



Rome, March 29, 2023

*I know of no public event that has given me so much joy
such as the proposal to establish a Hebrew University in Jerusalem*
Albert Einstein, April 1921

Meeting with the students of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Lecture about

ANNA KULISCIOFF, A PIONEER

Dear friends,

You are welcome to this site which, in the heart of Rome, hosts two historic foundations named after the fathers of Italian democratic and reformist thought: Giacomo Matteotti and Menè and Vera Modigliani.

We are in a hall of the “Casa Grande Barberini”, “The Great Barberini House” which in the sixteenth century was the first Roman residence of the Barberini family: it was purchased by Monsignor Francesco Barberini, apostolic prothonotary and authoritative exponent of the papal Curia, who had moved to Rome from Tuscany, homeland of the family. The entrance was then from the courtyard behind us, which was accessed from Via dei Giubbonari, through a passage that no longer exists.

Please take a seat while I address you with a warmer and more cordial welcome. My name is Alberto Aghemo and I am the president of the Giacomo Matteotti Foundation, but I also greet you on behalf of Professor Anna Foa, a great authoritative Italian historian, who is the president of the Modigliani Foundation, who unfortunately cannot be with us today. Anna instructs me to greet you very dearly; I therefore address a very cordial greeting to the students of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and another particularly affectionate and dear one to Professor Manuela Consonni, to whom Anna is bound by an ancient and deep affection.

I am well aware that all of you come from the largest and most important university in Israel which now has a century of glorious history behind it. I also know that the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is Israel’s largest university, as well as its main

research institute, and this is not surprising given that it counts among its founders Albert Einstein, whose memory and archives your great university keeps. But among the founders of the University of Jerusalem we cannot fail to mention two personalities particularly dear to us such as Gershon Scholem and Martin Buber.

I have been requested to give a lecture, but I would prefer to say a speech conversation, on a topic that is particularly dear to me: the figure and the civil and political intellectual legacy of an exceptional woman: Anna Kuliscioff. It is a task that I carry out with great pleasure and which honors me for at two reasons: the first one is that Anna Kuliscioff's personality and ideas have always fascinated me. The second is that that extraordinary woman was an ideal civil and political point of reference for two young socialist exponents who trained under her teaching: Giacomo Matteotti and Menè Modigliani.

In short: there is, here and today, an air of family...

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Anna Kuliscioff, I was saying, was an extraordinary woman and a pioneer of the struggle for women rights - for the right to work, to vote, to full civil equality for women - and for democratic and reformist socialism in Italy and in Europe.

Well, let's try to get to know her better, through the fundamental stages of her adventurous and passionate life.

Born in 1854 in Moskaja (now the Ukrainian town of Kherson), from a wealthy family of Jewish merchants (Rozenstejin), Anna as a child stands out for her uncommon intellectual gifts. She has an extraordinary memory and an exceptional predisposition to logical and rigorous reasoning, and was encouraged from childhood to cultivate studies with private teachers and very early became interested in politics.

Lover of studying, she decides to follow the Philosophy courses at the University of Zurich, a city located in the center of Europe with university faculties, including technical ones, open to women and in which one breathed great freedom of thought and where Anna finds his ideal environment and where his life begins to be marked by a continuous struggle for freedom.

So in 1871, at the age of 17 she moved to Zurich to continue her philosophy studies, because women were forbidden to enter the university in Russia. Testimony of his passionate nature and equal yearning remains the sensational gesture with which she tore up the university booklet when, in 1873, Russian students were ordered to leave

the University of Zurich, on pain of not being admitted to the exams in Russia. Order, among other things, supported by the motivation according to which the young Russians went abroad not for study reasons, but to abandon themselves to the impulses of “free love”. It was a real provocation. During her stay in Switzerland Anna adopts the surname Kuliscioff, when she discovers her great political passion in the city of Zurich where many progressive ideas circulated and numerous socialist and anarchist exponents and exiles from all over Europe were present. It is here that she begins to develop his progressive ideas and gathers many Russian emigrants around him.

Therefore forced to repatriate from Switzerland by order of the tsar, she adheres to the so-called “going towards the people”: it is the period of revolutionary utopia, during which Kuliscioff, as a reaction to tsarist despotism, becomes convinced of the need to use violence in the political struggle. But over time his positions will be less and less extremist and more and more of a legalistic nature.

Back in Russia in 1874 to devote herself to active politics, already in 1877 she was forced to take refuge in Switzerland, following the wave of arrests caused by the various street movements which in those years agitated not only Russia, but a large part of Europe.

In Switzerland she meets Andrea Costa [Andrea Antonio Baldassarre Costa (Imola 1851 – Imola 1910) was a great Italian politician, one of the founders of socialism in Italy, the first socialist deputy in history of Italy] immediately establishing a total coincidence of ideas with him and moving with him to France. In Paris she collaborated with the Kropotkin International (the anarchist component of the First Workers’ International).

Anna Kuliscioff and Andrea Costa lived together first in Paris, then in Switzerland and finally in Imola, where in 1881 was born their only daughter, Andreina. After breaking up with Costa in 1885, Anna returned to Switzerland to attend medical school. In 1888 she specialized in gynecology between the universities of Turin and Padua. Finally she moved to Milan, where she met Filippo Turati – her future partner for life – and began to practice as a doctor.

But let’s take a little step back...

In 1878 Anna was arrested and expelled from France and went back to Switzerland. Of anarchist ideas, Costa approached socialism thanks to Anna. Those were years of harsh repression, which saw them both victims of continuous arrests and summary trials. She

then moved to Italy, where a few months later she was also tried in Florence on charges of conspiring with anarchists. A new move to Switzerland will follow.

In particular, the trial in Florence in 1880 aroused much interest in public opinion and gave a lot of visibility to the personality of Kuliscioff.

However, Costa's forced distance and jealous temper forever damaged an already conflicting relationship. From prison Andrea writes to Anna about his jealousy, especially towards Carlo Cafiero, another famous Italian anarchist, with whom Anna had started a close political and human dialogue in Lugano. To her partner's accusations, Kuliscioff replies firmly:

«In the end I see one thing: as always, men are allowed everything, women must be their property. The phrase is old, banal, but it has its reasons for being».

The distrust and disagreements, exacerbated by the distance, will definitively sink their love in 1885.

The 80s constitute for Kuliscioff a decisive period and at the same time of transition, also emotional: in this period of time she keeps away from the political scene being engulfed by her role as mother and by the suffering deriving from her state of health – she had contracted tuberculosis following the period in prison in Florence - and by the loneliness caused by the crisis in her relationship with Costa, a relationship that Anna ends painfully.

In Switzerland Kuliscioff had resumed her studies and had passed from engineering to medicine. Following the numerous detentions she had contracted tuberculosis and milder climates were recommended to her. Thus she moved, with his daughter, to Naples. In 1882 Anna was once again forced to leave Italy and take refuge in Switzerland, where she resumed her university studies at the Faculty of Medicine, which she completed amidst a thousand difficulties in Pavia in 1887. In 1888 she specialized in gynecology, first in Turin, then in Padua.

His thesis was dedicated to the causes of puerperal fever, and having indicated its bacterial origin, she paved the way for the discovery that would save millions of women from dying after childbirth. She then moved to Milan, where she began to practice medicine, traveling among other things to the poorest neighborhoods of the city. By the Milanese people she was called the “doctor of the poor”.

In those years an increasingly convinced socialist political faith matured, a political faith that she shared daily with Filippo Turati, whom she met while collecting funds

for Russian exiles and with whom, after some doubts, she became romantically involved.

In 1889 she founded the Milanese Socialist League with Turati and Lazzari.

Of rigid Marxist principles Anna Kuliscioff looked with a certain skepticism at the “philanthropy of almsgiving”, however her ideas did not prevent her from collaborating with the main exponents of Lombard feminism. Anna Kuliscioff and Alessandrina Ravizza, also of Russian origin, in fact, worked together on many initiatives, while maintaining a different approach to the women’s question. In Milan they ran a free medical clinic that offered gynecological assistance to poor women and where some of the first women graduates in medicine lent their services free of charge, in addition to Kuliscioff, also Emma Modena. After a period of research she abandoned the laboratories and put his experience at the service of the underprivileged.

In Milan she came into contact with the main exponents of Milanese feminism, Anna Maria Mozzoni, Paolina Schiff and Norma Casati, who in 1882 had formed the League for women’s interests. From here on, Anna Kuliscioff’s commitment to the women’s question becomes increasingly clear and pressing, culminating in the beautiful speech at the Philosophical Circle of Milan on April 17, 1890 (she was 37): *The Monòpoly of Man*. A strong intervention, with an original and modern setting, which not only considers the women’s question from an economic angle (“obligatory” perspective for those like her who considered themselves part of the Marxist firmament), but which above all delves into the delays, the motivations social, cultural prejudices that accompany it and that find their roots in a closed mentality and habits of age-old oppression. The innovative aspect of Anna Kuliscioff’s intervention, however, lies in the way she denounces the oppression reserved for the opposite sex.

The profound and revolutionary meaning of his speech is already in the provocative question she poses in the incipit of his famous speech:

«Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I want to confess to you that, thinking about the inferiority of the social condition of women, a question came to my mind, which kept me perplexed and undecided for a moment. How come – I said to myself – to isolate the question of women from so many other social problems, which all have their origin in injustice, which all have the privilege of a sex or a class as their basis?».

And she continues:

«I will not, however, make an indictment. It is not a condemnation at all costs of the opposite sex that women are asking for; on the contrary, they aspire to obtain the conscious and active cooperation of the best men, of those who,

having freed themselves, at least in part, from feelings based on custom, on prejudices and above all on male selfishness, are already disposed to recognize the just reasons that women they have to occupy a worthy place in life for having conquered the right to do so».

If the inferiority of women arises from male privileges, overcoming it is certainly very difficult because the dominance of men emerges as consecrated by juridical and political social schemes which have their roots in the mists of time and which from here, on the long wave of history, reaches up to the moderns to strengthen the chain of female subordination.

«The experience of many other women – argues Anna – who took turns deviating female life in general from the traditional track, and above all my own experience, taught me that, if for the solution of multiple and complex social problems many generous men, thinkers and scientists appear, even from the privileged classes, this is not the case as regards the problem of the privilege of men over women».

And she adds:

«All men, with few exceptions, and of any social class, for an infinite number of reasons that are unflattering for a sex that passes for strength, consider their privilege of sex as a natural phenomenon and defend it with marvelous tenacity, calling help God, church, science, ethics and laws in force, which are nothing more than the legal sanction of the arrogance of a dominant class and sex».

It would therefore be simplistic to attribute the inferiority of women to male selfishness and arrogance. It is a condition, the female one, much more complicated and subtle; yes, subtle because the passage of time and the intellectual and moral evolution of man has transformed the ancient condition of slavery of women; but, precisely, he transformed it, he did not abolish it, and indeed – the Christian tradition also hopes –, that condition of meek surrender was sanctified by the women themselves.

«The sayings of St. Paul - recalls Kuliscioff - of St. John Chrysostom, of St. Augustine, of St. Ambrose and others, all in agreement to call the woman the door of the devil, prove it sufficiently. And these concepts, modified and then remade by the various churches and above all by the Catholic Church, still inform after so many centuries the substance of the opinions that men and, unfortunately, also women themselves have, on the abilities, attitudes and reciprocal relationships of the two sexes (...) so for women there remained laws and institutions that originate from brutal force, consecrated and sanctioned by the church and then also became the basis of the civil codes in force».

From here moves Anna to describe the parable of the woman, from the primitive age to the dawn of industrial society, with “the other half of the sky” always bent under the yoke of oppression and exploitation.

«One could say with Letourneau – underlines Kuliscioff forcefully – that the first domestic animal of man was the woman, because in uneven conditions of struggle, she remained the defeated, but only defeated by brutal force».

Anna Kuliscioff’s first denunciation is the lack of solidarity among women, their being divided by a hard and refractory opinion to the impulses of emancipation. Kuliscioff’s speech had an international resonance, but in Italy the echo of her words immediately died down.

1891: The “Anna Kuliscioff Salon” is born. Having moved with Filippo Turati to an apartment in Portici Galleria at number 23, she transforms the living room of the house into a studio and editorial office for «Critica sociale»: piles of newspapers and bundles of books surround Anna and Filippo as they work together and in the living room there is a small green sofa where Kuliscioff receives visitors at any hour of the day: figures from culture, from Milanese politics, humbler people and the “seamstresses” who find a friend and confidante in Anna. But work in the most famous living room in Milan was abruptly interrupted on 8 May 1898 when an armed group broke in and arrested Anna on charges of crimes of opinion and subversion. In December she is released from prison on a pardon, while her companion Filippo will have to wait a year.

Also in 1891, together with Filippo Turati, she had founded the review «Critica sociale», from whose columns she pleaded for many causes, starting with the redemption of women, which she supported in every way. Everyone, really everyone: promoting their intellectual and moral emancipation, supporting their economic independence, defending their rights. From the first decade of the twentieth century until the outbreak of the Great War she will support the battle for universal suffrage with all possible means, together with some of the most angular heretics of Italian socialism, such as Gaetano Salvemini.

The human and political relationship with Filippo Turati, the undisputed leader of Italian socialism between the 19th and 20th centuries, is getting closer and closer. Their close association also generates some criticism and induces some companions to speak of a sort of ideological dependence of Philip on Anna. The measure of this independence lies in a joke by Antonio Labriola, one of the fathers of Italian socialism, according to whom «Italian socialism had only one man, who was a woman: Anna Kuliscioff». The symbolic place, which later became a sort of sanctuary, was their

apartment in Milan which was the meeting point of the political exponents of the time, but also the asylum of ordinary people, such as the “taildresses”, who found in Anna a loyal and generous confidante. And it was from Milan that Kuliscioff concretely supported the women’s question within the socialist movement, for the protection of the work of women and children, elaborated by Kuliscioff herself and presented by Turati, and then with the battle for universal suffrage. The so called Legge Carcano in 1902 was a very important Law for the protection of the work of women and children.

In 1911 the Socialist Committee for women’s suffrage was born with the contribution and support of Anna Kuliscioff. At the beginning of the twentieth century the debate on voting revolved around the request to extend the right to all male citizens, even illiterates. Of the equal prerogative for women, on the other hand, nobody, or almost, gave a thought. Turati himself justified the Party’s position by citing as a reason «the still sluggish political class consciousness of the female proletarian masses». Anna Kuliscioff’s response in «Critica sociale» (Universal suffrage?, pp. 11-12) was immediate:

«You will say, in propaganda, that the illiterate are entitled to political rights because they too are producers. Maybe women aren’t workers, peasants, clerks, more numerous every day? Isn’t it equivalent, at least, to military service, the maternal function and sacrifice, which gives children to the army and to the workshop? Are taxes and consumer duties paid by males alone? Which of the arguments, which apply to male suffrage, could not be invoked for female suffrage?».

On the question of universal suffrage, understood as the extension of the vote to everyone, including women and illiterates, Anna Kuliscioff nevertheless found correspondence of ideas with Gaetano Salvemini, the Apulian historian known for his impetuous temperament.

«Now – Turati complained in a letter to Kuliscioff – Salvemini writes to me that, if his suffrage project is good, we must make it ours, if it is bad, present a better one, but do it immediately, make big, and gradually with all the usual impertinences, pum, pum, pum».

But Turati’s complaints did not find easy acceptance in Kuliscioff, who instead found in Salvemini a consonance of ideas, from the condemnation of Giolitti’s politics to the need to extend the right to vote to everyone, illiterate and otherwise, men and women. Anna replies from the pages of «Critica Sociale»:

«Let's even make money on Congresses and socialist parties, if you like. But Turati cannot fail to recall our experience, our attempts, our propaganda, exercised for a long time, among the female proletariat; all that work which, if it later ran aground (and we will see the reasons for it), however was enough to demonstrate how the awakening of working women grew in direct proportion to our action, idealistically socialist, exercised among them». (from «Critica Sociale», Narrow-gauge universal suffrage, p. 20)

After all, for Anna Kuliscioff the vote for women was not only a question of class but above all a question of civil rights: she had openly sided against the official positions of the Socialist Party (and therefore also of Filippo Turati), and had always shown her skepticism, not to mention her contempt, towards bourgeois feminism which claimed rights only for women belonging to certain social categories.

But in 1912 the Giolitti government approves a law which, under the (false) name of universal suffrage, effectively grants the vote to all literate men who have reached the age of twenty-one, and to all illiterate males who have reached the age of thirty years. Only men. A bitter defeat, before which however Anna Kuliscioff does not disarm, pessimistic but tenacious. Indeed, on January 7 1912, she founded the bimonthly review «La Difesa delle Lavoratrici», which she directed for two years together with Carlotta Clerici, Linda Malnati and Angelica Balabanoff.

However, a period of discouragement begins for Anna Kuliscioff and it is at the same time a period of disorientation also for the socialists themselves and in which we begin to glimpse the first signs of an anti-socialist and nationalist movement at times violent, of which Anna, with her sensitivity and foresight, perceives the full range.

Another famous speech on the theme of the female proletariat and the difficult vindication of women's rights dates back to this period, which begins as follows:

«Invited by various women's societies to have a chat on the question of women, I accepted the invitation wholeheartedly, because even misfortunes serve some good. The inferiority of the social position of the woman to whatever class she belongs means that the collaboration that the professional woman can lend to the working women could never be suspected of ulterior motives.

[...] Other than the eight hours of work! A single woman usually works for two men and has only the priest and the wife as her moral adviser».

And she concludes bitterly:

«Time must not dismay: if we do not enjoy the fruits of our work, they will be our daughters [...]. I don't want to be a bird of ill omen but I firmly believe that not even a socialist republic, if anything came soon, would have done us the justice that belongs to us”.

In 1914, after the outbreak of the World War I, political differences with the editorial staff led Anna Kuliscioff to withdraw from the editorial initiative «La Difesa delle Lavoratrici» over which, however, she would always continue to exert influence. After the end of the war and the advent of fascism, the magazine did not have an easy life. It closed in 1925, the year of Anna Kuliscioff's death. Maybe not just an accidental coincidence.

1925 – Just as fascism was asserting itself with all its arrogance, Anna Kuliscioff died in her Milanese apartment. «It's really hard to die too». Facts and history prove Anna Kuliscioff right, who disappeared on December 27th. His funeral - December 29, 1925 - will be accompanied by violence in the streets of Milan, violence unleashed by some fascists who throw themselves against the carriages, tearing drapes, flags and crowns.

Immense crowd of people who wanted to pay homage to the “doctor of the poor”, remembered thus by Pietro Nenni:

«The funeral had been an apotheosis for her and for her surviving companion. But, to the Fascists, even the homage paid to a woman eminent in knowledge, distinguished by character, esteemed by all for her unparalleled kindness, had proved intolerable. On the very steps of the monumental building, while I shouted “Long live socialism!” by way of greeting, we were attacked. Around the coffin, around the wreaths and ribbons, there was a short and fierce scuffle from which several of us came out bleeding and bruised. And it was sad to think that this happened in a cemetery and in front of the body of a woman who, with all her soul, with all her intelligence, had wished for peace, justice and fraternity».

A last note. Universal suffrage, understood as Anna Kuliscioff had defended it in her battles, i.e. as a vote for everyone, men and women, without distinction of sex or class, will be introduced in Italy only in 1946, after twenty years of fascist dictatorship and after the terrible tragedy of the World War II.

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A SHORT PORTRAIT OF ANNA KULICIOFF as a Woman

In the description of Claudia Mancina and in the letters to Andrea Costa, to her daughter "Ninina" and to Filippo Turati, between love passion and civil passion.

This is how the historian Claudia Mancina describes her on the basis of testimonies from contemporaries:

«Beautiful and sweet, the long blonde braid, the cerulean eyes that seemed to investigate the soul of the interlocutor, the petite and elegant figure, always dressed with care, between feathered hats and black lace, since the beginning of his burning political story the young Russian resembled, rather than a severe nihilist, the heroine of a novel by Tolstoy.

[...] The political sign left by Kuliscioff is relative to the women's question; indeed to the link between the women's question and the socialist movement. With respect to this problem, she had a clear theoretical approach, and a consequent political strategy. With orthodox Marxist inspiration, she thought

that the women's question was an aspect of the social one, which would be resolved with the emancipation of the proletariat.

[...] Kuliscioff thought that women had enormous potential to fight: the Party had to bind them to itself by inserting their goals into its program. And on this she strongly criticized the Italian Socialist Party, which unlike the German one was slow to understand that women were half of the proletariat».

Anna Kuliscioff's correspondence reads like an epistolary novel, such is the evocative power of historical feelings and situations, as well as the mastery of the Italian language through which she expresses concepts and sensations with phrases such as:

«Life without you is for me a continuous vegetation» (from the letter to Andrea Costa of 18 November 1880).

Through these letters we witness an emergence of modernity at times surprising, considering the historical period in which they are placed, which make Anna Kuliscioff one of the most lucid, enterprising and shrewd thinkers of her era:

«Don't you think I'm right to feel a little offended by the fact that you consider it your duty never to part with me?» she always writes to Andrea Costa, reproaching him for a sort of benevolent masculine paternalism, «because if my mother thought of me before, now you owe it».

The progressive sentimental detachment from Costa then becomes the occasion to fathom the twilight of a couple relationship with features of searing realism:

«You seek rest in me, I in your life. I am little woman to you, you are an abstraction to me. I don't have maternity leave. You don't give me the human contact between the different sexes».

On 22 October 1898 she wrote to his daughter Andreina:

«Remember, Ninina, before becoming angry with men and things, to take a look into the depths of your soul, and you will often find many mitigating factors that will turn your anger to pity or compassion».

Of the same daughter she will give an account in one of the most beautiful letters of this collection, the one to Andrea Costa of 27 March 1904, in which she reasons on the life choices of the young Andreina:

«It is a great melancholy to have to convince oneself that we are not our children, and that they want to make their own life [...]. *The melancholy does not come from that little incident of religious marriage, but from the fact that our daughter has neither a rebellious soul nor a combative temperament*».

Then there is the restitution of that climate of slow sliding towards the cliff that can be perceived in the long correspondence that marks the more than thirty-year relationship with Filippo Turati. Among other things, she confided to him the discouragement for the seizure of power by Mussolini and for the beginning of the fascist dictatorship; wrote to Turati on 17 November 1922:

«Today I would ask you for a word of comfort, I am so full of disgust, dejected and almost dismayed by the specter of ruins that lie ahead in the future».

A specter of ruins that in 1925 will not fail to mar even his funeral...

Alberto Aghemo

Rome, March 29th 2023

THE GIACOMO MATTEOTTI FOUNDATION – ETS

Established on 2 April 1973, the Giacomo Matteotti Foundation is about to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. The Act of incorporation reads that «The Foundation has an educational, cultural and social purpose and proposes the affirmation of the principles of democratic socialism».

Its founder and first president was Giuseppe Saragat, an authoritative figure of Italian reformist socialism, president of the Constituent Assembly after the World War II and then President of the Italian Republic in the years from 1964 to 1971. The Foundation was recognized with a decree of the President of the Republic in May 1974 and recently, in accordance with Italian legislation, it has become a **Third Sector Entity** that operates with social and non-profit purposes. The Foundation refers to the thought and work of Giacomo Matteotti, martyr of anti-fascism, and intends to confirm his ideals of social democracy through study and research initiatives for the affirmation of the principles of democratic socialism and for the political formation of the citizen. The Foundation, which by statute is non-partisan, also has among its aims the promotion of seminars and conferences on the themes of contemporary society, democratic progress, ideological and cultural struggle against all forms of dictatorship. Its investigation and dissemination activity is entrusted to various research and promotion committees active in the various fields of political and institutional historical research.

Its activities historically take place in the various sectors: the first item is the editorial activity with the publication of essays, research and monographs and of the quarterly magazine «Tempo Presente», founded in 1956 by two great Italian progressive intellectuals, Ignazio Silone and Nicola Chiaromonte; 2. seminars and training conferences aimed above all at young people and schools; 3. research activity in the social sciences; 4. offer to the public of the services of the library which has 28,000 volumes mainly of contemporary history; 5 the collection and valorisation of archival material.

THE GIUSEPPE EMANUELE AND VERA MODIGLIANI FOUNDATION – ESSMOI

The Giuseppe Emanuele and Vera Modigliani Foundation – both authoritative exponents of Italian reformist socialism, husband and wife, both jurists descended from families with a long Jewish tradition of Livorno, in Tuscany – initially set up as

ESSMOI, Association for History of Socialism and the Italian Workers' Movement, on April 26, 1949, as a private non-profit association, based in Rome, in the home of Vera Modigliani. It was later legally recognized as a Foundation in 1987 and represents a decisive point of reference in the field of studies, especially bibliographic ones, on the history of socialism and the Italian labor movement.

Among the founding members we remember: Norberto Bobbio, Ignazio Silone, Leo Valiani, Luigi Firpo, Gaetano Arfè, Renzo de Felice, Giuliano Vassalli, Aldo Garosci, Fernanda Ascarelli.

In recent years, to the retrospective bibliographic research with an examination of volumes, periodicals and pamphlets and to the transcription of the Parliamentary activity of the Italian socialists, envisaged by the statute, new historical research has been added: some have been concluded with the printing of the relative volumes, others are in processing course.