DOMESTIC POLITICAL CULTURE

AND

US-ITALIAN RELATIONS

IN THE EARLY COLD WAR.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on US-Italian relations and cultural diplomacy in the early Cold War. Particular attention is devoted to the scholarship on the Congress for Cultural Freedom, an organization of left-wing anti-Communist intellectuals established in 1950 and financed by the CIA. Instead of looking at this organization from a transnational perspective, this work has as the starting point the local dimension of it. In particular, the Italian branch of the CCF: *Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della Cultura* and the journal *Tempo Presente*. Differently from other European context, the Italian cultural experiment failed in promoting a transnational anti-Communist culture due to domestic factors such as: the political establishment, non-governmental groups with a socialising function and the political culture of the country. This analysis fosters a process of rethinking of US-Italian relations arguing against the theory of Washington as the pivotal actor. Instead, this work analyse the domestic structure of the country with its own political establishment, its political culture and its set of values and norms that represented the determinant factors for resisting, modifying and adapting the deployment of US Soft Power in the country. A lack of understanding of the complexity of the context led the US to plan controversial and ineffective interventions in the early Cold War. Despite Washington's short-term success, long-term initiatives to transform the Italian political culture and Americanize the public opinion proved ineffective. This is a contribution taking further the investigation of the Cold War by emphasizing the importance of going "local" for a thorough understanding of transnational relations.

To My Grandpa.

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INTRODUCTION

My doctoral research was initially conceived as a thorough investigation of the US deployment of Soft Power techniques in Italy in the early Cold War. In particular, the core interest of my analysis was on the *Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della Cultura* (AILC), the Italian branch of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), and the journal *Tempo Presente* as part of a broad US strategy of cultural warfare. The CCF was created in 1950 as a transnational organization of left-wing anti-Communist intellectuals covertly funded by the CIA via a series of philanthropic organizations. From 1950 to 1967 it established branches in thirty-five countries and its global reach was impressive. Part of its activities consisted in organizing cultural events, international conferences, and publishing important journals in those areas the Americans liked to refer to as the Free World. The primary aim of this organization was to detach the neutralist intelligentsia from the appeal of Communism through the promotion of an alternative that better reconciled with the American Way of Life. Experts of the CCF have defined it as one of the most effective CIA's psychological operations that, together with other covert-overt interventions, successfully led to the establishment of a transnational anti-Communist cultural hegemony in the West.

Even though since the cultural turn of Cold War studies in the late 1990s the CCF and its national affiliates have become a field of research of increasing interest among scholars, the Italian branch has not received adequate attention. To fill this academic gap, I decided to further the investigation of this organization by specifically looking at

the Italian case. As my research was progressing, however, I began questioning the largely accepted theory of the CCF as a successful organization. Undoubtedly, it had the merit of creating a transnational space for a cultural debate fostered by a network of interconnection among influential personalities beyond national boundaries. However, on the local front, the peculiar outcome of the Italian organization seemed to contradict the theory of an achieved success. The Italian project struggled to fit within the framework of the Cold War. In the end, it did not bring forth an alternative cultural hegemony and these intellectuals remained at the margin of the national cultural landscape.

This led me to question the real nature of the CCF not simply as a transnational organization but also as a national product with its local characterization and limits. First of all, I sought to understand on which basis previous scholars have argued in favour of a CCF's hegemonic position. I soon realized how, in most of the cases, scholars have the tendency to look at this organization simply from a mere transnational perspective. This, unfortunately, leads to underestimate the importance of the local and the series of complex negotiations taking place within the nation itself.

Furthermore, the concept of a transnational cultural hegemony, which seems to be a central theme of many books and academic articles, is often presented as an ambiguous and vague concept. No explanations whatsoever have been offered to explain what kind of hegemony the CCF was able to create. Even though the CCF was created as a transnational project, it was in the local context that the abstraction of a transatlantic anti-Communist culture found its concrete dimension.

The more my research was progressing, the more I realized that both the AILC and *Tempo Presente* could not be conceived as mere micro-reproductions of ideological conflicts on the macro level. Therefore, I decided to investigate what factors could determine the success or failure of transnational relations in a specific country. I was finally convinced that the reasons why this cultural project had a different impact in Italy was mainly linked to domestic variants. In particular, the political culture of the country, its political and social system and the forms of collective identities represented determinant factors for the final outcome of this transnational intervention.

Saying that, to understand the complexity of the Italian project and the dynamics of US-Italian relations as a mere transatlantic approach to the Cold War is not enough. It is therefore indispensable to fully engage with those national dynamics that despite intersecting with Cold War dynamics went beyond them. The starting point of this research is a thorough investigation of the national structure and the ways in which specific cultural environment can resist, modify or accept the deployment of Soft Power. While external actors could intervene and promote a change within the country, they could only do it through a process of mediations and negotiations with local actors but also if the domestic structure allowed them to achieve their specific objectives.

This analysis also opened up to a re-interrogation of the dynamics of power in the relations between states. There is a tendency among scholars to describe US-Italian relations as an unbalanced interaction in which the US is largely described as the pivotal actor that could determine all the terms of this relationship. As my research seeks to prove, it was not Washington that had a predominant role but it was De Gasperi and the network of socialising agencies he managed to attract that played a central role in the

early Cold War US-Italian negotiations. Interesting dynamics revealed how Italy was capable to co-opt the effort and exploit the US Anti-communist paranoia for national reasons, eventually creating its own local cold war.

Since the complex negotiations that took place within the country could not be simply read from a transnational perspective, the main focus will be on Italian constant attempts to safeguard national interests and priorities, depicting its long-lasting tendency to adapt to external pressure through a series of stratagems and negotiations. It was not a matter of loose guidance or of benevolent concessions from the outside that shaped the Italian post-war, but it was the result of national efforts and negotiations in moving beyond the strict boundaries of the Cold War. The peculiar responses of cultural and political actors, their choices and individual efforts revealed the limitation of previous scholarship. It is therefore beneficial to abandon that narrative that look at Italian post-war choices as a natural response to the US-Soviet confrontation, and to examine them in their national essence as a starting point of a new Cold War narrative. My first objective, therefore, is to 'localize' the history of the Cold War in order to 'internationalize' the Italian one.

This work is divided in six thematic chapters. In the first chapter I will focus on the notion of psychological warfare and the manifestation of the conflict through culture. Attention is also given to the new scholarship of Cold War studies reviewing relevant works in this field. In particular, I will focus on the scholarship dealing with the CCF. Starting from the assumption that culture represents an incredible form of power and a fundamental political tool, this research aims to offer a modest contribution taking further the investigation of the Cold War by emphasising the importance of 'going local' for a thorough understanding of international/transnational dynamics. By looking at

culture as a two-way process, US cultural diplomacy needs to be understood as an on-going process of interaction between transnational and national cultural structures. This contribution, therefore, will not merely look at culture as a political tool, but also as a determining factor for the exercise of power in different contexts. The main objective is to investigate how local cultures, in this case the Italian one, can set limits to the use of power in specific frameworks. To do so, it is necessary to rethink the Cold War and its culture from a bottom-up, inside-out perspective that has the "local" at its core.

Furthermore, attention will be paid to the notion of Cultural Hegemony. Considerations will be made over the tensions emerging between transnational and national attempts to construct a "Common Sense". When studying the CCF and its Italian branch it is crucial to investigate on how effective the promotion of a transnational ideology and an "imagined" Atlantic community were in shaping Italian politics during the Cold War. Besides looking at the Cold War as an abstract framework, the attempt is also to move beyond the myths of an undefined Euro-Atlantic identity and of a construction of a transnational hegemony as a self-proclaimed U.S. success. Therefore, this represents an attempt to underline the limits of a mainstream narrative that tends to look at the cultural Cold War simply from a transnational perspective.

In the second chapter attention would be on the domestic structure and Italian political culture. The starting point for understanding US-Italian relations in politics and culture is not American foreign policy or the "trans-Atlantic" dimension of the Cold War; it is instead the local context and the negotiations of power within the country. Despite the fact that, with the beginning of the global conflict transnational and international actors would eventually step in to take part to the Italian Reconstruction, a contest of power

within the state was already taking place. Since the Armistice declaration in September 1943, Italian political leaders set as their primary objective the reconstruction of the country and its transition towards democracy. The weak state-society relation and a lack of a national identity could hamper the democratization of the country and lead to a lack of legitimacy of the new state. Anti-fascism became the unifying ideology for a renewal of the country and for creating a rhetorical consensus around the political establishment. However, parties' interests in securing their authority within the Italian society led them to initiate a competing quest for hegemony by exploiting Italian political culture of antagonism and familism that, instead of uniting the country, led to the creation of two opposing social groups: Catholics and Communists.

The third chapter expands this antagonizing dimension of post-war Italy by looking at political parties' reliance on socializing agencies. Due to the weak state-society relations these party could not directly establish their authority on the Italian populace. They had instead to rely on those social actors that over a long period had succeeded in becoming a point of reference within the society. In particular the Catholic Church, the CGIL and, eventually, the intellectuals played a pivotal role in the mobilization of the Italian populace by conveying votes to one political party or the other. Their reliance on an antagonizing rhetoric led to further social and economic divisions within society with the creation of sub-national networks. Despite scholars tend to look at this dynamics through Cold War lenses, these instabilities were not the response to international divisions but they were the result of a national clash for the promotion of a new collective identity built on values such as Catholicism or social justice. The consequence for parties' reliance on the antagonising rhetoric of these socialising groups led to a lack of improvement of the state-society relation with the creation of a climate of fear and

distrust that would make the US intervention and the construction of conditional alliances with both political and non-governmental actors easier.

The fourth chapter, instead, look at the evolution of US-Italian relations and the economic reconstruction of the country. Up until 1947, the US approach towards Italian reconstruction was based on a strategy of indirect control. By relying on non-governmental networks and their ties with the Italian government and economic groups, the US offered advices and suggestion for reconstructing the country. Before the Cold War, stability and reformation of the economic and political system were the key elements of US foreign policy towards Italy. When the international climate began to deteriorate and anti-Communist became the main priority, Washington shifted from an indirect approach to a more direct one by opening up a dialogue with the only anti-Communist political party that could effectively halt the PCI's increasing electoral success: the DC. Differently from the mainstream narrative of the Cold War and US-Italian relations, one of the objectives of this thesis is to prove that it was not Truman the pivotal actor to set the terms of this relationship, but De Gasperi who, by successfully presenting himself and his party as the only reliable and viable anti-Communist ally the US could rely on, obtained leverage in the negotiation process. If the US wanted to keep Italy as an anti-Communist ally, Washington needed to adapt its objectives and strategies to the Italian context and its political culture.

The fifth chapter focuses on the US deployment of Soft Power techniques in Italy in the attempt to change the political culture of the country. Disappointed by the DC's search for autonomy and its unwillingness to follow the US guidance for the reconstruction of the country, psychological warfare experts began to increasingly target the Italian public

opinion in the attempt to Americanise the local population as well as by promoting trans-national anti-Communism as a new form of national identity. The strategy of selling the American way of life through the promotion of cultural products and values is analysed in this chapter and the focus is on the local challenges to transform Italians' ideas and beliefs. Despite American goods and cultural products dominated the Italian market scholars tend not to address the question of why Italians chose those products. In many cases, American products were the only available due to the paralysis of the Italian industry as a consequence of the war. But as soon as the cultural industry was back on its feet, Italians went back to their national products.

Furthermore, following the June 1948 election and the US intervention to secure the conservative party access to power and the electoral defeat of the Italian Communist party and the Socialist party, Washington faced new challenges. While contributing to the DC' success, the intervention secure the party's authority within the political establishment with the result that the US lost the already weak control on the Italian political forces. Even more so, the American intervention facilitated the establishment of sub-national groups in particular the Catholic networks that, instead of leading to an acceptance of the American way of life or of a transnational anti-communism as a form of identity, allowed Catholicism to become a new form of collective identity and paradoxically strengthen the Communist party's authority among the anti-clerical forces.

The US disappointment towards its Italian allies and the increasing anti-Americanism among the Italian intellectual community led Washington to rethink its strategy towards the country. In the last chapter the focus is on the AILC and the review *Tempo Presente*. As I sought to demonstrate the Italian case contradicts the theory of a hegemonic success

of the CCF. The failure to establish a transnational anti-Communist identity in the Italian intellectual community was linked first of all to the political culture of the Italian intellectuals and their interpretation of the CCF as an opportunity to bring along a transformation of the Italian culture not from a transnational perspective but from a national one. The attempts to bring forward a new cultural alternative to the one promoted by the PCI and DC led the Italian branch to concentrate on local issues, rather than merely on the Cold War. The political culture of these intellectuals led to a series of controversies with the CCF's headquarters. In particular, their anti-clericalism represented a major concern for the leaders of the organization who wanted to promote a united and wide anti-Communist network that included also the catholic world.

Even though Italian negotiations made this cultural project peculiar, the domestic structure limited the success of this organization on the local front. The readers' response was tepid and sales remained limited. The editors decided to halt publication of *Tempo Presente* in 1968. Seeking to maintain some sort of intellectual autonomy, these intellectuals never linked themselves organically to the political establishment. Their refusal to follow any dogma and their unwillingness to compromise with political parties led to their marginalization within the Italian cultural environment. Despite the Cold War gave them an international reputation and influence, in the Italian context their arguments felt on deaf ears. The US' attempt to establish a new cultural hegemony proved unsuccessful.

- CH. I-

THE CULTURAL COLD WAR: TRANSNATIONAL VERSUS NATIONAL DIMENSION.

The analysis of the Cold War has long been a source of heated controversy amongst historians. Different schools of thought have disputed at length about the origin, the course, and the inevitability of the conflict, as well as who was to blame for the deterioration of the relations between the USA and the USSR. While scholars have devoted considerable efforts to the interpretation, or reinterpretation, of the Cold War concentrating on the military, economic, and political aspects of the conflict, the ideological dimension of it has long been underestimated. Because of its apparent harmlessness, there has been a general tendency to disregard culture or relegate it to an accessory category to the use of Hard Power. Over the past decades, however, scholarship has shifted toward new approaches and fields of research particularly focusing on the role ideology, culture, and propaganda played during this conflict, thus coming to a better understanding of what the Cold War was about.

The traditional approach to the American strategy and operations, focusing on economic and political interpretations, has been challenged by academics such as Christian G. Appy, David Caute, Mario Del Pero, John Fousek, Scott Lucas, Richard Pells, Federico Romero, Giles Scott-Smith, Frances Stonor Saunders and Hugh

Wilford[1], who re-interpreted older framings of the early Cold War by noting that the conflict was far more than a political and military contest: it was a "total conflict" of cultures and ideological systems. The long-lasting interpretation of it as a mere geopolitical struggle for spheres of influence opened up to new reinterpretations of the bipolar confrontation that led scholars to define it as a psychological conflict, too, in which ideas and values went hand in hand with the so-called "traditional weapons".

Even though the interpretation of the Cold War as a psychological war and ideological struggle for the maintenance of spheres of influence has been around since the beginning of the conflict itself, the narrative of a mobilization of the conflict through culture is relatively new. By emphasising the political dimension of culture (and not simply the cultural dimension of politics) this ground-breaking scholarship has deepened our understanding of international politics and how policymaking works.

Besides its pioneering recognition, the new historiography of the Cold War is essentially suffering on one front of analysis. While concentrating on both Super

[1] A partial listing of works on Cultural diplomacy and organizations includes: F S Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (Granta Books, 2000); H Wilford, *The CIA, the British Left, and the Cold War: Calling the Tune?*, Cass Series / Studies in Intelligence (F. Cass, 2003); G Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, Routledge / Psa Political Studies Series (Routledge, 2002),; G Scott-Smith, H Krabbendam, and Roosevelt Study Center, *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, Cass Series--Studies in Intelligence (F. Cass, 2003); S Lucas, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-56* (Manchester University Press, 1999); W. Scott Lucas, "Mobilizing Culture: The State-Private Network and the CIA in the Early Cold War," in *War and Cold War in American Foreign Policy 1942–62* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2002), 83–107; C. Appy, ed., *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (The University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); M Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," *Journal of American History (Bloomington, Ind.)* 87, no. 4 (2000): 1304–34; F Romero, "Indivisibilità Della Guerra Fredda. La Guerra Totale Simbolica," *Studi Storici* 38, no. 4 (1997): 935–50; J Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000); D Caute, *The Dancer Defects, The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Powers' attempts to mobilize culture and construct their own hegemony, this scholarship leaves open the question of the local response to the dissemination of ideas and values. It also pays little attention to the way in which a specific social/cultural structure managed to determine the use of power in those contexts in which cultural interventions occurred. Cultural Cold War historians often focus either on US attempts to shape the European response to the Cold War or on the relationship between American power and European autonomy. This leads to underestimate the relevance of "local cold wars". By looking at the events merely through Cold War lenses, they miss the chance to portray a much more complex and ambivalent relationship between the US and its European allies shaped by national negotiations, interests, and strategy. Even in cases where scholars have approached this conflict from a national perspective, the "local" is most of the time considered only as the playground to expand the notion of the Cold War. Thorough investigations of national structures and the ways in which specific local "environments" can resist, modify, accept, or determine the use of Soft Power proved to be scarce.

This chapter is constructed around three main areas. First, I will focus on the notion of psychological warfare and the manifestation of the Cold War through culture. Attention will be given to the new scholarship of Cold War studies, reviewing relevant works in the field. In consideration of the complexity in defining what is culture and what is not, and trying to avoid the risk of working on a far too vast terrain, this work will essentially introduce the scholarship dealing with "high culture", in particular those works in regards to a specific organization: the *Congress for Cultural Freedom*.

Second, I seek to introduce new perspectives of analysis. Starting from the assumption that culture represents an incredible form of power and a fundamental political tool, this research aims to offer a modest contribution taking further the investigation of the Cold War by emphasising the importance of "going local" for a thorough understanding of international/transnational dynamics. When looking at culture as a two-way process, US cultural diplomacy needs to be understood as an ongoing process of interaction between transnational and national cultural structures. This contribution, therefore, will not merely look at culture as a political tool, but also as a determining factor for the exercise of power in different contexts. The main objective is to investigate how local cultures, in this case the Italian one, can set limits to the use of power in specific frameworks. To do so, it is necessary to rethink the Cold War and its culture from a bottom-up, inside-out perspective that has the "local" at its core.

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chapter, would dismiss the interpretation of it as a micro-reproduction of the ideological conflict on the macro level.

The Cultural Cold War: A New Historical Perspective.

The Cold War historiography that had been produced prior to the late 20th Century was essentially focusing on traditional subjects, such as nation-state diplomacy, economics, and international politics, and military factors. In the aftermath of the conflict, however, these perspectives seemed inadequate to explain the complexity of the war. Since the collapse of the USSR and the opening up of both powers' archives, scholars have been granted access to new available sources and have begun questioning the true nature of the conflict and the role of culture.

Central to this new narrative is the concept of Soft Power. This concept was initially developed by the American political scientist and former State Department official Joseph Samuel Nye in 1991 in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* where he reflects on the evolution of the concept of power and how it "is becoming less fungible, less coercive and less tangible" [2]. Years later, in the preface of his book Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics, Nye defines Soft Power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion". According to Nye, besides the use of hard power successful states need to attract supporters and shape their long-term attitudes through the promotion of ideals, values

[2] See J S Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, (Basic Books, 1991) 188.

and culture. As he claims, Soft Power "arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies. When you can get others to admire your ideals and do want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. Seduction is always more effective that coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive."[3] The seductive aspect of US foreign policy is the central theme of this new Cold War scholarship.

This new historiographical perspective has broadened our understanding of the bipolar confrontation by placing culture, ideology, and propaganda at the core of their analyses. While the focus of previous research was merely on the economic and psychological implications of culture by emphasizing the cultural dimension of politics, it is not until the 1990s that scholars began to move beyond a simple analysis of the Cold War rhetoric and brought forth a real interrogation of a cultural conflict. In addition to being a political and economic war, scholars have begun to talk about a cultural Cold War. The central theme of this new scholarship is an in-depth investigation on the crucial role culture played during the Cold War. Culture, which was previously seen as an additional element of historiographical analyses, became a central descriptive tool[4] fundamental for broadening the understanding of the conflict and how international relations work.

The process of rethinking the Cold War in terms of a clash between ideologies and culture was made possible by previous investigations on the notion of culture. In

[3] J S Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (Public Affairs, 2004), X.
[4] M Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare," *Ricerche Di Storia Politica*, no. 1 (2003): 5.

particular, with the cultural turn of the mid-19th Century, scholars began to look at the nature of culture and its relation with power. Despite the plethora of published works dealing with it, defining this concept is not an easy task. In its broad and ambiguous conceptuality, scholars have encountered many difficulties in giving a neat and widely accepted definition of it. One of the most commonly accepted definitions belongs to the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz. In 1973, Geertz published a book titled *The Interpretation of Cultures*. As stated, "Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning."[5] By this, Geertz argued for a semiotic approach to culture in which the underlying webs of meanings need to be first isolated and interpreted in order to understand culture in its manifested form.

Years later, the social psychologist Geert Hofstede made the important claim that although certain aspects of culture are physically visible, their meaning is invisible and, "lies precisely and only in the way these practices are interpreted by the insiders."[6] Culture, therefore, does not merely represent visible artefacts but it also includes the underlying assumptions generated in the pre-conscious level. The local traditions, the values and the history of a country work together towards the production of cultural products. Understanding these meanings is necessary to comprehend why people around the world behave differently and have different ideas and values.

[5] C Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, Basic Books Classics Series (Basic Books, 1973), 5.
[6] G H Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (McGraw-Hill, 1991), 8,.

Since culture is not static but is rather dynamic, there are always actors trying to intervene and modify it. Starting from this definition of culture, scholars sought to understand what cultural relations mean and how they work. As Akira Iriye put it, "Cultural relations may be defined as interactions, both direct and indirect, among two or more cultures. Direct interactions include physical encounters with the people and objects of another culture. Indirect relations are more subtle, involving such things as a person's ideas and prejudices about another people, or cross-national influences in philosophy, literature, music, art, and fashion."[7] By arguing this, Iriye highlights the complexity of cultural encounters among nations and the manifestation of cultural diplomacy as the result of both its direct and indirect approaches.

Taking up these notions of culture as a starting point, Cold War historians expanded and reinterpreted the understanding of it according to the specificity of the Cold War[8]. As Christian Appy observes in his book *Cold War Constructions*, this new interpretation of the Cold War is constructed around the ideas that "culture is inherently political (and that is embedded in, and expresses, relations of power)" and that "all political struggles are culturally constructed (embedded in systems of value and meaning)"[9]. This re-interpretation represented a significant turn in Cold War studies. As Appy claimed, historians now tend to agree that "policy making, intelligence gathering, war-making, and mainstream politics might be profoundly

[7] A Iriye, "Culture and International History," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. M J Hogan and T G Paterson, Second Edi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 242.
[8] Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare," 5.
[9] Appy, *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966*, 4.

shaped by a social and cultural world beyond the conference table and the battlefield"[10]. According to R. B. J. Walker :

> "[The] significance of the concept of culture in the analysis of international relations is not that it offers a convenient category of socio-scientific explanation, or a convincing account of human nature, or a helpful classification of the different kinds of human practices there have been. Rather it hints at all the uncertainties of modernity, and at a multitude of struggles- on the grounds of tradition or postmodernity, of gender, race, religion and ethnicity, or socialism and capitalism, of the Other, of the future, of the local community, or the state and of the planet – to reconstitute the conditions of human existence in the face of tremendous structural transformations."[11]

This new scholarship offers a multidisciplinary approach to the Cold War with a focus on the roles of ideas, ideologies, and culture by emphasising how Soft Power played a greater role than previously acknowledged. Thanks to this new historical approach, international and diplomatic history has been enriched with scholars coming from different disciplines such sociology, literature, anthropology, history, communication studies, gender studies, and musicology. New issues have also been introduced to expand the understanding of the Cold War. Attention has been given, for instance, to the role of linguistics and visual symbols; popular and high culture; mass products; to the role of individuals and transnational organizations as part of a state-private network strategy. Aspects like nationalism, national identity, race, class, and gender have also

[10] Ibidem.
[11] R B J Walker, "Security, Sovereignty, and the Challenge of World Politics," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 15, no. 1 (1990): 12–13.

been integrated in these analyses. Despite their initial reluctance, some diplomatic historians too have expressed the necessity to move beyond the traditional inter-governmental diplomacy and look at the interaction between the state and private sectors of society.

The perception that this war represented, as Del Pero put it, "a total and absolute conflict between two antagonistic, but equally universalistic, models"[12] led to the awareness that this war could not be fought on the traditional battleground. Because of its absolute nature, this was a "war for unconditional surrender"[13], a war that had the annihilation of the antagonist and its model of social development as the ultimate goal. The defeat of the enemy, however, could not be achieved with military means. The technological and scientific developments of mass-destruction armaments reached a level of frightening intensity that led both Super Powers to find alternative ways to win this war. The impossibility of defeating the enemy through normal warfare made the psychological effort to conquer the "minds and hearts" a necessity for both sides[14]. Both Powers chose to opt for an ideological intervention meant to either glorify their own *modus vivendi* on political, social, and economic terms or to undermine the appeal of the rival system.

The Cold War became the symbolic framework where the struggle between values and ideas took place. By revealing the centrality of ideologies and culture in this conflict, previous interpretations alone seem now inadequate to define its complexity. The new scholarship holds out against the "national security" thesis. In *Freedom's War*, for

[12] M Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," *Journal of American History (Bloomington, Ind.)* 87, no. 4 (2000): 1304.
[13] A Stephanson, "Fourteen Notes On the Very Concept of the Cold War," *H-Diplo*, n.d., 20.
[14] Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," 1304.

instance, Scott Lucas rejects the idea, supported by others historians, that the US, through the façade of "national security", was merely defending itself and the Free World against "the evil empire"[15]. From Stalin to Truman and passing through Eisenhower, Khrushchev, and Kennedy, all Cold War leaders were motivated as much by ideological beliefs as by concerns about national security. Previous historiographies simply failed to recognize the ideological dimension of the conflict, as if scholars read all the documents and assumed all events as, "unmediated, objective realities rather than dynamic historical construction"[16]. Because of its apparent harmlessness, previous analyses on the Cold War tended to disregard culture or treat it as a mere accessory to the use of Hard Power. As Lucas observes in regard to previous works dealing with the Cold War and its culture, the limits of those works lay in the absence of the state from the historical account leading to a superficial interrogation of 'culture' as separated from the total political environment.[17]

Initially conceived as a non-political asset meant to foster mutual understanding among countries, the Cold War made evident that Soft Power[18] could not be treated as secondary to political and economic diplomacy. As Vladimir Pechatnov observes, the mobilization of ideologies and culture for political aims:

[15] W S Lucas, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-56* (Manchester University Press, 1999), 3–4.
[16] Appy, *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966*, 4.
[17] W. Lucas, "Beyond Freedom, beyond Control, beyond the Cold War: Approaches to American Culture and the State-Private Network," *Intelligence and National Security* 18, no. 2 (2003): 62.
[18] The term Soft power, coined in 1990 by the political scientists Joseph Nye, has been defined as "the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment. A country's soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies." In J. S. Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008): 94.

> "[…] made the Cold War more intense, global, and dangerous. More global -because both sides believed in the universal nature of their principles and wanted to spread them to the whole world. More intense -because each side believed it had a monopoly on truth and was determined to win. More dangerous -because ideological hostility led to exaggerated suspicious and fears, which in turn push both sides to overkill in providing for security."[19]

According to Federico Romero this was "a colossal operation of preparation for a war that would never be fought and, simultaneously, a war effectively waged but without a military clash"[20]. Therefore, it is evident how culture ended up playing a central role in Cold War international relations not only as an appendix of US diplomacy but as the battleground for a total war.

US Cultural Diplomacy and the State Private Network.

Differentiating themselves from previous narratives, scholars have shifted their attention toward the complexity of the psychological warfare and how cultural diplomacy had been orchestrated. Apart from the reliance on "negative" propaganda meant to dehumanize and delegitimised the Soviet enemy, it became indispensable for US foreign policy to foster a friendly world environment where the American system

[19] V O Pechatnov, "The Cold War and Its Legacy," in *International Relations Since the End of the Cold War: New and Old Dimensions*, ed. G Lundestad, Nobel Symposium (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 121.
[20] F Romero, "Indivisibilità Della Guerra Fredda. La Guerra Totale Simbolica," *Studi Storici* 38, no. 4 (1997): 943.

could flourish. To do so, on one hand Washington conveyed its effort and economic resources to the recovery of Western Europe hoping to create a stable Euro-Atlantic alliance, while on the other hand it became fundamental to sell the American Way of Life abroad in the attempt to promote a better understanding of the US. American psychological experts planned a Cultural Diplomacy strategy, "...based on the assumption, dubious at best, that if other people understood us, they would like us, and if they liked us, they would do the things we wanted them to do."[21]

The conditions under which international relations had been conducted underwent a great change during the Cold War. The end of the Second World War resulted in a mutation of the global power structure with the rise of two Super Powers and their consequent struggle for hegemony. The competition for spheres of influence led to an increase of global interdependence and the engagement with psychological warfare through transnational networks. This was primarily due to the fact that technological and scientific developments of mass-destruction armaments reached a level of threatening intensity that made governments' reliance on Hard Power practically unfeasible. If this conflict could not be fought on the traditional battleground, both the US and the USSR had to find alternative ways to compete and win this war. The perception that the Cold War represented a conflict between two opposing ways of life led the two Super Powers to opt for an ideological intervention meant to either glorify their own *modus vivendi* on political, social, and economic terms or to undermine the appeal of the rival system.

[21] O Stephens, *Facts to a Candid World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), 38.

In a world divided in two, the conquest of the international consensus became the prerogative of both sides. Despite systematic differences, both Super Powers had "collective dream projects" and wanted to spread their own 'way of life' globally in order to create their own "dream communities"[22]. They both constructed their agendas around the universality of their principles in constant conflict with each other. Because it was a 'war for unconditional surrender', neither the US nor the USSR were willing to negotiate or compromise and they strove "to out-educate, out-perform, out-write, out-produce, out-argue, and outshine the other."[23] While the USSR relied on classical orchestras, ballet companies, and socialist realism in the arts to enhance its influence across the world, the US responded with abstract expressionism, performing arts, and jazz music. For both the USSR and US, the unconventional actors were writers, poets, ballet dancers, musicians, songwriters, painters, movie stars, radio speakers and intellectuals. As David Caute claimed, never before, "had empires felt so compelling a need to prove their virtue, to demonstrate their spiritual superiority, to claim the high ground of 'progress', to win public support and admiration by gaining ascendency in each and every event of what might be styled the Cultural Olympics."[24]

The first theatre of intervention for US cultural diplomacy was in Western Europe. As Osgood claims:

> "[…]the untold story of America's cold war of words did not lie in the tale of psychological operations to foment unrest behind the Iron Curtain, as I first supposed. Rather, it was in the broader effort to win the hearts and minds of people on the other side of that curtain,

[22] P Romijn, G Scott-Smith, and J Segal, eds., *Divide Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, n.d.), 1–2.
[23] Caute, *The Dancer Defects, The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War*, 4.
[24] Idem, 3.

> in the areas of the world that were non-communist, neutral, or tied to the United States through formal alliances- the area that Americans liked to call the 'free world'"[25]

The major target of Osgood's concept of psychological warfare was the general population. As Ellul observed in his work *Propaganda: the Formation of Men's Attitudes*, "the individual is of no interest to the propagandist" since he might present too much resistance to external action. To be effective, "propaganda cannot be concerned with detail". Creating certain convictions in an isolated individual represents an extremely difficult and complex process. For this reason, Ellul explains, "modern propaganda reaches individuals enclosed in the mass and as participants in that mass, yet it also aims at a crowd, but only as a body composed of individuals."[26] Facilitated by the communication revolution beginning in the late nineteenth century, the constantly evolving modern instruments and techniques of communication allowed opinion makers to reach large sectors of society.

Central to this new reinterpretation of the Cold War is the notion of the "State-private network". In the attempt to move beyond the interpretation of the Cold War that focus either on the traditional state diplomacy or government officials and corporate interests, scholars that have been working for the last decade on the Cold War in terms of a psychological warfare brought forth the concept of "networks" and transnational relations.

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[25] K A Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (University of Kansas, 2006), 2.
[26] J Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, Vintage Book (New York: A. Knopf, 1965), 6.

In order to penetrate different societies, the US planned a broad strategy of direct and indirect intervention that involved national governments and the collaboration between the Government and private individuals and organizations. As reported by Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, the term "state-private network" referred to the "extensive, unprecedented collaboration between 'official' US agencies and "private" groups and individuals in the development and implementation of political, economic, and cultural propaganda in support of US foreign policy from the early cold war period to today."[27]

Because the idea of intellectual freedom was at the core of American cultural diplomacy, intervention could only take place outside the formal state structure. In order to do so, the US government had to rely on transnational networks and non-governmental organizations with the cooperation between different non-state actors. Psychological warfare experts developed what Kenneth Osgood defined as a "camouflage approach to propaganda" that relied on "independent news media, non-governmental organizations, and private individuals as surrogate communicators for conveying propaganda messages."[28] This connection between public and private spheres was, according to Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford, an "ideological construction […] drawing upon specifically American ideologies of freedom and voluntarism"[29].

The importance of the state-private network, Scott Lucas emphasizes, allowed the US to wage this psychological crusade against the Soviet Union while reinforcing US

[27] L Kennedy and W S Lucas, "Kennedy, Liam; Lucas, Scott (2005); Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and U.S. Foreign Policy," *American Quarterly Review* 57, no. 2 (n.d.): 312.
[28] Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*, 5.
[29] H Laville, A.P.H.H. Wilford, and H Wilford, *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, Studies in Intelligence (Taylor & Francis, 2006), 1.

triumphalism[30]. It also allowed the inclusion of society and culture as spheres of interests moving beyond a traditional historiography that was predominantly constructed around the role of the State and the use of Hard Power. In this total conflict, every sector of society—religious group, media, labor unions, businesses, intellectuals, students, athletes, actors—became involved in the fight. The CIA, which was created in 1947, played a unique role in this. It established networks of cooperation with leading intellectuals, art galleries, students' organisation, influential publishers, women's groups, newspapers, and television networks, and universities in the so-called Free World that had the purpose of creating a transatlantic cultural community.

Cultural Cold War Studies and the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

The Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) was part of a broad cultural diplomacy strategy aiming at detaching the European intelligentsia from the appeal of Marxism and Communism by offering a way that better reconciled with the American Way of Life. Its political and cultural origin dated back to June 1950 when a group of intellectuals gathered together in Berlin to take part to a conference whose declared aim was the promotion of intellectual freedom and the opposition to any totalitarian system. Covertly funded by the CIA, which subsidized the CCF with nearly $800.000 a year[31], from 1950 to 1967 the CCF established branches in thirty-five countries of the world. Part of its activities consisted in organising international conferences and

[30] Lucas, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-56*, 54–55.
[31] Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare," 14.

cultural events, publishing important cultural and political journals, offering economic subsidies and support to intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain as well as books, travel grants, and cultural exchanges to its own members. One of the most remarkable initiatives promoted by the organisation was the publication of over twenty journals. Among others, its principal and well-known journal reviews of the Congress for Cultural Freedom were *Encounter* in UK, *Preuves* in France, *Tempo Presente* in Italy, *Der Monat* in Germany, and *Cuadernos* in Latin America.

The CCF was conceived as a transnational project that, through a network of interconnections among educational, cultural, and political leaders, could operate beyond national boundaries.[32] It gave intellectuals a platform to bring forth a transnational intellectual debate. The global reach of this organization was impressive; it included among its members philosophers, economists, political scientists, novelists, musicians, poets, and academics. Among them, Benedetto Croce, Ignazio Silone, Raymond Aron, Karl Jaspers, John Dewey, Arthur Koestler, Melvin Lasky, Nicolas Nabokov represented the leading cultural elite of the CCF. Broadly labelled as the "liberal intellectuals", or the Non-Communist Left, the members of the CCF lacked an overarching political homogeneity among those intellectuals. Most important, anti-Communism was their shared interest.

Like many other cultural operations promoted by the US in the early Cold War, the CCF was part of a broad strategy of securing the American hegemony abroad. In order to remove the risk of the US government of being exposed to infringe upon other countries sovereignty, the CCF operated on a state-private base in which non-

[32] K V Mulcahy, "Cultural Diplomacy and the Exchange Programs: 1938-1978," *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 29, no. 1 (1999): 26.

governmental actors became the major forces for the promotion of specific US foreign policy agendas. While the CIA—via philanthropic organizations such as Ford Foundation, the Fleishmann Foundation and the Rockefeller foundation—was instrumental in funding the organization, the reliance on local actors made the whole cultural campaign appeared as a voluntary mobilization of individuals against the Soviet system and in support of the American Way of Life.

Beside the most obvious anti-Communist intent, this cultural experiment was seen as instrumental to the creation of a transnational cultural environment friendly to the US. The American objective was to propose liberal democracy as the only possible alternative to Soviet ideology. America's reliance on the so-called opinion makers was part of a broader strategy to tackle the spread of anti-Americanism within educated and left-wing circles. Influenced by the beginning of Korean War and the intensification of covert actions and psychological operations, a feeling of distrust and hostility toward the US spread among Western countries. Winning over specific segments of society that had expressed some criticism toward the US and its hegemonic plans became not only important but also indispensable for the United States to win the Cold War. In particular, psywar experts sought to obtain the support from:

> "the uncertain 'neutralists' or the geopolitical 'realists' who are already partially attracted through Marxism to communism but who are still susceptible to intellectual challenges […] These neutralists and crypto-communists would not be stimulated by propaganda, but

> they could be fascinated by intelligent argument which appeared to be objective, penetrating and forward-looking."[33]

Scholars have devoted considerable attention to the understanding of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its attempts to promote a transnational intellectual community meant to foster a better understanding of the US and its outcomes. A widespread tendency among scholars of the CCF is the production of books and journal articles that linger on dichotomous concepts such as "coercion" and "submission" or "hegemony" and "autonomy", minimizing, therefore, the voluntary nature of many intellectuals' contributions and the complex negotiations that took place within the organization. In her book *Who Paid the Piper* (1999), which represents a valuable work that allowed for a renewed debate on the Cold War amongst scholars of different fields, Frances Stonor Saunders exaggerates the CIA's influence within the CCF without really questioning individual willingness to participate to this struggle. She mainly focuses on the creation of this massive apparatus of US cultural propaganda by offering a painstaking analysis of the ways in which the CIA covertly ran cultural congresses, publications, exhibition, and concerts through its front groups and philanthropic organizations. The author depicts the intellectuals as passive or mere instruments of the Agency, suggesting that because the CIA was playing the piper, it was also calling the tune. By focusing almost exclusively on the CIA's control of cultural activities, Stonor Saunders misses the opportunity to portray a much more

[33] The Lodge Project, July, 28, 1953, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, BOX 72, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

complex relationship in which individuals within the CCF were negotiating their own cultural space within the transnational network.

This intellectual approach to the CCF is part of a broader framework of analysis of the Cold War that is constructed around the idea of Cultural Imperialism. This concept, together with Westernization and Globalization, is largely used to criticise the US psychological intervention during the Cold War and the US imperialist tendency. It is constructed around the idea that America—through the dissemination of cultural products, commercial goods, and ideas—ended up imposing its own will over other "less powerful" societies by determining their cultural values and the standardization of national identity. This theory, however, addresses Cultural Diplomacy only from a unidirectional perspective: the North American one. Scholars tend to examine how America's hegemonic and imperial tendencies were at the time, but they do not scrutinize the locals' responses to this challenge. Some academics began questioning the concept of an American empire by presenting a much more complex reality, emphasising the voluntary embracing of American culture abroad. Geir Lundestad, for instance, argues that: "if this American expansion created what we could call an American Empire, this was to a larger extent an empire by invitation"[34]. Even though the role of the "recipient" is now presented in less passive terms, this perspective does not fully consider the series of negotiations that took place on a local dimension and how values were transformed and adapted according to the cultural structure of the specific country.

[34] G. Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (1986): 263.

The CIA-control theory has, however, also been criticised by other historians of the CCF. Some scholars argue against Saunders' interpretation of the CCF, claiming that the complexity of the cultural organization cannot be reduced to the simple interpretation of coercion. The CIA's role in financially supporting the CCF requires an outlook that goes beyond the autonomy-control dichotomy. Among others, Scott Lucas, Giles Scott-Smith, and Hugh Wilford propose a different analysis of the Congress by placing the individual members of the CCF at the centre of this cultural diplomacy. As scholars have repeatedly argued, when approaching the study of the Cultural Cold War the voluntary nature of many intellectuals' contributions must be recognized. In *Freedom's War*, for instance, Scott Lucas claims that despite the CIA provided most of the subsidies, "the impetus was coming from individuals with no Government position, individuals with their own interests in ensuring the triumph of freedom."[35]

Another work that challenges the idea of a top-down, controlled organization is Hugh Wilford's book, *Calling the Tune? The CIA, the British Left and the Cold War, 1945-1950.* The author, while trying to answer the question of whether the CIA was really "calling the tune", examines the CCF from a British perspective that further challenges Saunders' argument. He rejected the idea that the British intellectuals, in this specific case study, were mere instruments of the US psychological warfare. As he claims in the conclusion of his book, "it might well have been the case that the CIA tried to call

[35] Lucas, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-56*, 2.

a particular tune; but the piper did not always play it, nor the audience dance to it." [36] According to his findings, the British case demonstrates a greater degree of autonomy.

Similarly, Scott-Smith in *The Politics of Apolitical Culture* moves attention away from the Agency by focusing on the individuals within the CCF, emphasising how their anti-totalitarian ideology consequently made them get closer to the CCF[37]. As he claims, the anti-communist intellectual network, despite with less financial resources, was already in operation even before the WWII broke out; it was a precursor of the actual Cold War cultural struggle. The core of his work is the transition of influential European intellectuals of the 1930s and 1940s from anti-fascism to anti-communism positions. By emphasising the nature of these influential intellectuals' anti-totalitarian opposition, Scott-Smith wants to go beyond a simplistic dichotomous narrative of autonomy versus control by presenting the intellectual struggle as an independent engagement. As he states: "the clarion calls of freedom and truth that would be expressed consistently from the late 1940s onwards may well have been enhanced by the Cold War, but they certainly were not created by that conflict."[38] Shifting the focus away from the Agency exposes and by emphasising the complexity of negotiations that took place, the limits of a top-down argument constructed around the theory of "control" have become more evident.

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[36] H Wilford, *The CIA, the British Left, and the Cold War: Calling the Tune?*, Cass Series / Studies in Intelligence (F. Cass, 2003), 49.

[37] G Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, Routledge / Psa Political Studies Series (Routledge, 2002).

[38] G Scott-Smith, "Building a Community around the Pax Americana. The US Government and Exchange Programmes during the 1950s," in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War. The State-Private Network*, ed. H Laville and H Wilford (Oxon-New York: Routledge, 2006), 83.

Despite the importance of placing the individuals and their negotiations at the core of these analyses, this scholarship has not fully addressed the specificity of national case studies[39] and the "local" gets easily lost in the "transnational" dimension of the Cold War. The excessive look to the CCF and the actors involved from a transnational perspective ignores the role that internal structures played in shaping the dynamics of a Cultural intervention.

One of the historians who examine the CCF from a national perspective is Hugh Wilford. In *Calling the Tune?,* he explains the complexity of US cultural diplomacy and the limits of previous works on the CCF by studying the specific British context. Through his work, he seeks to demonstrate that simply looking at individuals and their negotiations is not enough for understanding the CCF. Through his analytical approach to trade unions, cultural movements, and also politics from the British system out, and in particular from the Non-Communist Left out, he seeks to offer a new perspective of analysis for Cold War studies.

Despite those premises, Wilford shies away from presenting a thorough analysis of the local case. Without expanding the notion of the local, he is merely using the British case as a playground to expand the notion of the Cold War. The main issue with his work is that he does not sufficiently explain the importance of "going local" when studying this cultural intervention. There is no thorough investigation about the the

[39] A few examples of this local outlook on Cold War history have been produced. Among the others: I Philipsen, "Out of the Tune: The Congress for Cultural Freedom in Denmark 1953-1960," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. H Krabbendam and G Scott-Smith (Routledge, 2004), 237–52; T De Vries, "The Absent Dutch: Dutch Intellectuals and the Congress for Cultural Freedom," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. H Krabbendam and G Scott-Smith, 2004, 254–68; M Hochgeschwender "The Intellectual as Propagandist: Der Monat, the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and the Process of Westernization in Germany," 1999.

nature of British peculiarity, and he tries to neither explain whether his analysis is unique to that specific context or whether it is also applicable to other national cases. This lack of explanations is mainly caused by the fact that he does not go deeper enough into the British context missing the chance to explain if the CIA's success was only the result of the alleged special relationship and of closer cultural ties between the US and UK. This book is another example of the tendency among scholars to look at national case studies from a unidirectional perspective with the emphasis always on the Americans and their strategies.

The problem is that when a specific national case study becomes the focus of our narrative, generalizations cannot be applied. By its very notion, a national analysis requires a specific approach that has each single case study under examination. With the term 'national' I refer not only to the geographical entity of the nation but also to the cultural and intellectual traditions of the analysed country. One major lacuna in the narrative of the CCF is the absence of investigations on the interaction between transnational forces and the internal political, social, and cultural context. Attention needs to be addressed to the reciprocal dynamics of external-internal factors and to the interaction between ideas, belief, and identities with the structural environment in which action takes place. The cultural evolution of Cold War dynamics that took place in Britain according to Wilford's investigations was not applicable to the Italian case. The reasons can be found in the peculiarity of the Italian domestic structure, its political culture, and the fact that, compared to the two Anglo-Saxon countries that shared some cultural, linguistic, and historical similarities, the Latin country was a completely different reality. All these aspects will be analysed in the further chapters.

The Problematic Aspects of Cultural Transmission and Hegemony.

With the cultural turn of Cold War studies, a recurring aspect in most of the analyses is the notion of hegemony, and more precisely cultural hegemony. Raymond Williams in his book *Marxism and Literature* observed that while the "traditional definition of hegemony is political rule or domination, especially in relations between states" [40] the word has acquired a new meaning following the posthumous publication of Antonio Gramsci's *Quaderni Del Carcere*. This was a collection of essays written during his incarceration and published for the first time by Einaudi between 1948 and 1950. In his writings, the Italian intellectual reflected at length over the complexity of power relations and hegemony. While classical Marxist theory identifies economy as the predominant aspect of hegemony, Gramsci brought forward the concept of ideology and culture as crucial aspects of social power.

Despite the fact that Gramsci did not provide a precise definition of hegemony, in the section dedicated to the intellectuals he treated hegemony as 'the "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group' as opposed to the coercive power of the state. 'This consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.' [41] Gramsci insisted that effective leadership can be

[40] R Williams, "Hegemony," in Marxism and Literature (Oxford Paperbacks: 1977-2009),108.
[41] A Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, The Intellectuals, New World Paperbacks (International Publishers, 1971) 145.

established when there is spontaneous consent among the leaders and the led. Only when this consent is established, the leaders can exercise their intellectual and moral influence and build their hegemonic role.

However, as the critical theorist Stuart Hall reminds us, "it is crucial to the concept that hegemony is not a given and permanent state of affairs, but it has to be actively won and secured; it can also be lost."[42] In order to be maintained, hegemony requires that "ideological assertations become self-evident cultural assumptions. Its effectiveness depends on subordinated peoples accepting the dominant ideology as 'normal reality or common-sense'."[43] According to Gramsci the concept of hegemony was strictly linked to the "transformation of sectional interests, via influence or compromise, into a 'general interest' for society as a whole that could overcome conflicting interpretations of the world."[44]

Dominants groups within society can obtain consent and legitimacy from the masses by spreading specific ideas, values and assumptions through social institutions such as labour unions, the church, school and so on. These institutions play an important role in socialising people into specific norms and beliefs of the dominant social group. Therefore, if a specific group can exert some control over these institutions they can control the masses. From its dominant position, the leading elite can exert control over social institutions and influence the behaviours and beliefs of society by creating what

[42] Stuart Hall, "Culture, the Media and the Ideological Effect," in *Mass Communication and Society*, ed. James Curran, Michael Gurevitch, and Janet Woollacott, vol. Set books / Open University (London: Open University Press, 1977), 333.
[43] Gail. Dines and Jean McMahon Humez, *Gender, Race, and Class in Media : A Critical Reader* (SAGE Publications, 2011), 34.
[44] G Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, Routledge / Psa Political Studies Series (Routledge, 2002), 5.

Gramsci used to refer as the "common sense", a dominant view of society. To create this, the dominant groups have to present their own definition of reality in a way that is acceptable to other social groups and convince them that the one promoted is the only admissible interpretation. The role of the intellectuals is central to the creation of a "common sense". They represents, according to Gramsci, "the dominant group's "deputies" exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government."[45] They can transform set of values and ideas into common sense.

Hegemony, in Gramscian terms, is also a recurrent notion among historians of the CCF. The cultural organization was created with the intention to establish an hegemonic influence among specific social strata and to provide "a sense of consensus around certain shared values and interests"[46] Overall, scholars tend to characterise this organization as a relatively successful hegemonic institution, capable of establishing a transnational cultural hegemony in Western Europe. Despite the claims, those who approached the US cultural project in terms of hegemony have failed to thoroughly establish whether this goal was reached and on which degree it was reached. In *The Politics of Apolitical Culture*, Scott-Smith defines the Congress for Cultural Freedom as a hegemonic instrument of US foreign policy by applying Gramsci's theory to the projection of American cultural power in Western Europe. The attempts to construct a transnational hegemony play here an important theoretical role by using it as the grounding framework for his understanding of the CCF. While claiming that the apolitical culture of the Congress for Cultural Freedom "had a decidedly political

[45] A Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, The Intellectuals, New World Paperbacks (International Publishers, 1971) 145.
[46] Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, 5.

impact during the Cold War"[47], there is essentially a lack of explanation of why and how the CCF proved successful in establishing a transnational hegemony and, particularly, in which contexts. His definition of hegemony as well as the idea of an Atlantic community remained far too abstract and linked to the idea of an undefined transatlantic community. This idea of the "West" and of an "Atlantic Community", Richard Pells states, "sometimes seemed an American invention, useful politically but not entirely comprehensible as a cultural phenomenon."[48]

Similarly, Hugh Wilford, while correct in suggesting that the construction of hegemony is a two-way process not solely exerted from the top down, remains vague in his definition of the CIA success. While recognizing the British non-Communist left's ability to embrace ideas and values and manipulate the CIA according to different aims, he eventually argues that the Agency intervention proved successful in reinforcing American transnational hegemony in Britain. How the CIA operations effectively contributed to the success of a transnational anti-communism needs to be clarified.

Despite the fact that the CCF was successful in creating a platform for a transnational intellectual debate or, as Risse-Kappen claims, an "intellectual space for changes"[49], the different national outcomes need to be analysed further. The limit of previous analyses in offering a totally convincing explanation of how the US succeeded in establishing a hegemonic culture is mainly due to the absence of the local from

[47] Idem, 1.
[48] R Pells, "American Culture Abroad: The European Experience since 1945," in *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions: American Mass Culture in Europe*, ed. R Kroes et al., European Contributions to American Studies (Amsterdam: Vu University Press Amsterdam, 1993), 82.
[49] T Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 194.

consideration in transnational dynamics. By simply looking at either the transnational dimension of the Cold War or the nation-state only as part of this transnational framework, we forget to question the importance of the nation state[50].

Scholars rarely consider how cultural products, ideas, and values were received abroad. There is a gap in the literature, for instance, about the interaction between the transnational attempts to promote specific values such as anti-Communism, individual liberty, and intellectual freedom and the context and culture in which these attempts took place. Neither is there a thorough interrogation over the audience's response to the promotion of those values. Were individuals eventually convinced that the American Way of Life was the only solution to their national problems? Did the CCF successfully achieve the promotion of an alternative culture in specific national contexts? These are questions that must be answered. To do so, however, we cannot study the CCF simply from an abstract transnational perspective without seriously questioning the impact Western ideas and values had on specific targeted country. This perspective does not allow us to fully understand the complexity of negotiations and variations taking place along this process of construction of a transnational community. We need a "bottom-up" approach that looks at specific national cases and their negotiations beyond the Cold War dimension. As Tity De Vries claims:

> "Situating the Congress for Cultural Freedom and Cold War intellectuals in their national cultural contexts and traditions offers a different perspective to the grand narratives of the CCF organization, its main members and its activities that have been published so far. The apparent unity in opinions and actions of the Congress might

[50] Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare," 2.

> actually appear to have been more diverse if studied from different national perspective."[51]

One possible explanation that led many scholars to talk about Cultural Hegemony in terms of a transnational success could be seen as linked to the tendency of treating anti-Communism as a monolithic ideology. But 'anti-Communism' meant different things to different people. In many cases, the Cold War was not necessarily the central determinant of the opposition to communism and national negotiations. Different approaches were often conditioned from a ground-up dynamic. In order to understand the complexity of the CCF, we need to understand what Communism meant to these intellectuals and how they perceived the intellectual opposition to it.

The intellectual anti-Communism was not an isolated or static ideology but rather a negotiated process that interacted with domestic structures and was modified by them. As the analysis of the Italian case will reveal, this mobilization was never a micro-reproduction of the ideological conflict on the macro level. It was a national variation meant to obtain specific objectives that had nothing to do with the international conflict. Therefore, when studying the CCF, a set of questions needs to be addressed, such as: What did Anti-Communism mean to these intellectuals? What did these intellectuals stand for? Was liberal democracy and capitalism the best solution for all? What alternatives were they promoting? Without addressing these questions, the investigation of the CCF in terms of cultural hegemony would remain incomplete.

[51] T de Vries, "The Absent Dutch: Dutch Intellectuals and the Congress for Cultural Freedom.," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. G Scott-Smith and H Krabbendam, Cass Series--Studies in Intelligence (F. Cass, 2003), 165.

While hegemony could be achieved through military and economic means, cultural hegemony requires a much more complex strategy. The circumstances under which a group can exert cultural control and how transnational ideas are accepted, modified, or rejected by specific groups or countries are fundamental aspects that need to be analysed. First, we need to bear in mind that Cultural Diplomacy is a two-way process whose outcomes do not merely depend on how dominant a group is. The effectiveness of cultural diplomacy and the dissemination of cultural products always rest on the local response and its reception. *In Collaboration across Nations: Context and Dynamics*, Sharon Dawes, Lei Zheng, and Brian Burke claim that: "A fundamental challenge for transnational knowledge networking is that every participant comes to the engagement deeply embedded in layers of context." They further expand on this by elaborating on this concept:

> "Every participant, whether an individual or an organization, communicates, acts, and understands the world through well-established, contextual lenses. […] Much of the work of a transnational network is embodied in the effort to bridge or shrink "contextual distances" so that the participants can create shared meaning and productive collaborations. Despite similar shared values, the transnational networks found difficulties in national context because of national issues, cultural misunderstanding and the fact that the international ideological clash was prioritized to national issues. Most of literature on cultural transnational networks ignored the interactions with specific national context and culture."[52]

[52] S Dawes, L Zheng, and B Burke, "Collaboration across Nations: Context and Dynamics," n.d., http://www.umdcipe.org/conferences/GovernmentCollaborationShanghai/Submitted Papers/Dawes_Zheng_Burke_Paper.pdf.

Even though transnational projects were constructed around specific shared values and objectives, the idea that American democratic principles were "universally and totally applicable at all times and in all places"[53] reflected, according to Gienow-Hecht, the US "cultural ignorance as well as its geo-political aspiration."[54]

Despite operating on a transnational level, the CCF's cultural projects were addressed toward specific national context and relied on individuals who brought in their own "webs of significance" and their set of values generated in their pre-conscious level. The publication of these journals did not take place in a political, intellectual, or organizational vacuum. National identities, cultures, and contexts represented important determining factors for the outcome of this cultural warfare. And these could not simply vanish with the creation of a transnational network. To further understand the complexity of the Cold War, we need to move beyond a one-way cultural interpretation of the Cold War that ignore the role of structural elements within one country. The differences between each domestic structure shaped and modified the overall impact of the transnational project.

The Italian Political Culture and Context.

A series of attempts to change the cultural landscape in Italy took place upon the beginning of the Cold War. While national actors were trying to negotiate their cultural

[53] S P Huntington, *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981).
[54] J C E Gienow-Hecht, "Shame on U.S.?Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War: A Critical Review," *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 3 (January 1, 2000): 475.

space and redefine Italians' national identity, international and transnational actors tried to step in to redefine the political culture of the country and to influence beliefs and ideas in a way that it would benefit US post-war plans. Since the end of the world conflict and the beginning of the Cold War, the US gave start to a broad and ambiguous psychological warfare campaign addressed toward the Latin country. They relied on covert-overt operations to change Italians' behaviours by intervening on labour issues, political campaigns, the dissemination of cultural products and ideas, and economic matters. What they found, however, was a political system so immutable that it proved difficult for those transnational actors to intervene and change things.

Even though scholars tend to consider the CCF as a transnational cultural success, an examination of the Italian branch, *Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della Cultura*, and the publication of the journal *Tempo Presente*, which will be analysed in the last chapter, will support my main argument that cultural diplomacy in Italy was not as successful as it is thought. In the specific post-war Italian context, cultural hegemony could only be exerted through political recognition. Despite exercising authority, intellectuals did not possess any direct power, and their influence over civic society had to be filtered by the political system and a political class, which could legitimate their role as opinion moulders.[55] Different from the British context analysed by Wilford, Italy did not have a structure this Non-Communist intellectuals could rely on for establishing an alternative culture. They remained marginalised within the Italian cultural environment. The story of *Tempo Presente*, its failure in promoting a non-Communist left intellectual culture, its authors' isolation within the Italian literary

[55] C Pasquinelli, "From Organic to Neo-Corporatist Intellectuals: The Changing Relations between Italian Intellectuals and Political Power," *Media, Culture & Society* 17, no. 3 (1995): 416.

world, and their reluctance to embrace the Congress' directions reveal how national interests, culture, and context still play a decisive role in transnational network.

While there have been important works on American psychological warfare in the country and on US-Italian relations—such as Federico Romero's analysis of Trade Unionism[56]; Mario Del Pero's study of US-Italian political negotiations[57]; Kaeten Mistry's recent publications on the US, Italy, and political warfare[58]; and James Miller's analysis of the 1948 elections[59]—the Italian Cultural Cold War has not been fully analysed. In particular, there has been no significant work in English on the Italian relationship with the Congress for Cultural Freedom and on *Tempo Presente*.

Scholars who worked on the CCF have briefly addressed the Italian case, emphasizing the peculiarity of the Italian journal as the most leftist cultural product among the other CCF cultural projects. In most cases, the explanations given remain vague and unconvincing. One of the main limits of previous narratives is that by looking at local negotiations and national efforts only through a narrow Cold War prism many anomalies in the political as well as cultural and social context can only be explained as a temporary deviation from the American-leading direction, or as an external

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56 See: F Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944-1951* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

57 See: Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955."M Del Pero, "Containing Containment: Rethinking Italy's Experience during the Cold War," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 8, no. June 2015 (2003): 532–55. M Del Pero, "American Pressures and Their Containment in Italy during the Ambassadorship of Clare Boothe Luce, 1953-1956," *Diplomatic History*, (2004): 407-439.

58 See: K Mistry, "The Case for Political Warfare: Strategy, Organization and US Involvement in the 1948 Italian Election," *Cold War History* 6, no. 3 (2006): 301–29.

59 See: J E Miller, "Taking Off the Gloves: The United States and the Italian Elections of 1948," *Diplomatic History* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 1983): 35–56. J E Miller, *The United States and Italy, 1940-1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization*, History E-Book Project (University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

concession to the new Republic. However, it was not a matter of loose guidance or of benevolent concessions from the outside that shaped the Italian post-war era, but rather it was the result of national efforts and negotiations taking place in the specific structure of an environment that allowed them to move beyond the strict boundaries of the Cold War. The peculiar responses of cultural and political actors, their choices, and individual efforts revealed the limitation of these international narratives.

From this perspective, national contexts, such as Italy, are often perceived as appendices of Washington, and their national choices are often seen as natural extensions of Cold War international dynamics. In spite of the invasiveness of Cold War discourses, considering anti-Communism as an over-imposed product of the Cold War leads to an underestimation of the antebellum origins of Italian intellectual *impegno* in reforming society and culture. Although some sort of opportunism might have guided these intellectuals' actions, they were not passive players of US soft diplomacy; they strategically chose to play for specific reasons that went beyond mere Cold War dynamics.

Italians had their own cultural structures and their own Way of Life that the Americans could not simply substitute from above. Despite the fact that many Italians adopted the fierce Cold War language for evident propagandistic reasons, especially with the attempt to obtain foreign aid from one of the two super powers, the complexity of the Italian contexts and negotiations obliges us to go beyond this propagandistic reading. Interesting dynamics revealed how Italy was capable to co-opt the effort and exploit the anti-Communist propaganda for national reasons, creating its own local cold war. The main focus will be on Italians' constant attempts to safeguard national interests

and priorities, depicting its long-lasting tendency to adapt to external pressure through a series of stratagems and negotiations.

The time has come for a new discussion on the multiplicity of histories of the Cold War in different contexts remembering that, as Matthew Connelly claims, national transformations often obeyed their own logic rather than that of the Cold War, even when backed by one of the two superpowers. The Italian case shows how, for structural and strategic reasons, the US anti-communist campaign could not have been replicated in the Italian case without the support and negotiations of conscious national actors. It is time to look at the multiple dynamics of the Cold War remembering that, often, national events were not essentially a product on a micro level of the global confrontation. In particular we should analyse how Cold War ideologies and identities interacted with, influenced, and were influenced by larger cultural patterns in the Italian context.

Conclusion.

Despite the fact that since the Cold War transnationalism has become a central aspect of US foreign policy and cultural diplomacy, the nation-state still represents a cultural and political force of power in determining the evolution of transnationalism. With nation-state I do not mean simply the geographical entity or the political institution, but also the relations between the state and other socialising agencies and those values, ideas, behaviours that are part of a country's political culture. As I will demonstrate, internal and external actors can try to intervene and modify the national context, but

they can only do it within the narrative framework of the domestic structure. Since they represented the variables under which specific ideas and values are selected, modify, adapted, or rejected, domestic structures can determine the success or failure of transnational relations. They work as a filter that mediate the impact of transnational efforts to influence policy in the various targeted areas[60]. Because the outcomes of transnational networks depend so much on domestic structures, the impacts and effects of these exchanged ideas across the boundaries vary greatly from state to state. Therefore, a generalising approach cannot help us to determine the success or the failure of these networks.

When approaching the analysis of transnational relations, the "national" dimension of it cannot simply be removed; it is "inherent" to the concept. In the introduction to the book *State/Nation/Transnation*, the authors argue that: "If transnationalism is understood as sustained activities across national borders, then the importance of a 'national scale' and 'national space' that can be transcended through these processes is obvious. With no 'national', there can be no 'transnational'"[61] .The term nation-state is used here to define not only the government, but also the socialising agencies and the relations with the populace for what we can define as political culture.

While transnational actors and organizations can challenge the power of the state, the organs and institutions of that specific nation-state still represent the fundamental centre of power where policy decisions are made and acted upon. However, transnational actors and ideas can still have a deep impact within the nation-state. As

[60] Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 25.
[61] K Willis and B S A Yeoh, *State/Nation/Transnation: Perspectives on Transnationalism in the Asia Pacific*, Routledge Research in Transnationalism (Taylor & Francis, 2004), 1.

Risse-Kappen explains, transnational actors can influence national policy but only if they get access to the political system of the target state. But simply gaining access is not sufficient to have an impact on national policy. These actors also have to "generate and/or contribute to 'winning' policy coalitions in order to change decisions in the desired directions"[62].

Therefore, to further our understanding of transnational organizations and cultural diplomacy, we should not look at how the Cold War made these transnational projects possible but how national issues made them fragile. For this reason, in the next chapters I will focus on the Italian political culture, its political system, the social and cultural structures, and its people in order to prove how the lack of thorough understanding of Italy as an "ally" led eventually to a failure of US cultural diplomacy. This would help us to understand that transnational or international interventions, in order to be successful, had always to take into consideration the national and its complexity.

[62] T Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 25.

-CH. II-

THE ITALIAN DOMESTIC STRUCTURE.

"Transnationalism" and "Cultural Diplomacy" have become indispensable notions to the understanding of the complexity of the Cold War, allowing scholars to go beyond bilateral relations and investigate the interactions between state and non-state actors. Similarly to what happened in other European countries within the American sphere of influence, US-Italian relations fit within the transnational framework of the bipolar conflict. In Italy too, culture, as an instrument of statecraft, was deployed for the establishment of an environment in which the Capitalist system could flourish and anti-Communism could become a new form of collective identity extending beyond the boundaries of the nation.

However, it was within these national boundaries that US soft power interventions took place. Therefore, since these operations did not occur in a political, social and cultural vacuum, the American psychological efforts would have to adapt to the structure of the targeted country. For this reason, attention will be addressed towards the definition of the Italian domestic structure. By domestic structure I refer to the institutions of policy networks that link the state with other societal actors, state-society relations, and the values and norms embedded in the political culture of the selected country[63]. To look at the nation-state and its domestic structure is therefore

[63] T Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 187.

indispensable, as is an examination of the leading elite's attempts to rebuild Italian institutions and networks in the post-fascist era.

The starting point for understanding the US-Italian political and cultural relationship is not American foreign policy or the "trans-Atlantic" dimension of the Cold War; it is instead the national context and the negotiations of power within Italy. Despite the fact that transnational and international actors would eventually step in to take part in the Italian Reconstruction at the beginning of the global conflict, since the Armistice declaration in September 1943, a contest of power within the state had been already taking place.

Since the legitimacy of the old system was destroyed, Italy needed a new political structure that could facilitate the transition to democracy from its authoritarian past. Instead of focusing on international policy, post-war political leaders initially gave priority to domestic policy, concentrating on the rehabilitation of the country and its institutional renewal. Italy had to be recognized as a modern and democratic nation-state. Initially, the priority seemed to be stability through democracy. The domestic concerns took precedence with the reconstruction of the political establishment. While economic reconstruction, with US involvement, would follow, this politics-first approach meant Washington was not a central player in the negotiations.

Party leaders set the accomplishment of three important issues as basic preconditions for democratization: the legitimacy of the new political system constructed around the notion of anti-Fascism, the institutional form of the state and the republican question, and the drafting of a new Constitution. Despite representing fundamental aspects of the political history of the country, they could not alone symbolize Italian

democratization. One major obstacle on the way to political stability had to be solved first: fragile Italian state-society relations. As the political history of the country reveals, Italians have always distrusted governments, making their identification with the State almost impossible[64]. In order to decrease Italians' animosity towards the institutions, the tradition of political culture needed to be reshaped. To facilitate people's identification with the State, Italians had first to recognize themselves as part of the nation; their almost non-existent sense of a solid national identity had historically proved to be a hindrance to the process of political development. In post-war Italy, Anti-Fascism was widely perceived as the only viable solution for unifying the nation and for moving forward with the political and ideological rehabilitation of the country.

But because anti-fascism was neither a cohesive nor a monolithic ideology[65], political leaders produced a distorted narrative of it, depicting the majority of Italians as Anti-Fascists jointly fighting the external-internal enemy. Based on this myth, they established a new political system built on a coalition of all democratic parties: Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (National Liberation Committee- CLN). However, due to the fragility of anti-fascism as a unifying force and ideological divisions within the political establishment, political unity failed to be upheld, as did the consolidation of democracy. The problem was that the coalition was never the powerful executive actor in Italian post-war negotiations. Instead, the individual political parties, namely the Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democracy- DC) and the Partito Comunista

[64] See: G A Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture, Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).
[65] See: C Pavone, "Il Movimento Di Liberazione e Le Tre Guerre," in *Conoscere La Resistenza*, ed. M Begozzi et al. (Milano: Unicopli, 1994), 11–17.

Italiano (Italian Communist Party-PCI), that emerged from the war years ended up representing the driving forces capable of mobilizing the population. Despite representing the new Italy, however, these political parties operated within the old framework of Italian policy. The contest for power and the construction of political consent took place within the tradition of Italian political culture, and Italy remained the same divided country, characterised by a wide gap between the ruling elite and the masses.

The time frame examined in this chapter mainly covers the period from the end of the Second World War to the 1947 communist exclusion from the cabinet, definitely dismissing the resistance legacy, with the establishment of a centrist DC-led political formula that would dominate Italian politics for almost five decades. Italy moved from being a totalitarian regime to a *partitocrazia* (partitocratic regime) in which political parties ended up being the central actors exerting strong control over the government and society. Italy, eventually, became a country dominated by political parties. With the beginning of the bipolar conflict the DC obtained enormous "authoritarian" power due to the lack of a possible alternative from the opposition. This system would eventually collapse with the end of the Cold War, revealing the fluid nexus between national and international dynamics.

The Political Reconstruction of the Country.

In the early post-war period, political leaders were neither expecting Italy to regain its lost status as a Great Power nor attempting to essentially build the country's foreign

relations; they preferred instead to focus on domestic policy, concentrating on the reconstruction of the country and its institutional renewal. Because of its ambiguous role during WWII, Italy needed to be rehabilitated as a democratic country, not only to the international community but also in the eyes of its own people. While economic recovery and social reforms were initially moved to the background, political leaders worked to ensure the political development of the country. As the Socialist leader Pietro Nenni famously put it, what Italy needed in the aftermath of the conflict was "*politique d'abord*", politics above all.

The political elite was aware that the successful transition of the country from an authoritarian regime to a modern nation-state rested on the precondition of establishing a solid and democratic political system that could manage political and economic issues and prevent social instabilities. As a consequence of the fall of the Fascist regime and King Vittorio Emanuele III's escape to Brindisi, Italians had to confront both a political crisis and an institutional vacuum. The legitimacy of the old political establishment was gone, and Italy was left to face a lack of functioning political and administrative bodies. With Mussolini's fall from power on July 25, 1943, the structure of the state, based on the one-party system, crumbled[66].

Unlike in Germany, where the Allies played a major role in the "democratic retraining" of the country due to its central place in Cold War policy, Italian reconstruction and rehabilitation was not at the top of the US foreign policy agenda. Washington chose not to get involved in Italian affairs, and the process of democratization was taken over by local political forces. The partial removal of the Italian case from US concerns and

[66] M Ascoli, "Political Reconstruction in Italy," *The Journal of Politics* 8, no. 3 (1946): 319.

post-war plans was not solely due to geopolitical reasons; the post-war status of the country further complicated the picture.

Despite being a defeated country, Italy was not as defeated as its former ally Germany. As a result of the Armistice declaration of September 1943 and Italians' active role in fighting the internal enemy and the foreign invaders, Italy was neither an enemy nor an ally. To overcome this impasse, the local elite was given substantial autonomy in the political reconstruction of the country, while American officials on the ground offered generic advice and suggestions to the emerging political forces. During the final phase of the war, talks about how to plan a political reconstruction of the country began. The only requirement everyone agreed upon was the establishment of a new, legitimised government of an anti-Fascist nature. Anti-Fascism became a practical step toward a "new" political structure, the only condition for each party's inclusion in the government and the legitimising factor for participation in the political reconstruction of the country.

The Italian post-war political leaders, who derived their political legitimacy from their connection with the Resistance movement, strongly believed that the fundamental preconditions for a democratization of the country rested on the achievement of three major goals: the legitimacy of a new political system, the institutional form of the state, and the drafting of a new Constitution. The main problem with these newly post-war political forces was that they were too weak and inexperienced with the principles of statecraft. Most of their leaders had spent several years in exile or in prison due to their opposition to the regime. Lacking expertise and operating within a weak institutional structure, all political factions had no other alternative than to establish a government

of national unity that had anti-Fascism as its ideological foundation. Furthermore, no single party was willing to face the uncertainties of the peace treaty settlements on an individual basis. The fate of Italy and the consequences of its actions were not yet decided, and sharing responsibility seemed the only option for the emerging political parties. The collaboration was based on three preconditions: a government of national unity, the guarantee of the formation of a Constituent Assembly following the end of hostilities, and a united front against the Germans and the Fascists[67].

The symbol of the political renewal was the CLN (the National Liberation Committee), a multi-party organization that, from the liberation of Rome on 4 June 1944 to the formation of the Constituent Assembly in June 1946, worked to coordinate military and political actions in Italy. Temporarily, it served as the main Italian political body, with parties enjoying great influence and authority. Within the CLN were members of all the major anti-Fascist parties, namely the Italian Communist Party (PCI), Christian Democracy (DC), Italian Liberal Party (PLI), Action Party (PdA), Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP), and Labour Democratic Party (DL). Because of the impossibility of demonstrating each party's political weight due to the non-elected nature of the government, all six parties apparently shared equal influence and equal responsibilities of power within the Committee.

From a moral point of view, the CLN represented a clear break with the past and Italians' intentions to set aside political differences for the common good. Political leaders accepted the need to compromise and negotiate with each other (and with other non-governmental actors). Self-interest, opposing ideologies and agendas were

[67] P Togliatti and D Sassoon, *On Gramsci, and Other Writings* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1980), 15.

apparently set aside. This coalition was largely portrayed as the symbol of a new beginning for the country and the chance for Italy to finally lay the basis for its democratization. At least on the surface, it provided an organizational and ideological consensus as well as an area for cooperation and communication.

In regards to the institutional form of the state, on July 2, 1946, a popular referendum was held and Italy became a Republic. The abolition of the Monarchy symbolically represented the death of Fascist Italy. The House of Savoy had been largely blamed for the advent of the regime, the war and, eventually, the defeat. The figure of the King had been irremediably compromised, and as long as Vittorio Emanuele III remained head of the State, as Benedetto Croce put it, Fascism would continue to "corrode" and "weaken" the country[68]. On the same day as the referendum, a Constituent Assembly was also elected by universal suffrage, charged with drafting the Constitution that would be enforced on January 1, 1948. The new Constitution, which was the only legal text approved by all political parties, was largely acclaimed as the product of a new anti-Fascist national identity. From a superficial perspective, the country was finally becoming a democracy.

Despite representing pivotal events in Italian political history, these three achievements alone were not enough to finalise the Italian transition to democracy. Their symbolism, however, gave the country the semblance of a modern nation-state. In the attempt to move from mere symbolism to factual achievement, a major obstacle to political evolution had to be removed: the weak state-society relationship. Even though the anti-Fascist factor gave political parties the legitimacy needed to enter the

[68] N Kogan, *Italy and the Allies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 50.Kogan, 50.

political establishment, maintaining this legitimacy required a more complex and long-term strategy. Italian political culture had to be recreated and people's beliefs and behaviours reshaped.

Transition towards Democracy and the Challenge of the State-Society Relation.

Since democratic governance and political development entail some degree of expanded popular participation and political and civic engagement, the state cannot act in isolation, but requires politically conscious citizens to legitimize it.[69] As has been largely proved, throughout history, political participation in Italy had always been very low due to a general feeling of distrust towards governments, which were considered heavily corrupted and largely disinterested in the community[70]. The so-called *transformismo* (party-switching) and the trading of votes and loyalties within the government in return for favors, the use of repressive force to control social and political unrest, and a lack of popular legitimacy were seen as deviations of the liberal state from its democratic path. Not surprisingly, these practices alienated part of the population and gradually led to a deterioration of state-society relations[71].

[69] L W Pye, "The Concept of Political Development," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 358 (1965): 9,.
[70] See: R Bellamy, *Modern Italian Social Theory: Ideology and Politics from Pareto to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987) and G A Almond and S Verba, *The Civic Culture, Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).
[71] N Carter, "Rethinking the Italian Liberal State," *Bulletin of Italian Politics* 3, no. 2 (2011): 226.

The leading elites had long discouraged, if not opposed, popular participation in the decision-making process, considering the masses unfit for the tasks of government, which had always been undertaken only by specialized elites. After the Unification (1861), only wealthy educated men, a small minority of Italians, had the right to vote. In the first general elections held in the Kingdom of Italy, only 1.9% of the population was allowed to vote, and of those with the right just 57.2% exercised it in the elections[72]. (Only in 1912 suffrage would be granted to all men, while women would have to wait until 1946).

The alienation towards the political system was not simply the result of a general political apathy but was also the direct consequence of past experiences that had generated feelings of hostility, disillusion and a sense of powerlessness among the population. Centuries of external tyranny before the unification of the Kingdom, under which Italians had neither political nor effective legal rights, had eventually lessened popular reliance on governments[73]. Among the masses, there was a tendency to consider political participation and mobilization highly ineffective. Italians hardly believed their actions could either have an impact on the decision-making process or spur political and social changes[74]. This sense of powerlessness had estranged them from policy, leading them to consider the government "not as a social institution amenable to their influence, but as a natural force – often catastrophic, like an earthquake – to be endured"[75]. By recognizing that this anomaly represented a basic

[72] Bellamy, *Modern Italian Social Theory: Ideology and Politics from Pareto to the Present*, 4.
[73] G A Almond and S Verba, *The Civic Culture, Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 228.
[74] Bellamy, *Modern Italian Social Theory: Ideology and Politics from Pareto to the Present*.
[75] Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture,* 228.

impediment to the consolidation of democracy in the country, post-war political leaders sought to radically reduce Italians' distrust of the state.

However, building "civic" trust and confidence in post-dictatorial contexts is not an immediate process, but instead requires a long and complex series of negotiations and mediations between the ruling elites and society[76]. The question of state-society relations is interwoven with another important aspect: the construction of a national identity. As Lucian Pye demonstrated, the absence of a well-defined sense of nationhood could represent an obstacle to the process of change and reconstruction, increasing tensions and frustrations among the elites and widening the gap between the governors and the governed[77]. The role of identity represents a crucial factor for state legitimacy, "because a legitimate political order is usually built around a cohesive group and uses institutions that are a reflection of that group's historical evolution"[78]. For an overall improvement of state-society relations, the absence of an Italian national identity had therefore to be addressed once and for all. By recognizing themselves as part of the nation, Italians could eventually identify with the state. If this issue were not solved, the Reconstruction of the country would remain unaccomplished.

Despite the reunification of Italy at the end of the war, the notion of unity was more a myth than reality. Italy had never been a united or a truly democratic state. Instead, it had always been a disjointed country in which socio-political, territorial, economic and cultural subgroup identities co-existed and clashed. Since 1861, the leading elites had

[76] B Pouligny, "State-Society Relations and Intangible Dimensions of State Resilience and State Building: A Bottom-Up Perspective," *European Report on Development* (Florence, 2010).
[77] See L W Pye, *Politics, Personality, and Nation Building. Burma's Search for Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).
[78] S Kaplan, "Identity in Fragile States: Social Cohesion and State Building," *Development* 52, no. 4 (2009): 468.

had to face a deeply divided reality. Cultural and economic disparities had been widening the gap both between an educated class and the illiterate masses and between the developing northern regions and the underdeveloped South. Furthermore, the presence of countless regional dialects, some of which barely resembled the official language, produced even further divisions. Italians felt more attached to the ideas of local community, family and clan rather than to the idea of a Nation[79]. This division inevitably complicated the path towards social and political unity, as well as the formation of a collective community.

The expression *Fatta l'Italia, bisogna fare gli italiani* (Having made Italy, we must make Italians) had discursively shaped political discourses since the mid-nineteenth century. Since the formation of the Kingdom of Italy, there had never been a real and solid unity, mainly due to Italians' disaffection with the idea of the nation, and a nation that many felt had been imposed upon them by a minority. This lack of *italianità* resulted from the fact that the unification of the country had not been achieved through a mass revolution. It was instead a failed, "passive revolution", according to Gramsci, orchestrated by elites, form which the majority of the population had been excluded.[80]

Worried about anti-system feelings, Liberal governments refused to enlarge the spaces for political participation and to educate the masses, preferring to keep Italians as passive subjects rather than politically active citizens. Their unwillingness to involve the majority of the population in the decision-making process led to the upsurge of

[79] See: E C Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, Free Press Paperback (Free Press, 1958).
[80] Quoted in N Carter, "Rethinking the Italian Liberal State," *Bulletin of Italian Politics* 3, no. 2 (2011): 226–227.

hostile feelings towards the Liberal state and, eventually, the collapse of the political system and the rise of Fascism.

In response to the failure of the political system and the widespread popular discontent, the Fascist regime advocated mass participation and mobilization through its populist rhetoric. Creating an organic community that could identify with the totalitarian state became a fundamental aspect of the new ideology. Only through a process of nationalization of the masses, Mussolini believed, could the identification with the State be achieved. The regime sought to instil among Italians a sense of belonging and loyalty built around the notion of "homeland" and imperial grandeur. More than a geographical space, the "nation" ended up representing an ideological and symbolic construction[81].

If through nationalism the regime sought to unify Italians around the State, political and economic interests allowed factionalism to be tolerated in order to gain political consensus and support among major interest groups, such as the Church, big industry, the army, and the agrarian elite[82]. Like other European Fascisms, Mussolini was forced to compromise with the traditional elite that made his access to power possible[83]. Despite its populist rhetoric, the regime's approach to politics became more and more elitist, choosing to preserve the interests of a few rather than the common good, eventually failing to create an overarching national identity.

[81] R Ben-Ghiat, "Language and the Construction of National Identity in Fascist Italy," *The European Legacy* 2, no. 3 (1997): 438.
[82] Idem, 439.
[83] R Griffin and M Feldman, eds., *Fascisme: Critical Concepts in Political Science Vol. I* (London: Routledge, 2004): 316.

Since 1941, popular support for the war and to the regime had been drastically declining in Italy. In 1943 Mussolini, was ousted and arrested by order of Vittorio Emanuele III, and a civil war broke out. The entire peninsula was divided and occupied by two foreign powers. This dual occupation once again compromised the fragile sense of national belonging. Italians were left to choose to which of the factions they would be loyal. Some Italians decided to collaborate with the German occupiers; others chose to resist and fight the Nazis; others opted to isolate themselves while passively waiting for their fate to be sealed. The Armistice declaration, the collapse of the regime and King Vittorio Emanuele III's escape to Brindisi reinforced the impression that "the death of the country" was taking place[84].

As a consequence of WWII, nationalism ended up being a synonym of defeat and a reminder of the failure of the regime that had led Italy into war and catastrophe. The tragedy of the conflict and the collapse of the regime forced subsequent governments to distance themselves from this ideology, but if nationalism was no more an option, it had to be replaced by another unifying narrative. Anti-Fascism, largely perceived as the only legitimising ideology for a renewal of the country, was initially considered as a viable solution for unifying the nation and for confronting the problem of the political and ideological rehabilitation of the country.

[84]See: E G Loggia, *La morte della patria. La crisi dell'idea di nazione tra Resistenza, antifascismo e Repubblica*, (Bari: Laterza, 2003).

Anti-Fascism and the Politics of Memory.

When, in April 1945, the war was finally over in the peninsula, Italians had to face the excruciating reality of a country that had experienced the tragedy of twenty years of Fascism, a violent civil war and a world war. The immediate economic, political and social situation appeared disastrous. There was chaos everywhere. The material and moral devastation was great. Inflation was high; the cost of living skyrocketed; millions of people, who lived beneath the minimum level of subsistence, were now pressing the government, sometimes violently, to take some actions to ameliorate their conditions. Despite the dramatic times, feelings of living an extraordinary moment were widespread, especially in the North, where the Resistance movement was stronger.

Besides representing a fight against external and internal enemies, the Liberation carried within itself a new wave of hope. Among the maximalist and more intransigent factions of the Resistance movement, the Liberation was experienced as the initial phase of a national process to radically transform the country and its political, social and economic framework. It brought forth great expectations for a political and social revolution able to sweep away the old system. By being a popular movement, it offered Italians the chance to make up for the failed revolution of the *Risorgimento*. Leading forces within the movement strategically drew a parallel between the anti-fascist fight and the unification of the kingdom. There was a re-appropriation of many symbols and icons of the Risorgimento. While the Liberal Socialists of *Giustizia e Libertà* named their political organization, formed in 1942, Partito D'Azione (Action Party), just like Mazzini's party, during the Resistance fight the Communists named their units *Brigate*

Garibaldi (Garibaldi Brigades)[85]. This symbolic use of the Risorgimento became a powerful asset for representing opposition to the Fascist regime as Italians' second chance to bring forth their own revolution. By denouncing the *Risorgimento* as a "betrayed and unaccomplished" historical event that eventually opened the door to Fascism, radical forces within the movement saw themselves as the legitimate actor to complete the Italian revolution.[86]

Political forces within Italy realised that the Resistance movement had the potential to unify the country while offering a cohesive form of identity Italians could identify with. Even more so, their legitimacy was strictly connected to their active participation in the fight against the internal enemy. Anti-Fascism was not, however, a monolithic ideology. Besides being a war against Fascism, the Resistance was also a civil war. As Claudio Pavone demonstrates, during the Liberation, Italians were not simply fighting the intruders; Italians were also fighting Italians[87]. Besides violently confronting the supposed supporters of the Nazis or Fascists, the more radical faction of the movement stood against the entire Italian system and the bourgeois symbols of a capitalist reality. Landowners, professionals, entrepreneurs and clerics, as well as ordinary people, became the targets of a violent uprising[88]. This perspective, however, was seen as detrimental to the idea of national unity the leading class was hoping to build.

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[85] R Forlenza and B Thomassen, "From Myth to Reality and Back Again : The Fascist and Post-Fascist Reading of Garibaldi and the Risorgimento," *Bulletin of Italian Politics* 3, no. 2 (2011): 265.

[86] P Buchignani, "Il Mito Del 'Risorgimento Tradito' Nella Cultura Post- Unitaria e Novecentesca," in *Quale Risorgimento? Interpretazioni a Confronto Tra Fascismo, Resistenza e Nascita Della Repubblica*, ed. C Calabro and M Lenci (Pisa: ETS, 2013), 42.

[87] See: Pavone, "Il Movimento Di Liberazione e Le Tre Guerre."

[88] M Storchi, "Post-War Violence in Italy: A Struggle for Memory," *Modern Italy* 12, no. 2 (July 2, 2007):239.

The political elite deemed necessary the production of a national culture that could support the political system. Therefore, they chose to build a memory that could be collectively accepted by the population[89]. Like Mussolini had done with Fascism before them, they produced a subjective "representation or construction of reality"[90], and the mythical narrative of anti-Fascism produced by the elite eventually became the new "civic religion" of the country.

According to Roland Barthes' theoretical conception, "*Myth hides nothing*: its function is to distort, not to make disappear […] The relation which unites the concept of the myth to its meaning is essentially a relation of *deformation* […] in myth the meaning is distorted by the concept."[91] Therefore, in order to unite the country around this ideology, recent Italian history needed to be revised. Undoubtedly, the Italy who joined WWII in 1940 concluded its wartime experience as an Axis Power as a defeated country. However, the period running from September 1943 to April 1945 made this clear picture far more complicated. Despite the different narratives constructed around the role Italians played before and during the Liberation fight, in the aftermath of the war one became predominant. It hinged upon the interpretation of the Resistance as a patriotic fight against the invader and depicted the majority of Italians as anti-Fascists that jointly fought this national war to free the country.

By choosing to adopt this narrative construction, cultural and political elites rejected the idea that the Resistance was also a civil war. This collective "amnesia" was part of a tendency to strategically select a "usable" past useful for gaining political legitimacy

[89] R Forlenza and B Thomassen, "From Myth to Reality and Back Again": 265.
[90] J R Gillis, *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton Paperbacks (Princeton University Press, 1996), 3.
[91] R Barthes and S Sontag, *A Barthes Reader*, Vintage Classics (Vintage, 1993), 107–108.

and for creating the illusion of a "new" country while removing the sense of guilt Italians suffered. The *Duce* became the only one to be blamed for the war; Italians were instead portrayed as victims of this totalitarian regime, to be eventually glorified by their active role in defeating the internal enemy[92]. The *ventennio* ended up being defined as a mere "parenthesis" in Italian history. As Benedetto Croce famously put it, Fascism represented a deviation from the liberal state that had nothing to do with the historical past of the country. It was a moral illness that had to be cured, but, as a parenthesis, it should not have been taken as an embedded aspect of the Italian culture. From this perspective, the belief that Fascism might have been a mass phenomenon became taboo.

Eventually, anti-Fascism was reduced to a mere contingent phenomenon with defeat of the enemy as its manifest objective. Indeed, once it had been defeated, the urge to deal with the debris of Fascism dissipated. When Mussolini was executed on 28 April, 1945, and his corpse, together with those of his mistress Clara Petacci's and other infamous fascists, was strung up by the feet in Piazzale Loreto in Milan[93], the unifying factor begun to recede.

The narrative of the Resistance as proposed by the elite, however, clashed with the interpretation other Italians provided for it. Anti-Fascism was neither a cohesive nor a monolithic ideology. As Roy Domenico demonstrates, it meant different things to

[92] C Karner and B Mertens, *The Use and Abuse of Memory: Interpreting World War II in Contemporary European Politics* (Transaction Publishers, 2013): 139.
[93] The choice of the place was symbolic. It was the place where fascists had previously left the bodies of a group of partisans shot in a reprisal.

different people[94]. If defeating the enemy was the common denominator among all political and social factions, disagreements on what the enemy represented and what to do after its defeat became a source of tension, especially outside the political establishment. The more progressive forces of the Resistance movement perceived anti-Fascism as the initial phase of a broader plan to create a more equal and just society and to deal with longstanding unresolved issues, such as economic inequalities, social disparities, geographical divisions and so on. Only by abolishing the Monarchy and establishing a Republic could Italy begin its transition towards democracy. Furthermore, by blaming the upper classes for supporting the establishment of the totalitarian regime, this faction emphasised the importance of moving away from a bourgeois society. This could be achieved by fostering the advancement of the working class and the promotion of radical reforms.

At the other side of the spectrum was a more conservative interpretation of the period, shaped by a fear of radical changes and the protection of private interests. According to moderate forces, "the capacity to contain drastic fractures with the old order" [95] represented a non-negotiable element of the transition to democracy. Stability and order were the keys. In particular, the invocation for a restoration of order exponentially increased with the intensification of requests for radical reforms that would not leave the largest interests untouched. For instance, when in 1945 Italian Prime Minister Ferruccio Parri proposed a plan to punish those who had derived profits from the Fascist regime, he faced fierce opposition within the parliament and,

[94]See: R Domenico,"The Many Meanings of Anti-Fascism," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 4, no. 1 (March 1999): 54–59; C Pavone, *Una Guerra Civile. Saggio storico sulla moralita' della Resistenza*, (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991).

[95] Pero, "Containing Containment: Rethinking Italy's Experience during the Cold War," 608.

eventually, was forced to resign. Since big Italian businesses were potentially more vulnerable for having largely benefitted from Fascist economic policy, conservative parties saw in this plan a threat to the economic structure of society and denounced it as a radical attempt to purge the Italian ruling class and a direct attack on property rights[96].

There was also a moral and religious dimension to the Liberation. In particular, Catholic activists perceived reconstruction as a mission for a moral and spiritual rebirth of the country and of the whole of Christian civilization. This interpretation clashed with the anti-clerical dimension of the Marxist perception of the Resistance and the possibility of establishing a socialist society. Liberals, instead, opposed any break with the past advocating a return to pre-1922 Italy, a possibility strongly opposed by the Left, which considered the failure of the liberal state as the main cause of Fascism.

If the Resistance fight made clear that Italy did not stand for Fascism, what it did stand for remained unclear and controversial. Instead of addressing these questions, political parties played up the idea of national unity, using the anti-Fascist rhetorical construction as a moral framework. This, however, could only bring a partial victory to the country because it would not obliterate Fascism in its ideological and political fundamentals. The CLN, the Republic, the Constituent Assembly and eventually the new Constitution became mere symbolic expedients to uphold the façade of an achieved democratization and defascistization of the country, even when anti-Fascism would drastically abate and anti-Communism would replace it.

[96] N Kogan, *Italy and the Allies. Norman Kogan* (Harvard University Press, 1956), 123.

The elite distortion of reality for political aims deprived anti-Fascism of its substantive content; it became an empty shell, an instrumental expedient for gaining political legitimacy. The result was that Italian democracy remained a "simple procedural norm" and never a "historical conquest"[97]. Even though the leading elite tried to establish their interpretation of anti-Fascism as the basis of Italian national identity, social upheavals and uncontrollable emotions could not simply vanish with the establishment of an anti-Fascist political government.[98] The unsolved issues that had allowed the totalitarian ideology to emerge and the regime to be established continued to threaten the stability of the country.

By being deprived of its inner meaning, the distorted notion of anti-Fascism could not represent an ideology around which a national identity could be created. The leading elite chose not to negotiate the construction of a national identity with the rest of society. They produced their own narrative, making of it a powerful "foundational mythology"[99] that could be used as an instrumental expedient to gain and maintain power and legitimacy; however, a national identity cannot be "solely promoted by a ruling elite, but must instead be continually renegotiated between the government and the people."[100]

[97] E Traverso, "Intellectuals and Anti-Fascism: For a Critical Historization," *New Politics* IX, no. 4 (2004).
[98] A testimony reported in: G Oliva, *La Resa Dei Conti: Aprile-Maggio 1945 : Foibe, Piazzale Loreto E Giustizia Partigiana*, Le Scie (Mondadori, 1999), 71.
[99] S Kattago, *Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity* (Praeger, 2001), 82.
[100] S Ortmann, "Singapore: The Politics of Inventing National Identity," *Journal Of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 28, no. 4 (2009): 26.

Consensus Building and the Demise of Anti-Fascism.

While the narrative of post-war reconstruction remained built around the central notion of anti-Fascism at its mythological foundation, the Italian political elite was gradually and strategically moving away from it. This was due to a series of practical considerations that shifted political leaders' priorities from improving state-society relations to single parties' attempts to enlarge their electoral support bases. With the sole probable exception of the Action Party, which insisted on transforming the CLN from "a pure and simple coalition of parties" [101] into a permanent institution, the other parties rejected this proposal, realizing the advantages of increasing their political strength through elections. The Communists and the Socialists, despite insisting on slogans such as 'tutto il potere ai CLN' (all power to the CLN) and publicly supporting the CLN, were not willing to subordinate their own political line to it.[102] As Togliatti repeatedly claimed, once the liberation of the country was achieved, the CLN should be reduced to an auxiliary organ of the central government. Alcide De Gasperi, the leader of the Christian Democracy party, defined the CLN as a "contingent phenomenon" generated by the necessity to defeat a common enemy, soon to be replaced by new political solidarities.[103] Once these parties obtained the legitimacy to

[101] A Gambino, *Storia Del Dopoguerra: Dalla Liberazione Al Potere Dc*, Storia E Societá (Editori Laterza, 1975), 22.
[102] C Pavone, "The Continuity of the State and the Legacy of Fascism," in *After the War. Violence, Justice, Continuity and Renewal in Italian Society*, ed. J Dunnage (Leics: Troubador, 1999), 15.
[103] F Barbagallo, *Storia Dell'Italia Repubblicana. La Costruzione Della Democrazia. Dalla Caduta Del Fascismo Agli Anni Cinquanta* (Torino: Einaudi, 1994), 22.

participate to the political reconstruction of the country, they would move away from the CLN.

The CLN experiment formally ended in June 1946, and a government of national unity under the leadership of the DC was formed, including both the PCI and the PSI. Even though the political cooperation would last until May 1947, when left-wing parties would be ousted from the cabinet, the fragility of the anti-Fascist coalition had already begun to emerge. The choice of Alcide De Gasperi as Prime Minister in December 1945 clearly represented the first sign of a gradual demise of anti-Fascism as a unifying ideology and the tilt of the political balance to the conservative right. Political historians have pinpointed this precise event as the starting point of a "back to normalcy era"[104], an era in which the government chose to undertake moderate measures of political and economic recovery meant to restore order and to promote stability[105]. As Giuseppe Dossetti, one of the left-wing Christian Democrats, observed: "in just a few short months, the propulsion toward reform was contained. And in a few years, progressively compressed up to the point of being practically wiped out […]."[106]

The failure to get rid of the old administrative fascist apparatus or to efficiently intervene on economic matters weakened the feeling that there had been a break with the past and fostered a class struggle that would escalate in 1947. While Fascism had been defeated in its manifest form, the possibility of another form of fascism returning had not. This would have required the political parties to address and solve all those

[104] M Ascoli, "Political Reconstruction in Italy," *The Journal of Politics* 8, no. 3 (August 1, 1946): 325.
[105] A Gambino, *Storia Del Dopoguerra: Dalla Liberazione Al Potere Dc*, Storia e Societá (Editori Laterza, 1975), 31.
[106] N Kogan, *A Political History of Italy: The Postwar Years* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1983), 28.

issues that had made the advent of the regime possible. Despite their rhetoric, Italian politicians were more concerned with creating and maintaining their own hegemony rather than in solving Italians' basic problems. As Duggan claims, "[…]With so much of the past carried over into the Republic, it was difficult for Italy's post-war rulers to fashion a fresh and convincing vision of national identity that would in the years to come help keep the country on a sound political footing."[107] The new democratic symbols remained evasions or diversions from the main issues, and political legitimacy became more important than the effectiveness of the political system.

While people in the piazzas were urging for a transformation of the social system, political leaders more concerned with smooth progress towards recovery and reconstruction soon became conservative. As James Martin reported in citing Stephen Gundle, "although Anti-Fascism served as a set of general ideals against which the mass parties of the First Republic might, in its early years, mobilize their constituencies, the Resistance failed to form into a 'civil religion' or hegemonic worldview." [108] As Ferruccio Parri said, the path to democracy remained unfinished due to "a political class that poured words into their inability to act, quickly and properly, as the country's interest demanded."[109] Political leaders exploited, distorted, and finally rejected this ideology in the attempt to satisfy specific interests and gain a large popular electoral base. Eventually, they made "anti-Fascism fit their own

[107] C Duggan, "Italy in the Cold War Years and the Legacy of Fascism," in *Italy in the Cold War: Politics, Culture and Society 1948-1958*, ed. Christopher Duggan and Christopher Wagstaff (Oxford: Berg, 1995), 24.
[108] James Martin, "Ideology and Antagonism in Modern Italy: Poststructuralist Reflections," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (June 2005): 157.
[109] Mola, A Preface in L Mercuri, *L'epurazione in Italia, 1943-1948*, L'Altra Storia (L'Arciere, 1988), 5–6.

agendas"[110] and not the other way round. Once legitimacy was obtained, these parties would gradually move away from this principle.

The Illusion of the "Ethical" and the Political Establishment.

Tensions and ideological clashes within the coalition began to reveal the fragile equilibrium within the political system. These six parties had little in common with each other, having their own tactical and strategic needs as well as different, if not opposing, ideas and values. Due to the ways in which the coalition was conceived and the process of transition towards democracy planned, political unity failed to be upheld.

For a series of practical reasons and considerations, political leaders' desires shifted from cooperation to single parties' attempts to enlarge their electoral consensuses. The CLN symbol of political unity and renewal of the country ended up being as illusory as the ideological foundation on which it had been created. Out of the array of post-war organizations, only two political parties would dominate the post-war political arena: the DC and the PCI. The so-called moderate parties, such as the republicans (PRI) and the liberals (PLI), were not in positions of power in the aftermath of the war. The Liberal Party, which represented the political failure of pre-Fascist Italy for many Italians, was largely perceived as an elite body mainly composed of highbrow intellectuals and was largely blamed for the advent of Fascism. Similarly, the Action Party, which had gathered together liberal democrats, radicals and socialists and

[110] Domenico, "The Many Meanings of Anti-Fascism" 55.

played a central role in the Liberation process, began to disaggregate due to internal disagreements and the lack of a large popular body of support.

The DC was the successor of the Italian People's Party, a party founded in 1919 by the priest Luigi Sturzo, declared illegal by the Fascist regime a few years later. Rejecting the idea of class struggle, the DC became a "catch-all party" advocating the political unity of all Catholics, both rightists and leftists. It became the main recipient of anti-Socialist and anti-Communist votes. The other mass party was the PCI. Because of its active role during the Liberation, this party was transformed from a marginal political actor into a massive party of nearly two million members. Due to the absence of a real alternative coming from the Left, it ended up representing the only radical party within the political system that could represent the great expectations of the Resistance fight.

Despite their opposing political agendas, the DC and the PCI had something in common. The constant quest for legitimacy led the two mass parties to engage in a policy of *doppiezza* (duplicity), embracing more moderate rhetoric within the government, and a more radical or intransigent one outside the parliament. Their political predominance and electoral support were impressive, especially in a society in which isolation and alienation from political life and distrust of institutions were deep-rooted traits of the political culture.

These two parties stepped in and took over the legacy of the Fascist regime in seeing the party as the major political actor and referent of an entire society. Both the PCI and the DC represented what Gaetano Mosca defined as "quasi-religions stripped of the divine element".

> "All religions, even those that deny the supernatural, have their special declamatory style, and their sermons, lectures, and speeches are delivered in it. All of them have their rituals and their displays of pomp to strike the fancy. Some parade with lighted candles and chant litanies. Others march behind red banners to the tune of the "Marseillaise" or the "International" [...] In our day sects and political parties are highly skilled at creating the superman, the legendary hero, the "man of unquestioned honesty," who serves, in his turn, to maintain the luster of the gang and brings in wealth and power for the sly ones to use."[111]

Profoundly saturated by political myths and ideologies, both factions perceived themselves in messianic terms, as expressions of absolute values[112] and as guiding forces capable of morally and politically educating the masses.

Considering political participation and electoral support as total identification with each party's agenda or as recognition of the system is misleading. These parties constructed their hegemony by constantly relying on sub-cultural and material ties more than on consonance with broader political ideas, leading Italians to identify with one group against the other. Their predominance in the Italian political system was also connected to the fact that both parties relied on the two main subcultures that since the late nineteenth century had been dominant within Italian society: Catholicism and Syndicalism. Despite remaining outside the state system, these two ideologies had represented the most important forces of cohesion during the late nineteenth and early

[111] E Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton University Press, 2006), 4.
[112] J Martin, "Ideology and Antagonism in Modern Italy: Poststructuralist Reflections," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (June 2005): 148.

twentieth centuries and remained capable of mobilizing the masses through mass movements and organizations, such as Catholic organizations and trade unions.

Political loyalty to one group against the other was not the consequence of a thorough political analysis or identification with a party's agenda. This sense of belonging had its roots in a phenomenon known as "familism", or "amoral familism"[113]. First introduced by Edward Banfield[114] (1958) in his fieldwork on a southern Italian village (Chiaromonte), this concept emphasises one central element of Italian political and social culture: namely, the tendency to identify with one specific group and to prioritise the interests of one's family over those of one's community. Banfield used it to support his theory of Italians' inability to act together for a common good. The popular loyalty to a specific party had to rest on the so-called *voto di appartenenza* (vote of belonging).[115] Around this religious dimension of political affiliation, each of these two parties built its own mass consensus.

As I will discuss in the next chapter, the two parties' reliance on socialising agencies was extremely important in gaining consensus. The term socialising agency would be used to define those non-political institutions or organizations capable of politically mobilising specific social groups. These were able to mobilize Italian subnational groups through the promotion of ethical values and forms of identity that different social groups could recognise. The DC could rely on the endorsement of the Catholic Church and its organizations, and Vatican support would bring the party credibility

[113] See R D Putnam, R Leonardi, and R Y Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton Paperbacks (Princeton University Press, 1994).
[114] E C Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, Free Press Paperback (Free Press, 1958).
[115] P Edwards, "Alternation? What Alternation? The Second Republic and the Challenge of Democratic Consolidation," *Bulletin of Italian Politics* 3, no. 2 (2011): 322.

and legitimacy as well as a dominant position in Italian politics. As Alessandro Ferrari claims, in a fragmented, divided and isolated reality like Italy, "Catholicism—the religion of most of the population— was the only cement binding the new country together: a country without a common language and without a widespread culture capable of founding civic engagement"[116]. The PCI, instead, had a hegemonic position among the working class and the anti-clerical forces. It would rely on the CGIL (the Italian Confederation of Labourers), ARCI (Recreational and Cultural Italian Association) and other organizations.

By relying on the promotion of ethical values that could be adopted not by the whole of society but by subnational groups, these parties failed to support the creation of a unifying identity. Political parties promoted the construction of collective identities in which groups could recognize themselves as part of a faction opposed to another. Political affiliation, therefore, became the instrument of identification and filled the void left by the absence of a strong national identity. Instead of leading Italians to identify with the state and its institutions, it led the population to identify only with one of these two parties.

Both parties exploited the long-lasting ideological division between Catholics and Marxists by using the same antagonistic rhetoric they had used towards the Fascists. This led to further divisions and the creation of oppositional sub-group identities, making ideological clashes almost inevitable. As Lapalombara claims, in post-war Italy political rhetoric became very intense. Political discourses were:

[116] A Ferrari, "Civil Religion in Italy: A 'Mission Impossible'?," *George Washington International Law Review* 41, no. 4 (2010): 842.

> "[…] full of ideological assertions, sweeping condemnations of political opponents, and other expressions that [suggested] open warfare and irreconcilable conflict. Were one to read only the partisan press and to listen to speeches made in parliament or in the piazzas, one would quickly get the impression that, politically speaking, Italians [were] engaged in a war of all against all."[117]

Delegitimizing the 'other' became instrumental for legitimising the 'self'. The problem is that as these parties legitimised their participation in the political process of reconstruction, they chose not to fully legitimize each other[118]; however, the existence of each party was the legitimizing factor for the existence of the other. The DC "was kept in mostly to keep the Communists out"[119], while the PCI, despite constantly being in opposition after 1947, was legitimized by the presence of the Catholic party as the only radical party that could curb the power of the DC and the Church.

Conclusion.

Despite invoking the renewal of the country, these two parties took over the legacy of Fascism by making political parties the predominant decision-making actors, supplanting the state and conceiving it as instrumental to achieving their moral and

[117] J LaPalombara, *Democracy, Italian Style* (Yale University Press, 1989), 5.
[118] M Argentieri, *Fascismo E Antifascismo Negli Anni Della Repubblica*, Quaderni Di "Problemi Del Socialismo" (F. Angeli, 1986), 16.
[119] J W Muller, "The Paradoxes of Post-War Italian Political Thought," *History of European Ideas* 39, no. 1 (2013): 2.

political objectives[120]. While from 1922 to 1943, the only "legitimate" party was the PNF (National Fascist Party), in the aftermath of its dissolution the Italian political system was instead constructed around these two opposing factions and their leaders. Italy moved from being a totalitarian regime to a *partitocrazia* (partitocratic regime) in which political parties exerted strong control over government and society. Instead of being governed by political parties, Italy became dominated by them[121].

This particular political system was an anomaly that could not be found anywhere else in Europe. While having a form of a democracy, Italy had the essence of an authoritarian state. Nowhere else in Western Europe would a single party, namely Christian Democracy, dominate politics for half of a century, with all coalitions centred on it.[122] Instead of promoting a democratization of the country, this regime would increase political and social tensions, cause a series of governmental crises, destabilise the Italian political system and alienate the Italian electorate even further through exploiting ideologies to antagonize subgroups of society.

[120] G Corica, "Cultura Politica E Anomalia Italiana," *SocietàMutamentoPolitica* 2 (2011): 222.
[121] S Fabbrini, "The Transformation of Italian Democracy," *Bulletin of Italian Politics* 1, no. 1 (2009): 33.
[122] See: J W Muller, "The Paradoxes of Post-War Italian Political Thought," *History of European Ideas* 39, no. 1 (2013): 79–102.

-CH. III-

ITALIAN SUB-NATIONAL NETWORKS.

The Italian post-war political reconstruction was characterized by a series of negotiations and compromises that took place within the political arena. Initially, there was a rhetorical consensus among the elite. As previously demonstrated, leading elites set as their primary objectives the political rehabilitation of the country and the renewal of its institutional structure. Despite the various attempts to create political and social unity, the anti-Fascist government failed in becoming the central force for a democratic rehabilitation of the country due to the destabilizing tensions and factional interests that, in the end, reduced the coalition to a mere symbolic façade of democracy. Under the weight of individual parties' constant attempts to gain predominance among the electorate political unity succumbed and an undemocratic political system known as *partitocrazia* was established. As a result, political parties ended up exerted a vast control over the government and society.

While anti-Fascism allowed post-war political forces to gain legitimacy, the construction of hegemony required leading actors to secure the political and ideological consensus through a process of negotiations that included both dominant and dominated groups. As a consequence of the authoritarian experience of the *Ventennio*, post-war political parties were weakly grounded in civil society and uncertain of the political loyalty of the Italian electorate. Furthermore, the Italian

populace lacked the habits to political participation and identification with the new institutional structure[123].

Considering the weak state-society relation, in order to shape political consciousness these parties could not operate independently, but they had to rely on various non-governmental 'agents' or institutions that were rooted in the Italian society. Dominants groups within society can obtain consent and legitimacy from the masses by spreading specific ideas, values and assumptions through social institutions such as labour unions, the Church, schools and so on. These institutions could play an important role in manufacturing consent and in socialising people into specific norms and beliefs of the dominant social group.[124] Despite being outside the political establishment, these actors held a politically and socially relevant place within Italy and could effectively penetrate into civic society by performing recruiting functions. Among them the Church and labour unions had a unique role in reaching out to the Italian society. Both forces could exert a fundamental pressure on the political establishment trying to use their influence to both enhance their political and economic interest and to convey political participation towards one party against the other.[125]

While negotiating their political and cultural space in the institutional structure, political parties gradually established closer links with these actors and interest groups to build a series of alliances based on conditional premises and factional interests. The constant search for political legitimacy led the two mass parties, the DC and the PCI, to exploit long-term social and political divisions to enlarge their electoral base and

[123]See: G Pridham and P Lewis, *Stabilising Fragile Democracies*, 2003, 6.
[124] A Heywood, *Political Ideas and Concepts: An Introduction* (Macmillan, 1994), 100.
[125]See: G S Becker, "A Theory of Competition Among Pressure Groups for Political Influence".

establish their hegemony. The masses, instead of being involved in the reconstruction of the country, became instrumental to the consolidation of political party legitimacy.

Because the rhetoric of these non-governmental actors was based on an antagonizing stance, especially between Catholic and Communist groups, the political parties' reliance on these networks resulted in an increase of instabilities within the country. Unity, which was the pre-condition of post-war reconstruction, succumbed under the weight of each party's interest in securing their political authority.

This chapter, therefore, focuses on the process of recruitment of the Italian post-war electorate through a strategy of consensus building in which, the Catholic Church, the CGIL and, eventually, the intellectuals played a pivotal role. The alliances between political and non-political actors would eventually create a divided ideological context in which, with the beginning of the Cold War and the future intervention of the US, divisions and instabilities would reach a new level of intensity. Two sub-national collective identities, in constant opposition with each other, would emerge rooted in the Catholic and Marxist tradition of the country.

The Italian Power Structure and the Socializing Agencies.

Based on the complexity of the power structures in modern nations, the attempts to penetrate into civil society and the construction of political hegemony required a long-term, methodical and wide-ranging strategy mediated by cultural, political and religious agencies that could slowly and effectively shape the collective mentality. The

PCI could rely on various institutions such as the confederation of labours (CGIL), *Camere del lavoro* (centres for Italian syndicalist labour unions), *Case Del Popolo*, ARCI (Recreational and Cultural Italian Association) and on the organic intellectuals. Similarly, the DC could count on the Catholic Church and its network of associations that would successfully mobilized thousands of thousands of activists and, eventually, would foster the creation of a united Catholic front beyond different political beliefs. Due to their influence within the Italian society, these non-governmental actors could perform a socializing action and their mediating activities were seen as instrumental to solve the weak state-society relation.

While at the government level the political parties appeared willing to preserve stability by playing down long-lasting ideological tensions between Communist and Catholic forces, the ideological battle was exacerbated by their sub-national networks that functionally inducted individuals into Italian political culture while forming their own political orientations. Despite being non-governmental forces, these agencies performed a political function within society. Through their rhetoric they indirectly conveyed political messages and reshaped Italian political culture.

All these non-governmental actors considered politics not as their final objective but as an instrument to further specific group's interests. Both networks would exert a fundamental pressure on the political establishment and would use their influence to enhance particular interests by conveying political support towards one political party against the other.[126] Without entering the party-political realm, they could influence parties' decisions from the outside through a complex process of negotiations, co-

[126]See: G S Becker, "A Theory of Competition Among Pressure Groups for Political Influence".

optations and mediations. Their goal was not a struggle for political power or direct management of government, but to establish closer links with Italian political actors in order to exert some sort of influence on government policy and legislation as an attempt to gain advantages over other socio-political and economic groups[127]. By relying on these moral and social values they made easier for Italians to identify with these non-governmental groups. Eventually, thanks to their connection with political parties, they could eventually exploit the loyalty of specific sub-groups to obtain political objectives.

These socializing actors mainly operated on a regional and local scale trying to attract part of the population that had been at the margin of the political life. Facilitated by an absent and distant State, these actors gained a dominant position within society eventually becoming a guiding force capable of educating from a moral and political point of view the masses. Furthermore, by relying on accessible means of communication such radio, newspapers and, later on, television, they could reach both educated and uneducated groups. By constructing their own rhetoric on antagonizing discourses, these networks proved successful in persuading other groups to accept their moral, cultural and political values.

Their mobilization resulted in aggravating the ideological divisions affecting Italian stability in the pre-Cold War period. Initially, the ideological clash was essentially engaged outside the government system. The struggle for hegemony took place in the piazzas, factories, radios, journals and newspapers. By getting involved in national politics, however, these socializing actors did not act in name of Italy and its people;

[127] F. Battegazzorre, "I Simboli Politici Della CGIL Dal 1949 Al 1977," *Il Politico* 47, no. 4 (1982): 715–716.

they got involved in support of one sub-group against the other and this had the unfortunate consequence of exasperating the ideological tensions within the country.

The hostility between these two subcultures, however, had a long history and despite the political elite's attempts to defuse it by creating government coalitions based on anti-fascism the potentiality for a clash was always present, especially among the masses.

The Catholic Church and Its Socialising Function.

The fact that in post-war Italy the Catholic Church exerted substantial influence within the country should not be surprising. For centuries, the Holy See had represented a unique point of reference for the entire society, especially in those contexts where institutions were absent and a large number of Italians were excluded from participating to the political life of the nation. In contexts of social marginalization, the Vatican with its networks managed to step in and through a slow and constant process of trust building became a major social interlocutor for large segments of the population. Furthermore, as David Martin observes, after the war "all old symbols of legitimacy were compromised except the Church"[128] that despite its close relations with the Fascist regime still represented a major social actor in the country. Many

[128] R Cipriani, "Religione e Politica. Il Caso Italiano: La Religione Diffusa," *Studi Di Sociologia* 21, no. 3 (1983): 263.

Italians, therefore, saw in the Holy See the spiritual guide for a social and moral renewal of the country.

Despite representing a spiritual force in the aftermath of the conflict the Catholic Church gradually became a political and diplomatic authority. In particular, with the first national election of post-Fascist Italy in June 1946, the Vatican activities became more politicised. The factors that led to a shift from a moral to a socio-political activity were the opposition to Communism and the promotion of Catholic values as a new form of identity for the country.

Between 1945 and 1947 Catholic forces in Italy had a different approach in regard to Communism. While the DC opted for a more pragmatic strategy based on a prudent collaboration with the PCI, the Holy See embraced a total breakage and a head-on confrontation with Communists and fellow travellers. Since the establishment of the CLN, the theme of national political unity played up by all anti-Fascist parties represented a matter of great concern for the Vatican. Within the Church there was a widespread opposition to considering anti-Fascism as the fundament for reconstructing the country. According to many in the ecclesiastic circles, Catholicism was the only way through which reconstruct both Italy and Europe and the only acceptable unifying factor that could make up for Italian lack of a national identity.

Between the Vatican and Communism there had always been an openly declared war. The Church had never concealed its basic opposition to historical materialism and Bolshevik atheism. In the *Divinis Redemptories* (1937), for instance, Pope Pius XI defined Communism as an "intrinsically wrong" ideology at odds with the fundamental values of Christianity; good Christians, therefore, should not in any way

whatsoever collaborate with or support it. [129] Based on the irreconcilable nature with true Christianity, according to the Vatican "no one [could] be at the same time a good Catholic and a true socialist"[130]. Similar to his predecessor, Pius XII shared the same staunch opposition. Since his appointment to the papacy in 1939, he pinpointed Soviet communism as a major threat to Catholic civilization.

Following the fall of the Fascist regime, the Holy See expressed its fears about the eventuality of a Communist access to power in Italy. Furthermore, the radical interpretation of the Resistance fight as the starting point for establishing a new and just society concerned the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The increasing rise of violent demonstrations and retaliations against priests, catholic activists, and ecclesiastic properties by anti-clerical individuals within the partisan movement exacerbated these fears. The revolutionary rhetoric within the labour movement was perceived as a major threat to the establishment of a Catholic identity. As *defensor civitatis,* Pope Pius XII took a clear stand against atheists, sinners, and revolutionaries. Recalling Marx's statement that "religion is the opium of the people" and Lenin's fundament of Marxism as "absolutely atheistic and positively hostile to all religions", the Church morally condemned the PCI and those who supported it.

Dreading the vulnerability of the populace, the Vatican mobilized its own activists to prevent the popular support to the PCI. The Church's general tendency to distrust

[129] Pope Pius XI, "Divini Redemptoris," 1937, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19031937_divini-redemptoris.html.
[130] Pope Pius XI, Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," 1931, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/it/encyclicals.index.html.

democracies and mass politics was nothing new. In 1906, for instance, Pope Pius X reminded Catholics in his encyclical *Vehementer Nos* that:

> "[…]the Church is essentially an unequal society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful. So distinct are these categories that with the pastoral body only rests the necessary right and authority for promoting the end of the society and directing all its members towards that end; the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led […] like a docile flock […]"[131]

The populace was expected to be governed, to remain submissive to the ecclesiastic hierarchy, and to avoid political participation. The Vatican had hoped that after Fascism a moderately authoritarian government would follow in order to limit the freedom of the masses, considered immature and extremist.[132] But with the emergence of mass political parties and the extent of popular participation following the end of the conflict for the Vatican there was no other option than an all-encompassing mobilization meant to educate, influence and direct Italians. To counteract these "enemies of the Church", as the Pope used to refer to Marxists, the Vatican became more and more involved in the political life of the country.

[131] Pope Pius X, "Encyclica 'Vehementer Nos,'" Documenta catholica omnia, 1906, http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/04z/z_1906-02-11__SS_Pius_X__Encyclica_'Vehementer_Nos'__EN.doc.html.

[132] Based on this fear, the Vatican long insisted on continuing the Allies occupation of the country, postponing the elections as much as possible, and supporting the Monarchy in the institutional referendum.

This mobilization was largely perceived as a moral crusade meant to convince Italians to accept Catholicism as the pillar of their own national culture while refusing to embrace all materialistic and atheistic ideologies. The turning point that transformed the moral crusade of the Church into a political confrontation was the 1946 national election. In addressing the convention of the diocesan presidents of the Catholic Action Pius XII exhorted the audience to mobilize and instruct the Catholic electorate on the moral and political importance of casting a coherent vote in light of the 1946 election[133].

Without openly supporting a specific party, the Pope urged the Catholic masses to stand against those parties that represented a threat to the fundamental values of Christianity. The DC, at that time, was the only Catholic party that could prevent a Communist political success. The Pope recognized that only a centralized Church and a united Catholic front could stand as a bulwark against a Communist incursion. A united party, instead of a multiplicity of anti-communist catholic fronts, was considered the best strategy "to oppose a powerful dyke against the evil that is seeking to overflow."[134] The establishment of an alliance between the DC and the Vatican was conditional to the opposition to the PCI.

[133] Pope Pius XII, "Discorso Di Sua Santità Pio XII Ai Partecipanti Al Convegno Indetto Dalla Presidenza Centrale Della Gioventù Italiana Di Azione Cattolica," 1946, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/speeches/1946/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19460420_azione-cattolica.html.
[134] R Iaria, *Per Un Mondo Nuovo. Vita Di Padre Riccardo Lombardi* (Ancona: Profili, 2009), 26–27.

The Catholic Networks.

Despite the DC in the 1946 national election obtained more than 35 % of the votes (The PSIUP 21% and the PCI 19%) becoming the major political actor, the Vatican perceived the results only as a partial victory since leftist parties still retained an impressive popular support. The Catholic mobilization had therefore to reach a new level of intensity. In order to win this war against Communism and Socialism, the papal moral and political condemnation was not enough. The Holy Father had to rely on his wide network of activists that could operate on a regional and local scale. The pulpit became a platform from where to ignite a fierce anti-Communist campaign.

While the DC was a relatively new political actor, the Vatican could rely on its already established Catholic networks to control and influence the masses. The Church had its own institutional grassroots structures, such dioceses and parishes, its own cadres, the clergy and activists, but it could also relied on new mass communication systems such the radio, and later on, television[135]. By operating mainly on a regional and local scale, they could attract part of the population that had been at the margin of the political and civil life, becoming the social representative of specific subgroups within the Italian society.

The perception that the Christian civilization was at risk due to the advent of the so-called "god-less reds" was essentially exacerbated by the propagandistic rhetoric promoted by the clergy and Catholic activists essentially via Catholic newspapers, and

[135] See: L Trincia, "'La Civiltà Cattolica', la democrazia 'Naturaliter Christiana' e la paura del comunismo (1943-1948)," *Studi Storici* 2, no. 28 (1987): 505–29.

public rallies. The Catholic press was particularly strong, controlling some 1,800 publications with an overall circulation of 16 million copies, more than half the periodical sales in Italy. [136] Besides relying on Catholic newspapers such *L'Osservatore Romano*, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, *L'Avvenire D'Italia*, *Famiglia Cristiana*, the Pope realized the importance of relying on new communication systems such the radio and, later on, television. This had an important effect considering that until the 1950s the Italian reading public was very small and illiteracy outside the major urban centres was fairly high. Especially in the so-called *Mezzogiorno*, the southern part of Italy, the population was not very familiar with the Italian language while preferring to speak local dialects. Mass leisure and entertainment became important aspects of Italian life while movies, radio, magazines, and comics helped to deliver social, cultural and political messages also to isolated areas.[137]

When newspapers and radio were not available, however, local parishes, priests and catholic organizations played a unique role in reaching out the sectarian society. Furthermore between 1945 to 1948 Catholics activists and priests successfully attempted to become a force at the level of the piazza in numerous mass rallies.[138] Because of the increasing popular support to left-wing parties, Catholic forces were urged to fight this crusade not only within the Parliament but in public spaces too. Not surprisingly, the 1940s saw a dramatic increase in number of proselytizers. Padre Lombardi, the Jesuit known as 'God's microphone', was one of those. From February

[136] P Allum, "Uniformity Undone: Aspects of Catholic Culture in Postwar Italy," in *Culture and Conflict in Postwar Italy*, ed. Z Barański and R Lumley (New York: St. Martin Press, 1990), 85.
[137] Trincia, "'La Civiltà Cattolica', La Democrazia 'Naturaliter Christiana' e La Paura Del Comunismo (1943-1948)," 509.
[138] S Gundle, "The 'civic Religion' of the Resistance in Post-War Italy," *Modern Italy* 5, no. 2 (2000): 122.

1947, he began his radio program *Il Quaresimale,* which was broadcasted via radio in cafes, piazzas, churches, and in cloistered convents. This gave him national and international popularity. His numerous public speeches, hold at universities, theatres, and public spaces, attracted incredibly large audiences. Thanks to his charisma and powerful rhetoric, Padre Lombardi was capable of winning the hearts and the minds of large sectors of the population, rousing the crowd to action by exasperating both their fears and their hopes for reconciliation, peace, and unity after the tragedy of the war. [139]

The combined actions promoted by the Vatican, the clergy, the activists and Christian Democrats led to the transformation of the political consciousness strongly anchored to the notion of Catholic civilization. The Church, however, became inclusivist and exclusivist at the same time. While seeking to attract and unify all Catholics around its mission, it also condemned and eventually expelled those Italians who were labelled as "un-faithful"[140]. Catholicism, therefore, ended up representing only a subgroup of society that identified itself in oppositional terms. Based on the moral condemnation of the Vatican, it became almost impossible for Italians to embrace simultaneously both Communism and Catholicism. This had a great impact on public opinion especially in Italy where faith was central to people's lives.[141] The apogee would be reached with the excommunication in 1949 of those "who profess the Communist credo, materialist and anti-Christian" [142]. The ideological divide that had been

[139] Iaria, *Per Un Mondo Nuovo. Vita Di Padre Riccardo Lombardi*, 30.
[140] Allum, "Uniformity Undone: Aspects of Catholic Culture in Postwar Italy," 80.
[141] Elisa A Carrillo, "The Italian Catholic Church and Communism, 1943-1963," *The Catholic Historical Review* 77, no. 4 (1991): 647.
[142] G Miccoli, "La Chiesa Di Pio XII Nella Societa` Italiana Del Dopoguerra," in *Storia Dell'Italia Repubblicana. La Costruzione Della Democrazia. Dalla Caduta Del Fascismo Agli Anni Cinquanta*, ed. F Barbagallo (Torino: Einaudi, 1994), 575.

characterizing Italy over a long period was exacerbated and antagonism became a powerful instrument for identification. Through the politicization of the Church's moral activities the boundaries between morality and politics were altered. This permanently affected Italy's construction of identity with the result that since 1946 Italy was experiencing a process of moralization of politics and, simultaneously, of politicization of morality. However, the convergence of ethical and political values eventually facilitated the creation of a moral and political consensus, allowing the DC to gain legitimacy and political hegemony as well as offering to the party an instrument for de-legitimizing other political actors.

As a consequence of the Church political mobilization, the contraposition between the Christian Democracy and the leftist parties was exacerbated with the result of creating a space of legitimacy within the political context for anti-Communist policy. The Catholic groups' insistence on the exclusion of left-wing parties from the government coalition would increasingly pressurize the DC leader to oust both the PCI and the PSI. This pressure would eventually lead De Gasperi to open up a governmental crisis in May 1947 and establish a new centrist government coalition from which the two Marxist parties would be excluded. The fierce Anti-Communism promoted by the Church through its own institutions created a climate of fear that would eventually facilitate the American intervention in the country in the early 1948 by providing the US both the rhetoric and the leadership for an overarching anti-Communist strategy.[143]

[143] P C Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (MQUP, 2002), 4.

The PCI and its Socialising Actors.

If the Catholic party could rely on the Church and its networks to secure its authority and broaden its electorate, the PCI constructed its hegemonic base through various institutions and organizations. Among the others, the Party could rely on the confederation of labours (CGIL), *Case Del Popolo*, ARCI (Recreational and Cultural Italian Association) and on the organic intellectuals.

The CGIL represented the most powerful socializing agency that could convey the working class' votes towards the PCI. It was established in June 1944 as a nationwide confederation of labours to replace the dissolved Fascist syndicates. The urgency to reorganize the labour organization was linked to the revolutionary protests of the mid-1940s. While initially welcomed as part of a large anti-Fascist mobilization to fight the Fascists and the Nazis, these protests soon came to be perceived as a potential threat to national unity and a destabilizing force that would delay the reconstruction of the country. Therefore, the three main parties (DC, PCI, and PSI) agreed to create the CGIL, theoretically independent from political parties, to unite all workers and reduce the revolutionary potentiality of the protests. Mirroring the governmental coalition, the three general secretaries within the CGIL were leading figures of the Communist party (Giuseppe di Vittorio), Socialist party (Emilio Caneveri) and Christian Democracy (Achille Grandi). Despite it was meant to be independent from political parties, the organization was highly politicized.

However, as political cooperation and anti-Fascist unity would last, political parties were confident that ideological divisions within the trade union could be eased. While

in Rome politicians were attempting to keep the semblance of a coalition, consensus was breaking down beyond it. As already mentioned, the end of the war did not bring peace to Italy; Italy was still a country at war. Despite the Fascist attempt to mitigate longstanding unresolved issues through its pervasive ideology, territorial disunity, class division, and social and political tensions represented a major source of instability for the country. The series of violent protests and strikes that broke out from 1943 onwards were the visible expression of the failure in solving these issues.

Particularly in the northern industrial areas, demands for social justice and labours' rights became interwoven with anti-Fascist sentiments, allowing the working class to unite under the demands for regulations and reforms. If the North experienced a stronger and active working class mobilization, the whole south, instead, was shaken by a series of agitations and violence between local peasantry and landowners due to the occupation of large estates by the former. While countrymen attempted to overturn the previous system that saw them as submitted subjects to the agrarian aristocracy, landowners sought to restore the order and to impede the promotion of radical reforms. Reactionary forces largely perceived the national unity government as a threat due to the inclusion of the communists and socialists in it. Since economic strains were becoming unbearable, Trade unions' unrests increased.

While political parties were more concerned on the political reconstruction of the country and seemed more interested in playing up the theme of national unity, the CGIL cadres responded to the ambiguity of the ruling elite by mobilising the working class and politicising its members. The CGIL, through its Communist and Socialist leaders and activists, strengthened its dominant position within society becoming a

guiding force capable of educating from a moral and political point of view the masses. Facilitated by an absent and distant State, trade unions and workers' organizations eventually exercised an important influence over the political life of the country, becoming major social forces able to convey Italians' desire for a radical transformation of the economic and social structure.

Despite initially protest movements were not strictly politically inspired, the dominant position political parties had within the Italian context obliged the working class to rely on political factions for the promotion of reforms and to protect labour rights. In order to achieve this, trade unions needed political forces capable of re-organizing both society and the State. Based on the lack of a viable alternative from the left, the PCI came to be considered as the only party willing to act as the representative of the working class. This recognition was made possible because of the role Communists played in the Resistance fight and the mobilization of communist activists within factories during the violent strikes that affected Italy from 1943 onwards, which saw the Communists cadres always on the front line.

The decision to join a trade union shifted from being perceived as a tool to defend specific and immediate interests to a political stance meant to create a new social order.[144] The main problem was that the CGIL was created in a deeply ideological context in which long-term issues such as the ideological clashes between Catholic and Socialist forces, originated in the pre-fascist period, and the working class' hostility towards the Italian bourgeoisie ended up dividing Italians in sub-national groups competing one against the other. Class-consciousness and the historical

[144] B. Beccalli, "La Ricostruzione Del Sindacalismo Italiano, 1943-1950.," in *Italia, 1943-1950. La Ricostruzione*, ed. J Wolf (Bari: Laterza, 1974), 351.

working class' struggles were not new phenomena. The socialist party, which had long represented a major social representative of the working class within the Italian society, was too weak and divided to perform as the driving force for popular mobilization. Taking over its pre-fascist hegemonic role, the PCI was capable of operating through its activists and organizations on a local and regional scale reaching wider sectors of society. Following Lenin's definition of Labour Unions as a "transmission belt" from the Party to the masses, the working class relied on trade unions to obtain economic and political goals, while the party used the social influence of the CGIL to establish its political hegemony among the masses.

Despite divergences between the workers and the PCI the communist party would remain the only party expression of the working class and capable of protecting their interests. This was due to the fact that the only other alternative seemed to be the DC. By being a mass party, the DC was initially perceived as a progressive party. But despite the tripartite alliance with the PCI and PSI, the DC could not represent the workers' party because of its support to the industrialist class and the so–called fourth party as well as its close ties with the Church.

The main problem with the DC was that it saw in the big businesses the main driving forces for the reconstruction of the country. One of its main allies was Confindustria, the Italian employers' federation and national chamber of commerce, which in the post-war period defined the workers' protests revolutionary. As Foa claimed, Italian capitalism felt the vital necessity of reducing the resistance force of the workers and with threat of layoff regaining control of the labour force[145]. This led essentially to a

[145]V Foa, "La Ricostruzione Capitalistica Nel Secondo Dopoguerra," *Rivista Di Storia Contemporanea* 4 (1973): 437.

restoration of capitalism without resolving the main issues that were affecting Italian stability. By prioritizing the support to this sector of society to the achievement of social justice the DC became largely perceived as a conservative and elite party, hostile to the working class.

Many analysts believed that the communist influence within the CGIL was due to a top-down imposition from the party. What many could not understand was that the 1943-44 strikes started as mass protests not strictly inspired by the communist ideology and the politicization of the CGIL was not merely the result of a top-down imposition; it was instead a bottom-up progressive recognition among the working class that the PCI was the only political party that would eventually support the workers' demands. Because of the absence of a strong independent socialist party, the PCI ended up representing the only political party that could support important reforms in factories especially after 1943. There was therefore no absolute political identification with the party and its ideology.

Besides relying on the activities of the CGIL, for the PCI the organization of the social and cultural life of the working class was also deemed necessary. The party was aware they could influence the Italian electorate by relying on the support of artists, intellectuals and writers and shape what Gramsci referred to as the common sense of the nation. Alongside trade unions activities, the party also created spaces for recreation and socialization where activities such as music events, projection of movies, political discussions and festivals were organized to glorify the collective dimension of life. The ARCI, for instance, was created in 1957 in Florence as a non-profit

organization with no connection with the Catholic Church[146]. It was meant as a gathering space for individuals gravitating around the PCI. As Giovanni de Luna claims in the preface of the Le Muse del Popolo by Vincenzo Santangelo, ARCI played a significant role in politicising the masses by opening branches in remote villages it gave life to a cultural network where people got in touch, many for the first time, with Marxist ideas and values."[147] Similarly, the PCI could count on Case del Popolo, ANPI e UDI. According to Stephen Gandle this form of subculture created "a significant pole of community life". [148]

By relying on these socialising agencies, both parties exasperated social and political instabilities through the creation of two opposing sub-national identity, one against the other. The anticommunism of the Catholic masses was matched by the anti-Catholicism of the Communists[149]. As Lapalombara claims, political rhetoric became really intense. Political discourses were:

> "full of ideological assertions, sweeping condemnations of political opponents, and other expressions that [suggested] open warfare and irreconcilable conflict. Were one to read only the partisan press and to listen to speeches made in parliament or in the piazzas, one would quickly get the impression that, politically speaking, Italians [were] engaged in a war of all against all."[150]

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[146] https://www.arci.it/chi-siamo/storia/

[147] Giovanni De Luna in V Santangelo, *Le Muse Del Popolo. Storia Dell'Arci a Torino 1957-1967* (Franco Angeli, 2007), 10.

[148] S Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943–1991*, American Encounters/Global Interactions (Duke University Press, 2000), 6.

[149] Elisa A. Carrillo, "The Italian Catholic Church and Communism , 1943-1963", *The Catholic Historical Review* 77, no. 4 (1991): 647.

[150] J LaPalombara, *Democracy, Italian Style* (Yale University Press, 1989), 5.

The Intellectuals and the Post-War Engagement.

While both political parties sought to construct their own sphere of hegemony within the Italian electorate by relying on the mediating action of socially influential actors such as the Church and the Labour Unions, the attraction of the educated classes became a necessity for both factions. Italy, with its strong ideologies and a weak state, has often relied on intellectuals for promoting social changes to counteract political parties' apathy and ambiguity. By recognizing their role as influential opinion makers and their prominent position within society, governments have traditionally sought to obtain the intellectuals' support as an instrument of persuasion among the educated classes.

Historically, however, Italian intellectuals had often represented a narrow elite group incapable of performing an effective socializing function since their audience had always been a social minority, particularly those educated sectors of the high-middle class. The aristocratic position the Italian intelligentsia had hold within society, however, proved to be anachronistic in the early XX century. The central and active role played by the popular masses required the intellectuals to rethink their role within society.

During the twenty years of Fascist regime, Mussolini recognized the importance of establishing his hegemony among the uneducated Italians. As Cannistraro argues in his book *La Fabbrica del Consenso: Fascismo e Mass Media*, trough the creation of a massive and effective propaganda apparatus, the Regime was able to spread political

and ideological messages beyond urban areas, reaching socially and geographically marginalized groups eventually creating a vast popular consensus[151]. Due to the high level of illiteracy in the country, that according to the Italian National Institute of Statistic (ISTAT) in 1921 was 27,4%[152], the *Duce* relied on visual propaganda and oral communication to emphasize the achievements of the regime and to create the cult of personality that allowed Mussolini to project a positive image of himself and of the PNF.[153]

A particular effective instrument of persuasion was, as Victoria De Grazia explains in her book *The Culture of Consent*, the socializing role of the *dopolavoro* and the effects of policies applied to mass organization of leisure-time activities. Trough pastime such as mass sports and traditional games the regime attempted to organize the Italian people "into a public ostensibly above class: as audience, consumers, or participants, responsive, if not always enthusiastic, toward the regime's policies."[154] The spread of ideas was also facilitated by the regime's reliance on mass communication systems such media, radio, films and through various institutions such as *Istituto Luce* or the *Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista*.[155]

[151] See: P V Cannistraro, *La Fabbrica Del Consenso: Fascismo E Mass Media*, Tempi Nuovi (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1975).
[152] ISTAT, "1861-2011 150° Anniversario Unità D'Italia. Italia in Cifre," 2011, 14. http://www.istat.it/it/files/2011/06/italiaincifre2011.pdf.
[153] See: D Marchesini, *La Scuola Dei Gerarchi: Mistica Fascista : Storia, Problemi, Istituzioni* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976).
[154] V De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organisation of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), ix.
[155] The Istituto Luce was an Italian corporation created in 1924 involved in the production and distribution of films and documentaries for educational and informative purposes; the Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista, created in 1925 and under the control of the philosopher Giovanni Gentile, was the cultural organization of the PNF meant to "bring Fascism into Italian culture" M E Moss, *Il Filosofo Fascista Di Mussolini. Giovanni Gentile Rivisitato*, Voci dall'America (Roma: Armando Editore, 2007), 113.

During the *Ventennio*, however, the socializing activity of intellectuals was hampered by a constrictive reality in which the State was exerting both direct and indirect control over the cultural industry. As Lino Pertile claimed, besides dealing ruthlessly with political opposition, the regime opted for a much more lenient and sophisticated strategy of cultural control. If on one hand it allowed high culture "to live undisturbed at the margin of society, as a privilege of the small liberal elite", on the other hand it could exert control over mass media for the creation of a popular subculture.[156] While there were intellectuals who chose a more public stance, working within the political and ideological apparatus of the State, for the rest of them there were two options available. They could oppose the authoritarian culture promoted by the regime by choosing the exile, or to become traditional intellectuals pursuing their intellectual interests in a kind of *Ivory Tower*. Following Benedetto Croce as the prime example of the latter category, these intellectuals chose disengagement from society and to act in the name of reason and truth above sectarian and socio-political interests. Despite Mussolini was able to create his own hegemony the transformation of the State-Society relation never occurred. If the so-called "functionary" intellectuals helped in conveying some sort of temporary legitimacy towards the political system through an extensive recourse to propaganda, the "traditional" men of culture were too detached from society to obtain any social and political transformation of it.

The Italian intelligentsia was blamed either for having supported the regime or for not having effectively opposed it. Largely blamed for their long-lasting passivity and connivance with the regime, they gradually reacted to the cultural apathy and the

156 Cfr in: A Caesar and M Caesar, *Modern Italian Literature*, Cultural History of Literature (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 164.

Fascist experience became a reminder of a shameful heritage bringing along the need for repudiating the past. As the socialist writer and politician Ignazio Silone claimed, the systematic censorship was not the only cause for the intellectual apathy and cultural stagnation of the XX century; the ones to blame were the Italian Intellectuals and their disposition in accepting self-censorship, assimilation or connivance with the Regime.[157]

When the regime and its own hegemony crumbled what was left were the symptomatic factors of a fragile country in which the State-Society relation had not been solved. The gap between leading elites and the masses was immense; the ideological and social clashes interwoven within the Liberation fight were destabilizing the country bringing forth all the failures of the Fascist regime in solving long-lasting issues such labour conditions, North-South division, and social inequalities. The establishment of a new political system was not enough for solving Italians' dissatisfaction and distrust towards the institutional structure. It became necessary to shape the political culture of the country through a methodological negotiation between the institutions, the major socializing agencies and the people.

Following the Armistice declaration, there was a widespread feeling of living an extraordinary moment; the Resistance movement brought along the desire for a radical transformation of the institutional system, the urge to create a new society based on equality, and to overcome the traumatic events of the past. Besides a desire for a socio-political reconstruction, an intellectual and cultural renewal was deemed as necessary.

[157] S G Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A Life of Ignazio SIlone* (New York: Fsgbooks, 2009), 94–95.

Rebuilding houses and factories or establishing a new solid political system was not enough; a transformation of the hearts and minds of society was expected.

Alongside socio-political and economic devastations, the tragedy of the war brought about a cultural crisis in which the image of the intellectuals was compromised. Despite having negative repercussions the war created an opportunity for renewal infused with the desire for transformation that pervaded all sectors of society. As the partisan writer Italo Calvino wrote with enthusiasm and great optimism, the years immediately after the war represented for the country a chance to "start again from zero"[158]. It is within this context that the debate on the sociocultural role of intellectuals and the bond between policy and culture became of crucial interest.

Due to the awakening force of the Resistance experience, intellectual passivity was replaced by a widespread desire for engagement; through socio-political mobilization intellectuals could gain back their social role along the process of a radical transformation of society. They abandoned their *Ivory Towers* in masses negotiating their position within society and their role as promoters of socio-political and cultural changes. To do so, they could initially operate only within the boundaries of Anti-Fascism, which became the conceptual framework for a cultural renewal of the nation, removing the widespread sense of guilt among the intelligentsia. The appropriation of this ideology made them appeared as reliable forces within society. Intellectuals became therefore an invaluable asset to potentially transform the political culture of the country and finally solved the problematic relation between the state and society.

[158] David Ward, "Intellectuals, Culture, and Power in Modern Italy," *The Italianist* 21, no. 1 (2001): 306.

The cultural distance between them and the masses could not be sustained anymore; social engagement became their only chance for a national cultural redemption. While moving away from Benedetto Croce's assumption stating the separation of policy and culture, post-war Intellectuals gradually discovered the works of Antonio Gramsci, and in particular *Lettere dal carcere* (Letters from Prison) and *Quaderni del carcere* (Prison Notebook), posthumously published in 1947 the former, and 1948-1951 the latter. Especially in *Prison Notebook*, which was a collection of essays written by the Marxist thinker during his eleven-year detention, the question of the intellectuals' role within society represented a central point of analysis.

Gramsci defined Croce's theory of the apolitical role of intellectuals as simply anachronistic[159]. A common and serious error, Gramsci claimed, consisted in believing "that one can know without understanding and even more without feeling and being impassioned […] that the intellectual can be an intellectual (and not a pure pedant) if distinct and separate from the people-nation […]"[160]. Under the conditions of mass politics there was no possibility for maintaining a socially detached intellectual position; intellectuals had to renounce to their position of isolation and neutrality to plunge into practical life.

A new kind of Intellectual would gradually emerge from the ashes of the war breaking away from the traditional conception of intellectual as specialist or savant, representing only a narrow class of educated people. Gramsci defined intellectuals not simply those individuals engaged in academic or writing professions, but also as social actors that

[159] A S Sassoon, *Gramsci and Contemporary Politics: Beyond Pessimism of the Intellect*, Routledge Innovations in Political Theory (London: Routledge, 2000), 19.
[160] J Martin, *Antonio Gramsci: Intellectuals, Culture and the Party* (Routledge, 2002), 95.

by holding a predominant position within civil society operated as permanent persuaders functionally contributing to the formation of a worldview, a common sense. If the masses could "feel" but did not always "know" or "understand", the Intellectuals could use their knowledge and critical thinking to promote an intellectual and moral transformation of the masses and to shape the collective consciousness. By operating as organizer and connective element within society in relation to "hegemony" and "political government", through a methodological work intellectuals could help the subaltern classes to move away from a submissive position to become a major force of changes within society.

Culture would be no longer considered as a privilege but as a service, a revolutionary instrument through which the intellectuals could transfer their experience and knowledge "to the terrain of common utility"[161]. As Elio Vittorini wrote in a letter addressed to Togliatti, culture represented "the human force that uncovers in the World the necessities of change, and brings it to the consciousness of the world"[162]. By rejecting the idea of a purely academic and individualistic culture, Gramsci relocated the intellectuals at the centre of politics along the process of democratization of the socio-cultural life. It was intellectuals who, according to him, laid the "cultural foundations for the creation of a society's moral and intellectual leadership." [163] Therefore, major changes within society were essentially played out on the cultural terrain. In order for the Intellectuals to become a major social force for transformation, as stated in an article probably written by Togliatti in June 1944 and published in the

[161] G Pintor cfr in N Bobbio and L G Cochrane, *Ideological Profile of Twenty-Century Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 166.
[162] E Vittorini, "Politica E Cultura. Lettera a Togliatti," *Il Politecnico*, no. 35, (Jan-March 1947).
[163] D Ward, "Intellectuals, Culture, and Power in Modern Italy," *The Italianist* 21, no. 1 (2001): 302.

Communist paper *Rinascita*, it was no longer possible to separate "ideas from facts […] culture from politics […] and *art from true life*."[164] The extraordinary impact his theories had on post-war Italian intellectual renewal are beyond any doubts, especially from the late 1940s onward.

The Intellectuals and the Italian Political System.

From 1943 to 1947, anti-Fascism as a total and overarching ideology offered the conceptual framework for a cultural renewal of the country. As to produce a cultural transformation of the country, however, intellectuals went beyond the collective memory filtered by official narratives that characterised the *Ventennio* simply as a "parenthesis". The intellectuals, therefore, began analysing and examining the Italian past to offer an exhaustive analysis of those factors that had facilitated the regime to rise and be maintained. The ideals of anti-Fascist were also exalted throughout the so-called Neo-realism. A lot of articles, as well as essays and books were published, describing the partisan experience, pen-portraits of comrades-in-arms, diaries about the resistance movement. Despite the variety of cultural works, the focus on social issues and on the working and peasantry classes was a common denominator of these narratives.

Initially, the urge to defeat once and for all Fascism and its legacy allowed an extraordinary form of collaboration between conservative and more radical members

[164] Cfr in A M Torriglia, *Broken Time, Fragmented Space: A Cultural Map for Postwar Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 4.

of the intellectual elite and cultural productions flourished with an increase of memoirs and epic-celebrative works. The destabilising crisis Italians faced in the aftermath of the war sprung a new sense of solidarity among different ideological and cultural groups for an intellectual reconstruction meant to create a new culture and a new society in which all the contradictions of the past could be solved once and for all. As Piero Lucia argues, there was an initial attempt to create a new national culture beyond ideological or political divisions[165]. The publication of authoritative reviews such as the social-democratic *Il Ponte*, the catholic *Il Mulino*, the Communist *Società* and *Il Politecnico* facilitated the intellectual ferment of the early post-war.

Cultural unity and intellectual renewal faced a challenge when anti-Fascism broke down as a unifying ideology within the political establishment. When the myth of national unity emphasised by the rhetoric of political leaders crumbled, repercussions on the cultural terrain were felt. With the dissolution of the Action Party and the establishment of a DC-led cabinet following the ousting of left-wing parties, the spirit of the Resistance not only as a national but also as a social war dissipated.

For those intellectuals that had strongly believed in the revolutionary possibility of anti-Fascism this was considered a betrayal. The significance this betrayal of the spirit of the war had on intellectuals can be highlighted through the words of Piero Calamandrei. As early as October 1946 he wrote on his review Il Ponte:

> "The lack of confidence in freedom, the desire to stand apart, to leave politics to politicians. This is the dangerous state of mind that each of us must guard against and fight […] [If] I catch myself doubting

[165] P Lucia, *Intellettuali Italiani Del Secondo Dopoguerra. Impegno, Crisi, Speranza.* (Napoli: Guida, 2003), 33.

> that the dead have died in vain, that the ideals for which they have died for were foolish illusions, with these doubts I'll allow the rebirth of fascism. In the wake of the brief epic of the heroic resistance [..] the long, painful and inglorious decades of the resistance in prose have now begun."[166]

The longing for a cultural reconstruction and renovation of society had to face a completely different reality in which political and cultural fundaments had been undermined in name of continuity[167]. This had a profound impact on intellectuals' choices. Because of the peculiar post-war political system known as *partitocrazia*, in which the country became dominated by political parties that exerted a strong control over both society and the government, any attempts to change or influence Italian policy and culture could only take place within a process of negotiations with the main political parties, namely the DC and the PCI. Besides with their knowledge and influence intellectuals could bring political legitimacy and authority to political parties[168], they had no direct power. The effectiveness of their social actions had to be mediated and filtered by political parties that represented the major actors for the promotion of social, cultural and political changes. Since the intellectuals could only preserve their social role by relying on one party instead of the other, they were eventually forced to adapt to a system characterised by political antagonism and struggle for cultural hegemony. The fact that in the Italian political and social context

[166]P Calamandrei, "Il Fascismo Che è in Me e La Resistenza in Prosa," *Il Ponte* X (1946), http://www.vocineldeserto.it/?page_id=2948#calamandrei.
[167]V Binetti, "Marginalità E Appartenenza: La Funzione Dell' Intellettuale Tra Sfera Pubblica E Privato Nell' Italia Del Dopoguerra," *Italica* 74, no. 3 (1997): 365.
[168] S Settis, "Impegnarsi in Italia? Mitologie e destini dell' 'intellettuale impegnato'" *Italian Culture* 30, no. 1 (2012): 70.

was soon divided between these two political factions and their antagonising rhetoric forced the intellectuals to give up to their unitary project of cultural reconstruction.

Even with the fall of the Regime, the State kept on having a predominant role in controlling the cultural industry. Political parties began exerting some sort of control over distribution and contents in the attempt to shape Italian society, culture and politics. They also began to employ large funds and energies for the production and distribution of cultural products seeking to organize and convey a vast popular consensus towards one party or the other. Through the fabrication and promotion of an antagonizing culture political parties could make up for Italians' absent sense of nationhood. Ideological antagonism replaced anti-Fascism as a unifying factor, ending up creating cultural sub-groups in competition among each other while failing to address the needs and aspirations of the nation as a whole.

Through a process of monitoring and censoring of the cultural industry by political parties, intellectuals found it difficult to escape the demands and controls of political authority. Aware of the constrictions of the political system, many of them chose to adapt to the Italian political context. For those who chose social engagement but refused to organically adapt to the political system by refusing to choose between one or the other political party, cultural marginalization was the outcome.

By recognizing the importance of culture and the creation of a new intellectual organic class as part of broader plan of reformation of the Communist party, the PCI began consistently relying on and recruiting organic intellectuals. This strategy was perceived as necessary in order to gain legitimacy and obtain a vast popular consensus while counteracting the catholic hegemony that the DC had been constructing down

the years through its own catholic networks and the relations with the entrepreneurial class. The widespread feelings of uncertainty and despair that characterised this period led many intellectuals to gravitate towards the PCI.

It is wrong however to simply consider the increasing intellectual support to the PCI as a top-down imposition. By blaming post-war literature for being subordinate to the party, scholars tend at times to forget the social and cultural context in which the intellectual reconstruction took place. Because of the revolutionary rhetoric and the extraordinary contribution given to the Liberation fight, the PCI represented the only political party that could challenge the conservative and moderate reconstruction promoted by the DC. The close ties between the Italian intelligentsia and the Communist party were deemed necessary for a transformation of the political culture of the country that could make up for the failures of pre-fascist leading elite in integrating the 'submissive' classes into the political system and ameliorate the state-society relation. During the post-war period Intellectuals got closer to Communism as a way to approach the masses.

For the majority of the intellectuals there was not a total identification with the political agenda of the party. Generally speaking, the so-called engaged post-war intellectuals had a relatively poor knowledge of Marxism[169]; many became "politicized" as a consequence of the Resistance experience. Largely seen by the anti-Fascist intellectuals as the heir of the Resistance, the PCI became the organ for elaborating and promoting a new cultural transformation that could eventually allowed the

[169] P Mazzolari, *Cattolici e Comunisti*, 2nd ed. (Vicenza: La Locusta, 1978), 6.

connection between culture and politics. It is worth noticing that many Catholic intellectuals who had participated to the resistance fights shared the overwhelming desire for a radical transformation of the country. Their desire for radical changes basically clashed with a policy of moderation promoted by the DC. As the Catholic priest and writer Primo Mazzolari wrote, "today's dissatisfaction has a name; the novelty a face: Communism. In this sense, we are all somehow communists, even those who fear it or speak ill of it. If we really urge for something different from what has been achieved so far, it would be advisable to make ourselves willing to build a path alongside the communists"[170].

Communism was perceived not in its political dimension, but in its moral force for renewal against the social status quo. This doesn't mean that the relation between intellectuals and the PCI was smooth. There was not a single and cohesive set of beliefs among the so-called engaged intellectuals. Disagreements on economic development and policy, labour issues, division between the north and the south, the analysis of the historical past, the explanatory causes for a lack of a national identity, the reasons that allowed Fascism to rise and the role of the Vatican within the Italian society were only a few of the issues over which the intellectuals had different perspectives. Furthermore, the PCI's constant appeal for realism in arts was combined with an intolerant attitude towards avant-garde movements and foreign products, especially American ones. This closure towards what was new arose a lot of criticism. PCI members were labelled "illiberal" and their cultural policy "dictatorial". Even among the communist supporters there was a criticism towards the party guilty, in their opinion, for

[170] Idem, 5.

promoting a sectarian and out-dated literature not easily understandable by the Masses. This, for instance, was one of the factors that brought to a clash between Togliatti and Vittorini with the consequent end of *Politecnico* in 1947. Vittorini claimed that culture could enrich policy and could be useful only if it was autonomous and not politicized. He wrote:

> "to be a revolutionary writer doesn't mean to play the pipe for revolution. Revolutionary is the writer who can disclose, through their works, revolutionary needs different from those created by policy: domestic needs, secret, hidden in the human being that only them can perceive".[171]

While PCI chose to rely on the mediating function of organic intellectuals as ideological guides that could change Italians political culture and construct an alternative hegemony, the DC mainly invested most of its efforts on mass-cultural programs. Similar to the Fascist period, the Catholic party constructed its own hegemony through the press, television, publishing houses (I.e. Morcelliana, SEI, Studium, l'Ave, Cinque Lune), and public meetings while also exerting control on the Ministry of Public Education. Thanks to its massive propaganda campaigns, it was capable of presenting catholic values as an integral part of Italian political culture. By simply focusing on mass culture, however, the party failed to establish its own intellectual network[172]. The reason why the party chose to rely on mass-culture and not on high-culture was probably due to the party's failure in understanding that

171 A M Cittadini Ciprì, *Italia E Francia Nel Secondo Dopoguerra: Il Caso Vittorini Sartre*, Quaderni Della Rivista "Il Politico" (Milano: Facoltà di scienze politiche dell' Università di Pavia, 1984), 65.

172 U Eco, *A Passo Di Gambero* (Milano: Bompiani, 2006), 163.

political culture was not a static concept but always involved in a process of transformation and evolution. The party did not realise that the intellectuals did not simply produce ideologies, but they also operated as "organiser of hegemony", that is, they could theorise "the ways in which hegemony can be developed or maintained"[173]. The DC, however, massively relied on the powerful rhetoric of the Church in convincing Italians to identify with the party, as the only one within the political system closer to catholic values and conservative positions. Furthermore, its connection with businesses and entrepreneurial groups allowed the party to attract the conservative high middle-class and win its support. Without recognizing the importance of relying on the intelligentsia to achieve consensus, the DC could not reinforce its own hegemony among the intellectual class. Many among the conservative intellectual elite, therefore, had to rely on other intellectual groups, groups that not only had different opinions but in many cases antithetical too.

The connection between intellectuals and the PCI was favoured by the fact that it was perceived as the only party capable of opposing the censorship promoted by the Catholic party. Criticism toward the DC's censorship techniques brought a great number of conservative, bourgeois intellectuals closer to the PCI. Intellectuals mobilized against the "clericalization" of arts, culture, education and science. By representing the only viable alternative to the conservative faction within the Italian political system, the Communist party operated as the most effective connective body between the various anti-fascist elements and the only cultural referent for those intellectuals that, besides their ideological positions, desired to bring forth their social

[173] S Gill, *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 51–52.

function within society.[174] This meant that for many of them, the only "democratic" party seemed to be the communist party. Undoubtedly the PCI exerted a great influence on cultural activity and was capable of attracting great numbers of intellectuals especially until 1956. However, its main flaw was that the party looked at intellectuals as simple instrument to obtain political, social and cultural legitimacy and not as social actors that could shape the collective consciousness and the political culture.

Conclusion.

Despite the fact that post-war political parties' official rhetoric was initially built around the notion of anti-Fascist cooperation and unity, the leading elite never really condemned the bombastic ideological discourses of their own satellite agencies. They instead exploited the antagonizing rhetoric to instrumentally reinforce ideological divisions and build their own hegemonic space within sub-national groups. Instead of uniting the country, parties' strategy of using the recruiting ability of the socialising agencies created two opposing and antagonizing networks that found in Catholicism and the Communism sub-national forms of identity. The construction of these two collective identities, however, led groups to identify themselves as part of a faction opposed to another. It did not, however, unite Italians nor improve the state-society relations. Even though political parties obtained immediate electoral advantage, their

[174] Binetti, "Marginalita e Appartenenza: La Funzione Dell' Intellettuale Tra Sfera Pubblica e Privato Nell' Italia Del Dopoguerra," 362.

reliance on these social institutions exacerbated political and ideological tensions within the country leading to further instabilities. As Lapalombara claims, the presence of these groups within Italian society constituted a source of weakness and instability for democracy since the fragmentation of Italian society and its peculiar political culture led antagonising pressure groups to compete for specific interests instead of restoring the unity of the state[175].

This ideological divide would eventually create the space for American intervention and the legitimacy for anti-Communist policy in the Italian government. The result would be the creation of a triangular relationship based on conditional alliances between the DC, the Church with its networks, and eventually the US. Each of these actors could not act independently but had to rely on one another to promote a transformation of the political culture of the country.

[175] J Lapalombara, *Interest Groups in Italian Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1964), 10–11.

-CH IV-

RETHINKING US-ITALIAN RELATIONS AND THE ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION.

The cooperation at the government level between the three mass parties lasted until May 30, 1947, when De Gasperi announced the formation of a new government with the exclusion of both the PCI and the PSI from the cabinet. It was the fourth consecutive cabinet presided by the DC's leader since he was firstly appointed in December 1945. The exclusion of the Left from the government, however, represented the beginning of a new political era for the country that affected both its domestic and foreign policy. This event laid the foundations of an ideological and political antagonism between Catholics and Marxists that would divide the country for decades. With the establishment of a DC-led government, the political equilibrium shifted to the right and this formula would eventually dominate Italian politics for nearly five decades. Furthermore, the so-called May crisis, which has been largely characterized as the catalyst for the establishment of an US-Italian alliance, would determine the evolution of transatlantic relations shifting Washington's approach to Italy from an indirect to a more direct form of intervention. It was at this precise time that anti-

Communism substituted anti-Fascism and became the new legitimising ideology allowing the convergence of American and Italian interests.

Scholars' attempts to find answers to De Gasperi's choice to end the tripartite coalition have produced a series of explanations. Because it took place in the shadow of the Cold War, precisely two months after the Truman Doctrine declaration and days before the Marshall Plan speech at Harvard, the Prime Minister's decision has often been considered as the result of American pressure meant to infringe on Italian sovereignty. Scholars tend at times to identify De Gasperi's journey to the US in January 1947 as the central cause of the May crisis, sometimes implying that Truman asked the Italian Prime Minister for the exclusion of the communists from the cabinet as a prerequisite for American future economic and financial aid. Besides the fact that there is no evidence proving that the US President explicitly requested the exclusion, a critical analysis of mere international factors is not sufficient for a thorough understanding of the political turn and the reasons behind it. This perspective alone fall short of what is a complex and multidimensional passage of the Italian history.

The evolution of US-Italian relations is the core interest of this chapter. The objective is to offer a reinterpretation of Cold War dynamics that goes beyond the unilateral narrative that tends to focus on the supposedly pivotal role of the US by assuming a primacy of American power in defining the relationship. Even though the US intervention might have had an impact in the Italian context, Italian political actors and their socialising agencies played a fundamental role. As this chapter purports to demonstrate, the ousting of the two leftist parties was the by-product of an intricate process of consensus building and mass parties' struggle for creating spheres of

hegemony. In particular, it was the result of a political loss of consent and fears for a collapse of the system due to the aggravation of the economic crisis within the country.

The first section of this chapter focuses on the early post-war period and the economic dimension of Italian reconstruction. Even though until 1947 Italy was not at the top of Washington foreign policy agenda, the Italian case required attention as a matter of principle due to its geographical position and autarkic past. Before anti-Communism would become the central tenet of US foreign policy towards Italy, stability came to be seen as the crucial key for US post-war plans for an overall recovery of Europe and for protecting American interests in the Mediterranean. Even though the façade of political stability was maintained through the establishment of anti-Fascist government coalitions, the worsening of the economic conditions became a matter of concern for US observers. By avoiding a total collapse of the economy, Americans sought to prevent Italy from being swept into an international alliance hostile, if not opposed, to US strategic interests. Economic assistance was therefore offered to the country especially through the United Nation Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Up until 1947, the US adopted an indirect form of intervention in the Italian affairs and, while the local ruling elite was given substantial autonomy, the Italian government constantly received advice and suggestion on how to plan an effective economic policy. Following this advice, however, depended not so much on the degree of pressure exerted by Washington but on the Italian leading elite's decisions to accept American directions.

The second part of this chapter focuses on the beginning of the Cold War and the evolution of US-Italian relations from an indirect to a more direct involvement in the

political and economic reconstruction of the country. The DC leader De Gasperi played a pivotal role in advancing relations between the two countries and in convincing Washington to change its strategy towards Italy. However, the DC was initially perceived as a far too conservative and unreliable political actor. The close ties with the Vatican also represented a major concern for the US, worried that an excessive Church involvement in Italian politics could push anti-clerical and secular forces towards the left. De Gasperi, therefore, had to prove himself and his party to be a reliable interlocutor for the US in order to obtain political support and strengthen his authority within the Italian political establishment. The catalyst was the Prime Minister's journey to the US in January 1947, and the mediations of Italian and American Ambassadors, made this possible. Once there, De Gasperi exploited the American anti-Communist fear as leverage to obtain political and economic support. When in the US he strengthened Washington's belief that the inability to pursue an effective reconstruction of the country rested on the PCI and the radical protests organised by the Italian federation of Labour. Once obtained the reassurance of political and economic support, the DC leaders took the initiative and excluded the PCI and the PSI from the cabinet.

The third section of this chapter focuses on the post-1947 era. Despite the establishment of De Gasperi IV cabinet represented a phase of magnitude importance for the future of the Italian political system, the following years contradicts the interpretation of a primacy of American power in defining the US-Italian relationship. As Harper argues, "what the cold warriors of 1947-8 conceived as an alliance for progress with the Italian people was only the latest marriage of convenience for the

predominant political class."[176] Since the priority of the Catholic party was the creation of a political space for its authority, the US became a significant asset in contributing to securing that space of authority from 1947 through the 1950s.The interesting point is that by supporting the DC, the US lost its already weak control over Italian economic and political forces to the Italian conservative party. The conservative party became even more conscious of both its autonomy and its indispensability for the US[177]. By being the only political alternative to Communism in the country and the only reliable interlocutor Washington had in Italy, the DC could not be easily replaced.

The Economic Question in the Early Post-War.

In the aftermath of World War II, Italian economy was in deep distress. Compared to other European countries, only a small percentage of Italian industrial plants were damaged by the war. Nevertheless, communication systems and transportation networks were shattered; forty per cent of the pre-war railroad network was unusable and Italy had to deal with the massive wreckage of bridges, roads, and hydroelectric systems. Despite the end of hostilities brought forth widespread feelings of hope for a prompt renewal of the country and its institutions, in the aftermath of the conflict the State was on the edge of bankruptcy; the country was hit by high inflation also caused by the issuing of AM-Lire, the currency the Allied Military Government for Occupied Territories (AMGOT-AMG) had put in circulation during the occupation; the rate of

[176] J L Harper, *American and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, First Pape (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 166.
[177] Idem, 160.

unemployment was over 2 million; the standard of living instead was far lower than other European countries.

Besides material devastations and the financial chaos caused by the war, long-lasting socio-economic issues that had existed since the foundation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861 remained unsolved. Social inequalities, political corruption, class conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the impoverishment of the masses, and the high illiteracy rate, all factors that had facilitated the rise of the Fascist regime, were a constant remainder of Italian failed transition to democracy. Furthermore, the vast differences in terms of regional wealth, education and infrastructures that divided the country appeared to be even more evident in the aftermath of World War II. The economic and social disequilibrium between northern and southern regions grew even wider due to the different impact the course of the war had had in those regions. Compared to the rest of the country, the Italian South had always been poorer and less developed. While in the North there was a more or less functioning industrial network that survived thanks to the resistance movement, in the under-industrialized southern regions the massive damaged caused by the war and the occupation aggravated the structural problems of the backward agriculture system. Due to a skyrocketing unemployment rate, a great number of southern Italians decided to migrate northwards. For those who chose to stay, the situation appeared quite depressing. The persistence of *latifondi* with its system of privileges that had characterized Italy for centuries aggravated the tensions between local peasants and landowners, leading to the occupation of lands and the increase of radical protests and clashes.

In the meantime, the recourse to another kind of violence of partisan nature brought terror to the northern regions. Moved by the revolutionary spirit of the Resistance, the most radical factions of ex partisans resorted to extreme actions to dismantle the Italian bourgeois system, its clerical tradition and its fascist debris. The most gruesome events took place in Emilia, more precisely in specific rural areas that would become infamously known as the Triangle of Death[178], where nearly three thousand people would be executed from 1945 to 1947. Social instabilities and violent outbreaks aggravated the precarious economic condition of the country with businesses renouncing to undertake investments and industrialists, entrepreneurs, and financers threatening massive capital outflows that could paralyse Italian economy.

Furthermore, structural problems such as the scarcity of natural resources and the lack of deposits of coal and metallic minerals were seen as a major impediment to Italian recovery and its industrial capacity[179]. While Italy had relied on German and British coal before the war, in 1945 neither country was exporting. Italians had to secure raw materials by looking for other external producers. However, the state lacked monetary capacity for importing goods and resources. To revive internal production and increase exports, Italy required external financial assistance.

In the aftermath of the conflict, the United States appeared to be the only external actor that could offer economic assistance to Italy. Since July 1945, the overseas power began to pour money into Europe through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). This was an international relief agency founded in 1943

[178] See: G Crainz, "Il Conflitto E La Memoria. «Guerra Civile» E «triangolo Della Morte»," *Meridiana*, no. 13 (1992): 17–55.
[179] See: J L Harper, *American and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

with the mission to help those invaded countries whose resources had been depleted and lacked foreign exchange to pay for importing the necessary supplies. However, in the early phase of post-war reconstruction Italy was not on top of Washington's priority list. The US congress was reluctant to send extensive economic and financial aid to the Latin country. As an ex-enemy, the Peninsula was not initially entitled to UNRRA aid.

Fearing to recreate the same social and economic conditions that had led to the explosive popular outcry on the early 1920s that eventually facilitated Mussolini's access to power, Italy with its autarkic past required attention as a matter of principle. There was a widespread belief that the massive economic dislocation the country was experiencing in the aftermath of World War II could be a fertile breeding ground for the rise of a new totalitarian or authoritarian regime. Furthermore, the critical conditions the population was enduring could lead to violence and anarchy and, therefore, worsening the already unstable situation. The consequences for the whole Europe would be fearful. Therefore, despite the initial reluctance, a limited UNRRA relief plan for the country was approved in mid-1945 and eventually extended in 1946.

Much of the money was used to provide the local population with food, shelter and medical supplies. Despite crucial, this intervention offered only a short-term solution for an immediate relief for the population to overcome the dramatic times, but it was not enough to secure a long-term stability of Italian economy. As an UNRRA poster made clear "UNRRA can only lay the foundations for the reconstruction of Italy, and provide temporary aid. THE REST FALLS TO THE ITALIAN PEOPLE- THAT IS

TO EACH OF YOU."[180] Getting Italy back on its feet was therefore Italians' responsibility.

According to the United States, the first step towards Italian stability rested on the establishment of a political coalition built around the anti-Fascist tenet. Only through the formation of a united and legitimised front Italy could plan and coordinate an effective political and economic reconstruction while avoiding the spread of anarchy and chaos within the country. Differently from their British ally, the US was less interested in the monarchical question and immediately displayed its support to the Italian anti-Fascist ruling class.

Because in the early post-war anti-Communism was not the priority of US foreign policy towards Italy, the State Department welcomed both the establishment of the government coalition, which included the PCI, and the reorganization of the Italian federation of labours, CGIL, largely believed to be an extension of the Communist party. These two bodies were initially seen as positive forces that could help maintaining the order and preventing social, political and economic chaos. Stability, therefore, was the key for an American approach to Italian reconstruction up until 1947.

After receiving official diplomatic recognition in September 1944, the newly created Italian government was given substantial autonomy on domestic affairs. Except on a few sporadic occasions such as the schedule of national and administrative elections, the referendum issue, and the role of the constituent assembly, the US did not openly intervene on Italian matters. Initially, the American economic intervention to foster

[180] V Belco, *War, Massacre, and Recovery in Central Italy, 1943-1948*, Toronto Italian Studies (London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 136–137.

Italian recovery was possibly perceived as a mere public recognition of the country as part of the West but not as a thorough attempt to effectively reconstruct the country. While the anti-Fascist institutional façade of post-war Italy gave the semblance of political order, the deterioration of social and economic contexts concerned the US. Nevertheless, no specific economic measures were provided until the signing of the Marshall Plan in July 1948.

While Washington formally withdrew from intervening, the US tried to establish a form of indirect control through the activities of mid-level officials, labor unionists and diplomats.[181] Among the others, the American Embassy and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) operated as mediators between Washington and Rome by establishing close ties with right-wing Socialists and Christian democrats as well as influential non-governmental economic actors. The main objective was to convince the Italian political class to implement an American approach to the Italian reconstruction. The AFL leader Luigi Antonini, who in 1944 had been sent to Italy to reform the trade union movement, described the post-war situation as critical. Unemployment, delinquency, poor conditions and social tensions were holding Italy back from reaching stability.

In the early phase of post-war reconstruction, however, Americans had positive feelings about the leading elite's ability to solve the economic crisis. Without exerting direct control on the Italian decisional dynamics, the US kept on offering suggestions to the political class. According to some American analysts, a policy plan constructed on classical economic tenets represented the best strategy for stabilizing Italian

[181] Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944-1951*, 31–32.

economy. They suggested to the Italian government to promote multi-lateral free trade, currency convertibility, the end of protectionist policy and the removal of the state from the economic sphere. On July 1945 Undersecretary to Foreign Affairs William Clayton asked the American embassy to Rome to encourage the Italian government to dismantle bilateral commercial agreements and trade barriers in order to facilitate Italian integration in global economy [182]. Other economic experts were instead convinced that deficit spending and social liberalism would facilitate Italian recovery and would create employment, distribute income, while promoting social and political reforms. Furthermore, Italian leading forces were given the advice that, in order to finalize Italian economic recovery, the production capacity had to be restored, the unemployment crisis solved, the internal monetary situation stabilized, industrial plants and infrastructures that had been damaged during the conflict had to be rebuilt and a solution had to be found to the *Mezzogiorno* question.

The implementation of these policies depended not so much on Washington's pressure but in large part on the decision of the Italian political class to implement them. The main problem, however, was that the US relied on a political class that, instead of prioritizing an effective economic plan, was seeking to secure its own power within the political establishment. Instead of addressing the economic issue, up until late 1946 the Italian government proved more concerned on promoting a political reconstruction of the country and its institutional renewal. Social and economic reforms were initially put aside in the attempt to avoid instabilities within the political establishment due to political parties' different economic and social agendas. Beside this, another pivotal

[182] R Raftopoulos, "Italian Economic Reconstruction and the Marshall Plan. A Reassessment," *Occasional Papers,* no. 3 (2009): 9.

reason that led parties' leaders to prioritize political instead of economic reconstruction was linked to the widespread feeling of electoral insecurity within political circles and the strategy of consensus building to counteract it.

The delay in effectively addressing the daunting economic questions had the unfortunate consequence of driving the country into a financial and economic chaos. In late 1946 the situation appeared to be beyond control. The Lira's free market value felt from 528 to 909 per dollar. Popular discontent drastically increased due to poor working conditions, the lack of social justice and labour rights led to massive mass protests that broke out in many Italian cities. In response to social agitations, the most conservative groups and the Italian capitalist class eventually increased pressure on the government to halt social unrest by regaining control of the "revolutionary" working class. Industrialists, entrepreneurs, and financers threatened massive capital outflows and renunciation to undertake investments unless the PCI would be removed from the cabinet.

In this context of great instability, local *Mafiosi* added more fuel to the fire. In the absence of the State, these outlaws made major inroads within the population and exerted their powers through the recourse to violent actions against Communist and Socialist members and supporters. Violent retaliations in the South due to the increasing support to Left-wing parties culminated with the massacre at Portella delle Ginestre, Sicily, on May 1, 1947. Eleven people were killed at the hand of Salvatore Giuliano and his band days after the victory of the Blocco del Popolo, the PCI-PSI coalition, for the regional election in Sicily. Fear of a possible socio-political and economic collapse of the system was widespread. In response to social unrest, State

repressions increased, especially following Mario Scelba's appointment to the Ministry of Interior in February 1947.

The government coalition became the target of fierce criticism inside and outside the country for its inability to solve the economic crisis and to effectively reconstruct the country. Among the most conservative Catholic circles and the economic right, the DC collaboration with the PCI and PSI became a matter of great concern. The presence of what De Gasperi named 'the fourth party'[183] exacerbated the situation and the pressure it exerted on the DC ended up representing a primary factor that led to the political crisis and the eventual ousting of the leftist parties from the cabinet. The term fourth party was a metaphoric expression used to define the political influence of non-political economic forces able to paralyze Italian recovery by threatening loan sabotages, massive capital outflows, renunciation to undertake investments, as well as promoting libellous campaigns[184]. The "blackmailing powers" of the economic and financial elites caused a widespread fear of a possible socio-political and economic collapse of the system[185].

Social and political tensions put some constraints on the government and led the DC to accept the idea that without solving the economic crisis the political legitimacy of the government would be jeopardized. The regional elections in 1946-7 showed a decrease of electoral support to the DC especially in the South. In Sicily vote for the

[183] See: L Cafagna, "Il «quarto Partito» e la «sinistra non di governo» nella ricostruzione postbellica. Considerazioni tipologiche e comparative," *Ricerche Di Storia Politica* VIII, no. 1 (2005): 37–50.
[184] Barbagallo, *Stor. Dell'Italia Repubblicana. La Costr. Della Democr. Dalla Caduta Del Fascismo Agli Anni Cinquanta*, 105.
[185] L Cafagna, "Il «quarto partito» e la «sinistra non di governo» nella ricostruzione postbellica. Considerazioni tipologiche e comparative," *Ricerche Di Storia Politica* VIII, no. 1 (2005): 41.

Catholic party dropped from thirty-three per cent to twenty per cent[186]. Moderate segments of the working class that had initially perceived the DC as a progressive party begun to withdraw their support to the conservative party in favour of either Left wing parties or the right-wing populist and anti-Communist party *L'Uomo Qualunque* (The Common Men).

With national elections approaching in April 1948, the Prime Minister had to secure its political authority to impede a further drop of electoral consensus. When it became clear that there was no possibility for maintaining political hegemony without addressing Italian economic and industrial issues, De Gasperi turned to the Italian capitalist class seeking political support and collaboration of the entrepreneurial class.[187] Establishing hegemony among this economic group was not an easy task. Big businesses, entrepreneurs, bankers, and industrialists had openly declared their dissatisfaction towards the Catholic party and its ambiguous agenda. To overcome this impasse, De Gasperi strategically established close ties with well-respected Liberal economists, whose positions on economic policy were largely accepted among the capitalist class.

The Christian Democrat leader, however, had to acknowledge that an economic reconstruction without external aid was very unlikely to happen. The United States appeared to be the only economic power that could assist the country in its path towards recovery. When in November 1946 the Republicans won the midterm elections and took control of the House of Representatives, the prospect of a Congress'

[186] J Whittam, "The Reluctant Crusader: De Gasperi and the Crisis of May 1947," *War & Society* 2, no. 1 (1984): 93.
[187] G Formigoni, "De Gasperi E La Crisi Politica Italiana Del Maggio 1947," 2003, 376.

refusal of an economic and financial commitment abroad speeded up the Italian ruling elite's intention to establish close ties with Washington. Furthermore, UNRRA founds were about to come to an end and Italy was in desperate needs of external economic aid.

Despite the fact that an external economic assistance was vital for the country, the primary reason that led the Gasperi to reach out to Washington was linked to the loss of his party's political consent. When the Prime Minister finally came to terms with the idea that the political legitimacy of his party largely depended on finding a viable solution to the economic crisis, he conveyed his energies and used its personal networks within and outside the country to secure the US political and economic support to his party. Ironically, the US would become relevant at the time the DC faced a political challenge to retain its authority rather than simply for economic reasons. By the late 1946, De Gasperi sought to convince Washington to revaluate its approach towards Italy from an indirect to a more direct form of intervention.

The United States and Christian Democracy in the Early Cold War.

In order for the US to directly intervene in the country a major issue had to be solved: the lack of a political interlocutor. The very nature of the Italian government coalition with its ideologically divided political parties represented an impasse for the promotion of an effective economic recovery according to American plans. First of all, political parties' inability to overcome divisions due to different economic and social agendas impeded to reach agreements on economic policy. Secondly, concerns about

the Italian economic status shifted Americans' intentions from an indirect to a more direct form of control, the absence of a major political interlocutor in the political system further delayed the US involvement in the Italian recovery process. As Romero argues, without a political counterpart with whom starting a productive dialogue on reconstruction, there was no chance for Italy to obtain substantial economic aid and political support from Washington[188].

In the early post-war, when anti-Communism was not the central tenet of US foreign policy towards Italy, American officials believed that Italian successful transition to democracy depended on the victory of a social democratic front. According to many, a lay party similar to the Labor Party in UK would represent the best option for a political and economic recovery of the country. American trade unionists, mid-level politicians and diplomats expressed their support to the right-wing faction of the Italian socialist party and since the Armistice declaration in 1943 began actively supporting the socialist leader Giuseppe Saragat. Even though in the final stage of the war and the early reconstruction period the State Department was more concern on a united anti-Fascist front and eventually stability rather than anti-Communism, Americans individuals with close connections in the Italian political system mobilised to urge right-wing socialists to break away from Pietro Nenni's party, the PSI, which held to the wartime pact of unity with the communists. The Italian American Labor Council (IALC), founded in New York in 1941 under the leadership of the AFL's delegate

[188]F Romero, "Gli Stati Uniti in Italia: Il Piano Marshall E Il Patto Atlantico," in *Storia dell'Italia Repubblicana. La Costruzione Della Democrazia. Dalla Caduta Del Fascismo Agli Anni Cinquanta*, ed. F Barbagallo (Torino: Einaudi, 1994), 239–240.

Antonini, actively promoted and financed a split within the Socialist party by seeking to establish a political leftists alternative to the Communism party.[189]

When the break eventually occurred in January 1947 with right-wing socialists leaving the PSI, the outcome was unsatisfying. If, on the one hand, Saragat's new party, the PSLI (Partito Socialista dei Lavoratori Italiani), was too weak and divided into different factions to represent an alternative to the PCI, on the other hand, the PSI seemed not inclined to break the pact of unity with the communists and re-join the secessionist group. Therefore, the US turned to the most tenacious anti-Communist political actor: the DC.

Despite the shared anti-Communist interest, this convergence did not eradicate all American doubts about establishing an alliance with the Catholic party. The close ties between the DC and the Vatican, for instance, raised great concerns in Washington. State department officials were worried that an excessive Church involvement in Italian politics could have played into the hands of the PCI "by pushing disillusioned anti-clerical and secular forces towards the left, alienating key groups on which US reconstruction and reform programs relied."[190] However, the disappointing results of the 1946 local elections that showed an increasing support to the PCI and PSI required an immediate intervention and support to the only effective anti-Communist force.

The declining support for the DC also allowed a further convergence between US-mid level officials, De Gasperi and his party, and non-state actors all willing to halt the PCI

[189] R L. Filippelli, "Luigi Antonini, the Italian-American Labor Council, and Cold-War Politics in Italy, 1943–1949," *Labor History* 33, no. April 2015 (1992): 111–112.
[190] K Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 31.

increasing electoral success[191]. The diplomatic efforts of the two ambassadors, Alberto Tarchiani and James Clement Dunn, proved pivotal for an improvement of diplomatic relations between the two countries by filling the communication vacuum between the two governments as well as by influencing public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic. Thanks to their mediations, Washington would be soon led to believe that both De Gasperi and his cabinet could be trusted. The Italian ambassador to the US, for instance, constantly praised De Gasperi's leadership, identifying him as the most able politician among the anti-Communist moderate forces. Furthermore, to clear the Prime Minister's doubts of a possible infringement of Italian sovereignty, Tarchiani reassured the DC by claiming that a US-Italian alliance was not only fruitful for economic purposes but also for fostering the DC's political objectives[192]. Through this alliance the Catholic Party could strengthen its authority within the national political system and the international community.

However, it was De Gasperi who played a central role in improving US-Italian relation managing to present himself as a reliable interlocutor for the US. The catalyst was his journey to the US in January 1947. To solve the economic crisis and political uncertainties, the DC Prime Minister accepted the invitation by the American magnate Henry Luce to attend an international conference held in Cleveland. Walter Dowling, the State Department Italian desk officer, had forwarded news about this conference to De Gasperi's secretary noting that this was an "excellent medium" to present the Italian case before influential American figures such as Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg, John Forrestal and George Marshall, and Secretary of State James

[191] Idem, 43.
[192] G Sale, *De Gasperi, Gli USA e Il Vaticano* (Milano: Jaca Book, 2005), 49.

Byrnes[193]. De Gasperi saw in this journey the chance to get economic and material aid from the US, to convince the Export-Import Bank to offer a loan to Italy, but, above all, to receive political support to his party.

Once in Washington, De Gasperi met with the Secretary of State James Byrnes and eventually with President Truman. Unable to present a coherent economic strategy to reconstruct the country[194], the Italian Prime Minister tried to obtain the US support by exploiting the American anti-Communist fear as leverage. He described the Italian situation as on the verge of a collapse strategically blaming Italian "radical" groups as the major obstacle to carry out an effective reconstruction of the country. "The greatest political pressure," he reported to Byrnes, "was being brought at this time by the Communist Party to bring Italy within the orbit of Russian influence." [195] In order to face this threat, some help was required especially considering the economic crisis Italy was facing.

The trip to the US would help secure a 100 million dollars loan from the Export-Import Bank and 50 million dollars payments related to the wartime occupation.[196] However, despite the fact that many DC politicians considered this loan inadequate, it was more important for its symbolic meaning than for its economic benefits. It eventually allowed De Gasperi to obtain the American political support to his party[197] and it would help him securing its authority within the country. Thanks also to the media

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193 Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950*, 49.
194 A Brogi, *A Question of Self-Esteem* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 81.
195 S Serfaty, "An International Anomaly: The United States and the Communist Parties in France and Italy, 1945–1947," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 8, no. Spring-Summer (1975): 139.
196 Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950*, 48.
197 Mistry, 62.

campaign led by some American journalists and correspondents as Anne O'Hare McCormick, Sumner Welles, Stuart Alsop and Walter Lippmann De Gasperi's ten-day tour, which was described as a media "triumph", made him the perfect interlocutor.[198]

This journey has engendered an historical debate among scholars. There is a tendency to identify this event as the central cause of the political crisis that led to the ousting of the PCI from the cabinet. Scholars tend to imply that either Truman asked the Italian Prime Minister for the exclusion of the communists as a prerequisite for American economic and financial aid or that De Gasperi promised to expel the Left from the coalition. However there is no evidence proving these theories. Whether it was the Italian Prime Minister or the American President to first introduce the problematic issue of the Italian Communist party's inclusion in the government coalition is not of interest here. The interesting point is that the nature of this alliance was due to the convergence of both countries' anti-Communism.

By choosing anti-Communism as the new legitimizing ideology, De Gasperi would obtain political leverage to strengthen his power both within the Italian political establishment as well as in the transatlantic relation. Even though this journey to the US was not the cause that led to the political crisis, it soon became the expedient that could eventually allow the DC leader to remove the Left from the cabinet. De Gasperi The strategy of incoming US-aid was used to reassure the Italian masses during a period of great political, economic and social instability and to isolate both the PCI and PSI. Despite the fact that there is no evidence proving that Truman openly

[198] S White, "De Gasperi through American Eyes: Media and Public Opinion, 1945-1953," *Italian Politics and Society* 61, no. Fall-Winter (2005): 15.

demanded the Communists exclusion as a prerequisite for receiving American economic aid, the Catholic party strategically published a list of such "demands." [199] It was a shrewd manoeuvre designed to convince the Italian public that the Communist exclusion was the only effective key to obtain America's aid.

It took few months, however, for De Gasperi to eventually oust the PCI and PSI from the cabinet. Nevertheless, once back from the US the DC leader started removing communists and socialists out of sensitive posts and placed Carlo Sforza in the foreign office and Scelba at the interior.[200] The former was a noted anti-monarchist who spent the early years of the war in the US where he established close ties with State Department officials. The latter was an Italian Christian Democrats politician known for his anti-Communism often referred to as the "Iron Sicilian" for his ruthless suppression of left-wing protests and workers' strikes.

After signing the Art. 7, which recognize the Lateran Pacts of 1929 and guaranteed the special status given to the Catholic Church in Italian society, and the signing of the Paris Peace treaty, the need for a political alliance with the PCI came to an end. Furthermore, with the declaration of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 De Gasperi made a forced comparison between the Greek and the Italian case. The US anti-Communist approach to Italy was then made more explicit and De Gasperi, who gained internal and external credibility since the journey to the US, was now ready to move. Encouraged by the news that the communists had been expelled from the French and

[199] Serfaty, "An International Anomaly: The United States and the Communist Parties in France and Italy, 1945–1947," 144.
[200] Whittam, "The Reluctant Crusader: De Gasperi and the Crisis of May 1947," 97–98.

Belgian government without producing any serious repercussions, De Gasperi finally decided to act by ousting the leftist parties from his government on May 31, 1947.

The Evolution of US-Italian Relations in the post-1947.

Besides the ousting of the Communists from the cabinet in May 1947, the appointment of liberal economists was seen as an indicator of Italian final acceptance to take into great consideration America's advice for an economic reconstruction of the country. Unsurprisingly, Washington expressed its satisfaction for the political change and in particular for the appointment of Luigi Einaudi as Budget Minister. The establishment of an alliance with an anti-Communist political party that could count on the support of liberal economists, middle-class forces and entrepreneurial groups was seen as a guarantee to American interests in the Mediterranean[201]. Furthermore, Washington was led to believe that the PCI had represented the major obstacle for Italian economic paralysis. Now that the threat was removed, the Americans were optimistic about a rapid recovery of Italian economy according to US approach and within the framework of the European Recovery Plan. Furthermore, with the PCI out of the game, Washington was convinced that it would be able to exert remarkable pressure on the Italian government and play a preponderant role in the Italian reconstruction.

Days after the establishment of the new cabinet, Secretary of State George Marshall delivered a speech at Harvard University in which he outlined the need for an

[201] Harper, *American and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, 159–60.

economic aid plan for the rehabilitation of the economic structure of Europe. Despite the fact that the US would give financial aid, the responsibility to rehabilitate each country's economy rested on the states with each economic plan to be drawn up by a European government and, eventually, to be approved by the US.

To grant its approval, Washington informed the Italian government through its embassy in Rome that the precondition for sending economic and financial subsidies rested on Italians' responsibility to take some resolute measures to stabilize currency and to reduce inflationary pressures. Luigi Einaudi, the newly appointed minister of the Budget, started its anti-inflationary battle. The so called «Einaudi line» consisted in a deflationary stabilization plan reducing money supply and imposing restriction on bank credits. The result was immediate, with inflation rates slowing down and the severe foreign exchange crisis brought under control[202].

Stability, however, was not the only preconditions set by Washington. The DC government was also expected to reform Italian society by tackling unemployment and improving Italians' living standards. Once again, the DC would begin to act independently from the US. Einaudi refused to apply any policy of deficit spending or wage growth rather aiming to saving private investment restocking through balance readjustment and cutting state subsidies on prices.[203] Furthermore, its credit restriction plan hit small and medium-size businesses severely, with a decline in investments and a halt in industrial productivity. The consequences of his policy led to unemployment increase, social tensions, and productive reconstruction paralysis. The United States

[202] P Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1988* (St. Martin's Press, 2003), 113.
[203] C Spagnolo, *La Stabilizzazione Incompiuta. Il Piano Marshall in Italia (1947-1952)* (Roma: Carocci, 2001), 89–92.

was deeply concerned about the political consequences of this stabilization policy, especially with national election approaching in April 1948.[204]

Even though not all the conditions set by the Americans were reached, the urgency to defeat the PCI in the national election convinced President Truman to hasten the ERP bill through Congress in order to be signed before the vote[205]. The priority given to anti-Communism allowed the DC not to deal with American requests while still emphasising Italian need for US support and assistance in politically defeating the PCI.

With the approaching of the national election in April 1948 Washington began to fear the possibility of a communist access to power. In a CIA report in March 1948, the Agency noted that it would have been "the first actual extension of Communist (Soviet) territorial control (except in China)"since the end of the war and "the first instance in history of a communist accession to power by popular suffrage and legal means"[206]. Besides authorizing a series of covert-overt actions to impede a Communist electoral success, which would be analysed in the next chapter, during the last week of the electoral campaign, the US publicised the imminent arrival of Marshall Plan aid to Italy, aids that would have been cancelled in case of an electoral success of the Italian communist party.

When the day of the election came, the Left was defeated and the DC obtained an absolute majority in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. After the electoral success, Washington welcomed the newly established government led by De Gasperi

[204] G Park, *Spending Without Taxation: FILP and the Politics of Public Finance in Japan*, EBSCO Ebook Academic Collection (Stanford University Press, 2011), 84.
[205] M Gilbert, *Cold War Europe: The Politics of a Contested Continent* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 66.
[206] E T Smith, *The United States, Italy and NATO, 1947-1952* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 33.

and Ambassador James Dunn expressed the beliefs that both American and Italian interests would benefit from it. According to him, this political change would lead Italy towards "economic and institutional reforms necessary to modernize and democratize the country"[207] as well as a final ideological defeat of Communism.

However, if the Americans thought that this new US-Italian alliance would allow Washington to play a major role in Italian reconstruction they would be soon proved wrong. The DC continued instead to pursue an independent or at least autonomous agenda. Despite Washington's requests to use the ERP aid to increase productive investments, to absorb unemployment, to promote a vast land reform in the South, as well as to increase productive efficiency and labour productivity in Italian industry, Italians seemed reluctant to follow this advice. Instead, the Italian government kept production growth slow and employment level down, pursuing economic policies aimed at recovering public budget and curb inflation[208]. A large part of the Marshall Plan funding was also used to build up the Banca d'Italia reserves, against the objections of the ERP[209]. Tensions emerged on issues such as agricultural and industrial productivity, new management methods and technologies, apolitical and corporative trade unions, land reforms, private and public monopolies, and the antiquated financial system[210]. The American plans for transforming the socio-economic and political structure of the country clashed with the DC intent to pursue

[207] Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," 1307.
[208] F Romero, "Gli Stati Uniti in Italia: Il Piano Marshall E Il Patto Atlantico," in *Storia dell'Italia Repubblicana. La Costruzione Della Democrazia. Dalla Caduta Del Fascismo Agli Anni Cinquanta*, ed. F Barbagallo (Torino: Einaudi, 1994), 262.
[209] D J Forsyth and T Notermans, *Regime Changes: Macroeconomic Policy and Financial Regulation in Europe from the 1930s to the 1990s*, Berghahn Series (Berghahn Books, 1997), 188.
[210] K Mistry, "Re-Thinking American Intervention in the 1948 Italian Election: Beyond a Success–failure Dichotomy.," *Modern Italy* 16, no. 2 (2011): 189.

stability and the restoration of order, rejecting any radical transformation of the structure of the country. The Italian government chose to promote a more conservative economic policy that could safeguard the economic right and the conservative electorate's interests[211].

The priority for the Catholic party was to consolidate its own networks and, despite the economic assistance was vital, the DC's priority still remained politics. The effectiveness of an American direct approach towards Italy did not automatically mean the US would be free to exert its will. Even though the US wanted the implementation of reforms, the final decision rested in the hands of those Italian actors who had the construction of a political hegemony as the primary objective. This priority did not fit with Washington's vision of a proper economic reconstruction.

The reluctance to follow the US advice and to promote social and economic reforms was interpreted in Washington as further proof of the DC passive conservatism. The Italian party, however, considered this conservative approach necessary to stabilize social alliances at the base of DC government. In particular, it was meant to build a hegemonic social block composed of the middle-class that could give the DC political legitimacy[212]. De Gasperi continued in pursuing his own fundamental objective namely the consolidation of networks of alliances that could secure him and his political party's power within the country.

[211] Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950*, 23.
[212] G Sapelli and G Fuà, *Storia Economica dell'Italia Contemporanea*, Sintesi (Milano) (B. Mondadori, 1997), 2.

Despite frustration, the American government continued to politically and financially support the DC to ensure the country would remain anti-Communist. The priority given to reduce the Communist political influence within the country gradually led Washington to adapt its foreign policy agenda towards the country. According to Giulio Sapelli, in the Italian case, economic policies deviation from Keynesian line was barter with a strong control with anti-Communist function.[213] As Harper argues, "Once committed to the DC-led alliance, the United States would fall prey to the dilemmas inherent in the complex relationship of a great power to a smaller local client. Events would be determined less by the architects of the Marshall plan than by factors essentially beyond the American executive's control: Congress, objective economic circumstances, and, above all, by the Italian political forces themselves."[214] No matter how powerful the US was, by being the only effective anti-Communist political actor the DC could not be easily substituted. De Gasperi's refusal to outlaw the Communist party as the US repeatedly asked for, allowed him to obtain great leverage in the negotiation with the American ally.

Conclusion.

In less than ten years since the 1948 election Italy would undergo a series of major changes. In 1949 it became a founding member of the NATO, in 1955 a member of the United Nations, in 1952 a founding member of the ECSC and of the European

[213] G Sapelli and G Fuà, *Storia Economica dell'Italia Contemporanea*, Sintesi (Milano) (B. Mondadori, 1997), 2.
[214] Harper, *American and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, 141.

Economic Community in 1957. In the 1950s Italy revived its economy, which led to an impressive economic growth dubbed the "Economic Miracle" that unfortunately widened the economic gap between the wealthy and the poor classes. Despite America contributing greatly to the economic growth of the country and facilitating the establishment and maintenance of a centrist government that prevented a communist political success, relations between the two countries did not seem to ameliorate. Initial optimism gradually vanished as Americans became more and more frustrated over the DC's pursuit of independent objectives as well as the unsuccessful attempt to make transatlantic anti-Communism as a new form of collective identity.

The failure in reducing the appeal of the PCI was considered as a consequence of the Italian government passivity to act as an anti-Communist force. In a letter to Ambassador Luce, Eisenhower complained about the Italian case. As he wrote:

> "It seems strange that among all the states in which we opposed communism, we had less results in Italy than in any other country. The whole area of Western Europe, including Italy, has experienced a high economic growth in recent years and this is especially due to the American help. However, each new report from Italy gives evidence of a growing resentment towards us, and an increased respect for the Soviets. [...] So, while I recognize your argument, namely that the United States should interest more about Italy, I also believe that the greatest responsibility belongs to the leaders of those countries."[215]

[215] F Robbe, *L'impossibile Incontro. Gli Stati Uniti E La Destra Italiana Negli Anni Cinquanta: Gli Stati Uniti E La Destra Italiana Negli Anni Cinquanta*, Storia Della Società, Dell'economia E Delle Istituzioni (Franco Angeli Edizioni, 2012), 93.

The main problem was that the alliance was never meant to be an invitation to the US to paly a major role in Italian political and social reconstruction. According to Del Pero, the so-called phase of "invitation" had ended once Italy received the guaranteed of Marshall plan aid. De Gasperi and his party began resisting to American pressures knowing that Washington needed a political interlocutor to pursue anti-Communist policy within the country. Aware that the Communist presence represented the only guarantee for economic aid, external security, and the US political support to the Christian Democrats, De Gasperi strategically oppose any internal or external requests to outlaw the PCI.[216] Eventually, what took place in Italy was a strategic co-optation of US money, its influence and networks in order for the Catholic party and its leader to obtain credibility.

With the DC electoral success the US lost its already weak control over Italian economic and political forces to the Italian conservative party. The conservative party became even more conscious of both its autonomy and its indispensability for the US[217.] By being the only political alternative to Communism in the country and the only reliable interlocutor Washington had in Italy, the DC could not be easily replaced. Eventually, it was De Gasperi and not Truman who played a pivotal role in US-Italian relation. Up until when Italy would receive economic aid or the international conditions would allow it, the Italians would be the one setting the terms for an Italian-American agenda. No matter how useful the US intervention in favour of the DC was; Washington could not dictate its own will due to the fact that Cold War dynamics had

[216] Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," 1332.
[217] Harper, *American and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, 160.

the effect of solidifying the DC position as the only powerful anti-Communist political force.

-CH. V-

THE US SOFT POWER AND THE ITALIAN POLITICAL CULTURE.

While seeking to foster an effective recovery of Italian economy and to establish close ties with anti-Communist forces within the political establishment, the United States recognized the need for transforming Italians' political culture through a process of Americanization of the whole society. As highlighted by the American diplomat George Kennan in his famous Long Telegram, it was largely believed that the Communist menace could be resisted by publicly exposing the realities of the Soviet situation and by educating the population about the benefits of the American system and its Way of Life[218]. American culture was therefore deployed in a transnational attempt to influence the Italian public opinion and teach Italians about the uniqueness of America and the desirability of its economic, political, social and cultural system.

Americans were also becoming more and more concerned about widespread feelings of hostility and distrust towards their country[219]. This negative attitude towards the Western Power was mainly caused by deeply rooted stereotypes and misconceptions about America and its people[220]. Washington, therefore, authorized the recourse to covert-overt operations to promote a better understanding of the American *modus*

[218] G Kennan, *The Charge in the Soviet Union (Kennan) to the Secretary of State,* telegram available at https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm
[219] See Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II*
[220] Ibidem

vivendi abroad[221]. In January 1948 the US Congress passed the US Information and Educational Exchange Act, also known as Smith-Mundt Act, a bill that clarify the terms in which the US government could engage in public diplomacy. Radio broadcasts, films, posters, cultural exchanges and educational programs all became powerful instruments to shape Italians' perceptions and manoeuvre the public opinion to create a friendly and healthy environment in which the United States could exert an indirect pressure on governments and their political agendas. As part of a broad process in which people around the globe were slowly and gradually led to identify with the Western Power, cultural diplomacy was meant to enhance the image of the United States abroad as well as to influence ideas and beliefs among specific segments of society to transform the political culture of those selected groups.

Despite the US could exert some pressure that could led to a change of the Italian political culture this could not take place without a series of negotiations and mediations with local actors. The Americans had to adapt their objectives to the national context in which they chose to intervene and its challenges. In Italy, when the US intervened in the April 1948 national election, Washington had to rely on anti-Communist forces that had been active in the political and social fight against the PCI. These actors were deeply rooted in the Italian society and despite being non-governmental forces they operated as powerful political and social actors. The influence and experience of the Catholic Church and its organizations, for example, was used by the US to advance its position within the Italian society and achieved their anti-Communist intent. However, the establishment of this conditional alliance

[221]See: United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 available at www.state.gov/documents/organization/177574.pdf

between Washington and the Vatican had some unfortunate consequences. Instead of Americanizing the masses and leading Italians to accept a transnational anti-Communism as a new form of collective identity, the US intervention in support of the DC strengthened the influence of the Church within society and Catholicism became a strong form of identity.

While seeking to transform the catholic masses, the United States also attempted to change the political culture of the working class by taking control of the labour unions away from the PCI.[222] As discussed in the previous chapter, the USA through the American Federation of Labor initially campaigned for the establishment of a non-political trade union. This would be revealed soon to be practically impossible for a country in which ideology and politics were so deeply interwoven and embedded in all strata of society. Americans had, therefore, to change their tactics and they began supporting a split within the CGIL. When this happened, the formation of two separate trade unions, the catholic CISL and the social democrat UIL, were not powerful enough to neutralise the Communist influence within the working class. Despite the US pressured both organizations to merge the unification never took place. The socialists' hostility towards the Catholic Church and the DC's distrust towards the Left proved much stronger than the lure of American dollars.

One of the major flaws of US public diplomacy was that it was based on the assumption that, once understood the American Way Life, people around the world would be more than willing to adopt the US system, its culture and its values. This was

[222] R L Filippelli, *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Filippelli, "Luigi Antonini, the Italian-American Labor Council, and Cold-War Politics in Italy, 1943–1949."

not the case for the Italian population. Despite the large dissemination of American cultural products, Italians always showed some resistance to the process of Americanization. The transnational attempt to sell the American *modus vivendi* faced the challenge of the Italian cultural and social barriers.

Selling the American Way of Life in Italy.

Even though the US State Department had traditionally being reluctant on relying on propaganda and psychological weapons, in the aftermath of WWII these became indispensable assets of American foreign policy for waging a global and total war.[223] Washington's concerns about the expansionist aims of the Soviet Union escalated after George Kennan, the American Diplomat stationed at the US embassy in Moscow, sent to the State Department what it would become known as the Long Telegram. The top-secret document was cabled in response to the election meeting speech delivered by Stalin at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow in February 1946. The analysis produced took the form of a lengthy and detailed memorandum in which Kennan outlined his views of the USSR and its foreign policy. After denouncing the aggressive behaviour of the Soviets, he advocated the US government to mobilize and prevent the spread of Communism beyond the Iron Curtain through a long-term, patient, but firm, containment of Soviet expansionism. Disillusioned by American policy of appeasement, Kennan tried to persuade the US government to abandon any plans for

[223] S Lucas, *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-56* (Manchester University Press, 1999), 11.

cooperation with the Soviets and to pursue a sphere of influence policy in Western Europe. If the Soviet menace was to be halted, the US had to play a much more active role in world affairs. According to him, Washington should mobilize to protect those areas of vital strategic importance to the US against the spread of the Communist menace. This strategy would become known as "policy of containment".

Despite the seriousness of the situation, Kennan believed that the Soviet threat could be removed without the recourse to a military conflict. A major challenge to the survival of Capitalism was coming from within the Capitalist world itself. Internal divisions, systemic flaws, as well as structural problems within the 'Free World' represented a source of vulnerability that would have played into the hands of the Soviets. Because, as Kennan claimed, "world communism is like malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue"[224], the US government had the responsibility of restoring European countries to an healthy condition and build a friendly and harmonic environment that would allow Capitalism to survive and flourish[225]. The first necessary step toward a final defeat of the USSR was the orchestration of a collective mobilization of state and non-state actors to solve internal problems and instabilities as well as to improve self-confidence and to boost community spirit in the West.

Since the end of World War II, Americans had expressed some concerns about the reputation of the US abroad and the increasing manifestations of hostility and distrust among European countries towards the oversee power. Attitudes of enmity were badly

[224] G Kennan, "Telegram, George Kennan to George Marshall ['Long Telegram']," 1946, 17, Part 5: [Practical Deductions From Standpoint of US Policy], https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/6-6.pdf.
[225] National Security Council, "NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," n.d., http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm.

received and Europeans were often criticised for what the United States perceived as a lack of gratitude and appreciation towards the country that had brought them victory against the Nazis and Fascists. However, the self-proclaimed characterization as bastion of democracy and freedom seemed at odds with the ideas people in the Old World had of the US. As Richard Pells reports in his book *Not Like US: How Europeans have loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II*, in the early post war American diplomats began travelling around Europe to evaluate the state of America's post-war reputation. The results came as a surprise. Appalled by widespread feelings of distrust towards the US, these encounters also revealed deeply rooted misconceptions about America and its population[226]. Foreign public opinion tended to see the United States through deeply rooted stereotypes that had been formed in the early 19th century and persisted throughout the 20th. America was often described as vulgar, brutal, materialistic, and immoral. Many of these views were forged through Hollywood but also from accounts of fellow countrymen who had migrated to the US and complained about their social conditions and racist system. The average middleclass person tended to see Americans as uncivilised, dangerous and culturally illiterate. Intellectuals and the leading elites also shared the same misconceptions and used to criticise the cultural and social life of the overseas power. European intellectuals tended to view America with distrust and hostility. In particular, they criticised the advent of mass culture perceiving it as a menace to the Western culture. Mass culture represented for them a synonym of decay, vulgarity and

[226] R Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 61.

superficiality.[227] Furthermore, the promotion and dissemination of American cultural products in the Old World was seen as a threat to the preservation of local traditions and moral values.

With the beginning of the Cold War and the increasing support to Communism in the West, the US State Department recognized the necessity for promoting a better understanding of the American *modus vivendi* to make its system more desirable than the Soviet one. Building positive international relations and coalitions became fundamental for promoting American interests as well as for securing its hegemonic role in the Western hemisphere. In the attempt to ameliorate its image abroad, the US gave start to a massive psychological campaign meant to teach public opinion abroad about the uniqueness of the American system. In January 1948 the US Congress passed the US Information and Educational Exchange Act, popularly referred to as Smith-Mundt Act. The purpose of this bill was to clarify the terms in which the US government could engage in public diplomacy. While various information activities were already in operation before the passing of the bill, such as Voice of America and the Fulbright Programs, this act made them permanent and extended them to a larger number of countries. As stated, the major objective was "to enable the Government of the United States to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries, and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries." It provided for "an information service to disseminate abroad information about the United States, its people, and policies promulgated by the Congress, the President, the Secretary of State and other

[227]E Capozzi, "L'opposizione All'antiamericanismo: Il Congress for Cultural Freedom e l'Associazione Italiana per La Libertà Della Cultura," in *L'Antiamericanismo in Italia e in Europa Nel Secondo Dopoguerra*, ed. P Craveri and G Quagliarello (Rubettino, 2004), 326.

responsible officials of Government having to do with matters affecting foreign affairs"[228] This gave a legal authorization and financial support to overt information programs through press, publication, radio, motion pictures, information centres as well as cultural, educational and technical exchange programs.

Through public diplomacy, the US sought to emphasize the uniqueness and the desirability of the American Way of Life as a universal claim. Despite its vagueness, the American *modus vivendi* was strictly connected to four fundamental principles such as liberal democracy, individual freedom, capitalist economy and modernity[229]. Furthermore, the constant representation through movies of the American Dream with its system of mass production and good wages was used to make the American Way of Life more desirable in the eyes of Europeans.

Since the invasion of Sicily in July 1943, Italy had been flooded with propaganda aimed at selling the American model in order to convince Italians they could enjoy the same welfare and individual freedom as Americans did. The constantly evolving modern instruments and techniques of communication facilitated the dissemination of ideas allowing messages to reach geographically isolated areas and socially marginalized groups. Due to the high illiteracy rate in the country, the reliance on stamps, cartoons, posters, movies, radio programs and public events represented a great advantage for the promotion of the American Way of Life.[230]

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[228] O Stephens, *Facts to a Candid World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), 38.
[229] P Isernia, "Anti-Americanism in Europe during the Cold War," in *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, ed. P J Katzenstein and R O Keohane (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 59.
[230] According to ISTAT, in the early post-war the illiteracy in Italy represented the 12,9%. ISTAT, "1861-2011 150° Anniversario Unità D'Italia. Italia in Cifre," 14. http://www.istat.it/it/files/2011/06/italiaincifre2011.pdf.

Because of the invasive dissemination of US cultural products, scholars began to talk about cultural imperialism with US culture ending up representing the "dominant" one through a process of destruction, substitution or simply transformation of the "local" culture. As Victoria De Grazia argues in her book *Irresistible Empire*, after WWII the American presence became tangible in Italy thanks to the growth of mass culture, movies, and consumerism[231]. She explores the massive impact American products and images had on European societies, in particular in Germany, France and Italy. Through movies, the USA was depicted as a growing modern economy. The dissemination of US products in post-war Italy was massive and it operated through a series of institutions and cultural industries. In particular, the US reliance on movies seemed to be the most powerful and effective way to Americanize the Italian audience by influencing and shaping tastes, ideas, and belief. Due to the high illiteracy rate in post-war Italy, movies represented powerful instruments even more than the radio, which not all Italian families could afford to buy. A very popular form of entertainment in the early post-war, it also allowed the Italian audience to overcome the traumatic experience of the war. While Italian neorealist films presented stories about the economic and moral difficulties of post-war Italy, American movies worked as a distraction from the everyday life and a chance for briefly forgetting about a reality made of poverty, destruction, violence and injustices. In 1949, for instance, 73 per cent of box-office takings were American movies. Italy became the most important market in Europe for the American Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA), with nearly

[231] V De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

600 films per year.[232]After that year this percentage would drop conspicuously and in 1953 Hollywood would control less than 43 per cent while the local industry production would gradually increase. [233]

While relying on films to sell the American Way of Life in Italy, the US also invested on radio programs. The Voice Of America (VOA) was the official broadcasting body of the United States created with the purpose of disseminating news about America and the world abroad. Created in February 1942, soon after the US joined World War II, the VOA was part of the Office of War Information (OWI) and was meant to inform foreign audiences about the world conflict. After the end of hostilities its maintenance was under consideration. Even though the OWI was liquidated in August 1945, Truman, pressured by VOA staff and supporters in the Congress, decided to keep the program alive and its responsibilities were transferred to the State Department[234]. With the passing of the Smith-Mundt Act it was finally institutionalised.

As historian Simona Tobia observes, VOA programs tended to emphasise American peaceful and unique nature. The United States was depicted as the cradle of democracy and freedom of thought. While the West Power was described in benevolent terms, the constant reference to the imperial and aggressive attitude of the Soviet Union was used to warn the European public opinion against the threats of Communism. Because the Western Way of Life was under attack by the East force, Europeans were asked to

[232] B Whelan, "Marshall Plan Publicity and Propaganda in Italy and Ireland, 1947-1951" *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol 23, No. 4 (2003): 320

[233] S Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943–1991*, American Encounters/Global Interactions (Duke University Press, 2000), 45.

[234] D F Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945-1953* (University of Missouri Press, 2000), 1.

mobilise against the expansionist aims of the Communist world in the name of freedom and democracy[235].

Italy had the highest quota of VOA radio broadcasts among US' allies and, according to the first VOA director John Houseman, the Italian Desk was the third largest after the French and the German[236]. With the approaching of the April 1948 national election, its radio broadcasts largely increased with the purpose of offering support to the Christian Democracy's campaign against the PCI. Besides warning the Italian audience about the fate awaiting them in case of Italy's falling under Communist control, its daily broadcasts tended to report examples of American assistance and to constantly praise the friendly relations between the US and Italy. The idea was to emphasize Americans' goodwill towards Italians and its disposition to help the country to get back on its feet.

Up until mid-1950s, when the DC government decided to reduce the programming times of foreign broadcasting and to move VOA programs to a less favourable airing time, VOA transmissions were followed by a large number of Italians, especially during lunchtime and in the evening[237]. Besides news programs and political commentaries, Italians could also enjoy entertainments and educational programs such as *Cronache d'America, Università per radio, Ai vostri ordini*. From 1948 VOA staff expanded their interests to cover topics like economics, sport, literature, medicine as

[235] S Tobia, "Advertising America: VOA and Italy," *Cold War History* 11, no. 1 (2011): 31.
[236] S Gerbi, "The Italian Section of the Voice of America during WWII," n.d.
[237] S Tobia, "Advertising America: VOA and Italy," *Cold War History* 11, no. 1 (2011): 31.

well as programmes especially addressed to women and youth describing the desirability of the American Way of Life.[238]

While the VOA aimed at reaching the largest audience possible, the United States Information Service (USIS) operated with the purpose to reach a more selected and educated public[239]. Seeking to form new opinion moulders that could influence the general audience and transform the political culture of selected groups, a network of overseas branches of various offices, based in embassies and consulates, was created. The aim was to promote a better understanding of America through the broadcasting of documentaries and featured films, cultural programs, as well as library collections available to local public. The agency also dealt with the international educational exchange program also known as the Fulbright Program. William Fulbright, an American academic and politicians, strongly believed that through a better understanding of other cultures and societies, conflicts between countries could be diminished and a peaceful coexistence achieved. Around this idea of cultural and educational exchanges among countries, the program was designed and placed under the State Department's responsibility.

Another quite significant psychological warfare instrument was the propaganda campaign constructed around the European Recovery Plan, also known as Marshall Plan. When signing it, each European country accepted a clause for the dissemination of "information and news" on the working of the plan itself. Besides receiving money for an economic and financial reconstruction of the country, 5% of the funds of the

[238] Tobia, "Advertising America: VOA and Italy," 32.
[239] J Sussman, "United States Information Service Libraries" (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 1973), 12.

Marshall Plan was used for publicity and propaganda meant to change attitude, outlooks, and aspirations of each recipient countries. As David Ellwood claims, "From these premises, barely noticed at the time, there sprang the greatest international propaganda operation ever seen in peacetime."[240] As Ellwood has revealed, concerts, contests, radio shows, arts exhibitions, cartoon strips became valuable mediums to influence local audiences and remake European countries in the likeliness of the US. While the Soviet system was depicted as an underdeveloped world, characterized by scarcity of consumers good, lack of personal freedom and low living standard, positive propaganda messages projected the idea of American abundance, prosperity and freedom.[241]

US Cultural Diplomacy and the Challenges of the Italian Way of Life.

Buying American products, watching Hollywood movies, listening to rock and pop music, or reading American books did not however symbolize Italians' acceptance of the American Way of Life. One of the objectives of US Cultural diplomacy was to convert Italians to Americanism by promoting a new form of identity beyond the boundaries of the nation. At the core of this process of Americanization laid transnational concepts such as anti-Communism, Capitalism, and individual freedom. The adoption of these models could not simply take place through imposition. Because

[240] D Ellwood, "'You Too Can Be Like Us': Selling the Marshall Plan," *History Today* 48, no. 10 (1998).
[241] D W Ellwood, *Italy, 1943-1945*, Politics of Liberation Series (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1985), 3.

this process did not occur in a cultural vacuum, it faced the challenge of a clash with Italian notion of identities and its Way of Life.

The idea that through the dissemination of cultural products the US managed to create an empire and built its cultural hegemony is simply an overestimation that excludes from considerations domestic dynamics and the reception of these products by the locals. Supporters of this thesis have a tendency to simply place the promotion of American values at the centre of their analyses and at how people reacted to that promotion. This interpretation is however only a partial view. First of all, it does not consider the question of the structural vacuum from their case studies. Even if it was true that between 1945 and the late 1950s the Motion Picture Export Association of America, sometimes called as the "little State Department", allowed the US to control the film market, having a near-monopoly of distribution[242], the predominance of Hollywood movies on the market was not the result of Italians' preference for American films. In many cases, as Lorenzo Quaglietti claimed in *Storia economico-politica del cinema italiano*, Italians watched American movies because there was no other alternative[243]. In the aftermath of the war the Italian movie industry was in poor conditions due to the destructiveness of the conflict. As soon as fascist protectionist barriers were removed, the US conveyed great energy and money to expand the market to its own advantage. When the Italian government attempted to introduce a law for broadcasting Italian movies at specific times it faced the stiff opposition of the

[242] T Miller, "Anti-Americanism and Popular Culture.," in *The Political Consequences of Anti-Americanism*, ed. R Higgott and I Malbasic (New York: Routledge, 2008), 66.
[243] D Forgacs and S Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society from Fascism to the Cold War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 153.

Americans. But once the Italian cultural industry was rebuilt, Italians would go back to their own familiar products.[244]

The similar argument worked with the radio programs. The Italian audience tended to turn to foreign networks only when other sources of information were scarce or not available. But when in the 1950s the Radio Audizioni Italia (RAI) resumed its transmissions and could broadcast at a national level, the Italian audience switched to its wider range of programmes, which were considered far more interesting than the American one. While in 1947 20 percent of the Italian population in possession of a radio was listening to American programs, a survey by DOXA revealed that in 1956 the number had dropped to 2.9 percent.[245] The reason for this was that national radio networks tended to cover not only international issues but also local and national news. Attention was also paid to cultural and social matters that seemed to be of greater interest for the Italian audience then the ones covered by the VOA, often created on misplaced assumptions about the tastes, values and habits of the Italian public. Furthermore, the very nature of VOA focusing essentially on America, its history, its culture and its democratic values, did not attract a large local public. Because it was all about America and its superiority, it was only natural that when the opportunity came, Italians listeners tuned to local networks.[246] An Italian Fulbright fellow complained that, despite the joint planning between countries and the sharing of insights among people of different culture, "the exchanges were mostly designed to

[244] Ibid.
[245] S Tobia, "Note Sulla Diplomazia Culturale Americana in Italia," in *Libertà Della Cultura e 'Guerra Fredda Culturale'. Studi Sul "Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF),"* ed. M Mastrogregori, Storiograf (Brossura, 2007), 184–88.
[246] Tobia, "Advertising America: VOA and Italy," 39–40.

teach foreigners about the 'superiority of American-style democracy'".[247]

But Cultural Diplomacy also worked on the level of values. Once again, if there was for the Italians the possibility to promote their own values this would always became problematic for the dissemination of US values. The promotion of local ideas and beliefs would be stronger and more effective than a mere imposition from an external actor. In many case, US 'cultural diplomacy' attempted to transform the Italian culture according to American views without taking into consideration the cultural and social barriers of the local and the economic and political diversity between the two countries. The propaganda produced by the ERC, for instance, conveyed a vision of life that was at odds with the Italian culture. Despite the slogan "You too can be like us" and the emphasis on high productivity, good wages and prosperity, Italy was not like America; it had a different economic, political and cultural system, a distinctive set of values, and its own history. As the Italian entrepreneur Angelo Costa once pointed out, one of the limits of US psychological warfare in Italy was the Americans' lack of understanding of the context in which they try to sell their Way of Life.

> "No matter how cheap synthetic fibres became […] Italian women would always prefer clothes made in the home with natural materials; tinned food might be sold cheaply, but Italian traditions of cooking would always be preferred […] As for the concept of productivity, it ignored the basic difference between Italy and America: there capital

[247] Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II*, 62.

was cheap, labour was expensive; at home the situation was the opposite."[248]

Attempting to remake Italy in America's likeness was more difficult than expected. The persistence of small family-owned businesses, the traditional craftsmanship, the lack of cheap capital and the over-supply of labour represented a huge obstacle for the achievement of US plans.

In Italy there was also a general critique towards capitalism, which the US not only tried to defend but also to expand. By being the epitome of capitalism, the US was often criticised for being inherently aggressive, exploitative, and neo-colonialist.[249] This attitude of hostilities towards the US was not only a prerogative of the Left. Large sectors of the Right and the Catholic world disdained the Western Power, even though for different reasons than the Communism. Furthermore, also some segments of the socialist democrats, a group the US was trying to win over, also disliked the US political and economic system. The main problem with the US was that Capitalism and democracy came to be seen as an undistinguished entity with the latter viewed as a proxy of the former. The non-Communist left, therefore, advocated for a Third Way between American Capitalism and Soviet Communism.

Furthermore, the promotion of concepts such as progress, modernity, and individual freedom proved hardly effective within the Italian society. These ideas were not so easily transmissible or positively received in a conservative country like Italy where a

[248] D Ellwood, *The Shock of America: Europe and the Challenge of the Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 365.
[249] Isernia, "Anti-Americanism in Europe during the Cold War," 72.

large part of the population tended to identify with values connected to the moral and religious tradition of Catholicism. American culture and materialism were often perceived as a threat to Catholicism. Italians tended to distrust the American concept of individual freedom, the idea of consumerism and modernity, while perceiving American individualism and liberal values as a symptom of depravation of the spirit. The slowness and difficulty in overcoming cultural and moral traditions can be exemplified by referring to a peculiar event that happened in Italy in 1963, during the election campaign. The DC, hoping to enlarge its electoral base, chose to resort to an American advertising agency to improve the image of the party. The agency suggested a 'rejuvenation' of the party's image because, according to the founder of the Institute for Motivational Research in New York Ernst Ditcher, the perception of the DC among the Italian public was of an old and staid party. The agency came up with a poster portraying a young good-looking 20-years-old woman with the heading "La DC ha vent'anni" (The DC is twenty years old). The poster threw ridicule on the party as well as embarrassing comments both from its political enemies and its supporters. Recurrent jokes about the poster were "Allora bisogna farle la festa" (Then we must throw a party for her or Let's give her one then) or "E' ora che vada a farsi fottere", which in Italian corresponds to "It's time she got screwed."[250]

Aware of their constituents' frame of mind, Christian democrats realized that both the Italian middle class as well as part of the working class they tried to attract could be

[250] L Cheles, "Picture Battles in the Piazza: The Political Poster," in *The Art of Persuasion: Political Communication in Italy from 1945 to the 1900s*, ed. L Cheles and L Sponza (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 141.

frightened by sudden changes in the Italian way of life.[251] The major flaw of US public diplomacy was that it "was based on the assumption, dubious at best, that if other people understood us, they would like us, and if they liked us, they would do the things we wanted them to do."[252] The consumer society and the American way of Life, therefore, came to be seen as a threat for the Italian *modus vivendi*. It became a largely supported belief that "a specific Italian identity, with its distinctive cultural and political features, had to be preserved and not sacrificed on the altar of the Cold War."[253] So while the US was considered by many as a useful ally to prevent a communist political success in the country, the promotion of its values and culture were not largely welcomed in the country. In the early 1950s, Ambassador Clare Booth Luce had to admit that in Italy "we are definitely losing the ground in the propaganda field."[254]

The April 1948 Election and the US Short-Term Intervention.

Home to the strongest Communist party in Western Europe, with the beginning of the Cold War Italy came to be seen as a crucial testing ground for American psychological warfare. In the eyes of many American observers the PCI represented the major challenge to the promotion of an Italian-American solid alliance and, therefore, to the

[251] L Bruti Liberati, "Witch-Hunts and Corriere Della Sera. A Conservative Perception of American Political Values in Cold War Italy: The 1950s," *Cold War History* 11, no. 1 (2011): 70.
[252] O Stephens, *Facts to a Candid World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), 38.
[253] Bruti Liberati, "Witch-Hunts and Corriere Della Sera. A Conservative Perception of American Political Values in Cold War Italy: The 1950s," 71.
[254] *Special Information Project for Italy*, July 9 1954, Bureau of Public Affairs, Misc. Records 1944-1963, Record Group 59, box 77, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

consolidation of a US hegemonic role within the country. Italians, therefore, not only had to accept the American Way of Life but also to assume transnational anti-Communism as a new form of collective identity. However, due to the large electoral support to the PCI, achieving this goal required more than a simple dissemination of cultural products. Besides a long-term strategy based on the promotion of transnational values and ideas meant to facilitate the abandonment of national modes of thought, American policymakers believed that a short-term strategy to defeat Communism by bringing the conservative forces to power was indispensable for counteracting the increasing electoral support to the Left. The prevention of a Communist access to power via legal or illegal means as well as the deployment of psychological weapons to reduce the increasing appeal of the PCI among the Italian electorate became a US priority. The United States deemed necessary to depoliticise the working class movement.

In light of the incoming national election in April 1948 and the increasing electoral support to the PCI, on February 1948 the National Security Council produced its first policy document, NSC-1, assessing the position of the United States in respect to Italy and the communist question. This top-secret document called upon the US to provide full political support to De Gasperi or an "equally satisfactory successor" as well as an extension of economic assistance.[255] Due to the slow American response to the communist challenge and since the lengthy bureaucratic processes of the newly created National Security Council, the responsibility for organizing and waging a psychological warfare was largely delegated to local actors that had been actively

[255]J E Miller, "Taking Off the Gloves: The United States and the Italian Elections of 1948," *Diplomatic History* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 1983): 42.

engaged in a series of anti-Communist campaigns[256]. Washington, however, offered financial and political support to various religious, civic, labour and business groups that could help defeating the enemy. Individuals and organizations in the USA also expressed their support.

The well-known letter-writing campaign represented a remarkable psychological effort organized by private Italian-American groups with the support of the US government. It involved the exchanges of letters from Americans of Italian origins to their relatives and friends in Italy. Guided by sample letter published in newspapers or given away in Catholic communities, Italians were informed of the gruesome fate awaiting them in case of a Communist electoral success. According to different sources, millions of letters were written and distributed by radio stations, newspapers, and wealthy and influential individuals. Finally, business advertisement companies, with the approval of the Post Office, facilitated the dispatches. Beside this, anti-Communist appeals from famous Italian-Americans such as Frank Sinatra or Joe Di Maggio were broadcasted through the Voice of America.[257] During the last weeks of the election campaign, State secretary George Marshall made it publicly clear that ERP aid for Italy would be cancelled in case of a Communist electoral success.

In Italy, Washington had to rely on the experience and influence of anti-Communist groups that had been actively operating to diminish or neutralise the PCI influence. The most powerful and influential ally the US could count on was the Catholic Church. With the beginning of the Cold War and the struggle for hegemony between the two

[256] M Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," *Journal of American History (Bloomington, Ind.)* 87, no. 4 (2000): 1308.
[257] Mistry, "Re-Thinking American Intervention in the 1948 Italian Election: Beyond a Success–failure Dichotomy.," 187.

Super Powers, Truman recognized the need for establishing a fruitful alliance with the Catholic world by relying on Pope Pius XII as a powerful mediator. As US President wrote to his wife Bess in 1947: "If I can mobilize the people who believe in a moral world against the Bolshevik materialists […] we can win this fight."[258]

In mid-1947, the two leaders sealed their alliance with a highly publicized letter exchange. Both the President and the Pope, without naming the Soviet Union, recognized the dramatic time the world was going through and informally agreed on cooperating for the achievement of a lasting peace which both affirmed could only be built on Christian principles. In these letters, Truman wrote about an "evil and disruptive force intent on thwarting the hopes and ideals of mankind"[259]. The New York Times defined this US-Vatican alliance as an "anti-red Crusade". As it was reported:

> "President Truman and Pope Pius were believed in Vatican circles to have virtually pledged themselves to resist communism by all means at their command, in the letters they exchanged through Mr. Taylor[260]. […] As is usual in Papal pronouncements, he did not mention communism by name, but referred to it half dozen times so clearly that there could be no doubt about his meaning. The Church, he said at one point, 'cannot compromise with an avowed enemy of God. […] Indeed, the Pope's references to communism were so insistent […] that it was being whispered in the Vatican today that the true purpose of Mr. Taylor's present mission in Rome is to enlist

[258] D Kirby, *Religion and the Cold War*, Cold War History (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 92.
[259] D Kirby, "History, Memory and the Living Witness: The Vatican, the Holocaust and the Cold War," *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no. March 2013 (2011): 112.
[260] Myron Taylor was Truman's personal representative to the Vatican. He was appointed on May 3, 1946.

> the Vatican's support for an anti-Communist 'crusade' that Mr. Truman is thought to be about to launch."[261]

Concerned by the expansionist aims of the Soviet Union and the increasing support to the PCI, both leaders found in anti-Communism the common ground for overcoming ideological differences and the catalyst for establishing a sort of alliance. While the US recognized Pius XII's influential power across the globe and the potentiality for waging and winning the Cold War, the Pope acknowledged American wealth and power and welcomed US economic aid as deterrent to the spread of communism in Italy. The religious anti-Communist rhetoric largely contributed to the onset and fomentation of the conflict and provided a moral justification to the psychological warfare between the two blocks. The Cold War came to be seen as a conflict between 'good' and 'evil' in which the survival of religion was at stake and it was finally reduced to the moral question of being with Christ or against Christ.

In the months before the 1948 election, the Vatican opposition to Communism became more and more politicised. Without openly asking to cast a vote for a specific party, the Church suggested the clergy and their followers to vote for those candidates who offered guarantees "sufficient for the safeguarding of the rights of God"[262]. The newly established *comitati civici* (civic committees)[263] played a pivotal role in the political mobilization of Catholics. This organization was created in February 1948 under the

[261] A Cortesi, "The Anti-Red 'Crusade' Seen," *New York Times*, August 28, 1947, 11.
[262] E A Carrillo, "The Italian Catholic Church and Communism , 1943-1963 Author (S): Elisa A . Carrillo Published by : Catholic University of America Press," *The Catholic Historical Review* 77, no. 4 (1991): 650.
[263] D Keogh, "Ireland, The Vatican and the Cold War: The Case of Italy, 1948*," *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 1991 (1991): 936.

leadership of Luigi Gedda, the vice-president of the association *Azione Cattolica*. It was financially supported by the episcopacy with the objective of transforming this election into a moral crusade. Italians were not simply asked to choose between two political parties but between two different moral systems. There were three million members of Catholic Action (almost 50% more members than the Italian Communist party), plus more than one million from other Catholic groups. The members received precise instructions as to their role in the anti-Communist struggle.[264] The aim was to "Get people to vote. Get them to vote Christian. Get them to vote Christian Democrat."[265] Furthermore, the Catholic Action hired airplanes and dropped about 9,000,000 copies of anti-communist leaflets on major cities and regions. An article in *Life Magazine* praised Luigi Gedda for his successful attempt in organizing in one single month committees in all of Italy's 300 dioceses and in 18,000 of its 24,000 parishes. [266] Particularly effective was also the female political mobilization in favour of the DC.

Despite the initial pragmatism, the DC greatly benefitted from the religious mobilization by gaining legitimacy and a vast electoral consensus. Furthermore, the mobilization of the Vatican and the clergy successfully allowed the establishment of political unity among Catholics. As Kalyvas observes, the similarity and common religious creed could not automatically lead to the establishment of a political unity due to the fact that Catholics were divided along class and ethnic lines, and had different interests and background[267]. However, the mobilization of individuals and

[264] Keogh, 937.
[265] Keogh, 950.
[266] Carrillo, "The Italian Catholic Church and Communism , 1943-1963", 649.
[267] S N Kalyvas, "From Pulpit to Party: Party Formation and the Christian Democratic Phenomenon," *Comparative Politics* 30, no. 3 (1998): 295.

their incredible rhetorical speeches allowed Catholics to unite together under the flag of Christendom and the climate of anti-Communist fear they created.

When the day of the election came, the DC stood as the winner obtaining 48 per cent of the votes and an absolute majority in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The Left, instead, was defeated and obtained only 31 per cent of the votes. The electoral outcome was perceived within the Truman Administration as an American success. US observers and media tended to emphasize the American role, defining the Italian electoral decision as a demonstration of Italians' acceptance of transnational concepts such as "Freedom" and "Democracy". Furthermore, the electoral result was read as "proof of America's ability to influence the domestic affairs of other nations through the use of unconventional instruments"[268].

Whether the 1948 election can be seen as an American success is at least debatable. If we consider the mere short-term outcome of this election, namely the defeat of the PCI at the election, the American success theory can be partially accepted. The financial support to the DC and the threat of economic repercussion played in favour of the Catholic party's electoral success. Nevertheless, the long-term strategy to convince Italians to adopt a transnational anti-Communism as a new form of collective identity proved unsuccessful. The main factor that led to the failure is connected to the nature of the American tactic. When the US intervened, they relied on national subgroups such as the Church and its Catholic organization to advance its position and fight anti-Communism. Instead of Americanizing the Italian society, this strategy reinforced the Catholic identity of specific subgroups. Despite being the most powerful economic

[268] M Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," *Journal of American History (Bloomington, Ind.)* 87, no. 4 (2000): 1306.

force, Washington could not transform these identities completely because the US alliance with the Catholic world was established out of necessity more than for a mutual identification with each other's values and aims.

Between the United States and the Vatican there was a mere convergence of interest but never a total submission to a cause or another. Both actors saw this alliance as a temporary necessity for neutralizing the communist menace. Furthermore, their actions were not the expression of a single unitary anti-communist identity; they did not always share the same objectives and strategies and both sides had their own motives and agendas for fighting this war. While the US tried to Americanise the Italian populace by promoting anti-Communism as a transnational identity, the main goal for the Vatican was to neutralize the Communist threat in order to build Italy as the bastion of Christendom and to enhance the Catholic Church's influence across the world. Besides the anti-Communist shared interests, relations between the two were not always smooth. The Vatican, for instance, never concealed its distrust towards the United States. According to Fabbrini, numerous underlying reasons impeded the Vatican to overcome its hostility towards the United States. Among them, a central factor was that the United States was by large a Protestant country. Furthermore, the Church's despise for liberalism, which not only guided the US public behaviour but also the rigorous separation between state and church, further complicated their relations.[269] The Vatican also perceived the American Way of Life as a threat to Catholicism and its values.

[269] S Fabbrini, "The Domestic Sources of European Anti-Americanism," *Government and Opposition* 37, no. 1 (2002): 10–12.

Instead of reinforcing the American hegemonic position within the country, the US intervention simply strengthened the social power of these local subnational networks and their ambitions. The combined actions promoted by the Vatican, the clergy, the activists and Christian Democrats led to a transformation of the political consciousness strongly anchored to the notion of Catholic civilization. From an Italian perspective, the identification with Liberal democratic values or some sort of Euro-Atlantic identity was simply perceived as an empty rhetoric. Many concepts the US tried to export such as individual freedom and progress were far too abstract and clashed with Italian notion of a Catholic identity. In the Italian case, the religious and moral dimension of the local cold war proved to be a key factor of the electoral success of the DC. But the anti-Communism promoted by Catholic groups was "very distant from the reformism the United States wanted to promote"[270].

The US and the Italian Working Class After the 1948 Election

Even though the DC emerged from the 1948 election as the major party holding a substantial influence within the Italian society, the Communist hegemony among specific social groups still represented a matter of great concern for the US. In particular, the Italian federation of labour, CGIL, was perceived as instrumental to the PCI for maintaining a hegemonic position among the working class. Therefore, while trying to Americanize the masses, the US also sought to take control of the working

[270] Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," 1308.

class away from the Communist party. To do so, the US began to encourage free trade unionism by promoting the American system as a model for Italy.

As previously argued, Italy had always lacked a sense of nationhood; Italians instead tended to identify themselves with sub-national groups that gravitated around socializing agencies such as the Church and the Labour Union. These socializing actors never entered the party-political realm but they exerted considerable power on political parties and were capable to influence government policy and legislation in order to gain advantages over other groups.[271]

Because of the complexity of the Italian political system and the weak state-society relation, these sub-national actors tended to exercise an important influence over the political life of the country. While distrusting governments, Italians used to rely on these socialising forces that, along the years, had been able to build trust and loyalty among the populace. They mainly operated on a regional and local scale seeking to attract part of the population that had not been involved in the Italian political life. Facilitated by an absent and distant State, these actors gained a dominant position within society eventually becoming a guiding force capable of educating the masses from a moral and political perspective. Eventually, they became the reference point for large segments of society.

In the attempt to reduce the Communist influence among the CGIL, the US relied on the anti-Communist American Federation of Labor (AFL) and its leader Luigi

[271] F. Battegazzorre, "I Simboli Politici Della CGIL Dal 1949 Al 1977," *Il Politico* 47, no. 4 (1982): 715–716.

Antonini[272]. An Italian émigré to the US, Antonini was one of the most influential leaders of the Italian-American community in New York. Since mid-1920s, he established close ties with anti-Fascist (non-Communist) Italian-Americans and European groups, creating a broad transatlantic network of communication. Most of his contacts were among the Italian exiled intelligentsia, as well as socialist and labour activists. He established close ties with right wing socialists as Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani and Giuseppe Faravelli; with the socialist intellectual Ignazio Silone, but also with refugees to the US, most of them members of the anti-fascist Mazzini Society, such as Getano Salvemini, Leonello Venturi, Max Ascoli, Carlo Sforza, and Alberto Tarchiani, future Italian ambassador to Washington.

When Antonini was sent to Italy in 1944 in the attempt to reorganize the labour movement, his opposition to Communism led him to wage his own crusade at a time when the State Department looked at the CGIL as a positive force of moderation to prevent social instabilities in the country. As he publicly stated, he considered his mission the prevention of a Communist takeover of the Italian labour movement [273]. He constantly criticized the CGIL for being a political tool under the influence of the Italian Communist Party. The Italian confederation was, according to him, a "totalitarian political monstrosity"[274] subdued to the USSR.

Because the CGIL was considered a vehicle for political mobilization, it became necessary to challenge working class' reliance on it as a political instrument. Therefore,

[272] About the role of the AFL in Italy two important works are Filippelli's *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943-1953*: *A Study of Cold War Politics* and Romero's *Stati Uniti e il sindicalismo europeo 1944-1951*.
[273]Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944-1951*, 38.
[274]Romero, 73.

the AFL began campaigning for the creation of a unitary and powerful non-political trade union moulded on the American model. However, this objective seemed hardly achievable especially considering the Italian context in which ideology and politics were so deeply interwoven and embedded in all strata of society. The problem was that with the fall of Mussolini, Italian leaders had to act with urgency to create an entirely new labour movement. The impossibility to do it from the ground-up, led the leading elite to reconstruct the confederation of labour from the top down with political parties exerting remarkable influence on it. Furthermore, due to the weak state-society relation, the CGIL was largely perceived among the population as a politicized body the working class could rely on for participating to the political and economic life of the country and for securing better labour conditions.

The difficulty in de-politicising the Italian working class movement led the US to exert some pressures to create a secession within the CGIL. In particular, American labour unionists tried to convince right wing socialists and catholic trade unionist to establish a unitary but anti-communist labour organization independent from the Communist-controlled one.

When the State Department asked the AFL to lead trade unions to a definite choice for pro-Western support and the Western realignment around the Marshall plan, the communist majority among the CGIL denounce the European Recovery plan and its potential negative effects for Italian industry and eventually for the working class. Foreseeing a possible break within the CGIL, the State Department urged the embassy in Rome to take advantage of this unstable situation by pushing the minorities within the CGIL to stand up against the PCI faction. The US embassy in Rome immediately

organized a meeting between Irving Brown, the catholic and social democrat leaders in the CGIL, and AFL unionists to discuss the possibility of forming a unified, anti-Communist trade union organization controlled by Christian and Social Democrats.

When on July 14, 1948 the CGIL proclaimed a general strike in response to an attempt on the life of Palmiro Togliatti, the conservative factions within the union took distance from this demonstration, accusing the majority to using the organization as a political tool. The outcome was a split within the organization with the withdrawers establishing the LCGIL (Libera CGIL) that in May 1950 was renamed CISL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati dei Lavoratori). Social democrats eventually seceded from the confederation after Communists' protests against the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty and after violent clashes between police and Communist at Molinella (Bologna) on May 17, where a large number of demonstrators were wounded and a woman died.[275] They established the Federazione Italiana dei Lavoratori (FIL), eventually renamed UIL (Unione dei Lavoratori Italiani).

Despite there is no doubt about the American contribution to the split, considering it only as a result of US intervention is an overstatement. Certainly the US' anti-communist policy influenced Italians' decision to isolate communist forces, however, the secession was also due to the peculiarity of the Italian political and ideological context. Since the establishment, the CGIL had never abandoned the political and social dimensions of its activity[276]. Because the confederation of labour broadly reflected the political anti-fascist coalition in the government and its leaders were

[275] Idem, 167.
[276] G Bedani, *Politics and Ideology in the Italian Workers' Movement: Union Development and the Changing Role of the Catholic and Communist Subcultures in Postwar Italy* (Berg, 1995), 20.

always under political parties' pressure, its unity was always potentially exposed to the risk of a crisis between the main factions. When the governmental crisis opened in May 1947, the split within the CGIL was simply a matter of time.

Nevertheless, the US was not fully satisfied. The main problem was that there were now two non-communist, pro-western labour unions, rather than one unified strong organization. Despite the AFL's efforts to bring the two organizations together, the unification did not take place. The main obstacle rested in the anti-clerical tradition of Italian socialist and republican forces. As Filippelli observes, their hostility towards the Catholic Church proved much stronger than the lure of American dollars or the fear of communism.[277] American subsidies and political support were not enough to overcome the ideological divide between Socialist and Catholic forces.

Instead of creating an apolitical trade unions, the split established three competing organizations that where even more politicised. When non-communist labour unionists broke away from the confederation of labour, "the emergency was so compelling that the democratic labor leaders could not await a slow evolution of anti-Communist labor unions at the local level"[278] and the process of creation of a labour movement from the top-down had to be repeated. While with the creation of the CGIL all political factions within the movement agreed to a pact of unity and each group could more or less efficiently check on the other factions, following the secession, the Communists were left alone and could gain even greater control of the CGIL.

[277]Filippelli, "Luigi Antonini, the Italian-American Labor Council, and Cold-War Politics in Italy, 1943–1949," 124.
[278] M F Neufeld, "The Italian Labor Movement in 1956: The Structure of Crisis," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 310, no. 1 (1956): 85.

The other two non-communist trade unions, instead, were too weak to challenge the Communist hegemony within the working class.[279] The US, therefore, suggested increasing discrimination against firms employing Communist labour organization when granting government contracts. Similarly, Confindustria was advised to pressure industries to adopt a tougher opposition towards Communist unions and support the Catholic trade union (CISL)[280]. US psychological experts deemed necessary to refuse "to negotiate with Communist union leaders in nationalized industries".[281]

In a few years, Italy experienced the restoration of the capitalist class and big businesses that certainly promoted the Italian miracle but at the detriment of the working class that ended up having weak trade unions and low wages. By the 1950s, Filippelli claims, the Italian labour movement was among the weakest in Europe[282]. American desire for promoting reforms and modernization clashed with the necessity to take control of the trade union away from communism. When anti-communism gained its primacy over reforms, those who carried the gravest burden were the Italians workers. This, according to American labour unionists, was "unfortunate, but preferable to the alternative"[283] of Communist control of the working class. However, the U.S. support to industrialists and to the discredited capitalist class in Italy in order to achieve economic stability had the opposite result of isolating the workers and pushing them towards the PCI.

[279] A Carew, "The Politics of Productivity and the Politics of Anti-Communism: American and European Labour in the Cold War," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-60*, ed. H Krabbendam and G Scott-Smith, Studies in Intelligence (Taylor & Francis, 2004), 78.
[280] Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy, 1948-1955.," 1314.
[281] Del Pero, 13012.
[282] Filippelli, *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943-1953*, 213.
[283] Filippelli, 4.

Conclusion.

While the US managed to obtain a short-term success with the electoral defeat of the PCI in the 1948 election, from a long-term perspective Washington failed to transform the Italian political culture. Paradoxically, instead of Americanising the Italian populace, the American intervention in support of the Catholic party strengthen the DC, the Catholic Church became even more influent within the Italian society through the promotion of a sub-national collective identity. Last but not least, the US failure in creating a viable labour union had the consequence of increasing the working class reliance on the CGIL and, therefore, on the PCI. The lack of understanding of the Italian context and its political culture led the US to pursue hardly achievable objectives with the result that, in the mid-1950s, the Communist party was still a powerful and influential force within the Italian society. Instead of stabilising and uniting the country the US intervention created more antagonism and, therefore, instabilities.

When the Americas stepped in, despite all their initiatives, they could reshape neither the state-society relationship nor the Italian identity. Furthermore, the problem with the US transnational intervention to change Italian political culture was based on a concept of anti-Communist identity beyond the nation state. US intervention in the country would have to adapt to this peculiarity of the Italian political system. Because of political parties' dominant role within the political system, any attempts by interest groups, movements, internal or external actors to access or influence the decision-

making process could not take place without dealing with the political parties[284] and their socialising agencies. The changing international context became the expedient for the local parties to exploit subnational divisions. Anti-Communism became the new legitimising ideology, and the US became part of the Italian subnational framework.

Despite the short-term success that led the DC to access and maintain a dominant position in Italian political system, US State Department officials had eventually to realize that cultural diplomacy in Italy was not reaching the expected number of people and was not having the expected impact on the masses. In the early 1950s, Ambassador Clare Booth Luce observed how in Italy "we are definitely losing the ground in the propaganda field."[285] Italian distrust and hostility towards the United States increased and American anti-Communist rhetoric seemed unconvincing among the Italian population[286]. In particular, the propaganda overtly sponsored by the US government was largely disregarded. This was an indirect consequence of the weak state-society relations that characterised the Italian political culture. Generally speaking, the Italian population had always distrusted government institutions and even more so foreign governments. As a labour leader in Rome once observed:

> "Italians are difficult to propagandize. They are suspicious if they do not see it for themselves or if a trusted friend does not tell them it is that way. [..]You should let the leaders of the Italians explain events to them,

[284] O Massari, "Italy's Postwar Transition in Contemporary Perspective," in *Stabilising Fragile Democracies" New Party Systems in Southern and Eastern Europe*, ed. P Lewis and G Pridham (London: Routledge, 1996), 131.
[285] C B Luce, *Special Information Project for Italy*, July 9 1954, Bureau of Public Affairs, Misc. Records 1944-1963, Record Group 59, box 77, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.
[286] K A Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (University of Kansas, 2006), 76–77.

> or maybe an American of Italian ancestry whom they might trust and who can speak their language. […] They automatically discount the statements of a stranger. My advice on propaganda is to eliminate it entirely."[287]

Furthermore, distrust was also caused by the constant emphasis on how great America and its people were.

The increasing electoral support to the PCI seemed to confirm their concerns. The local elections of 1951-52 soon became perceived as a crucial test. It was the first electoral test after the landslide victory of 1948, and it could give some indications of national vote in light of the general election of 1953. In the South, where the DC was stronger, there was an increase of monarchists ad neo-fascist supporters, and the DC appeal was decreasing. In the Sicilian regional election of 1951 the DC obtained a narrow victory, 31.2 % votes compared to the PCI-PSI that obtained 30.2 %, which led the President of the Sicilian Council Franco Restino to form a government that included Monarchists and Sicilian independentists. The national election in 1953 was characterized by a change in the electoral law with the introduction of what detractors dubbed it *Legge Truffa* (Scam Law), a majority bonus system that would give 65% of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies to the party or coalition that would get an absolute majority. The DC, in a coalition with PRI, PLI, PSDI stopped at 49.99% of the national vote. Even though technically the DC won the election, there was a perceivable frustration among

[287] J A Raffaele, "United States Propaganda Abroad: Notes on The USIS in Italy," *Social Research* 27, no. 3 (1960): 289.

its members for the lack of the expected results. Fierce disagreement inside the party forced De Gasperi to resign and multiple weak governments followed.

Due to the unsatisfying alliance with both the DC and the Catholic Church, the US began to look for a new, reliable actor with whom carried on a new anti-communist ideological fight. It was in this confused panorama that the creation of a non-communist, leftist intellectual movement became necessary for the creation of an anti-Communist cultural hegemony different from the conservative positions of Catholic groups. The US, therefore, relied on the so-called opinion moulders to establish a friendly environment and advance American interest among specific segments of the Italian society that previous propaganda has failed to attract but they could still be convinced by intelligent arguments.

-CH. VI-

THE *ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER LA LIBERTÀ DELLA CULTURA* AND *TEMPO PRESENTE*.

Up until the early 1951, the American foreign policy approach towards Italy was essentially planned on specific short-term and long-term initiatives meant to hamper the increasing electoral support to the Italian Communist party and its recruiting activity within the working class. To achieve these objectives, the US had not only been financing the conservative anti-Communist party, the DC, but also the Socialist party to provoke a split within the labour movement. Furthermore, Washington also sought to transform the Italian culture through the dissemination of American products, values, and the promotion of a US political and economic system as a model for Italy. While on a short-term perspective the US managed to obtain some success, especially the Communist party's defeat in the 1948 election and the split of the Socialist movement in two, on a long-term Washington's attempt to transform the Italian political and social culture faced various challenges. The Italian populace showed some level of resistance to the adoption of American cultural products and ideas and there were widespread stereotypes about the United States, often considered an arrogant, warmongering and uneducated country[288].

Furthermore, in the early 1950s there was a widespread belief within the US governmental officials that the propaganda techniques adopted in Italy were not as

[288] See: Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II*

successful as they had hoped for. According to a declassified document, the United States were definitely losing the ground on the propaganda field in Italy[289].

Due to this perceived lack of success, in the early 1950s Washington chose to change its psychological warfare strategy by attracting those segments of the population that, due to their social and cultural role within society, could effectively operate a socialising action within the country. The US turned to the intellectuals. As previously discussed, Gramsci recognised how to build and maintain hegemony within a specific social stratum a leading elite should rely on the crucial role played by intellectuals in moulding the views of the people. This so-called opinion moulders came to be seen as a powerful ally that could lead to a transformation of Italian values and beliefs under the supervision of Washington.

The establishment of a transnational intellectual community of influential anti-Communist personalities seemed to offer the solution the US was looking for. The Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) was created as part of a broad US strategy of cultural warfare aiming at detaching the European intelligentsia from the appeal of Marxism and Communism by offering an alternative that better reconciled with the American Way of Life. Its political and cultural origin dated back to June 1950 when a group of intellectuals gathered together in Berlin to take part to a conference whose declared aim was the promotion of intellectual freedom and the opposition to any totalitarian system.

[289] *Special Information Project for Italy*, July 9 1954, Bureau of Public Affairs, Misc. Records 1944-1963, Record Group 59, box 77, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

In line with this broad strategy of cultural warfare, Washington believed that the replication of this transnational project in the Italian context would greatly benefit the US and would allow the transformation of Italian political culture according to an American perspective. In 1951, therefore, the CCF's headquarters authorised the creation of the *Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della Cultura* (AILC) under Silone and, five years later, the publication of the Italian journal *Tempo Presente*. The Americans, however, would soon realise that the Italian political culture was very hard to transform to the hegemonic power of the two main political parties and their overall objectives would be once again compromised.

This chapter focuses on the particular outlook of the *Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della Cultura* (AILC) and the Italian review *Tempo Presente* as a peculiar case within the cultural products of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF). Firstly, this was deeply connected to the particular status of the journal's leading forces, Ignazio Silone and Nicola Chiaromonte, and their negotiations to transform and adapt the transnational dimension of the cultural Cold War to local ambitions and needs. Beside an analysis of the content of the Italian review Tempo Presente, it is important to look at the correspondence and the private communication between these intellectuals. This will allow to cast some light on the editorial choices as well as the different points of view these intellectual felt free to express in their letters. As Hunt wrote to Lansky in 1960, "each magazine has a unique character of its own and is not simply a translation in the various languages of one basic magazine"[290]. Each journal autonomy depended therefore on the editors' choices and their relations with the CCF headquarters in Paris.

[290] G Scott-Smith and C Lerg (Eds) *Campaigning Culture and the Global Cold War: The journals of the Congress for Cultural Freedom* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017), 9.

There is no intention here to analyse the CIA involvement and the covert financial process. This has already been done by Francis Stonor Saunders, Peter Coleman, and others. My intention is therefore to take a step back from this perspective and to focus on uncovering editorial decisions and the review's content to show the complexity of the Italian journal and the galaxy of intellectuals that gravitated around it.

As their correspondence shows, as well as some of their editorial decisions, Silone and Chiaromonte were not passive players of US soft diplomacy; they chose, instead, to play along for specific reasons that went beyond mere Cold War dynamics. In spite of the invasiveness of Cold War discourses, one needs to consider the antebellum origins of Italian intellectual *impegno* and the demands to reform society and culture as a guide for understanding post-war anti-Communism. The need to avoid treating anti-Communism as a monolithic ideology[291] requires an analysis of the galaxy of intellectuals that gravitated around this label and the set of values and ideas they carried with them. They were clearly opposing Soviet ideology, but what did they stand for? What kind of alternative were they proposing?

Secondly, the peculiarity was strictly connected to the Italian context and the political culture of the country. Despite the CCF was established with a specific anti-Communist intent, Italians always insisted against limiting their actions to a mere anti-Communism. The cultural and political hegemony of the Catholic Church and the appearance of neo-Fascist movements were considered issues of primary

[291] R Pertici, "Il Vario Anticomunismo Italiano (1936-1960). Lineamenti Di Una Storia," in *Due Nazioni. Legittimazione e Delegittimazione Nella Storia Dell'Italia Contemporanea*, ed. E Galli della Loggia and L Di Nucci (Bologna: Mulino, 2003), 263–334.

importance. Italian intellectuals, therefore, used the AILC and *Tempo Presente* to discuss what they considered the major issues of that time.

Last but not least, the cultural impact of *Tempo Presente* and the tepid public response casts doubts on the interpretation of the CCF as a successful hegemonic instrument of US foreign policy questioning whether it effectively achieved to promote an alternative culture in Italy. Despite the CCF was created as a transnational project it was in the local context that the abstraction of transnational anti-Communism found its most concrete dimension.

The Transnational Cultural Intervention and the Anti-systemic Italian Intellectuals.

By the late 1940s, the status of US-Italian relations was still a matter of concern for Washington. The US lamented the unsatisfying alliance with Italian subnational networks such as the Church and the anti-Communist labour unions, blamed for their unwillingness to adapt their objectives to a transnational anti-Communist strategy. Furthermore, the US relations with the DC had been proving quite problematic due to the catholic party's reluctance to follow the American guidance in the political and economic reconstruction of the country. Last but not least, Italians still displayed some level of distrust towards the US and had shown some resistance to the reception of American value. According to a declassified document, in the early 1950s US officials

observed how in Italy Americans were "definitely losing the ground in the propaganda field."[292]

This inability to attract consent among the masses and in manoeuvring Italian political forces fostered a series of new analyses on why the Italian communists were still maintaining a great influence within the country. Despite Italy was receiving substantial financial and economic help from the USA, the PCI was still gaining remarkable electoral support. It became clear that popular support to the communist party could not be explained merely in terms of the economic backwardness of the country. Therefore, for winning the hearts and the minds of Italians focusing only on selling the American welfare as a reachable and desirable feature was not sufficient.

The US began to look for new influential actors within the country that could effectively operate a change in the Italian political culture. The 1950s, therefore, saw a shift of some US cultural projects from targeting mass audience to attracting the so-called opinion moulders with the result that the Italian cultural elite became the main target of cultural diplomacy. As part of a broader US anti-communist strategy, the cultural diplomacy promoted by the USA was mainly addressed towards those neutralist intellectuals in the attempt to convince them to side with the West. As reported in the declassified document Lodge Project within the United Nation, US propaganda should primarily target the "uncertain "neutralists" or geopolitical "realists" who are already partially attracted through Marxism to communism but who are still

[292] *Special Information Project for Italy*, July 9 1954, Bureau of Public Affairs, Misc. Records 1944-1963, Record Group 59, box 77, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

susceptible to intellectual challenges" [293]. To do so, the Americans needed a project that did not sound like a bombastic propaganda attempt but more as a result of a voluntary effort to preserve intellectual freedom.

The intellectuals, and in particular the so-called public opinion moulders, came to be seen as potential allies. The main objective was to attract those segments of the population that, due to their social and cultural role, could support the promotion of an alternative culture in line with American values and ideas. Their cultural influence would allow them to operate as socialising forces within the educated classes that would be fascinated by intelligent arguments, which would appear "to be objective, penetrating and forward-looking."[294] This group of intellectuals could provide "a sense of consensus around certain shared values and interests"[295] the civil society could identify with. Concepts such as western democracy, intellectual freedom and liberal anti-communism were the crucial values of this cultural warfare.

In post-war Italy, however, culture was the battleground for a clash between the PCI and DC, which sought to establish their own cultural hegemony. While the DC mainly relied on mass culture for the promotion of Catholic values, the PCI sought to establish its cultural hegemony within the academics and the anti-Fascist intelligentsia. Neither faction, however, could represent a valuable source for the USA. While Americans could not rely on the communist intelligentsia for self-evident reasons, the Catholic

[293] Lodge Project Within the United Nation, Declassified document, NND 947318, RG 59, Bureau of Public Affairs, Misc. Records, 1944-1962, Box No. 72, NARA, College Park, Maryland.
[294] The Lodge Project, July, 28, 1953, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, Box 72, NARA, College Park, Maryland.
[295] Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, 5.

intellectuals seemed too conservative to advance US ideological positions in Italy. Therefore, psychological warfare experts suggested to seek the support of other Italian anti-Communist intellectuals. The choice fell on a group of left-wing "anti-totalitarian" intellectuals who, since the fall of the Fascist regime, had been trying to negotiate their cultural space within the Italian context. By seeking to build a cultural hegemony alternative to Catholicism and Communism, these intellectuals sought to promote a new culture shaped by their exile experience and their connections with the European-American intellectual network.

This network, which had freely mobilized since mid-1920s, was really variegated and included numerous personalities with different political, cultural and social perspectives. Within the circle there were philosophers, writers, political scientists, European federalists, musicians and journalists. Among them there were influential members of the Mazzini Society, the anti-Fascist political organization created in the late 1930s, such as Gaetano Salvemini, Lionello Venturi and Max Ascoli; the European federalists Emilio Rossi and Altiero Spinelli; the Socialist politician and writer Ignazio Silone; the writer Nicola Chiaromonte and so on.

Because of their opposition to the Fascist regime, most of them had been forced to leave their native country and move to France and Switzerland, while others chose the United States as their destination. During WWII, many of them cooperated with the Office of Strategic Service (OSS) in coordinating assistance to the anti-Fascist Resistance in Italy. They offered useful advice on how to conduct effective propaganda campaigns in the country, as well as crucial information on the anti-fascist movement.

Legitimised by their anti-Fascist cultural and political activities, they came to be seen as valuable assets for the US in waging its psychological warfare against the Soviets. Scarred by the Fascist drama, these intellectuals were living with a certain anxiety about the future course of post-war Italy. To prevent the country from going from Fascism to Communism, they freely mobilized and began discussing the political, economic, and social rehabilitation of Italy. As Holmes claimed, for these writers, "anticommunism was an indispensable complement to antifascism"[296]. Totalitarianism, as a common denominator for both Fascism and Communism, was at the core of their analyses.

Ignazio Silone.

Ignazio Silone was a leading figure of this movement. He was born in Pescina, Abruzzo, as Secondino Tranquilli (1900-1978). He derived his literary surname from Poppedius Silo, symbol of autonomy and leader of the Marsi who had led a successful revolt against the tyrannical Rome in 90 B.C. His first name Ignazio, instead, was taken from the Spanish Counter-reformation saint Loyola in the attempt to "baptize the pagan surname".[297] As Pugliese observes, this sacred-profane dichotomy was a characterising aspect of his complex personality both as a political and intellectual actor. According to Giulia Paola di Nicola and Attilio Danese, Silone was an emblematic character: countryman and revolutionary; committed socialist and

[296] D Holmes, "The Zurich School ' 1929-1939 — A War on Two Fronts" 4 (1998): 69.
[297] Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A Life of Ignazio SIlone*, 3.

apparently detached from policy, novelist as well as political expert, believer and anticlerical. Communists liked him because of his rejection of Fascism; anti-Communists because of his criticism towards the Soviet Union; clergymen for his faith in Christ; anticlerical leaders because of his struggle against all hypocrisies of the Church[298]. Considered by many as "a queer mixture of priest and communist"[299] or, as Chiaromonte defined him, a "prete contadino", a peasant priest[300], he preferred to define himself as "a Christian without a Church, a socialist without a party"[301]. His wife Darina once said about him: " There is no single truth about Silone, only many truths"[302].

With the publication of his first novel *Fontamara* Silone gained international fame and intellectuals began to look at him as a symbol of the anti-fascist movement. Intellectuals like Thomas Mann, Albert Camus, Graham Greene, and Edmund Wilson talked about him with respect and admiration. [303] Howe referred to him as an extremely talented novelist; William Faulkner thought of him as Italian greatest living writer. Quite surprisingly, Silone was so appreciated abroad while neglected in Italy. As the American scholar Michael P. McDonald argues, it was a classic case of 'Nemo propheta acceptus est patria sua' (no prophet is accepted in his own country)[304].

From a political point of view, Silone was very active since his adolescence. He became a member of the Roman socialist movement when he was really young and in

[298] G P Di Nicola, A Danese, *Ignazio Silone. Percorsi di una memoria inquieta*, 7-8
[299] R H Costa, *Edmund Wilson, Our Neighbor from Talcottville*, A York State Book (Syracuse University Press, 1980), 47
[300] S G Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A life of Ignazio Silone*, 4
[301] Ignazio Silone's self-description; John Foot, *The Secret Life of Ignazio Silone*, New Left Review.
[302] S G. Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A life of Ignazio Silone*, 6
[303] Idem ,p.8
[304] Michael P. McDonald cited in idem., p.12

1920 he was named editor of the socialist newspaper *Avanguardia* . When in January 1921 the PCI was created by seceding from the PSI, he spoke in favour of the former and joined it. Together with Gramsci and Togliatti he can be considered as one of the founding fathers of the Italian Communist Party. In the late 1920s, however, he faced a political crisis that left him incapable of overcoming the disillusionment with Communism. He became more and more concerned about the increasing political intolerance and repression that was taking place in the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the lack of intellectual freedom represented a matter of great concern for the Italian writer. After refusing to condemn Trotsky and due to his support to Italian dissidents Pietro Tresso, Alfonso Leonetti, and Paolo Ravazzoli he was expelled from the PCI in 1931. Disenchanted from politics, he became a fervent critic of Communism, which he would eventually define as a "narrow-minded and conservative ideology, opium for subdued proletarians."[305] Despite his departure from the Party, he never recanted his Marxist identity[306]. Silone long advocated for a new non-bureaucratic society; he strongly believed that only in a society where all the authoritarian and centralized institutions were abolished, people could achieve the purest form of freedom and equality.

His opposition to the fascist regime forced him into exile first in Switzerland and then in France. It is in this period that he was introduced to Allen Dulles of the OSS (Office of Strategic Service). Dulles had come to Zurich in November 1942 and he established an outpost of the OSS in Bern where he could monitor the precarious situation Italy was facing. Silone, while cooperating with Dulles in coordinating assistance to the

[305] I. Silone 'Ideologie e realtà sociale,' *Tempo Presente*, 1956, 1/1, 4.
[306] I Silone, *Emergency Exit* (London: Gollancz, 1969), 49.

anti-Fascist Resistance in Italy, was receiving money, funnelled through the American Labour unions, to finance the socialist party and the anti-fascist movement.[307] He offered some advice on how to deal with Italians and how to conduct an effective propaganda campaigns.[308] It was essential, according to him, that the U.S intervened to secure the Italians against the 'Communist psychosis".[309] In order to achieve his goals, Silone did not hesitate to criticize US initiatives in Italy. For instance, in a letter to Gerald Mayer, he criticized the Allied radio propaganda campaign. As he said, the allied broadcasts in Italy, supposedly created for the masses, was not listened by the masses but by individuals already politically matured. Therefore, these individuals "usually find Allied propaganda stupid, banal, pretentious, and frequently prepared by gentlemen who must have been slightly intoxicated at the time."[310]

In the aftermath of World War II, when anti-Communism was not a priority of US foreign policy towards Italy, Silone and his circle of anti-totalitarian intellectuals found themselves essentially isolated within the cultural environment. While the Italian cultural context had no space for these intellectuals, the US saw no reasons for financing their cultural-political activities. When international relations began to deteriorate and the confrontation between the Unites States and the Soviet Union became more intense, their cultural potential came to be seen as a valuable asset for US cultural warfare.

[307]D Fertilio, "Nome in codice "Frost". Ecco il Silone consulente di Washington" *Corriere della Sera,* (01-July-2000);. 35.
[308] E Saccarelli, *The Intellectual as Agent: Politics and Independence in the Other 'Caso Silone',* History of European Ideas, (2013) 12
[309] S G. Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A life of Ignazio Silone*; p.151
[310] Letter for Mr. (Gerald) Mayer, OSS documents on Silone, Group 3, Doc. 17

With the end of the world conflict and the deterioration of the relations between the US and the USSR, Silone's reputation as an independent-minded intellectual and Communist opponent allowed him to become a leading figure of US cultural warfare. Together with André Gide, Richard Wright, Arthur Koestler, Louis Fisher and Stephen Spender, Silone contributed to the anti-communist *The God that Failed* (1949). This book was a six-essays volume based on these authors' testimonies (all the six had been communists) with a focus on their disillusionment and subsequent rejection of Communism. It was distributed, thanks to the CIA, all around the world as an emblem of freedom as opposed to soviet totalitarianism.[311] This analysis, based on their own personal experience as disillusioned ex-Communists, was meant to produce a more appealing and compelling effect on the intellectual community than other historical-political analyses might have. According to Silone, the final conflict would be between communists and ex-communists, since "one cannot fight communism without having assimilated all the good it contains."[312] As a direct witness, he felt a duty to reveal "the tragic reality which lies behind the façade of Communism."[313]

The Congress for Cultural Freedom.

The outlines of the Congress for Cultural Freedom story is well known. The inaugural Conference was held in West Berlin in June 26 1950 at the Titania Palace. It was

[311] F Stonor Saunders, Gli intellettuali e la CIA, 62.
[312] Pugliese, *Bitter Spring: A Life of Ignazio Silone*, 222.
[313] Silone, *Emergency Exit*, 102.

organised by private individuals with the support of the CIA and US occupation authorities in West Germany. The choice of the location was crucial. It represented "an island of freedom in a Communist sea"[314]. As Scott-Smith observes, the catalyst for the creation of the Congress was "the efforts of the reinvigorated Cominform to influence European public opinion against the Marshal Plan and against American involvement in European affairs in general"[315]. The US deemed necessary to establish a transnational anti-communist culture that could operate as a bulwark against the propagandistic attempts of the Soviets. The organization should be constructed around well-known international intellectuals and it had to appear as a voluntary mobilization of individuals concerned about the lack of intellectual freedom within the communist world.

One hundred and twenty delegates[316], mainly from Europe and America, and four thousands attendees participated to this conference[317]. Among the others invitees, at the conference participated Arthur Koestler, Karl Jaspers, Ignazio Silone, Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Benedetto Croce, Melvin Lasky, Raymond Aron, Arthur Schlesinger, James Burnham, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Sidney Hook etc. [318]

[314] *Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom*, 1949-1950. Article published on the CIA's website https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html#rft1
[315] *Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom*, 1949-1950. Article published on the CIA's website https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html#rft1.
[316] Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony*, 3
[317] *Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom*, 1949-1950. Article published on the CIA's website https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html#rft1.
[318] G Scott-Smith and C Lerg (Eds) *Campaigning Culture and the Global Cold War* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017), 2.

The Manifesto was a bold statement against totalitarianism and for the promotion of intellectual freedom. The invasion of South Korea by North Korean troops the day before the inauguration of the conference created a climate of tension and anxiety within the delegates. It was evident since the first day that there were two main factions within this organisation. One, led by Arthur Koestler, could count on the support of Sidney Hook, James Burnham, and Franz Borkenau. This group had a more radical approach and favoured a fanatical language against the Soviets[319]. The moderates, headed by Silone, preferred a more open approach. As Hochgeschwender observes, the radical battle cry «No Freedom for the Enemies of Freedom» seemed to the moderates to doom the success of liberal anti-Communism from within"[320].

Koestler and Silone, therefore, "represented the two poles of opinion over the best way to oppose Communists. Koestler favoured the rhetorical frontal assault, and his attacks sometimes spared neither foe nor friend. Silone was subtler, urging the West to promote social and political reforms in order to co-opt Communism's still-influential moral appeal" [321]. Koestler was interested in transforming the Congress into an anti-Soviet movement. He believed it had to be less cultural and more political, "a Deminform to counter the Cominform". [322] As reported by Enzo Forcella in an article published on Il Mondo, during his speech at the conference Koestler solemnly declared:

[319]Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare" 12.
[320] Ibidem.
[321] See "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1949-1950 at https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html
[322] Coleman, Peter (1989); *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Post-War Europe*, Collier Macmillan, London-Free Press, New York, p.35.

"The intellectuals need to realize that in today's world there is no room for ifs or buts […] The choice is between two position: yes or no, das Ja or das Nein. No to Soviet Russia, yes to freedom. The rest is only fear". [323] Such a cry out for militancy soon became a recognizable, and divisive, feature of Koestler's anti-communist stance. Silone, instead, was an inevitable rallying point for those within the CCF who disagreed with Koestler's militant positions[324]. In a letter addressed to Melvin Lasky, who was one of the organizers of the conference in Berlin, Silone lamented the thematic focus proposed for the gathering. It was not an invite for intellectuals and scholar, he argued, but a mere call for political agitation. According to him, a congress convened on this basis was useless. "It's my opinion" he wrote "that a certain political effect could be the outcome but not the premise for the gathering in Berlin" [325]. He also suggested to remove from the call for application any suggestion to discuss the true nature of totalitarianism and the Soviets. According to him, it was not necessary to state that these themes would be treated when discussing about the defence of cultural freedom. According to Silone, the Conference had to be an encounter of free men and women, writers and artists, who were not willing to renounce to their "supreme duty of freely speaking the truth."[326]

Silone could not stand the militant anti-communism glorified by the Koestler's faction. According to him, there were a great number of women and men that had chosen to join communist parties because they were sincerely hoping for a political, economic

[323] E Forcella, *Das Ja, Das Nein*, Il Mondo, 15 July1950
[324] Idem, p.24
[325] I Silone to M Lasky, 31 March, Box 1, Folder 32, 1950; Serie XIII: Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della cultura, Archivio Silone, Fondazione Turati, Firenze.
[326] Ibidem.

and ideological transformation of the status quo. According to Silone, the non-communist left intelligentsia should talk to these people, showing them that a possible alternative to communism was possible. He believed that a fierce criticism of the Soviet ideology would be counterproductive without offering any possible alternative.

As a result of the success of the conference, a permanent organization was created with its headquarters in Paris. The international secretariat was led by Nicholas Nabokov, a Russian exile musician, and Michael Josselson, a CIA field-agent, fact unknown to most of the members[327]. The organization was covertly funded by the International Organizations Division of the CIA, which subsidized it with nearly $800.000 a year[328]. Various national executive committees were also established over the years to come. From 1950 to 1967 the CCF established branches in thirty-five countries of the world.

While the CIA, via philanthropic organizations such as Ford Foundation, the Fleishmann Foundation and the Rockefeller foundation, was instrumental in covertly funding the organization, the reliance on local actors made the whole cultural campaign appear as a voluntary mobilization of individuals against the Soviet system and in support of the American Way of Life. It included among its members philosophers, economists, political scientists, novelists, musicians, poets and academics. Among the others, Benedetto Croce, Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, James Burnham, Raymond Aron, Nicolas Nabokov, Karl Jaspers, John Dewey, Hugh-Trevor-Roper. Broadly labelled as the "liberal intellectuals" or the Non-Communist

[327] Hochgeschwender, "The Cultural Front of the Cold War: The Congress for Cultural Freedom as an Experiment in Transnational Warfare" 13.
[328] Hochgeschwender, 14.

Left there was no political homogeneity among those personalities; anti-Communism was their shared interest.

Part of its activities consisted in organising international conferences and cultural events, publishing important cultural and political journals, offering economic subsidies and support to intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain as well as books, travel grants and cultural exchanges to its own members. One of the most remarkable initiatives promoted by the organisation was the publication of over twenty journals. Among the others, its principal and well-known reviews were *Encounter* in UK, *Preuves* in France, *Tempo Presente* in Italy, *Der Monat* in Germany, *Cuadernos* in Latin America.

Associazione italiana per la libertà della cultura.

Soon after the CCF was created and its headquarters established in Paris, leading members of the cultural organization were sent to Italy to investigate on the possibility to establish an Italian branch of the CCF. Due to the increasing intellectual support to the Italian communist party and the enduring distrust towards the US and its foreign policy, the CCF leadership authorized the creation of the *Associazione italiana per la libertà della cultura* (AILC), which was formed in late 1951 under Silone. Due to his international recognition as a writer as well as his political outlook and anti-Communist activism Silone was considered the *condition sine qua non* for establishing the Italian branch and eventually for running the CCF journal *Tempo Presente*. This acknowledgment allowed him to obtain a great margin of autonomy

and, as Daniela Muraca observes, his "unconditional leadership" led to a "directive centralism" that made any attempts of external interference barely possible.[329]

Thanks to his efforts and negotiations to transform and adapt the transnational dimension of the cultural Cold War to local ambitions and needs, the organization was prevented from becoming a *sic et simpliciter* replication of US propaganda. Despite being conceived as a national replication of the transnational organization, the outcomes were unforeseen and controversies soon emerged over different objectives and strategies. In particular, between the CCF and the Italian network tensions emerged due to the discordant ways of interpreting the intellectual community and the overall goal of this transatlantic cultural mobilization. While for the Paris headquarters the CCF was initially conceived as part of a wider approach to create a transnational anti-Communist culture beyond national interests, in the Italian case intellectual saw this project as a chance for promoting a national culture alternative to the Communist and Christian Democratic ones. For those intellectuals who gravitated around the Italian organization, therefore, cultural warfare went beyond the anti-Communist intent promoted by the US.

The main problem was that by shifting from a transnational to a national dimension, the US did not fully consider the possibility that these intellectuals could not perfectly fit within the Cold War framework. As Nicolas Nabokov confessed to Michael Josselson, the executive director of the CCF, major concerns were rising about the effectiveness of the Italian anti-Communist cultural campaign due to the fact that "most member of the Italian Association are so profoundly steeped in Croceism, and

[329] D Muraca, "L'Associazione Italiana per La Libertà Della Cultura: Il Caso Italiano e Il Congress for Cultural Freedom," *Storiografia* XI (2007): 142.

besides, are drug-addicts of anti-Fascism, that it will be difficult to change anything there."[330] However, both Silone and Chiaromonte always insisted against limiting their actions to a mere anti-Communism.[331] The CCF considered this tendency as part of a "grotesque" attitude of the Italian cultural elite to concentrate on "aspects of secondary importance." [332] According to Josselson, Italians "should keep in mind that they belong to an international organization […] and every time they need to think not only to their point of view, egotistic and national, but also […] to the international point of view."[333] CCF leading forces tended to agree that Italian intellectuals were too reticent to embrace the anti-Communist fight and more interested in addressing other Italian issues.

One major concern for the CCF was that Italians' seemed more worried about the hegemonic power of the Catholic Church rather than the increasing popular and intellectual support to the Communist Party. As Bondy and Altman reported to Josselson:

> "liberal and socialist intellectuals feel that clericalism is more dangerous than communism. They are afraid of the consequences of an even-stronger Catholic monopoly […] We tried to tell these people that, in the present world context, Soviet imperialism and the communist danger present specific problems, far more disturbing than the traditional, century-old struggle between clericalism and

[330] N. Nabokov to M. Josselson, undated letter (probably 1954), Box No. 203, Folder No. 13, International Association for Cultural Freedom Records (hereafter IACF), University of Chicago Library, Special Collections.
[331] N. Chiaromonte to I. Silone, 30 October, 1951, box 4 folder 132, Series I: Outgoing Correspondence, Nicola Chiaromonte Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscripts Library, New Haven.
[332] M. Josselson to N. Nabokov, 24 May, 1954, Box No. 251, Folder No. 12, IACF.
[333] M. Josselson to N. Nabokov, 4 June, 1954, Box No. 251, Folder No. 12, IACF.

anti-clericalism in Italy. But our remarks were greeted with many reservations"[334].

The CCF headquarters tried to intervene and smooth the anti-Clerical rhetoric of the Italian affiliate. Nabokov, for instance, fiercely criticised the "arrogant, bellicose, and quixotic" attitude of the AILC towards the Church. The Congress considered necessary to avoid any diplomatic incident with the Vatican, which was recognized as an influential and powerful ally for the US anti-Communist campaign. It was fundamental to preserve a cordial relation with the Catholic community since the Congress was seeking to include it in their own orbit.[335] However, the CCF could not directly intervene in the AILC's decisional line. While Communists and left-wing Socialists were prevented from joining the association, it was the exclusion of Christian Democrats that became a matter of great concern for the Secretariat in Paris who feared a possible backlash from the Vatican.[336] Further concern arose due to the presence in the Italian Association of anti-clerical intellectuals such as Salvemini, "who eats the Pope the way Levitas used to eat Uncle Joe".[337] Both Nabokov and Josselson tried to convince Silone to tone down the AILC's polemic with the Church but with no results. In a letter to Josselson, Nabokov also suggested that a "prominent catholic from outside of Italy should intervene to and through the top authority of the Vatican in

[334] D Muraca, "L'Associazione Italiana per La Libertà Della Cultura: Il Caso Italiano E Il Congress for Cultural Freedom," *Storiografia* XI (2007): 157.
[335] Idem, 154.
[336] M Mastrogregori, "Libertà Della Cultura e 'Guerra Fredda Culturale'. Bobbio, Gli Intellettuali 'Atlantici' e i Comunisti: Alle Origini Di 'Politica e Cultura', 1955," *Storiografia* XI (2007): 21.
[337] N. Nabokov to M. Josselson, 1 June 1954, Box No. 251, Folder 12, IACF.

order to persuade them to make a distinction between our international and national societies."[338]

Despite the CCF's insistence, the hegemonic role of the Catholic Church was of greater concern for the Italian intellectuals. Their anti-clericalism could not be simply removed with the beginning of the Cold War and the American insistence. No matter how much emphasis the CCF put on letting the Italians know that Communism represented the major threat to freedom and how necessary the collaboration of all cultural anti-Communist forces were, the hegemonic cultural role of the Church did not represented an issue of secondary importance in the Italian context. Furthermore, since these intellectuals chose to mobilise in name of cultural freedom, the fact they could not criticise the DC and the Catholic networks exploitation of culture for political reasons was unacceptable.

Tempo Presente and the Challenges of Transnational anti-Communism.

Even though tensions between the CCF and the Italian branch would never be eased, the urgency to deal with the Italian case led the Paris Secretariat to authorize the publication of the Italian journal of the CCF *Tempo Presente*, which would be published monthly from 1956 to 1968. Despite Silone was the *conditio sine qua non* for establishing the Italian branch of the CCF and running *Tempo Presente*, it was Nicola Chiaromonte who was the foremost editor of the two. Both editors agreed to

[338] N. Nabokov to M. Josselson, 9 June 1954, Box No. 251, Folder 12, IACF.

bring forth a high-quality review, an alternative to those cultural projects proposed by Communist organizations and conservative movements. They played a fundamental role in adapting the transnational dimension of the cultural Cold War to local ambitions and needs making clear from the beginning that they would have not tolerated any sort of external interference in the Italian cultural experiment.

Before *Tempo Presente* was founded in 1956, during a meeting of the executive committee (4 Dec. 1955) the editors strongly asked to leave out any mention about the connection between the journal and CCF. According to them such revelation would have possibly caused a wave of distrust among readers and collaborators.[339] Despite an initial refusal, Silone and Chiaromonte obtained the permission and Tempo Presente was the only journal in which there was no indication of the affiliation with the CCF.

Most of the collaborators of the review were members of the non-communist left, as well as well-known writers. Among them: Italo Calvino, Vasco Pratolini, Libero de Libero, Albert Camus, Alberto Moravia, Leonardo Scascia, Enzo Forcella, Nelo Risi, Elsa Morante, Altiero Spinelli, Giulio Guderzo, Giuliano Piccoli, Luciano Codignola. Furthermore, the prestige of the review was also incremented by the presence of influential foreign collaborators such as: Dwight Macdonald, Hannah Arendt (founders of Politics); Melvin Lasky, Richard Lowenthal (collaborators of Encounters, the former was also the chief editor of Der Monat and later of Encounter)

[339]F S Saunders and S Calzavarini, *Gli Intellettuali E La CIA. La Strategia Della Guerra Fredda Culturale*, Tascabili: Saggi (Fazi, 2007), 385–386.

Mary McCarty (collaborator of Partisan Review) Daniel Bell (Collaborator of Fortune) Lewis Coser, Joseph Buttinger, Michael Harrington, Irving Howe (collaborator of Dissident), and Theodore Draper. The journal was characterised by a wide range of articles; from socio-political analyses to literary reviews, from essays about European federalism to philosophical writings as well as letters from intellectuals from all around the world.

Since the first publication, the editors claimed they had no ideology or line to propose; "the point of view we share is that, nowadays, no one can offer global and systematic truths"[340]. Their stated aim was basically to inform and discuss about important national and international topics. As stated in the first issue in April 1956 "Tempo Presente is an international review of information and discussion based on freedom of criticism. It intends to promote the reconsideration of the ordinary ways of thinking confronting them with the reality of the existing world"[341].

Even though with the publication of TP the anti-clerical rhetoric would be smooth, probably because of Nicola Chiaromonte's editorial line, another controversy emerged. In particular, tensions emerged over the Italian intellectuals' notion of anti-Communism and the different ways of interpreting the cultural opposition from a transnational and national perspective. Even though they were key members of the Congress, both Silone and Chiaromonte constantly opposed the fierce anti-Communist

[340] T E Frosini, *Tempo Presente: Antologia 1956-1968 : Gli Scritti Più Significativi Di Una Rivista Simbolo* (Liberal Libri, 1998), XI.
[341] "Tempo Presente è una rivista internazionale di informazione e discussione fondata sul principio di libertà critica. Essa intende promuovere il riesame dei modi di pensare correnti mettendoli a confronto con la realtà del mondo attuale", *Tempo Presente*, 1/1.

crusade promoted by a faction led by Arthur Koestler and James Burnham. While for Koestler the CCF should have functioned as a political instrument to defeat Communism thanks to the recourse to a specular replication of the Soviet propagandistic fight; Silone preferred a more subtle approach. As he claimed, he wanted to "oppose to the hysteric cries of the communist propaganda a superior language"[342], fearing that a fierce anti-Communism would eventually push the so-called "neutralist" intellectuals towards the Soviet Union. In Silone's perception, a fierce criticism of the Soviet ideology would be counterproductive without really proposing any possible alternative.

As the editors soon realised, a specular replication of US anti-Communist efforts would not only have been ineffective but also detrimental to the Italian cultural project. As Moravia, a declared non-Communist and anti-Stalinist intellectual, once stated in a letter addressed to Chiaromonte: "Politics is not an absolute matter. What is bad for America could be good here, what is good now is not going to be good in ten years. Nowadays, the communism in Italy is not in an anti-liberal position, maybe for Machiavellian reasons, but it doesn't matter."[343] The impossibility to embrace a US oriented anti-Communism in the early Cold War was due to a series of reasons. First of all, a large part of the population was supporting the Italian Communist Party not simply for a political identification with the party's agenda but also because it was the only party that represented an alternative to the Catholic hegemonic position in the

[342] I Silone to M Lasky, 31 March, 1950, Box 1; Folder 32, Series XIII: Associazione Italiana per la Libertà della cultura, Archivio Silone, Fondazione Turati, Firenze (hereafter FondTu).
[343] Moravia to N Chiaromonte, Undated letter (1946?), Box 2, folder 60, Incoming Correspondence, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Nicola Chiaromonte Papers, GEN MSS 113.

country. Secondly, within the intellectual circles, the romantic idea of "Resistance", and the role communists played in it, was highly emphasised, even amongst non-Communists sympathizers. As Moravia argued "[…] I do not feel like being anti-Communist today, in Italy, for the main reason that this country has produced Fascism, and it is ready to do it again. I am afraid that American people do not understand what it means to live in a country that has been Fascist."[344] As Chiaromonte expressed in an extremely simple but effective way "some questions look different when seen from Europe […] Stalinism […] cannot be considered the main danger."[345] The anti-communist strategy planned by the US needed, therefore, to be adapted to the Italian context.

The editors' anti-communism was therefore meant to be different, in defence of democracy, social justice, individual liberty and fundamental rights, but also in defence of intellectual freedom. They conceived the CCF as an opportunity to foster a transnational intellectual debate moulded on their exile experiences but, above all, its creation was an occasion to overcome the cultural stagnation of the Fascist era and to promote an anti-communist leftist intellectual alternative to the cultural monopoly of the Italian Communist party and Christian Democracy.

Despite refusing to follow any dogma, the Italian project was never meant to be apolitical. For Silone and Chiaromonte the intent "was not disengagement from politics […]but an intellectual clarification necessary to restore the conditions for a

[344] Ibid.
[345] N. Chiaromonte to M. McCarthy, 9 July 1948, box 10 folder 240, Dwight Macdonald Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library

culture that was neither apolitical, nor politicized."[346] . According to them, major social and political changes were essentially played out on the cultural terrain. What Silone rejected was the abuse of culture for political purposes. In a speech at the Société Européenne de Culture in Venice in March 1956, Silone declared: "the writer belongs to society and not to the state."[347] True leftist writers, therefore, should "tell the truth to everyone, at all times, to enemies and to friends, even when friends do not want to hear disagreeable truths."[348]

Both editors were opposing intellectual dishonesty of those that "willing to be interpreters of the common interest, ended up being supporter of the reasons of an apparatus or of a State: bureaucrat amongst the others".[349] As Silone wrote in an editorial piece published on *Tempo Presente* titled *Invito ad un esame di coscienza:*

> "No intellectual who seriously feel the sense of personal and social responsibility will ever accept, despite suffering frustration, to be confined to an ivory tower. The mistake is to accept the dilemma: either isolation or servitude. You can commit neck-deep to political and social struggle, and remain free, reserving bitter truths to your friends."[350]

The Italian editors were criticizing intellectual dishonesty of those who "willing to be interpreters of the common interest, ended up being supporter of the reasons of an

[346] C Panizza, "Percorsi Dell'anticomunismo Democratico: Nicola Chiaromonte e 'Il Tempo Della Malafede'"," in *Intellettuali e Anticomunismo,* ed. A Mariuzzo and D Menozzi, n.d., 70.
[347] S. Pugliese (2009) *Bitter spring*, 227
[348] C. Greenberg (1939) "An Interview with Ignazio Silone", *Partisan Review*, 6/5, 27.
[349] N Chiaromonte (1957) "Commento all'inchiesta: 'tre domande agli intellettuali'", *Tempo Presente*, 2/2,101.
[350] I Silone (1956) "Invito ad un esame di coscienza", *Tempo Presente* 1/9, 689.

apparatus or of a State: bureaucrats amongst the others".[351] Criticism was implicitly, as well as explicitly, addressed towards Communist intellectuals in Italy, but also towards the conservative anti-Communist crusade promoted by Christian Democrats.

The Italian Anti-Systemic Intellectuals and America.

Relations between the Italians of *Tempo Presente* and the United States were rarely smooth. In spite of his anti-communism, Silone was an unpredictable ally. He refused to entirely embrace the American cause, often characterising "America" as a moral and cultural menace. While part of the European intelligentsia welcomed the American Way of Life, Hollywood and US mass culture as a symbol of modernity, many still looked at the US with a sort of snobbish, aristocratic attitude.[352] There was a widespread stereotyped vision of America amongst Italians who, as a US report showed, "liked to emphasize our materialistic attitude and our lack of cultural refinement, mainly to soothe their own acute sense of inferiority at Italy's present status in the international scene."[353]

Tempo Presente did not back away from similar criticism, especially on race relations, US foreign policy in Vietnam and Latin America, McCarthyism, and the aberrations of capitalism and consumerism. American intellectuals were becoming increasingly

[351] N Chiaromonte (1957) "Commento all'inchiesta: 'tre domande agli intellettuali'", *Tempo Presente*, 2/2, 101.
[352] Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II*.
[353] Doc. *Suggestion Dr Lowry*, 25 October 1951, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, BOX 70, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

worried about the spread of anti-Americanism within the European intellectual circles. In a letter to Chiaromonte, Macdonald stated:

> "Lionel [Abel] told me something I keep hearing on all sides, from people back from abroad […]: that the USA is becoming more and more unpopular abroad. It is frightening, really. (Get some tales from Jean in Mexico- all intellectuals hate USA) People are not FOR Soviet Russia, but they just fear and dislike USA- and think Senator McCarthy runs the country and there is a reign of terror here […] in short, Europeans are coming to think of this country as a homogeneous mass of atom-bomb-makers and 'red-baiters' and dollar-imperialists."[354]

Even Chiaromonte, largely sympathetic to the US, used to refer to the US by underlying the "incredible lack of quality in everything." He was extremely critical of the US, its policy and its culture. He harshly wrote to Dwight Macdonald: "There is something quite especially nauseating about American brutality. Not only because it is accompanied by so much double talk about democracy liberty and peace, but because it is so naked, so crude, so much a kind of end in itself, a sport, a technical affair" [355]. And he went on, "[…] the only thing America seems to be capable of doing in foreign policy is to put her force, financial and military, at the disposal of somebody else's policy."[356] The US, according to many Italians, could not lead the world, not from a political neither from a cultural point of view.

[354] D Macdonald to N Chiaromonte, 7 November, 1951, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 242, Dwight MacDonald Papers, Yale University Library, Manuscript Collections, Correspondence (hereafter DMpapers).
[355] N Chiaromonte to D MacDonald, 10 July 1965, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 244, DWpapers.
[356] Ibid.

However, the relation between the Italian intellectuals and the US was not an easy one. Criticism towards the hegemonic and paternalistic US intervention in the Italian cultural, political, and economic domains was widespread. During the Korean War the intensification of covert actions and the psychological anti-Communist crusade comported an increasing opposition among left-wing social democratic circles, which became more and more convinced that the real purpose of the NATO was to drag European countries into America's wars[357].

One of the regular collaborators of the review, specialized in US issues, was Mauro Calamandrei. He was an Italian writer and journalist and, in 1949, became one of the very first Italians to be awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study in the US. He was particularly known for being the American correspondent of the Italian review *L'Espresso*. In *Tempo Presente* he produced a series of analysis on US politics and society. He wrote an article on the Western diplomatic crisis in the Middle East, highlighting US foreign policy's limits. He blamed the US for its "lack of strategic and diplomatic planning, and long-term programs" [358] in dealing with the USSR. Mauro Calamandrei was not the only author who criticized US foreign policy. Other authors blamed the United States for its ambiguity during the Hungarian Revolution. Raymond Aron, for example, declared, "the policy of the United States was twofold: to comply with the requirements of the atomic age, it respected the division of the world into spheres of influence and did not think to intervene effectively beyond the line of demarcation; consistent with the requirements of the missionary spirit and of democratic prophecy, it protested to the United Nations, prohibited the use of force

[357] Ellwood, "'You Too Can Be Like Us': Selling the Marshall Plan."
[358] M Calamandrei (1958) "Lettera da New York. La crisi del Medio Oriente e le contraddizioni della diplomazia Americana", *Tempo Presente* , 3/8, 656.

and set out to free the enslaved peoples."[359] Similarly, François Fejtö accused Washington's hypocrisy for not having intervened in favor of the Hungarians "After ten years of inciting the satellites to claim freedom, the United States did not take the slightest serious initiative in view of a peaceful solution of a wider framework structure. The heroes were acclaimed and abandoned to their fate. It was a hard awakening for the Hungarians."[360]

US Foreign policy was not the only topic that arouse criticism. American culture was also blamed for the general deterioration of artistic products. Referring to mass culture, Ernest van den Haag especially criticized the "industrialization of arts", which was largely seen as a threat to high European culture. "In the climate of mass culture, a second coming of Christ would be only a sensational show to follow on TV, while waiting for Milton Berle's program"[361]. Generally speaking, the European authors seemed to analyze US culture through a European perspective, bringing forth prejudices and stereotypes typical of conservative realities.

But one of the most interesting publications is Dwight Macdonald's article "America! America!" It was originally written as a New York letter to Encounter in the early 1958. However, the British journal decided not to publish the article. According to Macdonald, this editorial decision "reflected the attitude of Encounter's 'front office', the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris, which published the magazine with funds supplied by several American foundations." He felt obliged to add his point of view

[359] R Aron (1957), "Suez, Budapest e l'ONU", *Tempo Presente*, 2/1, 8.
[360] F Fejtö (1957), "Un anno dopo. La situazione interna dell'Ungheria e l'evoluzione del mondo comunista", *Tempo Presente*, 2/12, 913.
[361] E van den Haag (1957), "Note sulla cultura di massa in America", *Tempo Presente*, 2/11, 856.

on the matter when "America! America!" was published in Dissent, in October 1958. According to Macdonald, "the readers have a right to know when a magazine makes an editorial decision for extraneous reasons, especially this kind of reason."[362]

While Encounters rejected the article, Tempo Presente decided to publish it. "America! America!" appeared with the title "Letter from New York" on Tempo Presente in April 1958, before it was published on Dissent. In this article MacDonald defined Americans as "an unhappy people, a people without style, without a sense of what is humanly satisfying"[363]. "Americans appear to other nations to be somehow at once gross and sentimental, immature and tough, uncultivated and hypocritical, shrewd about small things and stupid about big things." According to him, "in Europe exists a sense of community, in the US we live in a jungle. US motto should be "I got mine and screw you, Jack!"[364]

The articles published in the IACF Bulletin or in Tempo Presente were not simply the result of top-down impositions, but they followed a more complex and incessant scheme of suggestions. Josselson, for instance, was constantly suggesting possible publications. However, these articles could, or could not, be accepted or rejected by the editors. Even when tensions over publications of contestable pieces raised, for instance Guido Piovene's article on Charles De Gaulle[365], that, according to Josselson,

[362] D Macdonald (1958), "America! America!", *Dissent*, October.
[363] D Macdonald (1959), "Letter from New York", *Tempo Presente*, 3/4, 300
[364] Ibidem.
[365] Article published by Guido Piovene(1958) with the title "De Gaulle e noi", *Tempo Presente*, 3/9-10, 701-707. As Chiaromonte wrote to MacDonald in a letter dated 16 July 1958 "We had a clash with Mike on De Gaulle, on account of our moderately stiff stand against him, or rather our refusal to be fooled into supporting him on account of the Commies, and so forth and so on. Now De Gaulle has done what obviously he couldn't help doing, namely submit completely to the Colonels, and I don't think there is any question any longer how thing will develop in France, It will be an authoritarian paternalistic [...] regime for many years: there is no possible opposition for the time being. And De Gaulle is a solemn imbecile." In Dwight

was too critical and damaging to international cultural relations, the Italian editors decided to pursue along the path of cultural autonomy and publish it.

Since the beginning, Silone considered this review as a personal challenge, a challenge to cultural imperialism and an attempt to demonstrate Italian cultural autonomy. The outcome of his negotiations was to consider a European alternative to both American Capitalism and Soviet Communism moving beyond the specificity of the CCF. His criticism towards capitalist society and politics pushed him to embrace a third way position, critical of conservatism as well as communism. He rejected the rigid framework of the Cold War; an alternative to capitalism and communism was possible and, in his perspective, it was the European socialism[366]. As he claimed, "I think of socialism as an element from now on indispensable to a regime of real freedom- that is to say, of liberties that are concrete and actual, not formal and 'constitutional'."[367] Silone, and Chiaromonte, intended to influence the Congress from a more leftist position.

In another article by Spinelli, the author summed up the Italian political excursus from Italian Renaissance to the present status quo. He admitted that "the Italian democracy was born and lived under American protection, the Christian Democrats have agreed to become the American party, as well as the Communists are the Russian party in Italy [...] For this reason the Christian Democrats have worked without pretensions or farsighted visions, reconstructing and administering, good or badly, the State which

MacDonald Papers, Correspondence, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 242, Yale University Library, Manuscript Collections.

[366] E Saccarelli, "The Intellectual as Agent: Politics and Independence in the Other 'Caso Silone,'" *History of European Ideas* 40, no. 3 (2014): 2.

[367] C Greenberg (1939), "An Interview with Ignazio Silone" [translated from the French by Nancy and Dwight Macdonald], *Partisan Review*, 6/5, 25.

was dropped on their arms. Today that current has no longer or clearly visible stream, American leadership is no longer sufficient, and the boat needs an effective guide. "[368] They could find their own guide in the European community, a community free from ideologies, imperialist tendency and deeply democratic.

Through *Tempo Presente*, Silone praised the Hungarian intellectuals for the role they played in the 1956 insurrection. "They were craving more «for truth and freedom» than for bread, the Hungarians, and they demonstrated this."[369] They represented the epitome of those values Silone and Chiaromonte considered fundamental. As Silone wrote, "When it was time to choose, they have not hesitated between the party and the people, between ideology and truth. It may seem almost unbelievable. What an example and teaching for their Western comrades."[370] And he continued: "By rejecting the dilemma «communism or fascism» the Hungarians Masses have introduced […] a real alternative of freedom and have forged a new historical perspective. The so-called «third way», which miserably failed along the corridors of the lost-steps of Western Parliaments, resurrects in revolutionary forms where no one expected it."[371]

The End of Tempo Presente.

In 1966 a series of articles were published on *The New York Times* detailing a series of organizations that had been secretly funded by the CIA. Among the others, the

[368] A Spinelli (1959), "A che serve lo stato italiano?", *Tempo Presente*, 12/4, 891
[369] G Herling (1959), "Due rivoluzioni Varsavia e Budapest", *Tempo Presente*, 1/8, 586.
[370] I Silone (1956), "*Inivito ad un esame di coscienza"*, *Tempo Presente*, 1/9, 682.
[371] Ibidem. 685.

newspaper revealed that the CCF and its English journal Encounter had been one of those organizations that had been receiving money from the agency through a series of philanthropic foundations. In 1967, the US magazine *Ramparts* also reported these claims by publishing a long and detailed expose on the CIA's cultural organizations. These claims were confirmed by other reviews and two months later Thomas Braden, the former head of the CIA's International Organization Division, went public with an article published in the *Saturday Evening Post* entitled "I'm Glad the CIA is Immoral". In this article Braden confirmed that the CIA had been secretly financing the Congress for Cultural Freedom as well as other organizations[372].

Following these revelations a big scandal erupted, even though rumors of the CIA support to the organization had been circulating since the beginning[373]. The future of the CCF and its journals was in jeopardy. In Italy, however, these revelations did not provoke a massive outrage as elsewhere. In October 1967, for instance, Chiaromonte wrote a letter to his friend Dwight MacDonald where he stated that in Italy nobody publicly mentioned the journal connection with the CIA, not even the communist press. He reported, however, an occasion where Mary McCarthy was confronted by the publisher Feltrinelli who defined TP as "a magazine which in the past had been financed by the CIA."[374] The event, quoted in a letter sent by her agent, happened

[372] T W Braden, "I'm Glad the CIA is Immoral" *The Saturday Evening Post* (20 May 1967): 10-14.
[373] M H Hacohen, *The Congress for Cultural Freedom in Austria: Forum, the Rémigrés and Postwar Culture*, in M Mastrogregori, Storiografia, 161.
[374] N Chiaromonte to D MacDonald, 16 October 1967, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 244, DWpapers.

during a meeting with Feltrinelli to discuss the publication in Italian of one of her essays on Vietnam.

As soon as the news about the CIA involvement went public, both Silone and Chiaromonte discussed the possibility of publishing a short statement on their journal commenting about the CIA covertly financing TP and their lack of knowledge. Eventually, they decided not to proceed with it. Because nothing had been published in the Italian press, "a statement like ours would seem to come out of a clear sky, unconnected with anything the general public had read, and finally prove gratuitously damaging, in addition to being journalistically bad", Chiaromonte wrote. [375]

However, in 1968 the editors decided to halt publication. Despite the prestige of the review and its collaborators, the readers' response was tepid and sales remained limited. Poor distribution of the journal had always been a concern for the CCF Secretariat. In 1966 Chiaromonte informed MacDonald that their journal was still having distribution problems and they were wanted in Paris to discuss the issue with Josselson.[376] As Paola Carlucci stated, from 1956 to 1958 about 3300 copies were printed each month with less than 500 active subscriptions. The average percentage of returned copies of the journal from dealers and bookshops was about 30 percent. In November 1967 approximate circulation figures of other CCF journals were *Der*

[375] N Chiaromonte to D MacDonald, 16 October 1967, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 244, DWpapers.
[376] N Chiaromonte to D MacDonald, 24 September 1967, MS 730, Series I, Box No. 10, Folder No. 244, DWpapers.

Monat: print run 17.000 and total sales (including subscriptions) 13600; *Preuves* 5900/2800; *Survey* 4750/3050; *Tempo Presente* 3000/2600.[377]

The difficulties of the journal were mainly linked to the peculiarity of this journal. It was anti-communist in a country with the strongest communist party in Western Europe, it was critical of the Catholic Church and the Christian Democracy. Its ideological position also contributed to a series of difficulties in finding Italian funds[378]. Beside distribution problems and personal and administrative disagreements between the two editors, the lack of funding represented the main hindrance to carry on with the publication. As Chiaromonte revealed in a letter addressed to Sławomir Mrożek, following the revelation of the CIA's financial backup, the journal faced financial shortage. Nevertheless, Chiaromonte excluded the possibility of receiving Italian subsidies, which according to him were not only more difficult to obtain but also "far more political than the American one."[379] On the last number of TP it was stated: "for a cultural review, in Italy, there is no other alternative than relying on a political party or an economic group. For this reason, we are forced to halt publication."[380] Neither Silone nor Chiaromonte were willing to compromise and give up their intellectual freedom to other politic and economic powers. With these few words it was the end Tempo Presente as well as a failed attempt by the US to create a new hegemonic culture in Italy through the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

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[377] P Carlucci in C Morbi and P Carlucci, *Beyond the Cold War: Tempo Presente in Italy*, in *Campaigning Culture and the Global Cold War, The Journals of the Congress for Cultural Freedom*, (eds) G Scott-Smith, C Lerg (Palgrave: 2017) 142.
[378] Ibid 130.
[379] N Chiaromonte to Mrożek, 15 May [1967], box 4, folder 124, Nicola Chiaromonte papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
[380] Mastrogregori, "Libertà Della Cultura e 'Guerra Fredda Culturale'. Bobbio, Gli Intellettuali 'Atlantici' e i Comunisti: Alle Origini Di 'Politica e Cultura', 1955," 113.

Seeking to maintain some sort of intellectual autonomy, these individuals never linked themselves organically to the political system[381]. Despite exercising authority, intellectuals did not have any direct power. Their influence over civic society had always to be filtered by the party, which legitimated their role. At the same time, it had to be mediated by society.[382] By refusing to follow any dogma this network became more and more unpopular in Italy. Outside their own intellectual circle, their words almost fall on deaf ears failing to address the needs and aspirations of the nation as a whole. The main problem with this liberal-socialist intelligentsia was that they remained a compact elitist group that did not fit in a society in which mass political parties were becoming the major agents (referents) for changes. Due to the dominant role of political parties in post-war Italy, their influence over civil society had to be filtered by the party, which could legitimate their social role through political recognition. The creation of a strong and influential leftist non-Communist intellectual network was impeded by the lumbering presence of a strong Communist left and a Christian Democracy party that, in policy as well as on the cultural front, caused the marginalization of the new anti-communist left[383].

[381] G Verrucci, "Il Contributo Culturale e Politico Delle Riviste e Degli Intellettuali Laici Nell' Italia Del Secondo Dopoguerra (1945-1963)," *Studi Storici* 31, no. 4 (1990): 890.
[382] Pasquinelli, "From Organic to Neo-Corporatist Intellectuals: The Changing Relations between Italian Intellectuals and Political Power," 416.
[383] Capozzi, "L'opposizione All'antiamericanismo: Il Congress for Cultural Freedom e l'Associazione Italiana per La Libertà Della Cultura," 341.

Conclusion.

The story of *Tempo Presente* is another example of the complexity of Italian efforts to adjust to external pressures and position itself somewhere in between the two Superpowers, while constantly emphasizing its adherence to the Atlantic community. On the cultural front, the CIA's financial subsidies[384] transformed this domestic fight into an international struggle opening up a space for intellectual debates. European anti-Communism, however, was not a product of the Cold War but a spontaneous movement that had been embraced by many intellectuals since the Thirties. The CIA found a fertile ground in which to sow its own anti-communist seed. The agency help those intellectuals in reaching a bigger audience; in financing a project that had already been in motion, and that would have possibly been with or without the Agency's money.

Despite the international status of the two intellectuals gave them autonomy and they succeeded in promoting a peculiar Italian experiment, the Italian political culture and its domestic structure impeded the success of it. The emergence of a leftist anti-communist intellectual network in Italy was impeded by the lumbering presence of both a strong Communist left and the Christian Democrats, the dominance of which

[384] Estimating the exact figures of the CCF's financial subsidies to Tempo Presente (1956-1968) is arduous due to the lack of full and detailed records. Having said this, Stonor Saunders reported a document in which Josselson discussed CCF funding to Tempo Presente. As reported, Tempo Presente received $34.800 in 1964. Josselson also expressed his commitment to give around $ 46.000 for the following year. Peter Coleman has estimated that in 1966 Tempo Presente received $ 45.000 from the CCF. However, the journal was always short of funds, even with the money coming from the CCF. Silone and Chiaromonte tried to find alternative sources. Silone was also investing his own money. Spadolini recalled that in 1962 he succeeded in convincing the socialist Silone to collaborate with his "bourgeois" daily *Il Resto Del Carlino* by paying him enough so that he could keep *Tempo Presente* afloat.

politically and culturally ensured *Tempo Presente*'s marginalization.[385] Following the end of the conflict, political elite soon extended its influence over society by imposing a clear political direction on cultural activities. Both parties had their own intellectual networks for the construction and maintenance of hegemony. As Chiaromonte claimed:

> "In Italy all (or nearly all) the advantage of opposing Communism was left to the Christian Democrats, and this had extended the duration of their power. Because, certainly, having left to the communists the title of defender of democracy and the pride of being the only stable foothold for a possible opposition, it means that now that communism is collapsing the democratic and socialist opposition is partially discredited and partially defeated, disorganised and lost."[386]

While the Cold War gave them some sort of international recognition, on the domestic front their positions were still neglected or misunderstood. That is to say, the long-lasting expectation for a change in the relationship between intellectuals and people never happened mainly because they were not able to overcome the intellectual classism. Their reluctance to ally themselves with the political parties and because of the traditional allegiance to high culture that has been characteristic of Italian intellectuals produced a sort of indifference among the readers. Despite the remarkable initiatives, these intellectuals were not able to fill the gap between civic society and power.

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[385] Capozzi,"L'opposizione All'antiamericanismo: Il Congress for Cultural Freedom e l'Associazione Italiana per La Libertà Della Cultura," 341.
[386] N Chiaromonte to G Salvemini, Box 4, folder 129, Nicola Chiaromonte papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

The peculiarity of Italian political, social, and cultural structures operated as a filtering factor for determining both the success and failure of cultural diplomacy. The story of *Tempo Presente*, its inefficacy in establishing a Non-Communist Left cultural hegemony, the review's marginalization within the Italian literary establishment, and the intellectuals' reluctance to follow the Secretariat's guidance demonstrate how in transnational networks national interests, culture and context still play a decisive role. Despite their international status and influence, these intellectuals did not fit within the Italian context failing in establishing an effective cultural hegemony.

CONCLUSION.

Despite the fact that with the beginning of the Cold War transnationalism has become a central aspect of US cultural diplomacy, this research has sought to demonstrate how a mere transnational approach to the Cold War is not enough to understand the complexity of the conflict, its local repercussion and the series of negotiations that took place within the country. Despite the attempt to operate beyond the boundaries of the nation, the nation-state still represent a cultural and political force of power in determining the evolution of transnational relations. When analysing transnational organisations such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom it important to analyse the relations between political institution and other non-governmental actors with a socialising function as well as those sets of values, ideas, and norms that are part of a country's political culture. These can determine the impact and the outcome of those relations beyond the governmental apparatus.

Internal and external actors can try to intervene and modify the national context, but they can only do it within the narrative framework of the domestic structure. Since they represent the variables under which specific ideas and values are selected, modify, adapted, or rejected, domestic structures can determine the success or failure of transnational relations. They work as a filter that mediate the impact of transnational efforts to influence policy in the various targeted areas[387]. Because the outcomes of transnational networks depend so much on domestic structures, the impacts and effects

[387] Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 25.

of these exchanged ideas across the boundaries vary greatly from state to state. Therefore, a generalising approach cannot help us to determine the success or the failure of these networks.

While transnational actors and organizations can challenge the power of the state, the organs and institutions of that specific nation-state still represent the fundamental centre of power where policy decisions are made and acted upon. However, transnational actors and ideas can still have a deep impact within the nation-state. As Risse-Kappen explains, transnational actors can influence national policy but only if they get access to the political system of the target state. But simply gaining access is not sufficient to have an impact on national policy. These actors also have to "generate and/or contribute to 'winning' policy coalitions in order to change decisions in the desired directions"[388].

Even though external actors can try to intervene in other contexts and to modify the political culture of a specific population through a process of transfer or dissemination of political and ideological values, these actors could only operate within the narrative framework of the domestic structure. If the specific structure allows them to have a precise long-term impact on the country, their objectives can be partially or fully achieved. But this requires a complex process of negotiations and interactions with the social, political and economic elite of that specific country that would facilitate the promotion and reception of these external values or norms. On the other hand, in the absence of a favourable structure the achievement of specific objectives of cultural diplomacy would be very unlikely.

[388] T Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 25.

America's attempt to establish in Italy a transnational anti-Communist identity failed due to the unfavourable structure and the creation of strong antagonising collective identities that represented a challenge to the adoption of external norms and values the US tried to export. While with its intervention Washington obtained some short-term success, from a long-term perspective its intervention exacerbated divisions within the country and strengthened the authority of both the DC and its socialising network with Catholicism becoming a new form of sub-national identity. Paradoxically, it also secured the Communist hegemony among the anti-Clerical forces within the country. This demonstrates the limits of Soft Power strategy and the difficulties in transforming the political culture and the identity of a foreign country.

Furthermore, this research sought to demonstrate the challenges in forming a socialising agency from above. By relying on anti-systemic intellectuals the US sought to change the structure of the country through the creation of new socialising forces that could exert influence on both the Italian government and on social groups. This proved unsuccessful. The main factor that led to a failure of a long-term process of transformation of the political culture was due to the fact that socialising forces required to be organically connected with the political establishment. The intellectual reluctance in linking themselves to political forces and their refusal to establish organic relations with them led to a cultural marginalisation of this group.

The main problem with a socialising agency is that its influence among the population cannot be obtained through imposition but required a long-lasting strategy of trust building and the identification of the population with these forces. Washington therefore

could no simply impose a socialising force from above. To effectively influence the population and its way of thinking these forces have to be built from the bottom-up.

The transformation of the political culture of another country is a very complex process. It first requires a thorough understanding of the context and the domestic structure in which the external power seeks to intervene. The US lack of understanding of the Italian system and its political culture led psychological warfare experts to plan an ineffective strategy of intervention. As planned, the transformation of the population according to the American point of views could not take place.

To understand the complexity of the Cold War it is also indispensable to expand the notion of power and the relations between nations by moving beyond the definition of strong and weak states. Previous scholarship tended to look at the Cold War from a unidirectional perspective with the US playing a determinant role while other countries, such as Italy for example, simply considered as passive players of this unbalanced relation. As I sought to demonstrate, local actors played a central role in the evolution of the relations and in the process of negotiation with the US. Cold War dynamics and the priority given to anti-Communism, for instance, allowed De Gasperi to become a pivotal actor in the negotiating process eventually giving him leverage to set the terms of this relationship. The starting point for US-Italian relationship, therefore, is not American Foreign policy or the transatlantic dimension of the Cold War but it is the local context and the negotiations of powers within Italy. Local dynamics played a huge role in modifying and adapting the international Cold War structure on the micro level.

Therefore, a success intervention always depends on local actors, local structure and culture. Since they represented the variables under which specific ideas and values are

selected, modify, adapted, or rejected, domestic structures can determine the success or failure of transnational relations. When approaching the analysis of transnational relations, the "national" dimension of it cannot simply be removed; it is "inherent" to the concept.

As this research sought to demonstrate, the Cold War was never bipolar in a strict sense; there were instead multiplicities of histories that went beyond the Cold War. Despite regional developments became intersected with the dynamics of the US-USSR conflict, these developments should not be read as naturally responding to the bipolar climate. The objective of this research is therefore to encourage a full reconsideration of our understanding of Cold War relations moving beyond the mainstream narrative that depicts them as cohesive. Undoubtedly, the clash of interests between the two Super Powers generated a series of conflicts that dominated international affairs for decades, but this instability of the international system was also caused by national and local aspects that through its intersection with the Cold War dramatically changed the course of history for many European and Non-European countries, Italy included.

The same misreading of events that affected Italian historiography characterizes also other regional contexts of the world where conflicts came to be seen as merely generated by the bipolar confrontation. It is worth considering that in many cases, however, the Cold War frame was merely imposed from above by foreign actors. Through strategic attempts or by simply misreading events essentially local and national issues soon became Cold War cases. This is what happened in all corners of the world, from Latin America to Africa, from the Middle East to Asia. In Europe as well scholars often tend to oversimplify events presenting them as products of the Cold War. One of the main

limits of previous narratives is that by looking at Italian negotiations and national efforts only through a narrow Cold War prism many anomalies in the political as well as cultural and social context could only be explained as a temporary deviation from the American leading direction, or as an external concession to the new Republic. However, it was not a matter of loose guidance or of benevolent concessions from the outside that shaped Italian post-war history, but it was the result of national efforts and negotiations in moving beyond the strict boundaries of the Cold War. The peculiar responses of Italian actors, their choices and individual efforts revealed the limitation of mere international analyses.

This research did not aim to offer an exhaustive analysis of US-Italian relations but only to present a new perspective of analysis that tends to be underestimated. Further works with a focus on the local dimension are required for taking further the investigation of the Cold War. This analysis is only applicable to the Italian case but the importance of being local is central for understanding the evolution of the Cold War conflict and the national negotiations in other contexts as well. Because the outcomes of transnational networks depend so much on domestic structures, the impacts and effects of these exchanged ideas across the boundaries vary greatly from state to state. Therefore, a generalising approach cannot help us to determine the success or the failure of these networks. To further our understanding of transnational organizations and cultural diplomacy, we should not look at how the Cold War made these transnational projects possible but how national issues made them fragile.

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