Photograph album of the Italian campaign in Somalia and Ethiopia, 1935-1936

Processed by Jane Carpenter with assistance from Simon Elliott; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Photograph album of the Italian campaign in Somalia and Ethiopia
Note
Title supplied by cataloger.
Date (inclusive): 1935-1936
Collection number: 94/3
Creator: Istituto Luce (Italy). Reparto Fotocinematografico A.O.
Physical Description: 2 albums (106 photographic prints) : b&w, 25 x 35 cm (albums)
At head of presentation title on front cover: "Istituto Nazionale Luce. Reparto Fotocinematografico A.O."
Date from cover: "Maggio XIV E[ra] F[ascista]," which refers to the 14th year of the Fascist regime, established in 1922. Photographs (17.6 x 23.6 cm) are mounted on rectos of leaves of heavy black paper, one photo per page; photos are stamped in lower left corner "LUCE A.O.", but otherwise lack captions; each photo numbered in pencil on verso.
Albums bound in blue leather, with ornamental gilt borders, and gold-stamped title on upper cover; covers tied with matching blue leather thong; gold-stamped crest (the Savoy shield and cross) at top; covers lined in bright blue silk, with ornamental gilt inner borders; gold-stamped spine titles "Vol. 1[-2] Somalia".
Spec. Coll. copy: each album in modern beige cloth clamshell box with velcro closure.
Abstract: Two photograph albums, dated May 1936, documenting the southern campaign of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, as Italian troops under the command of General Rodolfo Graziani moved into Ethiopia from Italian Somaliland.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Language of the Material: Materials are in English.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.
Restrictions on Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Photograph album of the Italian campaign in Somalia and Ethiopia (Collection 94/3). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.
UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4233582
Scope and Content
The photos were taken by photographers from the film section for Eastern Africa (Reparto Fotocinematografico A[frica] O[rientale] of the Istituto Luce, a government agency created in 1924 to promote the use of film for informational and instructional use, but which became a powerful tool of propaganda for Mussolini's fascist regime. The albums were most likely presented by the president of Istituto Luce, Marchese Paulucci di Calboli Barone, to Prince Filiberto di Savoia (who participated in the Ethiopian campaign as commander of the Camiciere voluntary militia "23 Marzo") to celebrate the victory in May 1936 of the Italian army over Haile Selassie's Ethiopian Empire, and the resulting annexation of Ethiopia into the newly-created colony of Italian East Africa (Africa Orientale Italiana, or A.O.I.), which also included Eritrea and Italian Somaliland. Volume 1 begins with photographs of the Italian East African flag (the Italian tricolor bearing the Savoy shield and cross in the middle), and General Rodolfo Graziani in his field uniform, followed by an aerial shot of Mogadishu where Graziani arrived in March 1935. Determined to convince Mussolini that the army on the "southern front" should play a more active role rather than the purely defensive one envisioned by Graziani's commanding officer, General Emilio De Bono to the north, in Eritrea, Graziani spent April-December 1935 opening up new roads, developing port facilities, solving water supply problems, stocking up provisions and munitions, and stockpiling hundreds of motor vehicles. Many photos document
these activities, showing troops as they unload provisions, oil drums, tanks, trucks, small planes, boats, and steel bars and other construction supplies. Other photos show Italian and native troops engaged in radio operations, stringing barbed wire, digging trenches, creating firing positions behind trees and brush, and overseeing the building of landing strips and roads. The General is often shown consulting with his men, as well as with native commanders of the Italian colonial troops, the Regio Corpo di Truppe Coloniali, which included Eritreans and Libyans. Vol. 2 opens with photographs of a parade and ceremony, possibly in honor of a spring 1936 visit by Maria Jose?, wife of Umberto II of Italy, to the Ospedale Civile "M. Rava" [?], in Mogadishu, attended by military personnel, doctors and nurses of the Red Cross, and religious officials. Many photos document the construction activities undertaken by the Italians as they moved northwards into Ethiopia, with shots of truck convoys and camel trains bringing in supplies, bulldozers, boats, and airfields. Also included are shots of canals, wells, bridges, roads, railway lines, and the Dire Dawa railroad station for the Chemin de Fer Franco-Ethiopien, the rail line that ran from Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, to the French colonial port Djibouti on the Gulf of Aden in French Somaliland. Several photos feature the men of Legione 221 CC. NN. "Fasci italiani all’estero", one of the seven "Camicie Nere" or Black Shirt voluntary militia divisions that fought in the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, in review formation, engaged in field activities, riding in convoys, building roads, driving tanks; one shot portrays a truckload of men of the "Plotone Chimico" of the 6. Division CC. NN. [Camicie Nere], engaged in a drill, wearing gas masks, probably in preparation for the extensive use by Italian forces of poison gas in Ethiopia, beginning in January 1936. Other photos portray native Somalis, as civilians herding cattle and goats, ferrying people in boats across a river, standing in large groups with shovels raised; and as soldiers, in uniform, raising the flag, manning machine gun posts, and advancing on foot with rifles slung across their shoulders (while a photographer crouched on the ground films them). There are also several photos of parades and rallies in Mogadishu—the Cinema Italia in the background—showing support of various Italian labor groups for Mussolini, "La nostra vita e tua Duce."

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
Maria José, Queen, consort of Humbert II, King of Italy, 1906-2001 --Photographs.
Italy. Regio esercito. Legione CC. NN. in A.O., 221 --Photographs.
Chemin de fer franco-éthiopien --Photographs.
Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1936 --Campaigns --Photographs.
Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1936 --Artillery operations --Photographs.
Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1936 --Equipment and supplies --Photographs.
Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1936 --Propaganda.
Somalis --Italian Somaliland --Photographs.
Italians --Italian Somaliland --Photographs.
Railroad stations --Ethiopia --Diré Dawa --Photographs.
Railroads --Ethiopia --Photographs.
Hospitals --Italian Somaliland --Photographs.
Fascist propaganda.
Propaganda, Italian.
Italy --Militia --Photographs.
Italy --Armed Forces --Photographs.
Italy --Armed Forces --Equipment --Photographs.
Italy --Colonies --Africa --Photographs.
Italian East Africa --Photographs.
Italian Somaliland --Photographs.
Mogadishu (Somalia) --Buildings, structures, etc. --Photographs.
Mogadishu (Somalia) --Photographs.
Somalia --Photographs.
Ethiopia --Photographs.

Genres and Forms of Material
Photographic prints.
Other Index Terms Related to this Collection
A S. A. R. il Principe Filiberto di Savoia Genova, Duca di Pistoia

Related Material
Part of the Photograph Album Collection (Collection 94) in UCLA Library Special Collections.
For related photos documenting the Ethiopian campaign on the northern front from Eritrea, consult Collection 94/4.