

# Nuova Rivista Storica

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## Abstracts

VALENTINA SOMMELLA, Pretending to be neutral. La politica estera italiana alla vigilia della Seconda Guerra Mondiale dalle carte di Michael Mac White

The political and diplomatic relations between Ireland and Italy during the Second World War are here analysed in a comparative perspective as the initial attitude of both nations to the conflict was very similar: even though never compared as foreign policy aims, Ireland's neutrality and Mussolini's "non belligeranza" had much in common. Indeed de Valera's attitude of "a certain consideration" for Britain (as he told the German Minister to Ireland) meant for Ireland non-belligerency rather than neutrality. The use of unpublished papers, which have just become available mainly from Irish archives, provides an original contribution to the interpretation of Irish neutrality - the historical understanding of the concept having been revised over the last twenty years - and to the examination of Ireland's geo-political position in a European context during the Emergency. In this direction, the papers of the Irish Minister in Rome Michael MacWhite make a very important contribution in uncovering the Irish point of view on Italian foreign policy and relations between the two countries as MacWhite was posted in Rome from January 1938 till 1950. Even if there has been little study of MacWhite's role so far, he provides an interesting and precise picture of the Irish position during the war and of Italian involvement in the conflict. He was an acute political observer of the events taking place in the country where he was on duty, carefully describing day by day all the crucial steps leading to the general conflict. His perspective was supposed to be *super partes*, but he actually tended to be critical of the Fascist regime and more friendly towards the Allies.