	DGT
Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche	Italian National Tourist Board	ENIT
Fascicoli per categoria	Files by Category	Fasc. per cat.
Fascicolo	File	f.
Ferrovie dello Stato	State Railways	FFSS
Gabinetto	Cabinet	Gab.
Hamilton Wright Organization	Hamilton Wright Organization	HWO
Ministero della cultura popolare	Ministry of Popular Culture	MCP



Ministero per l'economia nazionale	Ministry of National Economy	
Presidenza del consiglio dei ministri	Presidency of the Council of Ministers	PCM
Regio decreto	Royal Decree	Rd
Regio decreto legge	Royal Decree-Law	Rdl
Sottosegretariato per la stampa e la propaganda	Undersecretariat for Press and Propaganda	

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