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TransHistFarRight

Transnational History of the Far Right

A Collective Research Project led by Marlene Laruelle

At a time when global political dynamics seem to be moving in favor of illiberal regimes around the world, this research project seeks to fill in some of the blank pages in the contemporary history of the far right, with a particular focus on the transnational dimensions of far-right movements in the broader Europe/Eurasia region.

www.historyofthefarright.org/

Introduction[1]

On August 24, 2024, Ukraine's Independence Day, the European far right descended on the city of Lviv in the western part of the country to participate in the Nation Europa conference.[2] At the conclusion of the event, a Memorandum of Unity and Cooperation was signed by representatives from the various groups, formally integrating them within a truly multinational European framework. Representing Italy were members of the neofascist group CasaPound, an organization which, according to historian Nicola Guerra, has multiple activists fighting in the defense of Ukraine.[3] While not physically present, one Italian stood out among the list of young activists and soldiers. Gabriele Adinolfi, a 70-year-old neofascist militant-turned-journalist, delivered the keynote speech for the event, presenting the attendees with his thesis on the future of Europe. "Europe must be central," he said, "not subordinate to the East or the West, but a free lighthouse [*sic*] of a Third Position in the world."[4]

Selecting Adinolfi as the main speaker for the event was not a random decision, as the Italian activist had decades of experience and knowledge in the area of European far-right politics. As a youth in 1978, Adinolfi was involved in the founding of Terza Posizione, a neofascist group with certain Third-Worldist and anti-American positions, and in his adult years he helped create the equally radical

[1] The author would like to thank the following scholars, professionals, and friends for their help, insight, and general support during the research for this project: Pauline Picco, Vito Ruggiero, Andrea Sceresini, Manlio Milani, Filippo Iannaci, Guido Salvini, Lucia Wolf, and Marlene Laruelle.

[2] Nation Europa [@RNationEuropa]. "24.08.24. «Nation Europa» Conference. On the Independence Day of Ukraine, It Hosted an Event That United Different Organizations from across the Whole of Europe in Lviv. The Conference Was Attended by Representatives from III Weg (DE), Casa Povnd (IT), Bulgarian National Union Https://T.Co/2WYwza6heN." Twitter, September 5, 2024. https://x.com/RNationEuropa/status/1831735149601468662.

[3] Nicola Guerra. "The Russia-Ukraine War Has Shattered the Italian Far Right." *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, (May, 2023): 13-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2023.2206468.

[4] Gabriele Adinolfi. "Speech of Gabriele Adinolfi on 'Nation Europa' Conference." Telegraph, September 10, 2024. https://telegra.ph/Speech-of-Gabriele-Adinolfi-on-Nation-Europa-conference-09-10.

movement CasaPound.[5] However, his domestic activism in Italy only captures a fraction of his total political activity, since the Italian neofascist helped educate activists elsewhere in Europe, particularly in France starting in the 1980s, following his escape from Italy after an arrest warrant was issued for him after the Bologna train station bombing of August 2, 1980.[6] What Adinolfi's political endeavors demonstrate is that *the initiatives of Italian neofascist and far-right actors are not confined to their native land*.

While much of the literature on the political activities of these groups focuses on their ideology, historical development, and domestic activities, less attention has been directed towards their transnational liaisons.[7] This article seeks to expand on this aspect of the literature by focusing on the transnational dimensions of the Strategy of Tension (the deliberate strategy through which acts of violence provoked a popular desire for a stronger state), while demonstrating how the phenomenon was not a strictly Italian affair and how a far-right transnational milieu developed during the period.[8]

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[5] Gabriele Adinolfi, and Roberto Fiore. *Noi terza posizione*. (Rome: Settimo Sigillo, 2015); Gabriele Adinolfi. *Né fronte rosso né reazione. Gli scritti politici di Terza Posizione*. (Florence: Passaggio al Bosco, 2020; Matteo Re. "La deriva radical: CasaPound Italia y el fascismo del tercer milenio." *Revista de estudios políticos*, no. 189 (2020), p. 273; *CasaPound*, or *CasaPound Italia*, is a neofascist organization founded initially as a right-wing social center known for its illegal occupations of empty buildings and strong transnational ties (see "Dangerous Organizations and Bad Actors: CasaPound Italia." Middlebury Institute of International Studies, November 30, 2022, https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/centers-initiatives/ctec/ctec-publications/dangerous-organizations-and-bad-actors-3).

[6] Périne Schir. "The French Groupe Union Défense and the Italian Far Right: Four Generations of Transalpine Cooperation." *IERES Occasional Papers*, Transnational History of the Far Right, no. 24 (May 21, 2024): p. 13. https://www.illiberalism.org/the-french-groupe-union-defense-and-the-italian-far-right-four-generations-of-transalpine-cooperation/.

[7] This of course is not to say that there is a dearth work on the transnational dimension of the phenomenon. In fact, this article relies on these other texts which collectively help to illustrate how Italian neofascists depended on and supported foreign actors. For example, see Nicola Guerra. *The Italian Far Right from 1945 to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. 1st edition. (Routledge, 2023); Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. Reprint edition. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018); Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses. Les extrêmes droites en France et en Italie (1960-1984)*. (Rennes: PU RENNES, 2016).

[8] The term Strategy of Tension, or *Strategia della Tensione*, first appears in an article published in the English newspaper *The Observer* following the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing. The journalists used the term to describe how Italian social-democratic president Giuseppe Saragat's efforts to undermine the Christian Democratic party's government might have "indirectly encouraged the far Right to go over to terrorism." The term evolved over the years during the various trials and was deployed as a way to describe a "conditioning strategy" between the political system and society. Ultimately, the term has come to refer to the pursuit towards creating "an atmosphere of subversion and fear in the country so as to promote a turn to an authoritarian type of government." However, amongst the experts there is no consensus on what exactly the end objective was, and which people or groups orchestrated it. Some argue that the Italian and American establishment are squarely to blame while other argue that the role of the political elite is underplayed with international actors and neofascist activists taking the lion's share of responsibility. What is agreed upon is the culpability of neofascist activists in the massacres. Finally, this article seconds, and through its research has confirmed, the statement put forward by Aldo Giannuli that "there never was […] a single long string that, from the peak of the great powers to the lowest actor, transmitted every minimal order." Instead, the period referred to as the Strategy of Tension was defined by a galaxy of different groups and actors who interacted with one another and with international entities (states, paramilitary groups, political alliances). Overlap, either due to jointly crafted initiatives or general doctrinal preferences, did occur but *doesn't support the thesis that a pyramidical system of direct command orchestrated each and every event*. Instead, as this article demonstrates, it is more useful to view the groups as part of a constellation with nodes connecting each other

The acts of terrorist violence inflicted on the Italian Republic were not, as historian and consultant for the public prosecutor's office Aldo Giannuli rightly points out, an "exclusively Italian dynamic, but an international one."[9] One cannot understand this period of Italian history without addressing the geopolitical dynamics of postwar Europe and the Cold War.[10] Therefore, rigorous analysis demands that the forces that supported, protected, and inspired Italian neofascists be unveiled in order to present the full story of this period.

Before we go any further, it is important to highlight what this article is not. Firstly, the text, *in primis*, does not seek to engage with the terminological debate regarding what the Strategy of Tension is and who was truly behind it. While the article exposes the political constellations of overlapping and clashing groups based on their directives at a given moment, it has no interest in uncovering the true culpability behind the massacres committed during this period: that responsibility lies with the magistrates and historians investigating those particular incidents. Its purpose is to illuminate how, since the start of the postwar period, Italian neofascists have engaged with foreign actors, and what these liaisons have looked like. Secondly, the article only tangentially discusses the political actions conducted on the Italian Peninsula to the extent necessary to contextualize the transnational schema. A considerable amount of literature exists which covers the ideological development, electoral struggles, and episodes of domestic violence that defined the neofascist experience during this period, but the article does not seek to contribute to that particular body of work.[11] Again, *its purpose is to recount who, for what reason, and under what circumstances, exported the neofascist political struggle beyond the domestic arena and onto the international stage*.

With regard to the content of the article, while purporting to cover the Strategy of Tension, it does not limit itself to that specific period (1950–1975).[12] Instead, it should be viewed more as a

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for various reasons (see Neal Ascherson, Michael Davie, and Frances Cairncross. "480 Held in Terrorist Bombs Hunt." *The Observer*, December 14, 1969; Mirco Dondi. *L'eco del boato. Storia della strategia della tensione 1965-1974*. (Rome: Laterza, 2015), p. 4; Anna Cento Bull. *Italian Neofascism: The Strategy of Tension and the Politics of Nonreconciliation*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 19, 77-79; Aldo Giannuli. *La strategia della tensione: Servizi segreti, partiti, golpe falliti, terrore fascista, politica internazionale: un bilancio definitivo*. (Milan: Ponte alle Grazie, 2018) p. 10).

[9] Aldo Giannuli. *La strategia della tensione*. p. 9.

[10] During the Cold War, Italy occupied a unique role within the Western bloc. Due to its strong communist party and business dealings with the Soviet Union, the country oscillated between the two powers allowing the nominally pro-Atlanticist NATO member state to interact with the East. However, the DC's perceived toleration of the PCI exacerbated the United States resentment towards its Italian ally. Therefore, Italy's Janus-faced political system shaped the nations geopolitical orientation as well (see Mario Del Pero. "Containing Containment: Rethinking Italy's Experience during the Cold War." *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 8, no. 4 (January 1, 2003): 532–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/1354571032000147755; Leopoldo Nuti. "Italian Foreign Policy in the Cold War: A Constant Search for Status." (Lanham: Lexington Books., 2011). https://iris.uniroma3.it/handle/11590/166573).

[11] Here one can read Mirco Dondi. *L'eco del boato. Storia della strategia della tensione 1965-1974*. Prima edizione. (Rome: Laterza, 2015); Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia. La Destra radicale e la strategia della tensione in Italia nel dopoguerra*. (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1995); Carlo Fumian and Angelo Ventrone, eds. *Il terrorismo di destra e di sinistra in Italia e in Europa. Storici e magistrati a confronto*. (Padova: Padova University Press, 2018).

[12] Aldo Giannuli. *La strategia della tensione*. p. 8; This date is contested since the parliamentary inquiry sets the date 1969-1974 while other scholars place the events between 1965-1974 as part of the Strategy of Tension. This article adopts Giannuli's timeframe due to his status as an authority on the topic but also since it captures the preparatory stages leading up to the episodes of violence, an essential period that helps to explain the context behind bombings. However, it is important to reiterate that this period represents only

companion piece to the foundational work of Franco Ferraresi, which traces the rebirth, consolidation, and terrorist acts conducted by the far-right in Italy.[13] Thus, it follows the three phases outlined by him (rebirth, strategy of tension, and armed spontaneity), but it looks almost exclusively at the international dimension.[14]

Finally, a brief mention regarding the sources used is needed. This article is the culmination of nearly a year's worth of archival research, with the House of Memory in Brescia, the Central National Library of Rome, the personal archives of Judge Guido Salvini, and the Library of Congress in Washington DC serving as the main sources of documentation.[15] However, it also depends quite significantly on work conducted by other historians who have made significant contributions in the study of transnational neofascism during the period covered below. A point was made to only cite primary sources and historiography works. In order to avoid the propagation of narratives that lack rigorous substantiation, the article relies on a rather slim corpus of secondary sources written by those whom the author deems to be among the more reputable authorities on the topic. However, it is necessary to note that this rule was broken in order to include information written by one neofascist leader, Stefano Delle Chiaie, and two journalists with a history of neofascist activism, Sandro Forte and Nicola Rao. This was done since Delle Chiaie's autobiography provides insight into essential anecdotal information to be reproduced here, while the works of Rao and Forte are serious works of historical analysis, albeit marked by their neofascist political past.

The article continues as follows: first, it explores the initial postwar framework and the steps taken by Italian neofascists to consolidate their presence on the international stage. It looks at the fighters and politicians active in the Salò Republic and how they reorganized politically after the Second World War. The second portion of the article represents the bulk of the piece and covers the emergence and happenings of the Strategy of Tension. In particular, it covers the groups which played a defining role during the period and the ties they established with friendly nations, organizations, and actors abroad. The third section presents an international assessment of the "armed spontaneity" period of political violence, which is traditionally presented as a purely domestic phenomenon. Therefore, the analysis presented below offers a much-needed perspective on the transnational dimension of this movement. Finally, the piece concludes with a brief discussion of the findings and their implications for the future of transnational neofascist initiatives stemming from Italy, along with potential avenues for research.

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one part of the wider story being analyzed in this article – that being the neofascist rebirth in Italy and its international liaisons (see "Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sulle cause dell'occultamento di fascicoli relativi a crimini nazifascisti," Doc. XXIII, N. 18-bis, *Senato della Repubblica*, May 15, 2003, p. IX).

[13] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia. La Destra radicale e la strategia della tensione in Italia nel dopoguerra*. (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1995); The term Strategy of Tension is used due to the phenomenon's integral role in the wider framework. However, the title could also read "Italian Neofascism and Transnational Networks, a Different Perspective on the Rebirth of Italian Fascism" but this title does not capture the violent and complex nature of this period.

[14] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia.* p. 31.

[15] The documents cited in this article include depositions, internal memos, judicial reports, letters, newspaper articles, magazines, and other primary source documents obtained during the investigations carried out by magistrates.

The Rebirth of Italian Fascism

Italian Fascism was not a static ideology based on a clearly defined corpus of theories from which it would draw.[16] Instead, it ebbed and flowed, adapting to the situation in which it found itself. As the following section will demonstrate, the successor groups to the Mussolini regime emerged primarily from the final stage of Italian Fascism, its experience as the Repubblica Sociale Italiana (henceforth referred to as the Salò Republic or RSI) from 1943 to 1945. Ostensibly a German-controlled Italian rump state founded after the Nazi SS commando Otto Skorzeny rescued the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini from prison in the Gran Sasso massif on September 13, 1943, the RSI returned to the revolutionary and nationalist origins of Fascism.[17] Militant and uncompromising, it would be this dying yet violent form of Fascism, rejected by its mere conservative allies, that would see itself reborn as a movement within the post-war Italian Republic.

The Heirs of Salò: The Consolidation of Neofascism in Italy

With the RSI's capitulation in May of 1945, Italian Fascists found themselves isolated politically during the immediate postwar period, since the anti-fascist parties that constituted the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (CLN), an umbrella movement of resistance forces, isolated all organizations and actors associated with the defeated regime.[18] While anti-Communist sentiment would gradually erode this sense of anti-Fascist solidarity when the Partito Communista Italiano (PCI) began to be perceived as a greater threat to the liberal and center-right parties than that of the defeated Fascists, this initial period of total political isolation of the Fascists led to the proliferation of small, violent, and clandestine groups.[19]

These were composed primarily of ex-RSI fighters and fascist youths who believed in the importance of insurrectionary action and subscribed to the republican fascist ideology of the RSI.[20] This plethora

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[16] As historian Stanley Payne writes, a "major obstacle" in defining Italian Fascism resides in the fact that it underwent a series of developments and its "orientation shifted considerably from one phase to the next" making a "valid generalization […] difficult to establish." While this article does not attempt to engage with the literature on what Fascism is or isn't, it underscores the fact that Italian Fascism, and as a result post-war neofascism, is not an ideology that exists in a vacuum and is very much the product of its time. Therefore, the attitudes and ideological orientations displayed by neofascist actors might occasionally contradict what are assumed to be traditional Fascist beliefs, such as traditional nationalist imperialism (see Stanley Payne. *Fascism: Comparison and Definition*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983) p. 68); On the history of the RSI and its ideology see Mimmo Franzinelli. *Storia della Repubblica Sociale Italiana 1943-1945*. (Bari: Laterza, 2020); Rovatti Toni. *Leoni vegetariani*. (Bologna: Clueb, 2011)).

[17] Stanley Payne. *Fascism*. p. 87; Mussolini was imprisoned in Gran Sasso after the Marshal Pietro Badoglio ordered he be sequestered following a vote of no confidence issued by the Grand Council of Fascism, the main body of government in Fascist Italy.

[18] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia.* p. 43.

[19] Ferraresi cites as examples the FAR (Fasci di Azione Rivoluzionaria); ECA (Esercito Clandestino Anticomunista); FAI (Fronte Antibolscevico Italiano); SAM (Squadre d'Azione Mussolini); TN (Truppe Nazionali); MACI (Movimento Anticomunista Italiano); PARI (Partito d'Azione Rivoluzionaria Italiano); MNS (Missione Nazionale Sociale); PFI (Partito Fusionista Italiano); PNL (Partito Nazionale del Lavoro). The FAR, the most relevant of these groups, is covered in the following section (see Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia.* p. 44).

[20] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia.* p. 44; Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso. La fiamma che non si spegne: da Almirante a Meloni*. (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2023), p. 22.

of organizations represented the first iteration of a unique strand of neofascism that emphasized violence over elections, a rationale that will define many groups covered in this article. However, the group that served as the hegemon amongst all neofascist organizations in postwar Italy and outlived its right-wing opposition spurned clandestine activity and adopted a "legal" path to power.

The Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) was created on December 26, 1946, in the office of Arturo Michelini, an accountant and former vice party secretary of the Fascist Party in Rome.[21] While the MSI was not exclusively the product of RSI refugees, those who followed Mussolini after the armistice of 1943 played a pivotal role in the party's development.[22] Notable figures here include Giorgio Almirante, former editorial secretary of the fascist magazine *La Difesa della Razza* (The Defense of the Race) and the MSI's longest-serving secretary, Giuseppe "Pino" Romualdi, former Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Culture in the RSI and a longstanding MSI representative who acted as an influential figure in the neofascist press and served as the vice president of the Republican Fascist Party of Salò; and Augusto de Marsanich, who played a minor administrative role in the RSI but served as the MSI's secretary representing the party's moderate wing.[23]

As alluded to earlier, the final stage of Italian fascism as the RSI's state ideology played a foundational role in shaping postwar neofascism, be it clandestinely or legally.[24] While tracing the various internal schisms and external pressures that molded the RSI's ideology into the various neofascist manifestations that emerged during the subsequent years is beyond the scope of this article, it is key here to mention the Europeanist sentiment that permeated all dimensions of the postwar fascist milieu.[25] The Charter of Verona, the RSI's political manifesto elaborated by the Nazi sympathizer Alessandro Pavolini and the former Communist Nicola Bombacci, illustrates how the Salò Republic's administration favored the creation of a proto-European Union consisting of a pan-European nationalist union of right-wing states centrally controlled. This "European community" would see the establishment of a federation of European states.[26]

With the revitalization of fascism during the postwar period, historian Andrea Mammone writes that leaning into this "pan-European" philosophy, which had started to emerge within the RSI, helped the groups "avoid stigmatization" by expanding their horizons towards a non-national dimension—though it was also a strategic decision to create a larger political community, thus providing them

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[21] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 15; An in-depth analysis of the MSI is beyond the scope of this article. However, the author recommends the previously cited book by Piero Ignazi *Il polo escluso. La fiamma che non si spegne: da Almirante a Meloni* for a thorough study of the party.

[22] The 1943 armistice, or Armistice of Cassibile, refers to the surrender of the Italian monarchy and marked the end of hostilities between Italy and the Allies during the Second World War. Certain loyal fascists fled to fight for the RSI, but other fascist sympathizers remained in the southern part of Italy and helped set up the MSI in that part of the country after the war.

[23] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 53, 57, 115; Other major actors in the MSI who were key in administering the RSI include Prince Valerio Borghese and General Rodolfo Graziani who both served as the party's president. However, their actual influence on the MSI was less prominent.

[24] Nicola Guerra. *The Italian Far Right from 1945 to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. p. 16.

[25] Piero Ignazi presents a useful summary on how the MSI developed ideologically in response to the changing political landscape in Italy. As for the minor organizations, the influence of traditionalist thinkers, such as philosopher Julius Evola, and "Europeanists," such as Adriano Romualdi, is also important to mention and is addressed later in the article (see Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 306-310); Europeanist here is meant to denote those with a favorable inclination towards further integration of Europeans as a collective identity.

[26] Aa. Vv. "La Carta Di Verona." November 17, 1943. http://www.storiaxxisecolo.it/rsi/rsicartaverona.htm; Note, this European Union has nothing to do with the current supranational body first created in 1957.

with more political legitimacy.[27] Additionally, this allowed them to avoid the hyper-nationalistic stain associated with the Mussolini regime.

For the MSI, its adoption of a Europeanist perspective was informed by an effort to contrast the two Cold War superpowers putting forth the notion of Europe as a "Third Force."[28] This stance, as will be discussed in the next section, received significant pushback from those party members who believed in prioritizing a joint anti-Communist struggle with the United States. As for the exceedingly radical right-wing youths who operated outside of the MSI, their understanding of Europeanism came from the thought of reactionary and traditionalist thinker Julius Evola, an Italian closely associated with Nazi Germany.[29] According to Evola, all sentimental and naturalistic perceptions of the nation had to be abandoned in favor of an organic and hierarchal European community.[30] Pro-European and anti-Communist, these essential RSI values came to define the MSI and many neofascist Italian organizations when they looked abroad in forming relationships with parties, actors, and nation states.

The Fasci d'Azione Rivoluzionaria and the "Los Angeles network"

Dividing the neofascist groups into the two distinct camps of clandestine and legal fails to capture how actors classified as belonging to one or the other category would at times have a foot in both camps. A noteworthy example of this is seen in the case of the Fasci d'Azione Rivoluzionaria (Fasces of Revolutionary action, or FAR), a neofascist paramilitary group and one of the first organizations, albeit indirectly, involved in transnational far-right operations. The FAR was founded by Pino Romualdi in 1945 with the intention of fomenting tension between the various antifascist parties. Ideally, from his point of view, this would result in a violent clash that would allow the neofascist group to emerge as the superior anti-Communist force on the Italian Peninsula.[31] In terms of the FAR's ideology, the group adhered to the republican version of fascism.[32] While the FAR professed that they

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[27] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, p. 65.

[28] Gregorio Sorgonà. "The Italian Right-Wing and the European Integration Process: The Case of the Italian Social Movement." *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 27, no. 3 (May 27, 2022): 383–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/1354571X.2022.2044646.

[29] Julius Evola (1898-1974) served as one of the most influential figures in the far-right's intellectual sphere. Initially a Dadaist painter, Evola shifted his focus to traditionalist and esoteric philosophy taking a keen interest in the thought of René Guénon. Evola's philosophy was distinctly aristocratic, anti-egalitarian, and anti-democratic making him the paramount ideological reference point for many post-war neofascists in Italy. In fact, Giorgio Almirante would say of Evola that "he is our Marcuse (only better)." For more on Evola see Franco Ferraresi. "Julius Evola: Tradition, Reaction, and the Radical Right." *European Journal of Sociology* 28, no. 1 (1987): 107–51. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23997444.

[30] Andrea Mammone. "Revitalizing and De-Territorializing Fascism in the 1950s: The Extreme Right in France and Italy, and the Pan-National ('European') Imaginary." *Patterns of Prejudice* 45, no. 4 (September 1, 2011): 295–318. https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2011.605842.

[31] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 22; While the group was officially founded in October of 1946, it had already begun to commit acts under this moniker before its official constitution (see Nicola Tonietto. "La genesi del neofascismo in Italia. Dal periodo clandestino alle manifestazioni per Trieste italiana, 1943-1953." Università degli Studi di Trieste, 2018, p. 109); It is also important to note that this iteration of the FAR was disbanded in June of 1947 due to internal scissions. However, the group was reconstituted by young followers of Evola in the early 1950's. Their ideological doctrine was made evident in the various articles published in the journal *Imperium* which presents a distinctly revolutionary and spiritualist understanding of fascism (see Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 23; Aa. Vv*, Imperium: mensile di politica e cultura: ristampa anastatica completa*. Settimo sigillo, 2003).

[32] By republican version of fascism, it is meant the revolutionary version of fascism uncompromised by the monarchical constraints that shaped it during its period in power.

opposed the Allied forces of World War II, declassified U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) documents showcase how Romualdi and his organization operated within the corps Italian network.

US support for the center-right party Democrazia Cristiana (DC) against the PCI is well-documented.[33] However, its ties to the neofascists is less well-known. Still, declassified documents from U.S. Army intelligence illustrates that the "Los Angeles network," the name of an intelligence network set up by the CIC which relied primarily on former German Sicherheitsdienst intelligence operative Karl Haas, made use of Romualdi's connections.[34] In his capacity as chief source, Haas collected information for the CIC through his former Abwehr colleagues, Vatican dignitaries, and "the Neo-Fascist underground movement 'Bands of Revolutionary Action,' " a mistranslation of the FAR.[35] The document states that Haas was supplied information "taken from files of various Italian Ministries, activities of PCI and Apparato groups, and a monthly political resume" seized by the FAR. With regard to Romualdi himself, he was described in the document as an "extreme nationalist from a die-hard Fascist point of view," but "fairly reliable."[36] Additionally, the former party vice secretary had allegedly received financial compensation for his role.[37]

Therefore, while the FAR was not controlled directly by the United States intelligence services, it aided the CIC's intelligence operations against Italian Communists thanks to Romualdi's role as a sub-source, that is to say a source not reporting directly to the CIC, within the intelligence network.[38] The FAR connection represents a major example of how the U.S. Armed Forces were aided by neofascist activists, and this was not an isolated episode.

The "Black Prince" and the "Cadaver"

Among the former RSI members linked to Allied intelligence services in the postwar period was Prince Junio Valerio Borghese. Nicknamed the "Black Prince," Borghese served as the commander of the X MAS, originally a flotilla involved in sabotage operations against the Allies which was reconstituted into an anti-partisan unit following the armistice.[39] During its short-lived service to the RSI, the newly constituted X MAS was involved in war crimes which included the murder of civilians.[40]

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[33] For more on the subject see Ronald Landa. "CIA Covert Aid to Italy Averaged $5 Million Annually from Late 1940s to Early 1960s, Study Finds | National Security Archive." National Security Archive, February 7, 2017. https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/intelligence/2017-02-07/cia-covert-aid-italy-averaged-5-million-annually-late-1940s.

[34] "Army CIC nets in Eastern Europe," n.d., n.p., FOIA, 519cd81c993294098d5165ab, CIA; The Sicherheitsdienst was the intelligence agency of the SS.

[35] "Army CIC nets in Eastern Europe," 519cd81c993294098d5165ab, CIA; Abwehr was the name of Germany's military-intelligence service.

[36] "Army CIC nets in Eastern Europe," 519cd81c993294098d5165ab, CIA.

[37] Nicola Tonietto. "La genesi del neofascismo in Italia." p. 178; Historian Matteo Albanese writes that Mario Tedeschi, future editor of the right-wing publication *il Borghese*, worked for the OSS counter-espionage service in Italy while assisting Haas during the latters operations. Additionally, according to Albanese, Tedeschi had been the go between American services and the MSI during the pivotal 1948 election helping to funnel money from the former to the latter (see Matteo Albanese. *The Transnational Making of Italian Neofascism*. (Routledge, 2024). p. 31).

[38] The document states that Romualdi at the time was in jail but could be contacted via Guisti Brinchi, a key member of the MSI's female wing (see Domenico Sorrenti, Roberto De Gaetano, and Katia Massara. "Il neofascismo nell'Italia meridionale tra eversione e legalità," 2017, p. 100).

[39] Giampaolo Pansa. *Borghese mi ha detto. L'ultima testimonianza del principe nero*. (Milan: Rizzoli, 2022), p. 43.

[40] One noteworthy example is that former Capitan Nino Buttazzoni of the X MAS who, in 1944, was allegedly responsible for the murder of a civilian and destruction of houses in the town of Asiago. Regardless of these

Due to his active role in suppressing partisan actions during Mussolini's rule, Borghese was at risk of being summarily executed if captured by antifascist forces, much like Mussolini himself. However, he was graced by the then chief of the U.S. Office of Strategic Services in Italy, James Jesus Angleton. According to the future CIA spymaster, Borghese was rescued from partisan capture in Milan since he believed the American government would benefit from the prince's services in the future.[41] On the orders of Italian Admiral Raffaele de Courten, Angleton had Borghese don an American uniform, smuggled the prince out of northern Italy, and placed him in Allied custody where he would eventually be tried for and convicted of minor offenses, but not for his crimes committed with the X MAS.[42] Yet after spending nine months in jail during his trial, Borghese was let go in accordance to the Togliatti Amnesty, a general decree covering both fascists and antifascists named for the then Justice Minister and PCI Secretary Palmiro Togliatti.[43]

Following the war, Borghese continued to meet with members of the American intelligence services. According to a confidential CIA report from February 1952, Borghese had "met secretly in Paris with American emissaries … for the purpose of examining the Italian situation from the political and defense point [of] view against Communists under the aspect of active participation within the MSI."[44] That same year, the prince joined the neofascist party as its honorary president. Declassified reports from the CIA further illustrate encounters he had abroad in 1952 and 1953 with an internal report stating that he had met with the then U.S. Ambassador to France James Dunn, Argentinian President Juan Perón, and British fascist politician Oswald Mosley—the latter supposedly being contacted for the purposes of providing the MSI with funds.[45]

The Emergence of a Pan-European Nationalist Vision

Borghese's contacting Mosley was no random decision.[46] The former leader of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) had been involved since the end of the war in promoting European unity. Considering

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war crimes and involvement in the RSI, Buttazzoni later testified regarding "contacts made in Rome with an American Jew personally sent to him by the head of the O.S.S., James Jesus Angleton" who had proposed that Buttazzoni "go to Trieste, to Angleton's offices, [and] collaborate with the U.S. Secret Services in an anti-communist and anti-Slavic capacity" (see "Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sulle cause dell'occultamento di fascicoli relativi a crimini nazifascisti," Doc. XXIII, N. 18-bis, *Senato della Repubblica*, May 15, 2003, p. 220-221).

[41] Jefferson Morley. *The Ghost* (New York City: St. Martin's Griffin, 2017), p. 27; Scholar Nicola Guerra writes that during this period Angleton was also in contact with Pino Romualdi (see Nicola Guerra. *The Italian Far Right from 1945 to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. p. 68).

[42] Morley. *The Ghost*, 26-27; According to the interrogation report written by Angleton after Borghese was questioned in Allied custody, the prince had given "every indication of complete willingness to cooperate and great care and insistence has been placed during the course of interrogation upon the precise objectives of the 10th MAS post-occupation network" (see "Preliminary Interrogation of Prince Valerio Borghese" n.d., n.p., FOIA, 519a6b27993294098d51120d, CIA).

[43] Giampaolo Pansa. *Borghese mi ha detto*. p. 49-52.

[44] "Alleged meeting between Valerio Borghese and American Emissaries in Paris," n.d., n.p., FOIA, 519a6b27993294098d5111ef, CIA.

[45] "Prince Valerio Borghese" n.d., n.p., FOIA, 519a6b27993294098d51120b, CIA.

[46] Oswald Mosley was the leader of the British Union of Fascists (BUF), a political party active in the United Kingdom between 1932 and 1940 when it was banned following the start of the Second World War. He was successful in forming ties with both Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, but the BUF never obtained significant political power in the UK – for more see Robert Jacob Alexander Skidelsky. *Oswald Mosley*. (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975) and Graham Macklin. *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism After 1945*. (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007).

the importance of a unified European identity as political project for various Italian neofascist groups, it is necessary here to address the origins of the postwar pan-Europeanist movements.

Mosley's doctrine developed towards the end of the Second World War, but in 1947 appeared in writing for the first time. In his book, *The Alternative*, Mosley called for "some form of European Union," arguing that this Union represented the "evolution" of patriotism constantly enlarging itself to incorporate greater territories, and highlighted the creation of the United Kingdom as an example.[47] Mosley further developed his thesis in later writings, explaining that "Europe a Nation means that Europe should become a nation in the same full sense that Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Spain are nations today."[48] This new state, he stressed, would be necessary in order to compete economically with the superpowers of the United States and Soviet Union.[49]

In order to accomplish this goal, Mosley created a domestic political party, the Union Movement (UM). Established in November of 1947, the party's core politics remained virtually the same as those of the BUF.[50] While the party represented the first organized political organization with pan-European ambitions after the Second World War, its British members did not care very much for the Europe a Nation policy, rarely mentioning this aspect of the party's platform.[51] While the group's creation represented a foundational moment in the development of postwar pan-Europeanism, its domestic successes in Britain were minimal, and in the 1949 municipal elections its eight candidates received just 1,993 votes out of a total of over four million.[52] While the party lingered on until 1973, its most significant impact on pan-Europeanism was its part in the creation of the more successful European Liberation Front (ELF).

Ironically, the ELF was founded by an American, Francis Parker Yockey, an eccentric fascist lawyer and pan-European theorist. He founded the Front in the fall of 1949 along with British activists disillusioned with the UM, seeking to create his own brand of Eurofascism.[53] According to the ELF, the narrow nationalisms of the past needed to be overcome in order to build a European fascist superstate, known as the Imperium, which would compete against the American and Soviet blocs.[54] Fundamentally, Yockey's Imperium differed ever so slightly from Mosley's "Europe a Nation" thesis with the concept of a united European superpower forming the basis of both movements' doctrines.

According to declassified FBI documents, Yockey, in his capacity as the ELF's leader, established contact with organizations in both the United States and Europe. In 1951, he gave a speech at an event hosted by the Movimento Italiano Femminile (the MSI's women's league) in Naples but failed to form any relations with the party due in part to negative statements he made about Italians.[55] Regardless

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[47] Oswald Mosley. *The Alternative*. (London: Mosley Publications, 1947), p. 148-149.
[48] Oswald Mosley. *Europe: Faith And Plan*. (Essex: Washburn and Sons, 1958), p. 5.
[49] Oswald Mosley. *Europe*. p. 4, 21.
[50] Dave Renton. "The Attempted Revival of British Fascism: Fascism and Anti-Fascism 1945-51." Phd, University of Sheffield, 1999, p. 46.
[51] Dave Renton. "The Attempted Revival of British Fascism." p. 47.
[52] James Sunderland. "The Postwar Revival of British Fascism." *New Lines Magazine*, May 31, 2024. https://newlinesmag.com/essays/the-postwar-revival-of-british-fascism/.
[53] Kevin Coogan. "Lost Imperium: The European Liberation Front (1949-54)." *Patterns of Prejudice* 36, no. 3 (July 1, 2002): 12-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/003132202128811466.
[54] Kevin Coogan. "Lost Imperium." p. 14; Yockey published a book in 1948 entitled *Imperium* wherein he argues in favor of his pan-Europeanist ideals (see Francis Parker Yockey. *Imperium: The Philosophy of History and Politics*. (Invictus Books, 2011)).
[55] "Francis Parker Yockey," July 8, 1954, 105-8229 SECTION 2, FBI. p. 12.

of its transnational connections, the ELF received little support in Britain and, with the departure of one of its leading figures to Latin America, the group collapsed.[56]

Whereas Yockey and the ELF failed to form significant transnational partnerships with the neofascist forces in Europe, Mosley and his allies succeed in reorganizing and uniting multiple European parties and movements into a cohesive group. The European Social Movement (ESM) was initially founded during the First European National Youth Congress, held from October 21 to 24, 1950, in Rome, and attended by representatives from France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Sweden.[57] During the congress, hosted by the MSI's university wing, the Fronte Universitario di Azione Nazionale (FUAN), a 10-point program was adopted which argued in favor of the establishment of a single European Nation with an open market, unified armed forces, and focus on "reviving Christianity."[58] The congress concluded with a decision to create three political bodies—a Europe Committee, a National Coordinating Committee, and a Permanent Secretariat—which would ultimately coordinate this project, although it is unclear if these governing bodies ever came into being.[59]

The ESM would convene again from May 12 to 15, 1951, in Malmö, Sweden. Hosted by the neofascist Per Engdahl and his party Nysvenska Rörelsen, the congress sought to continue the work set out the previous year but encountered some initial conflicts when "extremist" elements pushed back against the 10 points, advocating instead for "some form of racism, dictatorship, and aristocracy."[60] It is during this conference that the ESM would officially come into being. With the conclusion of the Malmö conference, it was established that the ESM would be led by a four-man Executive Committee consisting of Per Engdahl, Maurice Bardèche, Augusto de Marsanich, and the German Karl Heinz Priester—former member of the Waffen SS and founding member of the neo-Nazi Nationaldemokratische Reichspartei.[61]

What this section has sought to showcase is how Fascist elements in Italy not only quickly reconsolidated within the span of five years following the end of the Second World War but had also rapidly lain the groundwork for future transnational connections. From the ashes of Salò, neofascists faithful to Mussolini's vision reinvented themselves in order to operate within the nascent Italian Republic. The following section of the article covers the period revolving around the Strategy of Tension itself, focusing on the various state and nonstate actors tied to the neofascist groups.

Neofascists and the Strategy of Tension

As the neofascist forces in Italy began to establish themselves as a socially respectable and centralized force, internal currents would clash and splinter into various smaller radical groups. Influenced by the theories of philosopher from various generations, such as Julius Evola (1898–1974), Adriano Romualdi (1940–1973), Maurice Bardèche (1907–1998), Franco Freda (1941–), and other reactionary thinkers, these groups charted an alternative course to that set by the MSI by

[56] Coogan, "Lost Imperium." 21.
[57] "The European Social Movement," n.d., n.p., FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.
[58] "The European Social Movement," FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.
[59] "The European Social Movement," FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.
[60] "The European Social Movement," FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.
[61] "The European Social Movement," FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA; Philip Rees, *Biographical Dictionary of the Extreme Right Since 1890*, (New York City: Simon & Schuster, 1990), p. 303; The CIA document states ESM national affiliates included members of the Austrian Social Movement, Danish Reform Movement, Finnish National Youth, Comite National Française, German Social Movement, the MSI (although it later left), the Dutch group Work Community Europa, Swedish Reform Movement, Swiss Peoples Party, along with Hungarian, Croatian, and Romanian exiles headed by General Arpad Henny, Fray Brank Maric, and Vasilei Iassinki respectively.

adopting openly violent antigovernment positions. As a result, bombings and assassinations came to define the political activities of these organizations. On the international stage, their skills were employed by both dictatorships and clandestine organizations.

Ordine Nuovo and the Spiritualist Reaction

As seen thus far, party discipline and the ability to agree on a coherent political strategy were characteristics that the MSI lacked early on, something that would come to haunt the neofascists for almost 50 years. From this incapacity to form a unified structure, various radical splinter groups spawned out of the neofascist party. Ignazi identifies three main types of groups that would come to challenge the MSI's hegemonic position:

TABLE 1. Italian neofascist and far-right groups.[62]

Type of Group	Characteristics	Example Groups
Pro-coup movements	In close contact with the military and secret services, structured as clandestine organizations or with dual levels (legal and covert) aimed at restoring order, defending the values of Western civilization, and combating Communism and international subversion	Fronte Nazionale of Prince Borghese, Rosa dei Venti, Costituente Nazionale Rivoluzionaria
Radical movements	Tightly organized, more or less solidly anchored to theoretical foundations, with modes of action that fluctuate between legality and terrorism	Ordine Nuovo, Avanguardia Nazionale, Europa Civiltà
Counter-mobilization movements	Present in areas of acute social tension and focused on involving those sectors of society that are frightened by the climate of conflict and protest; despite having a fluid structure, capable of activating leaders and political cadres from diverse backgrounds, as well as specific social groups, primarily the military	Gruppi di Azione Nazionale of Mario Tedeschi, Lega dell'Italia Unita

While this article does not seek to cover each organization that broke off from the MSI, as there is truly an infinite number of neofascist groups that materialized during this period, it will focus on those organizations that challenged the MSI's dominance within Italy and, most importantly for the sake of this article, formed transnational ties with other like-minded groups or regimes. Among these, arguably the best-known and most impactful was Ordine Nuovo (ON).[63]

Traces of ON could already be spotted during the aforementioned FAR saga when young neofascist militants, influenced by the teachings of Julius Evola, began to coalesce around an anti-materialist, antidemocratic, and militant vision of politics.[64] Pino Rauti, who was mentioned earlier in relation the clandestine postwar group, became a rising star within the MSI as a leader of this Evolian faction which professed to have transcended the left-right dichotomy.[65] Ties between this young MSI activist and the traditionalist philosopher had existed already in the early postwar period when Rauti had

[62] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 134.
[63] For a history of Ordine Nuovo see Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. (Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis, 2017); Sandro Forte, *Ordine Nuovo Parla*. (Milan: Mursia, 2020); In short, it was a neofascist group which drew much of its ideological basis from the works of Julius Evola.
[64] One can consult his writings on these topics here: Julius Evola, *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1983); Julius Evola, *Gli Uomini e le Rovine: e Orientamenti* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 2013).
[65] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 41-42.

invited Evola write for the magazine *Imperium*, a publication created by Rauti and his "spiritualist" counterpart Enzo Erra.[66] A veteran of the Second World War, Rauti volunteered to join the RSI at the age of 17.[67] While this faction of the party would garner the support of many youths within MSI and the patronage of Pino Romualdi, it never obtained the necessary support to chart the party's political course.[68] Frustrated by their lack of influence, the seeds of secession began to germinate within the members of this faction.

ON began to take shape in 1953, three years before its official break with the MSI.[69] According to Rauti, the initiative was born from the fusion of intellectuals and activists who wanted to play a more significant role in shaping the party's platform.[70] Among the initial members was Clemente Graziani, a figure who will appear frequently throughout this article.[71] With the MSI's gradual shift towards taking a more moderate line, ON would develop into a fully-fledged current within the party, with the express intention to act as a foil to the central leadership. In 1955, with Rauti in charge, Ordine Nuovo would become an official intra-party group and launch a monthly publication of the same name that covered politics, philosophy and, initially, general reflections on the party's trajectory.[72] On the topic of international politics, activists voiced their support for the United Arab Republic, and even published the writings of pan-European activists such as the Swiss Gaston-Armand Amaudruz.[73]

This internal critique did not last for long. Following the MSI's fifth congress, in 1956, and the re-election of the party's moderate wing under Arturo Michelini, Rauti and members of ON broke away, establishing a separate political organization. In the letter sent to MSI secretary Augusto De Marsanich, the group explained that they could no longer endorse the MSI's political orientation being "estranged from the original purpose of the movement and a politics that betrays the highest vocation of the party."[74] With this, the Centro Studi Ordine Nuovo, now an independent organization from the MSI, was formed.

While Rauti acted as the group's steward for the majority of ON's existence, Graziani, as we will later see, would guide the group during its most violent chapter. While much of ON's leadership left their mark, in way or another, during the strategy of tension, two individuals are worth discussing due to their key role in promoting transnational ties: Stefano Delle Chiaie and Armando Mortilla. In his autobiography, Delle Chiaie stated that the reason behind his decision to leave the MSI for ON in 1956 stemmed from his dissatisfaction with the parties apparent moderate stance, yet he would find

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[66] For a complete collection of *Imperium's* articles see Aa. Vb*, Imperium: mensile di politica e cultura: ristampa anastatica completa*. (Rome: Settimo sigillo, 2003); Spiritualist was a moniker used by members of this faction to describe themselves and emphasize their anti-materialist world view.
[67] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. (Turin: Passaggi Einaudi, 2023), p. 8.
[68] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 77.
[69] Sandro Forte. *Ordine Nuovo Parla*. p. 34
[70] Sandro Forte. *Ordine Nuovo Parla*. p. 34
[71] Much like his counterpart Rauti, Graziani volunteered to fight in the RSI. After the war, he joined the MSI and FAR going on trial in 1951 for his participation in the latter group. There is no relation between him and RSI General Rodolfo Graziani (see Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 32).
[72] Sandro Forte, *Ordine Nuovo Parla*. p. 39
[73] Paolo Andriani. "Egitto e Israele." *Ordine Nuovo*. December, 1955; Paolo Adriani. "America: Maschera e Volto." *Ordine Nuovo*. June, 1955; Gaston-Armand Amaudruz. "Razzismo, Speranza d'Europa." *Ordine Nuovo*. June, 1955; Amaudruz was a Swiss neofascist, pan-European nationalist, and one of the first Holocaust denialists. His written work appeared frequently in ON publications and in the German far-right magazine *Nation Europa* (see Philip Rees, *Biographical Dictionary of the Extreme Right Since 1890*, p. 10).
[74] "Le Dimissioni dal MIS" *Ordine Nuovo*. December, 1956.

himself confronted with more opposition to his plans for direct action once he joined Rauti's group.[75] As a result, his affiliation with ON would not last long. Mortilla, better known by his *nom de guerre*, "Aristo," served as a key figure within the leadership of ON.[76] In 1955, he would become an informant for the Ufficio Affari Riservati (UAR), providing detailed reports to the Italian state on the dealings of MSI and ON activists.[77]

It is clear from the ON open letter that the new group represented the anti-materialist opposition to the MSI, that is to say, the revolutionary-neofascist wing of the party. However, additional insight into the specifics of ON's ideological doctrine is made apparent through a "general bibliography" provided to new militants by the group's cultural sector. The undated document, likely formulated in the late 1950s, presents a three-part series of texts on the "general traditionalist doctrine," "phenomenology of civilizations—genesis and criticism of the modern world," and "eastern traditionalism."[78] Writings by the French traditionalist René Guénon and Romanian philosopher Mircea Eliade appear as the main works of reference, eclipsed only by those of Julius Evola.

This is not to say that Ordine Nuovo was an exclusively intellectual organization focused on doctrinal production. Many of the bombings that marked the Strategy of Tension were carried out by ON activists. Notable examples include the bombing in Brescia's Piazza della Loggia on May 28, 1974, which left eight civilians dead, and the Peteano killings of May 31, 1972, which resulted in the death of three police officers.[79] However, the best-known of these was the Piazza Fontana bombing, carried out on December 12, 1969, in Milan, which will be discussed below.

Armed with a comprehensive political program and a violent base of hardline activists, ON came onto the scene as a viable alternative capable of challenging the MSI's hegemony, especially through its influence on the MSI's youth groups.[80] However, as the following sections will demonstrate, the neofascist group looked abroad in order to expand its influence, a decision that has to be understood in the context of a global anti-Communist strategy.

Situating Italian Neofascism Transnationally

With the neofascist domestic scene gradually fragmenting, various currents began to emerge, with differences regarding how the movements should orient themselves geopolitically. In the context of the Cold War, understanding what sort of approach to take was informed by the binary state of foreign affairs, with the West locked in a Manichean struggle with the Soviet bloc, and the legacy of the RSI, which opposed capitalism and communism. Thus, the MSI, which was in no way a monolithic entity, was torn within between those who supported initiatives that would fully incorporate the party within the American-backed bloc, and those who wished that the party would represent the vanguard of those Italians who wanted to carve out a third-way, or *Terza Via*, between the two geopolitical rivals, allowing for an uncompromising neofascist identity to exist. While the former,

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[75] Stefano Delle Chiaie. *L'aquila e il condor. Memorie di un militante politico*. (Rome: Settimo Sigillo-Europa Lib. Ed, 2022), p. 14-17.
[76] The significance of this name is unclear.
[77] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*, p. 70; The UAR was a section of the Directorate General of Public Security of the Italian Ministry of the Interior dealing with police activities relating to politics. It existed between 1948-1974 and depended on Italian Ministry of Interior.
[78] *Bibliografia Generale di Orientamento Tradzizionale*, n.d. Movimento Sociale Italiano (Msi), 1.1.1.8, Patrimonio dell'Archivio storico Senato della Repubblica.
[79] Giorgio Checchetti. "Per la Strage di Peteano Condannati Due Alti Ufficiali." *la Repubblica*, July 26, 1987; "Marco Toffaloni è Stato Condannato a Trent'anni per La Strage Di Piazza Della Loggia." *il Post*. April 3, 2025.
[80] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 122-123.

more pragmatic vision would ultimately prevail, the party's early years, namely from the MSI's founding in 1946 to 1949, were defined by a distinct anti-American sentiment informed primarily by the perception that the United States, along with Great Britain, had imposed a humiliating peace on the country.[81] Therefore, criticism directed against the former Allied powers originated primarily from the MSI's sense that they had truncated Italy's nationalistic ambitions.[82]

Fractures began to manifest themselves already at the party's second congress in June of 1949, with the third main topic of discussion on the agenda being whether Italy should join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[83] From this debate, the moderate wing, composed of De Marsanich and Michelini, would clash with the current led by then party secretary Almirante, as the former argued that joining the Atlantic treaty would allow for the party to establish ties with other anti-Communist groups and dig itself out of the political ditch in which it found itself.[84] While Almirante survived this challenge by successfully compartmentalizing the moderates, the 1949 congress indicated that the intra-party consensus regarding the United States was beginning to fracture.

Control over the MSI was shifted from the hands of Almirante and his allies to its moderates in the subsequent year, when De Marsanich became the secretary. This allowed for the moderates to take over the party's agenda, pushing the neofascists further into the Western anti-Communist camp.[85] The party's new secretary would confirm this new orientation during a press conference in November of 1951 when he stated that NATO represented a concrete initiative in the defense of Europe, thus abandoning the MSI's policy of keeping equal distance from both the blocs.[86] These steps gave rise to the MSI party's decision in 1952, during its third congress, to officially endorse NATO, stating that "equidistance" was a "nebulous" formulation and that, ultimately, Italy was a part of the West and should participate in its defense.[87] While this change was met with backlash from the internal opposition, Almirante would come to endorse the Atlantic pact as early as 1949. The former secretary stated that NATO represented a renewed anti-Comintern pact and that the MSI should position itself as the vanguard against the spread of Communism, a belief that he would hold onto for the rest of his political career and that allowed him to develop a privileged position as an interlocutor between the various internal currents.[88] In fact, this acceptance of Italy as another unit within the wider Western matrix persisted throughout the period of moderate rule and into the second Almirante leadership. During the following years, ties between the MSI and the American Republican Party (Grand Old Party: GOP) would strengthen, especially during the Nixon years. According to historian Davide Conti, the MSI would receive GOP funds, thanks to MSI Senator Luigi Turchi's connections, during the late 60s.[89]

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[81] Luca Tedesco. *L'America a destra. L'antiamericanismo nella stampa neofascista dal Patto Atlantico alla Seconda Guerra del Golfo*. (Rome: Le Lettere, 2014). p. 11.
[82] Luca Tedesco. *L'America a destra.* p. 12.
[83] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 56; Those interested in a detailed study that confronts the nature of American ties with the MSI should see Gregorio Sorgonà. *La scoperta della destra. Il Movimento sociale italiano e gli Stati Uniti*. (Rome: viella, 2019).
[84] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 56-57.
[85] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 57.
[86] Luca Tedesco. *L'America a destra.* p. 20.
[87] Luca Tedesco. *L'America a destra.* p. 22.
[88] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 35, 47.
[89] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 96-97; Turchi, along with Giulio Caradonna, represented the pro-American wing of the party. Furthermore, Turchi had remained in close contact with Rauti following the establishment of ON (see Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*, p. 21).

In summary, while the early years of the MSI were defined by a pervasive anti-Americanist sentiment, the party would come to reconcile its differences with the United States, cementing itself within with the Atlantic framework. However, at the level of its middle managers, opposition to the United States persisted as the vast majority of MSI members considered the U.S. an "imperialist power," believing that "Europeans counted for nothing within NATO."[90]

While the MSI's stance towards the United States was never unified, the position of ON and its militants was clear from the beginning: the Americans could not be trusted and represented, as they always had, the ideological adversaries of fascism. Informed by their Evolian neofascist anti-materialist belief system, the group opposed any collaboration with the United States prior to their exit from the party, as the group attacked the superpower in their journal by portraying the MSI's leadership as "spineless" and "fools" who let themselves be swayed by American tricks.[91] Rauti himself would go on to state openly that the third-way alternative to the dueling imperialist blocs appeared as the logical course of action, since joining NATO would reduce Italy to the level of a "foreign legion" at the service of "American plutocracy."[92]

While support for the United States was initially a touchy subject within the MSI, endorsing the Spanish and Portuguese regimes, whose fascist leaders survived the Second World War, was uniformly supported. In fact, when De Marsanich would be succeeded by fellow moderate Michelini, along with the push for greater collaboration with the United States the new party secretary argued in favor of integrating the Iberian dictatorships into the wider European framework of nations.[93] As for Almirante and the internal opposition at the time, they echoed this sentiment, with the former secretary defending acts of violence taken by the Franco regime in suppressing revolts in Barcelona.[94] However, the ties that the MSI established with the Iberian states, in particular those fostered with the Spanish government, were not novel and, in fact, dated back to the early years of the party's foundation. In lieu of the election set for April of 1948, a base of operations in Madrid was created by the Italian neofascists, namely RSI general Gastone Gambara, after meeting with their Spanish counterparts, and the MSI received financial support from the Franco regime.[95] In fact, the MSI was envisioned by the Spanish government as a mediating force between Madrid and Rome, ideally acting as members of the governing coalition.[96] Additionally, in order to direct MSI support for the Spanish dictator, publications adjacent to the MSI, such as the newspapers *Il Secolo d'Italia* and *Il Nazionale*, praised the Franco regime thus bolstering support for it amongst the Italian neofascist electorate.[97]

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[90] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 355.
[91] Umberto Giusti. "Il MSI crede a Foster Dulles." *Ordine Nuovo*, June 1955. Umberto Giusti is a pseudonym used by Pino Rauti.
[92] Pino Rauti as quoted in Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 49.
[93] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 105.
[94] Albanese, Matteo. del Hierro, Pablo. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 95.
[95] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 20.
[96] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 95.
[97] In 1953 Franz Turchi, the founder of *il Secolo d'Italia*, would travel to Spain in order to obtain financial support for his newspaper. During the trip, he obtained a subsidy of 500,000 pesetas for a period of three years. In addition to successfully receiving funds, Turchi met with leaders of the Spanish regime including Franco. Three years later, Turchi would again interview Franco and was gifted an autographed image of the Spanish dictator (see Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, p. 99).

Throughout the 1950s, political ties between the Italian neofascists and Spanish Franco supporters remained strong but were tested following what would come to be known as the Grimau incident. On November 7, 1962, Spanish Communist Julián Grimau was arrested, and he was executed the following year on the basis of "continuing military rebellion," along with other charges.[98] The execution, which was the last conducted by the Franco government against a Communist activist, led to international backlash, especially in Italy where the PCI held significant sway.[99] As Mammone and del Hierro write, the MSI "was forced to avoid taking a stand in favor of its Spanish ally" thus souring relations between the neofascists.[100] Regardless, this failure and MSI's inability to achieve significant political power did not entirely spoil its relationship with Spain, as the party would continue to receive financial support and promote pro-Franco events.[101]

In addition to Franco's Spain, ties were also fostered between the MSI and Salazar's Portugal. A report from journalist Lino Ronga to Hubert Halin, member of the Union Internationale de la Resistance et de la Déportation (UIRD), describes how, in the spring of 1962, MSI representative Giulio Caradonna had a "long meeting" with the Portuguese dictator, in which they discussed:

> the political and propaganda activities that [the MSI and his parliamentary group] could accomplish in Italy in "favor" of Portugal and orienting public opinion in a favorable sense for the continuation of Portuguese colonial dominance in Africa and the survival of the Salazar regime as the "only alternative" against the threat of a Communist intrusion in the Lusitanian country …[102]

The Iberian regimes would not limit themselves to the MSI, as they also formed partnerships with ON. For Rauti and his organization, the Iberian Peninsula served as something more than just a source of ideological inspiration and funding. As early as 1962, contact between the Spanish government and Rauti was established with the latter offering to set up a network in Italy that would monitor anti-Franco and anti-Salazar activities, with financial support for this initiative coming from the Spanish regime.[103] Two years later, members of ON would travel to Portugal and Spain, after being deemed "trustworthy" by representatives of the French paramilitary group, l'Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS)—a key group whose ties are explored in the next section.[104] Officially, the visit

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[98] "World: Death at Dawn." *TIME*, April 26, 1963.

[99] The MSI at the time held 24 out of the total 596 in the Parliament and eight of the total 246 seats in the Senate.

[100] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, p. 115.

[101] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, p. 116-118

[102] *Rapporto sul neo-nazifascismo in Italia*, 18 January, 1963, All. 86, Indice degli Allegati, Perizie Giannuli, H/b - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM; Founded in 1953, the UIRD was an association of resistance fighters and victims of Nazism founded by the anti-communist Belgian socialist and resistance veteran Hubert Halin who envisioned his group as an anti-Soviet foil to similar organizations. The UIRD was secretly funded by the West German government (see Maximilian Becker. "Tales of Antifascism: International Survivors' Organizations during the Cold War," December 21, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1163/22116257-09010009).

[103] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 17.

[104] *Ordine Nuovo e l'Aginter Press*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 147; Specifics as to why members of the OAS vouched on ON's behalf are detailed in a note from *Aristo* that details how Pino Rauti was flagged to the Portuguese regime allegedly by a "former lieutenant of the French paratroopers (now living in Lisbon) who had the opportunity to personally witness the skills of Rauti and his associates. In fact, this former French soldier, a deserter during the military revolt against De Gaulle, was wounded by the security police and, through connections with 'Ordine Nuovo,' was smuggled across the border and subsequently hospitalized in a private clinic." Furthermore, the note cites Italian

was conducted in order to establish a partnership between the "political authorities" from the two countries and resulted in the proposal to create an "Italo-Portuguese friendship association" funded by Portugal and managed by ON.[105] A similar organization was created in Spain and given an equally creative name, the "Italo-Spanish friendship association."[106]

After securing funding from both Iberian regimes, ON tightened these liaisons by providing intelligence support. In fact, Rauti supported the Portuguese secret services (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado: PIDE) by providing it with the names of anti-Salazar activists and organizations based out of Italy.[107] Additionally, a note from Aristo dated November 25, 1963, shows how Rauti was asked by the Portuguese regime to "inquire whether it is possible to purchase weapons in Italy to subsequently send to Portugal."[108] Therefore, Rauti's group came to offer the Iberian dictatorships both practical support in the form of intelligence gathering, and ideological support via its positive coverage in ON publications.

ON would remain active in Iberia, forming ties with other far-right activists who put down roots on the peninsula. According to Rauti's own testimony reproduced by journalist Nicola Rao, he had met with pre-eminent fascist actors such as German SS commando Otto Skorzeny and Belgian fascist Léon Degrelle.[109] In the postwar period, Iberia served as a safe haven for European reactionaries, offering ideological solidarity, financial support and, later, political protection for Italian neofascists.

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journalist Leo Negrelli as being interested in this trip. Negrelli, who at the time was living in Spain, was an early supporter of Italian fascism and well-connected activist. Prior to the Nazi seizure of power, Negrelli had been a close confidant of Hermann Goering and later served as press attaché for the RSI. While in Iberia, Negrelli would continue to support European fascists. In a letter sent to Pino Rauti, he provides details as to the individuals that he is contact with in Spain which include Otto Skorzeny, Maurice-Yvan Sicard – better known as Saint-Paulien, Anna Wolkoff, Leon Degrelle, and Višnja Pavelić (see Michael Palumbo. "Goering's Italian Exile 1924-1925." *The Journal of Modern History* 50, no. 1 (1978): D1035–51; Riccardo Marchi. *Les réfugiés Français d'extrême-droite au Portugal de Salazar (1945-1974)* in Olivier Darc and Victor Pereira, eds. *Vérités et légendes d'une "OAS internationale."* (Paris: Riveneuve, 2013), p. 149; *Lettera da Leo Negrelli a Pino Rauti*, July 8, 1972, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.III.1/107, BNS).

[105] *Ordine Nuovo e l'Aginter Press*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 147.

[106] *Ordine Nuovo trip to Iberia*, January 10, 1964, Documentazione acquisita da DCPP RAUTI Giuseppe, G/a-26, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

[107] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 72

[108] *Ordine Nuovo e il Portogallo,* November 25, 1963, Documentazione aqusita da DCPP RAUTI Giuseppe, G/a-26, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM; According to the document, these arms were supposed to be used in Angola against partisan forces.

[109] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica: La fiamma e la celtica - Il sangue e la celtica - Il piombo e la celtica La vera storia del Neofascismo italiano*. (Milan: Sperling & Kupfer, 2014), p. 141; Furthermore, Rao quotes Rauti as saying "In Madrid, [Skorzeny] ran a European circle, organizing conferences and debates — all in broad daylight. The city was full of Croatian exiles, along with the last remnants of the Iron Guard and Codreanu's Romanian fascists. Returning to Skorzeny, I recall attending a conference he presided over. I presented my views on the Slavic world and Germanism, criticizing the former and exalting the latter. At one point, a Russian prince, one of the White Russian exiles, stood up and said to me, 'You ignore the fact that the Slavic world played a role as a bulwark of Christianity against Turkish Islamism.' I responded that the Slavs had acted as a 'pendulum' in history—sometimes opposing Islamism and other times opposing Catholicism. I asked him, 'Who fought against the Teutonic Knights? And who allowed atheist, materialist communism to gain a foothold in Europe?' But Skorzeny sided with him, not with me, despite my praise of the Germanic world. It was a lesson in Europeanism. I had to accept it, but later, reflecting on it, I realized he was right: the Slavs bore the brunt of five centuries of Muslim assaults. Without them, the Turks would have swiftly reached Vienna and, from there, swept across the rest of Europe"; For more on Degrelle see the recently published Saenen, Frédéric. *Léon Degrelle*. (Paris: PERRIN, 2025).

Transnational ties were not limited to the European continent, as ON had also entered into contact with the Nasser government in Egypt, for which Skorzeny served as an advisor.[110] A note from the Italian foreign intelligence dated May 9, 1963, states how representatives of the United Arab Republic (of Egypt and Syria) "promised to finance the journal Ordine Nuovo" and that a certain "Soliman Asshan" had provided "Rauti and [Julius] Evola" a sum of "a million lire" in order to launch a series of anti-Semitic publications under the auspices of the publishing house Prima Fiamma.[111] While not receiving funds from them, Taiwanese politicians also sought the support of ON. According to a note from October of 1967, Rauti and other far-right journalists had contacted Taiwanese representatives who wanted "to force the Italian government to abandon the position of 'freezing' [sic] it would have adopted toward Taipei."[112]

Italian Neofascists and the OAS

As mentioned previously, members of ON had also formed ties with the French paramilitary and terrorist organization OAS.[113] However, it was not alone in this regard, as certain currents within MSI and affiliated publications expressed support for the secret army.[114] Ultimately, two currents emerged that split along the issue of how to confront the OAS question, with party members rallying around the figures of Michelini and Romualdi the elder, the latter using his publication *l'Italiano* to openly defend the secret army's actions.[115] Between 1960 and 1961, the newspaper would attack the polices of French President Charles de Gaulle while supporting French Algeria as a bastion of the West in Africa. However, as historian Pauline Picco notes, support for the OAS was toned down in *L'Italiano* between 1961 and June–July of 1963, likely due to Michelini bringing Romualdi into line.[116]

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[110] Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, Bennett Clifford, and Lorenzo Vidino. "Antisemitism as an Underlying Precursor to Violent Extremism in American Far-Right and Islamist Contexts." *Reports, Projects, and Research*, no. 10 (October 1, 2020). https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/ncitereportsresearch/10.

[111] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*, p. 11.

[112] *Taiwanese contacts with Italian far-right*, October 30, 1967, Documentazione aqusita da DCPP RAUTI Giuseppe, G/a-26, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM; Here freezing most likely refers to the prospects of cutting ties in favor of those with the PRC.

[113] For more detailed information on the OAS and its origins, see Rémi Kauffer. *L'O.A.S. : histoire d'une organisation secrète*. Paris, Editions Fayard. (Paris: Fayard, 1986); Olivier Dard. *Voyage au coeur de l'OAS*. (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 2011); Georges Fleury. *Histoire de l'OAS*. (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2002); Note that Dard is the only historian listed here yet each text is important to address due to its significance in OAS studies.

[114] As Nicola Guerra writes, the MSI had previously supported Algerian independence on the basis of anti-French sentiment but would ultimately support the OAS "and the need for Algeria to remain French." With regard to publications, the far-right magazine *il Borghese* described the "paratroopers" as "the symbol of the best that our Western civilization still manages to express in its bosom" (as quoted in Nicola Guerra. "The Radical Westernization of the European Far Right and the Role of the Organisation Armée Secrète during the Algerian War." *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 0, no. 0 (n.d.): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2024.2441505).

[115] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses. Les extrêmes droites en France et en Italie (1960-1984)*, (Rennes: PU RENNES, 2016), p. 51; Pauline Picco. *Réseaux et mythes OAS en Italie (1961-1966)* in Olivier Dard and Victor Pereira, eds. *Vérités et légendes d'une "OAS internationale."* (Paris: Riveneuve, 2013), p. 116.

[116] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 51-53; Nicola Guerra. "The Radical Westernization of the European Far Right and the Role of the Organisation Armée Secrète during the Algerian War." *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 0, no. 0 (n.d.): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2024.2441505; Romualdi also sought to support members of the OAS through the creation a "cover office," although it is unclear of this ever came to pass. During the meeting where this was planned, Romualdi was joined by Filippo Anfuso, editor-in-chief of *il Secolo d'Italia*, George Sauge, a French pro-OAS French politician, Ernesto De Marzio, an MSI politician, and

While Romualdi aggressively pushed his party to support the French paramilitary group via his publication, he was not alone in this, as articles expressing sympathy for the OAS also appeared in *Il Secolo d'Italia*, notably during the trial of French General Raoul Salan, and in the magazine *Il Borghese*.[117]

Among the rest of the MSI, the terrorists were able to contact other high-profile members of the party, including Almirante, Caradonna and, surprisingly, Michelini as well.[118] In fact, a note from the Italian military intelligence service SISMI (Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare) dated May 13, 1961, indicates that the then MSI secretary, along with other leaders of far-right youth groups in Italy, had received a letter from OAS member Joseph Ortiz to "join forces with analogous European movements around the Mediterranean against the Soviet threat."[119] Michelini, who as leader of the neofascist party was perusing an "insertion policy" with the hopes of eventually allying with the Christian Democracts, would, in October of the same year, deny the existence of any links between the MSI and OAS, highlighting the party secretary's lack of interest in forging official ties with the French paramilitary organization.[120] Ultimately, while many within the MSI would support the OAS, the party never officially endorsed it, thus furthering the pre-existing schism between the MSI's youth organization and the party's leadership.

During its early years, the MSI did not have merely one youth organization, nor did it exert total control over all of them. The groups included the aforementioned FUAN, the Raggruppamento Giovanile Studenti e Lavoratori (RGSL) and Giovane Italia (GI). As Piero Ignazi writes:

> During the fifties, the MSI had three different channels for operating in the youth sphere: one directly affiliated with the party (RGSL), and two that can be described as parallel organizations (FUAN and GI). Although these parallel organizations were closely connected to the party and originated from it, they were formally autonomous and also welcomed individuals who were not members of the MSI.[121]

Therefore, these groups, up until 1971, had the ability to chart an independent course from that of the MSI, something each organization did to varying degrees with regard to the OAS. Amongst members of the FUAN, its leader, Franco Petronio, stands out as one of the primary nodes connecting the MSI and OAS.[122] In April of 1961, he traveled to France and formed ties with members of the "San

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Fernando Tambroni, the former DC Prime Minister of Italy (see Veronica Bortolussi. "I rapporti tra l'estrema destra italiana e l'Organisation de l'Armée secrète francese." Università Ca'Foscari Venezia, 2017, p. 132; *Francia O.A.S. segnalazioni varie*, September 19, 1961, 02/02/00 224/B1/ 832 DCPP Jean Jacques SUSINI DCPP, G/a - 52 8, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM).

[117] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 50; While *il Secolo d'Italia* had previously published "benevolently neutral" articles on the OAS prior to 1962, it is important to note that in 1960 Filippo Anfuso travelled to both Paris and Madrid in order to meet with future OAS members Jacques Soustelle and Pierre Lagaillarde prior the organizations creation (see Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2015. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139344449. p. 114).

[118] *Rapporti fra Oas e Msi*, 15 March, 1962, 12/03/97 2/92F G.I. MI A.S. Giannuli Allegati, H/b-1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

[119] *Joseph Ortiz. Esponente degli ultras algerini*, May 13, 1961, 12/01/00 1623/42-1 ROS Roma Jean Jacques SUSINI, SISMI, G/a - 52 6, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

[120] Pauline Picco. *Réseaux et mythes OAS en Italie (1961-1966)*, p. 116; For more on the insertion policy see Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 88-92.

[121] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 118.

[122] Franco Petronio had also been a member of the FAR and wrote for the journal *Imperium* (see G. Benincasa. "Sviluppo, Metamorfosi e Contaminazione dei Rapporti fra Criminalità Organizzata ed Eversione Neofascista:

Remo group," a clique of activists centered around the cities of Sanremo and Ventimiglia who aided OAS operatives in Italy.[123] Petronio and other FUAN members were also successful in establishing ties with Philippe de Massey, the OAS main representative in Italy.[124] Yet, with the increase in attention directed towards the MSI and its links with the secret army, pressure from the Michelini leadership led Petronio to publicly deny accusations that the MSI had collaborated with the OAS.[125]

Ties were also fostered with the RGSL. During the early 1960s, the youth movement was led by Caradonna, who in 1961 had visited Algiers to support the French settlers there and claimed to have been welcomed by the local population.[126] However, unlike Petronio and the FUAN, whose active ties to the OAS are well documented, less is known about the RGSL's liaisons other than the aforementioned 1962 memo indicating that Caradonna had contacted them.

Out of the three youth organizations, it was the GI that represented the strongest support structure for the OAS in Italy. Under the stewardship of Massimo Anderson, members of the Italian youth group traveled to Spain and France in order to meet with operatives from the secret army.[127] While pressure from the party had tempered the actions of members of the FUAN, the same effect did not occur with members of the GI, since its activists were implicated in smuggling arms into France.[128] In addition to weapons, the youth group helped smuggle individuals as well. A note from the counterespionage center in Genoa indicates how Anderson and other members of GI were set to meet OAS cofounder Jean-Jacques Susini on October 3, 1961, and aid him in entering France from Italy.[129] Thus, while each youth organization demonstrated an interest in supporting the French far-right *ultras*, the lengths they were willing to go to in order to support them differed. Regardless of these differences, one MSI activist and member of GI served as the unifying node on matters relating to the OAS and the "bearer of orders" for Anderson, Caradonna, and Petronio.[130]

A supporter of the MSI since his youth, Guido Giannettini became a leading figure in GI by the age of 27 and was given the task of creating ties with groups abroad.[131] Among the organizations that the MSI activist fostered ties with was the Secret Army, traveling on multiple occasions to meet OAS

Ibridazione del Metodo Mafioso o Semplice Convergenza Oggettiva?" Doctoral Thesis, Università degli Studi di Milano, 2022. https://air.unimi.it/handle/2434/932527, p. 52; Franco Petronio. "Economia e Individuo," *Imperium*, May, 1951).

[123] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 54; Bortolussi, Veronica. "I rapporti tra l'estrema destra italiana e l'Organisation de l'Armée secrète francese." p. 141.

[124] *Collusione O.A.S – M.S.I.*, September 3, 1963. All. 29, Indice degli Allegati, Perizie Giannuli, H/b - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

[125] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 55.

[126] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. p. 110.

[127] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 54; Anderson would become the inaugural leader of the Fronte della Gioventù (FdG), the MSI youth group that united all previous youth formations in 1972.

[128] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 56

[129] *Attività dei francesi antigollisti in Italia*, 19 September 1961, 12/01/00 1623/42-1 ROS Roma Jean Jacques SUSINI, SISMI, G/a - 52 6, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

[130] *Il MSI i Volontari Nazionali*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 110.

[131] Domenico Sorrenti, "Il neofascismo nell'Italia Meridionale tra eversione e legalità," (PhD diss., Università della Calabria, 2017), p. 173; Giannettini will become a key figure in the judicial hearings surrounding the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombings. While this event will be briefly discussed in the Aginter Press section, those interested in the trial should read Benedetta Tobagi. *Piazza Fontana. Il processo impossibile*. (Turin: Einaudi, 2019).

members in France and Spain.[132] During one of his visits to Spain, in 1961, Giannettini would even be arrested by the Spanish police along with OAS operatives, including founding member Pierre Lagaillarde.[133] Details surrounding this event were provided in a letter he sent to fellow neofascist activist Giacomo Gagliardi, wherein he described how "Joseph Ortiz, Lagaillarde, Argoud, Lacheroy, and others" were arrested alongside him by the *Brigada* Político-Social. While he was set free only a short time later, the OAS chiefs were brought to and imprisoned on the Canary Islands.[134] Giannettini's presence during the arrest of individuals such as Ortiz and Lagaillarde highlights his close relationship to the OAS, a relationship that would persist through 1964. Of note is that during one his visits to the Iberian Peninsula, Giannettini was introduced, on behalf of OAS operative Jean-René Souètre, to Yves Guérin-Sérac, the code name of Yves Guillou, a former French Army officer who will appear frequently in the subsequent sections. Giannettini stated:

> Around the years 1963–64, I was in contact with people who were part of the OAS. During a meeting with these people in Lisbon, I was introduced to a certain Ralf without any further explanation. However, I understood that this person was either part of or close to the OAS. I never saw this person again, and in later years, I heard from someone, though I don't remember who, that Ralf was identified as Guérin-Sérac.[135]

During this meeting, Giannettini would be accompanied by Enzo Generali, another Italian activist close to the OAS and who served as a link for multiple neofascists to the organization. A member of the MSI since 1958, Generali was tied to Giulio Caradonna and closely connected to the French paramilitary group while working as a bureaucrat in Luxembourg.[136] Much like Giannettini, Generali

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[132] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 39; Years later, Giannettini, in a deposition given during the 1996 Piazza Fontana trial, would say the following regarding his relationship with the OAS: "I must clarify that I was not infiltrated in the OAS but was in contact with this environment due to my right-wing and pro-Atlanticist political ideas, which were shared by this organization" (see *Verbale di Guido Giannettini*, January 4, 1996, Faldone Guido Giannettini, , D/b-6, Istruttoria di Milano, CdM).

[133] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. p. 115; One must note the importance of this period in the evolution of the OAS. The organization was created shortly after the self-determination referendum of January 1961, a pivotal moment that signaled a shift in French policy on Algeria. While the OAS initially emerged as a pro-colonial force opposing Algerian independence and the FLN, its focus began to shift gradually toward direct opposition to de Gaulle himself, even before the Evian Accords. This transformation is evidenced by the first assassination attempt against de Gaulle on September 18, 1961, in Pont-sur-Seine. The process intensified following the official loss of French Algeria in 1962 leading to the attempted assassination of August 22, 1962, orchestrated by Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Bastien-Thiry with OAS involvement. By this stage the OAS had fully developed into a paramilitary organization with a distinctly anti-Gaullist orientation and in 1962, seeing that the struggle to keep Algeria French was lost, opposing the French president became the central issue for far-right paramilitary group.

[134] *Lettera da Guido Giannettini a Giacomo Gagliardi*, January 2, 1961, Dossier di procedura penale, 82-A, Processo di Catanzaro, CdM; Giacomo Gagliardi was also a card-carrying member of the OAS-Metro (see Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses.* p. 39).

[135] *Verbale di Interrogatorio di Guido Giannettini*, May 15, 1997, D/b-6, Istruttoria di Milano, CdM.

[136] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 57; In fact, he appears as the link that connects much of the European neofascist international. Along with his OAS ties he connected with *Jeune Europe*, German mercenary Otto Skorzeny, DRC prime minister Moïse Tschombé, and prince Borghese (see Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 12, 19, 23); With regard to former MSI representative Giulio Caradonna, whose ties to Spain and the pro-American wing of the party were discussed earlier, he was deeply involved with the MSI youth groups, especially the FUAN and Rgsl. This involvement with neofascist youth led to his direct involvement in, along with Almirante, clashes against leftist students during 1968 student occupations of universities in Rome (see Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. p. 129).

was tasked with establishing ties with "sister" organizations abroad and was described as the "plenipotentiary of confidence" for multiple Italian extremist groups.[137] In fact, one of these organizations that he worked with was ON since, according to a report by Aristo dated May 12, 1966, he "managed international affairs" for the nascent group.[138]

As mentioned earlier, the ability of ON militants to foster ties on the Iberian Peninsula was due in part to the secret army's statements vouching for them. In fact, the strength of the ties fostered between the Italian organization and the OAS is underscored by Graziani's ability to become one of two Italians to receive an OAS-Métropole membership card.[139] Furthermore, in its publications, ON praised the French group and compared the *harkis*, Arabs that fought with the French, to those who fought for the RSI.[140] Practical support was provided to the OAS as well. A note from Aristo detailed how, by Rauti's own admission, ON had smuggled arms to the OAS.[141] Additionally, the leader of ON had even proposed to send 40 members of his group to Algeria in support of the far-right *ultras*.

Therefore, it becomes clear that the Secret Army displayed a strong international network of supporters. In an attempt to consolidate some of these ties, certain members of the OAS, namely Joseph Ortiz, Philippe De Massey, René Meningaud, Paul Chevallet, and Jean Maurice De Marquet, gave rise to the Union Méditerranéenne Anti-Communiste (UMAC).[142] The group was composed of OAS operatives, members of the Spanish Falange party, Portuguese members of the União Nacional party, "neo-Nazi elements headed by [Otto] Skorzeny," and a loose array of Italian neofascists which included Giannettini, Generali, and Petronio, among others.[143] Set up under the direction of OAS operatives, the group appears as one of the first attempts by the Iberian dictatorships to consolidate far-right elements, and as a quasi-precursor to the better-known Aginter Press (an organization that will be discussed more in the subsequent sections).

During the Algerian War (1954-1962) and OAS insurgency (1961-1962), competing currents within the MSI hindered the ability of the party to position itself wholly within either the Gaullist or insurgent camp. However, supporters of the French organization were still successful in aiding the Secret Army. Notable is the role played by activists Generali and Giannettini. Through De Massey and their own direct contacts with the leaders of the OAS and later the UMAC, the two men represented

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[137] *Il MSI i Volontari Nazionali*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 110.

[138] *Leadership of the Centro Studi Ordine Nuovo*, March 12, 1966, 9/82-A 18 Ordine Nuovo, Processo di Catanzaro, CdM; The note also reads that there is another member of ON's leadership who is an "unnamed journalist who deals with international affairs" for the group. Considering his close relationship with Rauti, his occupation at the time, and his known ties abroad, this unnamed individual is most likely Giannettini.

[139] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 29; Metro referring to the OAS branch in metropolitan France.

[140] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 63; Bortolussi, Veronica. "I rapporti tra l'estrema destra italiana e l'Organisation de l'Armée secrète francese." p. 115.

[141] Pauline Picco. *Réseaux et mythes OAS en Italie (1961-1966)*, p. 121-122.

[142] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 57; *I gruppi di pressione anticomunisti e l'Internazionale Nera*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 58.

[143] *I gruppi di pressione anticomunisti e l'Internazionale Nera*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 58; Here it is also worth addressing the connection between Giannettini and Skorzeny. The two had written letters between 1963 and 1970 discussing various topics, such as the latter's war time experiences. What is interesting, however, is that in the letter dated September 24, 1969 Skorzeny writes "I hope to read from you soon and to meet you in person another time" indicating that the two had met, although it remains unclear under what circumstances (see *Letter from Otto Skorzeny to Guido Giannettini*, 24 September, 1969, Perquisizioni Giannettini Guido, NR. 874/74, Tribunale di Milano, CdM).

integral nodes capable of connecting the French paramilitary organization with every dimension of Italian neofascism. While activists such as Gagliardi and Graziani were able to obtain OAS membership cards, archival documents indicate that it was Generali and Giannettini who acted as the principal Italian emissaries abroad.[144]

The intensity of the relationship fostered between the Italian neofascist milieu and the OAS varied depending on the different organizations the former had contacted, as well as the personal decisions of members within these groups. Yet overall, the secret army was able to comfortably rely on the network of activists and politicians on the Italian Peninsula who supported them in a myriad of ways, from spreading propaganda to arms smuggling.

Avanguardia Nazionale, Bringing Fascism to the Piazza

While ON appeared as a well-connected, ideologically univocal, efficient alternative to the MSI, and capable of creating partnerships abroad, some activists still found that the group fell short of their radical expectations. Such was the belief of Stefano Delle Chiaie, who, as mentioned previously, quit the group due to disagreements with Rauti's vision. From this schism, the Avanguardia Nazionale Giovanile, later abbreviated to Avanguardia Nazionale (AN), was formed on April 25, 1960, mostly by young activists eager to engage in a more "unbridled" version of politics but later evolved into a general neofascist movement.[145] Additionally, a newspaper and parallel youth group, Gioventù Mediterranea, were simultaneously created.[146]

Ideologically, the group expressed antimaterialist beliefs, argued for a "National Europe" as contrasted with the bipolar geopolitical worldview of the Cold War, and supported the establishment of a "corporatist system."[147] AN was notorious for its ongoing street violence, engaging both political opponents and the police.[148] It would be this aggressive and distinctly fascist ethos that resided at the group's core which resulted in 1962 in Delle Chiaie being sent to trial for reconstituting the Fascist Party. During the subsequent proceedings, the charge was downgraded to "apologia of Fascism," resulting in a mild sentence. According to a 1976 ruling by the Rome Tribunal, this was the real reason for the dissolution of Avanguardia Nazionale in the mid-1960s. On appeal, on May 21, 1963, Delle Chiaie was ultimately absolved thanks to an amnesty.[149] Due to this negative pressure, the

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[144] While there is photographic documentation of said membership card, it is worth dwelling on the bizarre nature of this find. The OAS, being a clandestine organization, would, in theory, not want a paper trail listing the names of its operatives. This leads one to speculate as to the validity of this card yet, seeing as there is no counter explanation as to why it exists, it ought to be taken at face value.

[145] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 121-124

[146] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 124; Delle Chiaie implies that this youth group, *Gioventù Mediterranea*, was founded by AN. However, the group had already existed for three years having been founded by MSI dissidents and future ON members Giulio Maceratini and Gino Ragno. This group, and Ragno in particular, connect various entities within the Italian neofascist matrix together and link them with youth movements abroad. In fact, the same year it was founded, members of the group traveled to Spain and allegedly met with youth activists from "every Arab, European, and Hispano-American nation" during the "Fifth International Congress of European Studies" sponsored by the Spanish *Frente della Gioventù*. See Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. "A Transnational Network: The Contact between Fascist Elements in Spain and Italy, 1945–1968." *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 15, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 82–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2013.849588; *Gita in Spagna*, July 16, 1957, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.I.1.2/6.1, BNS).

[147] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 124-125.

[148] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 127.

[149] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla Democrazia*, p. 126

group strategically self-disbanded in 1965, only to reappear under the same name in 1970.[150] For the sake of simplicity, the first and second iterations of AN will be referred to by the same acronym throughout this article.[151]

It is important to emphasize the militant rather than cultural aspect of AN, something that differentiated the group from ON.[152] As a result, this propensity towards violence on the part of AN would come to define which groups it sought out for transnational collaboration. While there was an overlap between the groups that ON and AN partnered with, we will see how the actions committed and the rationale behind some of these partnerships differed. Greece, a country which found itself under a right-wing dictatorship following the 1967 colonels' coup, would witness one of these first cases of overlap.

The Greek Connection

On the morning of April 21, 1967, tanks of the Hellenic Armed Forces rolled into Athens and occupied key sections of the city. Headed by a troika of right-wing colonels, the constitutional monarchy was overthrown in favor of a military junta that would control the country until 1974.[153] In its bid to achieve international legitimacy, the colonels' regime looked to the neofascist groups in Italy like potential collaborators.

Following this, the National League of Greek Students in Italy (Etnikòs Syndesmos Ellinon Spudastòn Italias: ESESI) was born. In 1967, the group held its founding conference in Rome with the express purpose of conducting "moral vigilance over the national creed of Greek students in Italy."[154] However, the group's fundamental purpose was to combat the influence of Italian Communists over the issue of the colonels dictatorship and spy on antifascist Greek students living in Italy. To this end, the Greek ambassador in Rome would go so far as to act as a go-between for the ESESI and GI in Bologna, as he was keen to promote activities "against the reds' in their stronghold."[155] With the support of the Greek intelligence service (Kentrikí Ypiresía Pliroforión: KYP), Greek students set up

[150] "Appunto dato al Capo della Pref"., February 7, 1973, NR. 6/81 RG PM Catanzaro - Delle Chiaie – 9, *Processo di Catanzaro*, CdM; The note from the Rome precinct discussing the second iteration of AN lists Delle Chiaie as the group's president, Guido Paglia as the group's secretary, and Adriano Tilgher as the vice-secretary. The two men would go on to have noteworthy careers with the former acting as a leading figure within the national public broadcasting company RAI and the latter as an infamous far-right politician. The note is also interesting because it lists Guido Giannettini as a member of AN's national directory. There is no other documentation which supports this claim and other members of AN, namely Tilgher, have contested the statement. Thus, while noteworthy, this information ought to be treated with skepticism.

[151] This is usage of the moniker does not present any issues as the leadership and ideological basis of the group remained mostly the same. The group, while displaying a leadership structure, was very much subject to the whims of Delle Chiaie who acted as the guiding figure within AN.

[152] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla Democrazia*, p. 126.

[153] For a detailed assessment of the coup see Dimitri Deliolanes. *Colonnelli*. (Rome: Fandango Libri, 2019), 5-23; Regarding the American connection, Kassimeris writes that while "little evidence suggests that the U.S. government and its agencies imposed, supported, or tolerated the regime […] existing evidence proves that the U.S. and its agencies had full knowledge of the coming dictatorship; therefore, the dictatorship was established with a high degree of political forbearance from all sides" (see Christos Kassimeris. "Causes of the 1967 Greek Coup." *Democracy and Security* 2, no. 1 (2006): 61-72).

[154] Gianni Flamini. *Il Partito del Golpe 1964-1968*. (Ferrara: Bovolenta, 1975), p. 158.

[155] Michelangelo Borri and Valerio Marinelli. "The Extreme Right and the Democratic Institutions in Italy. The Response of the Regions to a National and Trans-National Phenomenon (1973–1975)." *Modern Italy* 28, no. 3 (August 2023): 230–45. https://doi.org/10.1017/mit.2023.19.

ESESI chapters in most major cities in Italy and established strong ties with their Italian peers in the aforementioned MSI university youth group FUAN.[156]

However, the Italo-Greek relationship between neofascist students and activists was not confined to the Italian Peninsula. On April 17, 1968, members from ON, AN, and Europa Civiltà, another minor neofascist group, traveled to Greece to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the coup.[157] During this trip, 52 neofascists, including Rauti and AN Undersecretary Adriano Tilgher, were housed and fed by junta officials throughout the entirety of their stay.[158] Following their time in Greece, Conti writes that members of ON began "a persistent propaganda effort aimed at comparing, using the categories of 'subversive and revolutionary warfare,' the situation in Greece just before the military coup with that in Italy."[159] The Greek colonels' regime would represent for ON an ideal type of government to strive towards. In fact, in the days following the coup d'état in Greece, the official news organ for ON, *Noi Europa*, would triumphantly proclaim that the "centurions in Athens" had won and "even in Greece there is a fight for a New Order."[160] It was the privileged relationship between ON and the Greek officials that would ultimately assist certain Italian militants in finding refuge abroad.[161]

Greece, Spain, and Portugal: it was this tri-nodal web of far-right regimes that, spreading across the Mediterranean, had the Italian Republic in its sights and actively fomented the neofascist struggle within it. As the "Years of Lead" heated up, the role of each regime would only become more relevant.[162] However, looking exclusively at the state actors involved is both reductive and fails to capture the full force of this network, as the above discussion of the OAS has clearly demonstrated. Therefore, we must tack a brief detour and assess the liaisons with nonstate organizations during this period.

Building a Pan-Europeanist Vision

As mentioned previously, within the postwar framework which saw Europe divided between the Soviet and American blocs helped foster, some neofascists experienced a sense of relative powerlessness that could only be solved through some sort of European unity, be it federal or imperial. While we have already covered the genesis of this movement, it is important before

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[156] Gianni Flamini. *Il Partito del Golpe 1964-1968*. p. 158.
[157] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 95.
[158] Rauti provides additional insight into the trip in his testimony taken during the Piazza Fontana trial. He states that the trip was set up by the ESESI and he wasn't involved in the organization process. Additionally, Rauti admitted he had already travelled to Greece multiple times and on occasion met Kostas Plevris, leader of the neofascist 4th of August party and Aginter Press member (see *Procedimento penale contro Pino Rauti*, December 10, 1973, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.V.I/1.3, BNS).
[159] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 96.
[160] Gianni Flamini. *Il Partito del Golpe 1964-1968*. p. 157.
[161] Ioannis Ladas the commander of the Greek Military Police (EAT-ESA) provided lodging to MPON activist Elio Massagrande in Athens in 1974 (see Nikos Kleitsikas and Andrea Speranzoni, *Fenomena tromokratias: O ellinikos neofasismos mesa apo ta aporrita engrafa ton mystikon ypiresion*, (Chalandri: Proskinio, 2003), p. 222-237).
[162] The term Years of Lead (*Anni di Piombo*) refers to the period of terroristic political violence that existed between 1969-1980. During these years groups from the political extremes were involved in assassinations, kidnappings, and bombings with the Piazza Fontana bombing, kidnapping and assassination of Aldo Moro, and the Bologna train station bombing serving as key moments (see Andrea Chiampan. "Encountering Violence: The Movement and the Legitimation of Violence at the Eve of Italy's Anni Di Piombo." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 24–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1471968).

addressing how the various groups within it evolved to briefly address the thought of Italy's best-known Euro-fascist theoretician and his role within the transnational far-right framework.[163]

Adriano Romualdi, the son of Pino, served as the paramount articulator of Italian neofascist Europeanism and the chief interpreter of Julius Evola's thought.[164] A prolific writer, the younger Romualdi would pen multiple books on topics ranging from the Conservative Revolution in Germany to the origins of Indo-European culture. As Mammone writes, his main goal consisted of modernizing Italian fascism and promulgating a vision of a united Europe, which he perceived as the motherland of the Aryan race.[165] As he put it:

> Intrinsically, as Romualdi believed, this unification of the continent would have forcibly led to a resurgence of a non-narrowly patriotic fascism … In his last book, on the right and the predicaments of nationalism, he openly proclaimed his view that the only perspective was a "Nation Europe."[166]

In fact, in his text on the crisis of nationalism, Romualdi clearly defined how pan-Europeanism was necessary for Europe's survival in the modern geopolitical context. "In the second half of the 20th century, nations are not islands," Romualdi wrote. "No national idea can survive without a connection to a supranational dimension, that is to European nationalism."[167] Therefore, pan-Europeanism for Romualdi was characterized by the need to preserve European identity vis-à-vis the opposing Soviet and American blocs, but at the same time he understood that the narrow nationalist identities emanating from within each country were also in need of safeguarding. It was this idea of a European front that served as the bedrock for most of the pan-European groups active in Italy.

Among the first to gain traction was the aforementioned ESM. According to the group's program, the European nation would act as a federal state with each sub-nation enjoying a degree of equality and independence, yet with a pan-European army that would be controlled by the supranational state.[168] The ESM traced its ideological roots to the philosophy of Maurice Bardèche, one of the four men on the group's executive committee and and influential figure for Romualdi.[169] According to the French philosopher, for Europe to survive as a third force in geopolitics, it would need to adopt an autarkic economic policy, implement a "moral rearmament" based on the principles of courage and loyalty,

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[163] For the introduction to the pan-European groups see the subsection entitled "The Emergence of a pan-Europeanist Vision."

[164] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, p. 86; Romualdi would write during the same period as another prominent neofascist that drew extensively from Evola – Franco Freda. While Mammone credits Romualdi as being both the "chief interpreter" of Evola capable of elaborating his own distinctive thought based on that of the traditionalist thinker, it would be wrong to present him as the only Evolian interpreter. As Germinario writes, Freda's thesis on the disintegration of the system, published in 1969, represented the "translation of Evola in politics." Therefore, when discussing Evola's influence it is important to discuss both interpreters (see Francesco Germinario. *Tradizione, mito, storia. La cultura politica della destra radicale e i suoi teorici*. (Rome: Carocci, 2014), p. 101).

[165] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. p. 87.

[166] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. p. 88.

[167] Adriano Romualdi. *Una cultura per l'Europa*. (Rome: Settimo Sigillo-Europa Lib. Ed, 2015), p. 35; The book was originally published in 1986 posthumously.

[168] "The European Social Movement," n.d., n.p., FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.

[169] Andrea Mammone. "Revitalizing and De-Territorializing Fascism in the 1950s: The Extreme Right in France and Italy, and the Pan-National ('European') Imaginary." *Patterns of Prejudice* 45, no. 4 (September 1, 2011): 295–318. https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2011.605842.

and develop a nuclear arsenal in order to fend off American and Soviet pressures.[170] Aside from it being founded at the MSI's youth conference, the Italian neofascist party continued to play a leading role in the ESM executive committee, with De Marsanich serving as one of its four members alongside Bardèche. Still, the party's interest in engaging with the European Social Movement remained unclear, with a CIA report on the ESM stating that the neofascist party had "apparently dropped out … due to internal dissention," but "collaboration with the ESM continued."[171] In fact, as the MSI's interest in the movement continued to diminish, the Italian neofascist party was officially banished from the ESM one year prior to the movement's dissolution.[172] While relatively short-lived, the ESM's influence can be traced in two of the most effective pan-European groups of the Cold War: the Nouvel Ordre Européen (NOE) and Jeune Europe (JE).

During one of the ESM's meetings in Zürich, held in 1951, a new organization was created which eventually assumed the Nouvel Ordre Européen moniker in 1954.[173] At the helm of the organization were the Swiss Holocaust denier Gaston-Armand Amaudruz and the French Trotskyist-turned-neo-Nazi René Binet. As Lebourg writes, the NOE "took a hard stance on colonization," positing that "Europe should renounce its colonial domination but also send the 'non-native groups' back to the decolonized countries."[174] While the organization's main success was it ability to become the hegemonic group within French neo-Nazi circles, it had also successfully established ties with like-minded groups in neighboring Italy.

According to a confidential report sent from the police chief of Bologna's General Inspectorate for Action against Terrorism dated May 23, 1975, out of the 12 total NOE congresses, four were held in Italy—all of them in Milan.[175] Among the list of participants at the 5th Congress, held in 1958, were key leaders within ON, namely Pino Rauti and Paolo Andriani, along with Guido Maceratini from Gioventù Mediterranea, while at 8th Congress, hosted at the RSI veterans association Unione Nazionale Combattenti della Repubblica Sociale Italiana in Milan, the Italian representatives were mostly from AN, with Delle Chiaie at the head.[176] While the attendance of noteworthy figures like Rauti and Delle Chiaie at NOE meetings underscored the relative strength of the ties between the movements and the pan-Europeanists, it remains unknown whether practical initiatives emerged from these liaisons.

Plagued by internal divisions and ideological schisms, the ESM and NOE's attempts to institutionalize an international of the radical European right resulted in failure, and no new groups sought to fulfill

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[170] Ian R. Barnes. "Antisemitic Europe and the 'Third Way': The Ideas of Maurice Bardèche." *Patterns of Prejudice* 34, no. 2 (April 1, 2000): 57–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220008559140.
[171] "The European Social Movement," FOIA, RDP78-00915R000400120004-0, CIA.
[172] Kurt P. Tauber. "German Nationalists and European Union." *Political Science Quarterly* 74, no. 4 (1959): 564–89. https://doi.org/10.2307/2146424.
[173] Jean-Yves Camus and Nicolas Lebourg. *Far-Right Politics in Europe*. Translated by Jane Marie Todd. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017).
[174] Nicolas Lebourg. "René Binet, the French Father of White Nationalism." Illiberalism Studies Program. *The Far-Right Across Borders* (blog). https://www.illiberalism.org/rene-binet-the-french-father-of-white-nationalism/.
[175] *Nouvel Ordre Europeen*, Year, All. 7, Indice degli Allegati, Perizie Giannuli, H/b - 5, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.
[176] *Nouvel Ordre Europeen*, Year, All. 7, Indice degli Allegati, Perizie Giannuli, H/b - 5, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM.

this objective.[177] However, with the creation of JE in 1962, the idea promoting a pan-European identity survived. Led by Belgian syncretic far-right writer and former SS volunteer Jean Thiriart, the group sought to unite the European continent into a unitary nation, and acted as a supranational party with branches across the continent—not as an umbrella group for other established parties to interact within.[178] Among the group's most active branches were those in Italy, which had originally existed as an independent organization named Giovane Nazione but in 1963 adopted the moniker of Jeune Europe.[179] Present at the founding meeting were Thiriart, Mosley, and the president of Giovane Nazione, Pierfranco Bruschi.[180] Over the course of seven years, the organization would promote its message via the group's Italian newspaper, *Europa Combattente*, and established branches in eight cities.[181] Still, while other groups were able to receive the patronage of foreign powers and engage in paramilitary training, the activities of JE were limited to the realm of theory.[182] While these pan-European organizations' relationship with state actors was based on the formers desire to keep a pulse on the political situation in Italy, these pan-European organizations existed primarily to promote ideological engagement across the old continent.

Aginter Press and the Anti-Communist International

Anti-Communism served as the baseline political doctrine upon which these transnational ties were formed. It was this shared sentiment that allowed groups, be they state, or non-state affiliated, to collaborate with the neofascists regardless of their particular political differences. Opposing Soviet-style Communism, therefore, helped to absolve the Italian splinter groups of their fascist sins and permit them to collaborate with Western powers.

Recognizing the unique opportunity that the general anti-Communist sentiment of the Cold War provided in the West, certain far-right actors banded together in order to create a unified structure that could oppose Communist activity globally. It is from this impetus that the Agence Internationale de Presse was founded. Better known as Aginter Press, this particular organization was the brainchild of ex-OAS operatives who, with financial support from Portuguese intelligence, sought to expand their anti-Communist and pro-colonial struggle globally.[183] Establishing an exact date as to

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[177] Olivier Dard. "Black International in Europe from 1945 to the Late 1980s." EHNE. https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/polit ical-europe/political-models-make-europe-modern-era/black-international-in-europe-1945-late-1980s.

[178] For more on Thiriart and JE see Pietro Missiaggia. *Europa Nazione. Jean Thiriart il cavaliere eurasiatico e la Giovane Europa*. (Contrada popoleto: AGA, 2021); Note that AGA is a far-right publishing house. However, due to the text replicating the testimony of Thiriart the author deemed its inclusion necessary.

[179] Franco Ferraresi. *Minacce alla democrazia.* p. 121

[180] Pietro Missiaggia. *Europa Nazione. Jean Thiriart il cavaliere eurasiatico e la Giovane Europa*. p. 59.

[181] Pietro Missiaggia. *Europa Nazione. Jean Thiriart il cavaliere eurasiatico e la Giovane Europa*. p. 61.

[182] Still, it is important to note that some JE militants were involved in acts of violence, namely Claudio Mutti, and that Thiriart had envisioned the creation of a European Liberation Brigade. This brigade was never created (see Pietro Missiaggia. *Europa Nazione. Jean Thiriart il cavaliere eurasiatico e la Giovane Europa*. p. 95-97).

[183] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 129; Here it is worth mentioning that Otto Skorzeny is also tied to this network through the UMAC. Certain individuals of the UMAC were either AP affiliated, such as Giannettini, or communicated with AP officials, such as Generali. Furthermore, it's worth mentioning how the UMAC, much like AP, emerged from the Iberian context. Skorzeny would go on to create his own paramilitary organization called the Paladin Group which operated in Spain. According to activist Martin Lee, the group allegedly provided support for Wadi Haddad, Muammar Ghaddafi, the South African secret service, and the Greek colonels (see Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 57; Martin A. Lee. *The Beast Reawakens*. (New York: Routledge, 2000) p. 185)

when Aginter Press first appeared is tricky due to the multilayered nature of the organization.[184] In fact, what is colloquially referred to as Aginter Press was in reality a structure subdivided into various entities—some clandestine, others legal. The public face of Aginter Press was its press-bulletin service. Established in 1966, it provided both cover for secret operations and anti-Communist informational material for supporters of the group.[185] Yet what made Aginter Press a notable force was its clandestine dimension. Under the moniker Ordre et Tradition-Organisation d'Action contre le Communisme International (OT-OACI), armed operations involving Aginter Press members were undertaken—notably on the African continent but, as we will see, in Europe as well.[186]

Leading Aginter Press was Yves Guillou (better known as Yves Guérin-Sérac and, as mentioned previously, a member of the OAS). According to the findings of Judge Guido Salvini, Sérac had fought for the French Armed Forces in Korea, Indochina, and Algeria, but "in February 1962 in Oran he had deserted from the French Army and joined the OAS."[187] During his service in the Korean War (1950–1953), Guérin-Sérac fought alongside American and UN soldiers receiving the Silver Star and Bronze Star from the U.S. Armed Forces and even a Presidential Unit Citation presented by founding Korean President Syngman Rhee. Sérac, who ideologically placed himself within the Catholic-traditionalist camp, believed that the defining factor in the defense of Western values was anti-Communism, and it was this conviction of Aginter Press' leader which ultimately explains the group's kaleidoscopic ideology.[188]

While Sérac served as the figurehead for both the legal and clandestine elements of Aginter Press, three of the other central figures within the organization are worth mentioning: Robert Leroy, Jean-Marie Laurent, and Jay Salby. Born in 1908, Leroy was the organization's oldest known active member. In his youth, he had joined the monarchist group Action Française and volunteered to fight for Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War.[189] During the Second World War, he enrolled in the

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[184] According to research conducted by Picco, it is known that as early as 1963 that Sérac and his brother offered to the PIDE their skills and network towards creating an organization with the express purpose of challenging the enemies of Portugal abroad. What is also noteworthy is that two years earlier both Sérac and Souetre had attempted to enlist support from the CIA in "anti-DeGaulle activities." While the agency turned them down, this represents the first known occasion of Sérac's attempts to establish ties with Western intelligence services (see Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 130; "OAS attempt to enlist the cooperation of the United States for its anti-De Gaulle activities," May, 1961, 104-10072-10276, NARA).

[185] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 131; AP was even cited as source in a 1968 speech given by U.S. Representative John Rarick on "the Anatomy of a Revolution" where he cites a report from the Lisbon based agency describing how in the U.S ."a thousand black organizations which are preparing their members for an armed revolt, and that these militant terrorist groups are financed and inspired by highly placed white intellectuals" (see John Rarick. *The Anatomy of a Revolution*, October 8, 1968, Extensions of Remarks, 90th Congress - 2nd Session, Congress.gov).

[186] The reason why the acronym is OT-OACI not OT is because the clandestine wing of AP was composed of OT and another group within it, l' *Organisation d'Action contre le Communisme International*, usually described as the military wing of OT. However, scholars have not made a clear distinction as to which actions are attributed to OT or OACI thus molding them together as a single sub entity of AP.

[187] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A R.G.P.M., N.2/92F R.G.G.I. (Milano: Ufficio Istruzione sez.20^, 1998), p. 362.

[188] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A R.G.P.M., N.2/92F R.G.G.I. (Milano: Ufficio Istruzione sez.20^, 1998), p. 254. It's important to note that AP was not an out-in-out fascist organization. Instead, AP can best be summed up as an anti-communist far-right paramilitary group composed of neofascist, traditionalist, ultra-catholic, monarchist, pro-colonial, and other generally reactionary figures. This is evidenced by its publications and internal documents which differentiate between the various ideologies of its members and the lack of an ideological programme with a distinctly fascist offer.

[189] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 267.

Waffen SS. As a collaborator, he was initially sentenced death for treason only to be granted clemency and assigned 20 years of hard labor.[190] After being pardoned following 10 years in prison, he became politically active. Allegedly he worked with Otto Skorzeny in Egypt to train President Gamal Abdel Nasser's security forces and joined the French neofascist organization Ordre Nouveau.[191] Leroy was also involved with the pan-European groups in the latter half of the 1960s, having attended an NOE conference in Milan.[192] Prior to joining Aginter Press, he acted as a NATO informant, reporting on Communist activity.[193] Described as Sérac's right-hand man, Leroy was best known for his false-flag activities. The other Aginter Press member, described as Sérac's number two, was Jean-Marie Laurent. Much like Sérac, Laurent had served as a member of the OAS. He later sought asylum in Portugal.[194] As as martial-arts instructor in Lisbon, Laurent would retain a central role in carrying out Aginter Press-backed operations abroad, particularly in Africa.[195] Finally, the last key operative worth mentioning is the only American member of Aginter Press, Jay Simon Salby. Nicknamed Castor, court documents alleged that he was involved in the Bay of Pigs operation, although his role was never clarified.[196] Prior to joining Aginter Press, Salby had traveled between Latin America, Canada, and Spain during the 1960s, notably acting within the Guatemalan anti-Communist structures of Guatemalan President Carlos Manuel Osorio.[197] While the specific date as to when Salby joined Aginter is unclear, testimonies given by terrorists involved with Aginter Press confirmed his role as Sérac's main operative in carrying out direct actions, something we will discuss later on.[198]

Most of what is known about Aginter Press is available thanks to the capture of its archives by the Portuguese Armed Forces following the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Internal documents obtained during this requisition paint a picture of Aginter Press as a subversive group involved in false-flag operations under the guise of Communist militancy. No document found in the archive is more incriminating than that entitled "Notre Action Politique," which argued for the instigation of "chaos within all structures of the regime."[199] The text reads as follows:

> In our opinion, the first action we must initiate is the destruction of state structures under the guise of … communist and pro-Chinese groups. In fact, we have infiltrated elements within all these groups. Depending on the prevailing atmosphere, we will obviously need to adapt our actions (propaganda and forceful actions that will appear to be the work of our communist adversaries, as well as pressure on individuals who centralize power at all levels). This will create a sense of antipathy toward those who

[190] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A, p. 402; Ottolenghi, Sandro. "L'uomo del rapporto segreto." *L'Europeo*, 1974, 27 edition.
[191] Peter Hammerschmidt. *Die Nachkriegskarriere des "Schlächters von Lyon" - Klaus Barbie und die westlichen Nachrichtendienste* (Dissertation 2013), p. 404, 408; Franco Ferraresi, *Threats to Democracy*, p. 223, 225.
[192] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A, p. 365. Neither Rauti nor Delle Chiaie were present but Carlo Maria Maggi, a former ON member convicted in 2017 for organizing the piazza della Loggia bombing, was.
[193] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 267.
[194] Riccardo Marchi. *Les réfugiés Français d'extrême-droite au Portugal de Salazar (1945-1974)*, p 147.
[195] Frédéric Laurent. *L'Orchestre Noir*. Stock, 1978, p. 123.
[196] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A, p. 372.
[197] *Jay Salby interrogation in Algeria*, 17 January, 1976. B/b7 509-12, Tribunale di Milano, CdM; During this same period, Salby had contacted William Buckley, director of the National Review, in 1967. While the contents of their exchange remain unknown, it is certain that, based on archival documents held in Buckley's personal archive, two letters were sent by Salby to Buckley.
[198] *Testimony of Vincenzo Vinciguerra*, 19 October, 1992. D-b-15, Tribunale di Milano, CdM.
[199] *Notre Action Politique*, n.d., Aginter Press Archives, "Political Program," Bf-19, CdM.

> threaten the peace of individuals and the nation while also burdening the national economy.[200]

The document goes on to conclude that infiltrating key institutions such as the army, judiciary, and church can be used to manipulate public opinion, discredit the existing legal system, and position the group as the only viable solution for the nation's social, political, and economic challenges.

Following this logic, Aginter Press members would embed themselves in Communist and anticolonial organizations in order to carry out actions in furtherance of these ends. In Europe, Leroy was the leading operative involved with infiltrating Communist groups. He succeeded in masquerading as a Marxist-Leninist militant with ties to the Swiss newspaper *Étincelle* and the Franco-Chinese Friendship Association, thanks in part to a support from the Chinese Embassy in Bern, which vouched for him.[201] Under this guise, Leroy attended several meetings of the Italian pro-Chinese group Fronte Rivoluzionario Clandestino, with the intention of pushing the extremist group to operate outside the law and undertake provocative actions harmful to the wider matrix of left-wing movements.[202]

Outside of Europe, Leroy was able to infiltrate liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies, in particular the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO).[203] In fact, Aginter's plans in Africa, according to Portuguese intelligence, involved the "liquidation of leaders, infiltration or interception of collaborators and provocateurs, and the use of false liberation movements," further highlighting the false-flag nature of Aginter Press' actions.[204] Also in Africa, Picco writes how a branch of OT-OACI also existed in Johannesburg that focused mainly on recruiting mercenaries from far-right organizations, with Portuguese extremist and leader of Jovem Portugal, Zarco Moniz Ferreira, named as one of the main instructors.[205] Based on these findings, we can conclude that Aginter Press represented the tip of the transnational anti-Communist spear—engaging on all fronts and by any means.[206]

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[200] As Picco writes, it is impossible to assert that "a vast anti-subversive project was put in place to undermine, by occult means, the advance of socialist and communist forces in the world," yet it is clear that a "conjunction of interests between the objectives of certain Western intelligence structures [and] the actions carried out by the Aginter Press" existed during this period. This is especially true as this document, *Notre Action Politique*, relates to the CIA's CHAOS Operation, an operation crafted in 1966 which sought to infiltrate extra-parliamentary far-left groups in Europe (see Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 129).

[201] *L'Aginter Presse e l'Ambasciata cinese a Berna*. 12 March, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 169.

[202] Tribunale Civile e Penale di Milano, Sentenza-Ordinanza, N.9/92A, p. 402-403; In his ordinance on the findings from the 1998 Piazza Fontana trial, judge Guido Salvini highlights how this technique was used by other far-right extremists such as Mario Merlino, a neofascist activist close to Delle Chiaie who had also allegedly met with Leroy.

[203] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 135.

[204] *Documentazione aquisita in Francia relativa all'Aginter Press*, May 7, 1994, Tribunale di Milano, CdM.

[205] Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 134.

[206] Sérac's involvement in African affairs persisted after he had to flee Portugal and disband the original structure of Aginter Press. According to the testimony of ON member Vincenzo Vinciguerra, Sérac had fostered ties with members of the Angolan political party UNITA and stated that on one occasion Jonas Savimbi, along with his associates, visited Sérac's apartment in Spain. Additionally, members of AN including Delle Chiaie traveled to Angola with the express purpose of capital accumulation, a project that failed following the entry of Cuban forces into Luanda (see *Testimony of Vincenzo Vinciguerra*, 3 March, 1993. D-b-15, Tribunale di Milano, CdM; *Testimony of Vincenzo Vinciguerra*, 27 April, 1993. D-b-15, Tribunale di Milano, CdM).

In Italy, Aginter Press sought not only to conduct independent undercover operations, but also to foster a working relationship with neofascist groups, chief among them ON. Giannuli writes how, as early as 1967, Aginter Press had invited members of ON to attend a "meeting of foreign groups" in Lisbon.[207] According to a note from Aristo, Enzo Generali was set to participate at this meeting and Aristo himself, not Rauti, was to represent ON.[208] Following the meeting, Rauti expressed a strong interest in collaborating with Aginter Press, specifying that ON cadres would be available for political action abroad if the necessary funds were available.[209] While this offer appeared to have been initially rejected by Sérac, an internal report from the Ministry of the Interior written in 1967 illustrates how ON assumed a role in Aginter Press' clandestine activities, namely the recruitment of volunteers to travel abroad on behalf of OT-OACI and to create a network of agents in every major Italian city to provide information and logistical support for potential anti-Communist activity on the peninsula.[210]

Rauti would not officially meet Sérac until January of 1968. According to Aristo, Sérac was very interested in learning what ON's position was towards the United States and stressed the need for the two groups to continue the exchange of "secret information."[211] This particular meeting is noteworthy not only because it marks the first time the two men met face to face, but because, according to Aristo, Sérac admitted to receiving financial support from the "right-wing of the Republican party," mentioning U.S.Senator from Arizona and former Republican presidential nominee Barry Goldwater by name as a figure that Aginter Press had "close ties" with.[212]
This meeting with Rauti was not the only one that the director of Aginter had while in Rome, since that same year Sérac supposedly met with Delle Chiaie, with the latter admitting how the two discussed the idea of opening in Italy a "similar press agency as to the one he had in Lisbon."[213]

Aginter Press' relationship with Italian far-right journalists did not begin nor end with Rauti. In fact, most of Aginter's known collaborators in Italy were journalists, with some contacted the same year the group was created. Among these was Giorgio Torchia, the director and founder of the press agency Oltremare.[214] His first meeting with Sérac occurred towards the end of 1966, when the

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[207] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 52; We also learn from documents recovered in the AP archive that as early as September, 1966 ON was on their radar as a potential collaborator. Other foreign entities listed as potential collaborators included the NDP party in Germany, the Argentinian neofascist group *Tacuara*, the Japanese party *Komeito*, and French journalist Jean Haupt (see *Idees et Sugestions sur A.I.P*, Aginter Press Archives, "Political Program," Bf-19, CdM).
[208] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 53; At the meeting, *Aristo* does not confirm that Generali attended but Tazio Poltronieri, a neofascist involved in terrorist activities in northern Italy, did attend. Here it is also worth noting that *Aristo*, aka Armando Mortilla, in his testimony given in 1975, would give conflicting information regarding his relationship with Sérac who he claims to have met only in Lisbon sometime in 1968 prior to his trip to Africa. Still, Mortilla does clarify that in early 1967 he had been in contact with AP. What this bizarre testimony likely indicates is how Mortilla was careful not to betray his role as an informant while still providing non incriminating information as his ties with AP. Still, from this testimony we discover how Leo Negrelli, a friend of Rauti's, had also been in contact with AP and recommended that Mortilla contact Sérac (see *Testimony of Armando Mortilla*, 18 August, 1975. "Fascicolo Armando Mortilla," Tribunale di Catanzaro, CdM).
[209] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 54.
[210] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 57; The report also alleges that ON already has its own clandestine network that had helped the OAS in the past.
[211] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 63.
[212] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 64.
[213] *Interrogation of Stefano Delle Chiaie*. 18 September, 1992. BS D/b-4, Tribunale di Milano, CdM.
[214] According to Giannuli, Torchia was also involved with the aforementioned UMAC (see *Il ruolo dell'OAS*, March, 12, 1997. Consulenza dott. Aldo Giannuli, H/a - 1, Tribunale di Brescia, CdM, p. 59).

journalist Giano Accame introduced him to Sérac during the latter's trip to Rome.[215] According to Torchia, Sérac "desired to get in contact with an Italian press agency in order to exchange information," but downplayed this relationship, since if he desired to obtain a direct relationship with Portuguese officials he could do so via the Italian Embassy in Lisbon. Still, documents in the Aginter Press archives confirm how the relationship between Aginter Press and Oltremare was deeper than Torchia would want to admit. Within Torchia's personal file, a letter dated December 19, 1966, and signed by him reads: "Mister Jean-Marie Laurent is certified, by our press agency, as a special correspondent …"[216]

Giano Accame is another interesting figure in the neofascist matrix tied to Aginter Press. An Italo-German RSI veteran, Accame worked as a journalist for multiple publications, both neofascist and not. With regard to Aginter Press, Accame denied ever meeting Sérac, but did state he had dined with a representative from Aginter, introduced to him by the French journalist Jean Brune, while categorically denying that this person was Sérac.[217] The fact remains that both Accame and Torchia appeared as H1 collaborators: that is to say, as individuals deemed "friendly" by Aginter Press, in documents recovered in the Aginter archive.

Among the list of H1 collaborators a familiar name appears: Guido Giannettini. His file reads: "should be treated with caution," an indication that appears on no other known Aginter Press document. By this time, Giannettini had become an informant for the Servizio Informazioni Difesa (SID, the Italian intelligence agency), thus making his true loyalty difficult to confirm. While in the service of the SID, Giannettini provided information regarding NATO and Aginter meetings, stating in one report that Aginter Press may have been financed by circles close to then French President Georges Pompidou.[218]

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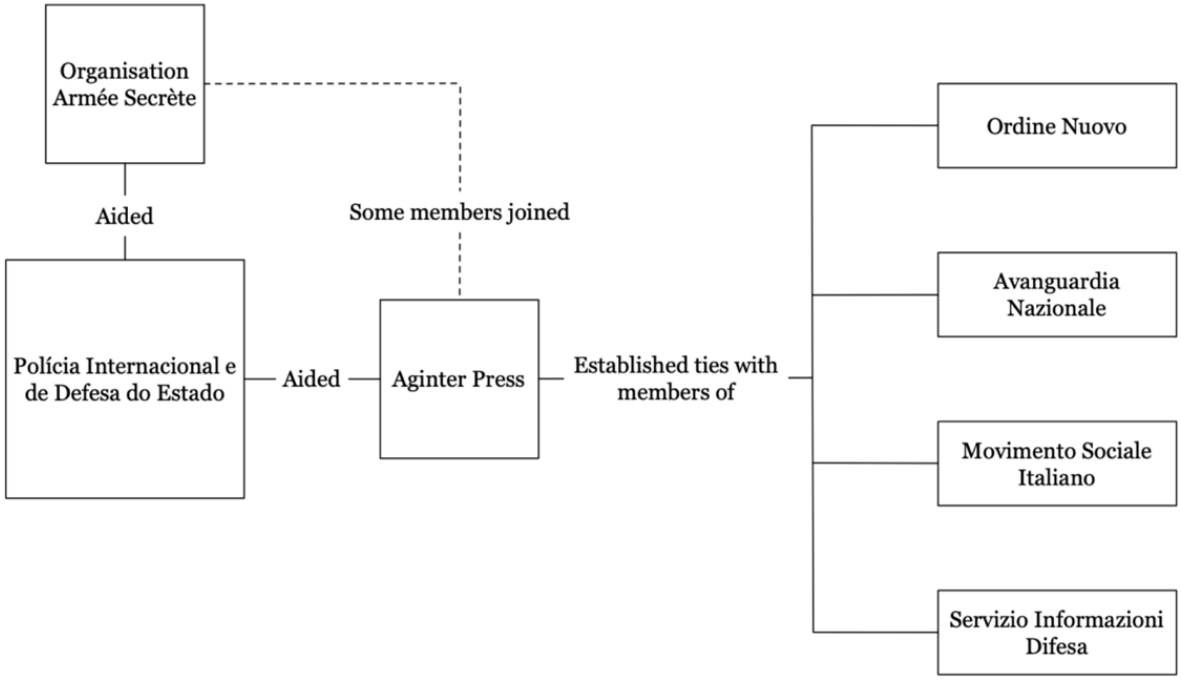
[215] *Interrogation of Giorgio Torchia*, July 18, 1975, NR. 14/75, Processo di Catanzaro, CdM; His personal file describes him as a "discrete" antisemite, neofascist, and with strong ties to the Italian armed forces and U.S. Embassy.

[216] *Letter from Giorgio Torchia*, December 19, 1966, Aginter Press Archives, "Scheda Contatti" Bf-19, CdM.

[217] *Giano Accame testimony*, April 2, 1997, "Faldone Accame Giano Nicola," D/a – 01, Tribunale di Milano, CdM; In the AP archives it is stated that Umberto Mazzotti was the intermediary between AP and Accame and during this particular meeting was joined by the Franco-Algerian journalist Jean Brune. In his file it states that Accame was "interested in ties with Ordre et Tradition but is too occupied with internal politics to assume a representative role." Accame is also described as the Rome correspondent for the Ghelen network (see *Giano Accame contact*, n.d., Aginter Press Archives, "Scheda Contatti ," Bf-19, CdM).

[218] Picco, Pauline. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 145.

FIGURE 1. Organization chart of Aginter Press, with links to Italian groups and institutions.



Source: Author's work based on available documents.

Aginter Press represents one of the main organizations involved in anti-Communist activities willing to engage with the Italian neofascist milieu through journalistic and clandestine initiatives. At the practical level, the group provided Italian neofascists with the resources to carry out political violence—including training courses on how to use explosives.[219] As Picco writes, ON and AN activists recalled receiving training in 1966 from a French instructor known as "Jean," supposedly a former OAS officer, who conducted guerrilla and explosives courses in Rome, while other AN members confirm that this individual, likely affiliated with Aginter Press, provided similar instructions both in Rome and Reggio Calabria.[220]

On December 12, 1969, a bomb tore through the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Milan, killing 17 people.[221] Only in 2005, after two separate trials, was the bombing attributed to Franco Freda, Vincenzo Vinciguerra, and Carlo Digilio, all members of the ON cell in the Veneto region.[222] The exact

[219] Picco, Pauline. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 148-49.
[220] Picco, Pauline. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 148-49.
[221] Going into an in-depth analysis of the bombing is beyond the scope of this paper but those interested should see Aldo Giannuli. *Storia della "Strage di Stato,"* (Firenze: Ponte alle Grazie, 2019); Benedetta Tobagi. *Piazza Fontana*, (Milano: Einaudi, 2019); Giorgio Boatti. *Piazza Fontana 12 dicembre 1969: il giorno dell'innocenza perduta*, (Milano: Einaudi, 2019); Guido Salvini and Andrea Sceresini, *La maledizione di Piazza Fontana. L'indagine interrotta. I testimoni dimenticati. La guerra tra i magistrati*, (Milano: Chiarelettere, 2019).
[222] "Strage piazza Fontana, archiviate ultime inchieste: 'No a indagini all'infinito.'" *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, September 30, 2013, sec. Giustizia; Its worth mentioning Carlo Digilio's background. Born in 1937, Digilio would occupy a key role in the bombing stating that it was he who inspected the bombs placed in Milan and Brescia. In addition to being a member of ON, Digilio served as an informant employed by the NATO spy network in Veneto and supervised by U.S. Navy officer David Carret. In fact, his father Michelangelo had already served as an OSS informant in Italy under the codename Herodetus – the same codename Carlo would

role played by Aginter Press in the bombing remains unclear, but two links are worth noting. During the immediate aftermath, police discovered fake flyers with the words, "Autumn 1969, the start of a protracted struggle," and red flags littered near the public square. Ugo Paolillo, the first prosecutor to investigate the bombing, would claim that the paper used for the flyers came from Switzerland, that the materials could be traced back to the OAS, and that this signature pointed to Guérin-Sérac. Therefore, flyers made by Aginter Press claiming the bombing came from left-wing groups were found near the scene of crime.[223] Secondly, during the investigations it emerged that Giannettini was in contact with members of the ON cell, namely Freda and Ventura. During his time as a SID collaborator, Giannettini would have Freda help him to compile information on pro-Chinese Maoist groups in Veneto, groups that Ventura was embedded in.[224] It is this relationship between Aginter Press collaborator Giannettini and the Veneto group, along with the flyers, that links the event of December 12, 1969, with the anti-Communist group. The extent to which Aginter Press members were involved in the bombing of Piazza Fontana remains unknown, but it is clear that Aginter, in the words of Giannuli, was the "hard core" of the Black International.[225]

Operation Tora Tora: The Borghese Coup and Those Who Knew

Much of the neofascist violence that shaped this period of Italian history is attributed to the MSI, ON, and AN—or at least to members linked to these groups. However, arguably one of the most important events of the period was that of the Borghese coup, code-named Operation Tora Tora, concocted by Prince Borghese and his organization, the Fronte Nazionale (FN).[226] After his falling out with the MSI over political differences, Borghese sought to organize cadres loyal to him within an independent structure that would not seek out political power through elections but by the establishment of a quasi-parallel state. Borghese would indeed say as much in his final interview given before his failed coup attempt in 1970, telling journalist Giampaolo Pansa that "we are attempting to create structures that can one day substitute those that currently exist … the term 'shadow-state' is tricky. I would say that it could be called a 'shadow-state' when … its strength and growth are enough to classify it as a state."[227] With the support of Rauti and members of ON, the group was able to consolidate itself across the entire country.

In January of 1970, Borghese met with Second Secretary Charles Stout at the American Embassy in Rome to discuss the political situation in Italy. During the conversation, the prince described the FN as a politically "conservative" group intent on preserving "Italy's position in NATO."[228] While the coup plot was not discussed during this meeting, as Stout's reception was relatively cold, Borghese sought other routes to secure support from the United States. Through Doctor Rieti Adriano Monti, a

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adopt (see Saverio Ferrari. "Piazza Fontana - La Storia Di Carlo Digilio, Morto Il 12 Dicembre, Anniversario Della Strage Di Piazza Fontana." *Liberazione*, January 1, 2006).

[223] Veronica Bortolussi. "I rapporti tra l'estrema destra italiana e l'Organisation de l'Armée secrète francese." p. 210.

[224] Erik Piccoli. "L'Agente Zeta: A Historical Profile of Guido Giannettini." *La Scighera Della Politica*, October 22, 2024.

[225] Aldo Giannuli and Elia Rosati. *Storia di Ordine Nuovo*. p. 51; Here black international is another way of naming the neofascist international network.

[226] Mirco Dondi. *L'eco del boato*. p. 251; The term Tora Tora is taken from the code name of the Japanese Empire's attack on Pearl Harbor. トラトラトラ！ (Tora Tora Tora!) is the abbreviation of 突撃雷撃 (lighting attack). A movie by the same name had come out in 1970 which likely inspired the usage of the term in the Borghese coup.

[227] Giampaolo Pansa. *Borghese mi ha detto.* p. 103.

[228] "Prince Junio Valerio BORGHESE and the National Front," August 31, 1970, FOIA, 519a6b27993294098d511203, CIA

member of AN, the prince was able to contact Hugh Fenwich, an American businessman tied to the Nixon Administration, who in turn would speak with Herbert Klein, then assistant to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.[229] Klein allegedly approved the idea of supporting a coup under certain conditions, which included the establishment of a civilian government led by a trusted member of the Christian Democrats.[230] Proof that the United States government was aware of the coup plot has been made evident thanks to the discovery of a telegram sent by U.S. Ambassador to Italy Graham Martin on August 7, 1970, entitled "Planning for possible coup attempt week of 10 August. Pass White House."[231] In it, the ambassador stated that:

> (1) The organization involved is called Fronte Nazionale. (2) The head of the organization is Valerio Junio Borghese … (4) Its motivation is nationalistic, anti-Communist and pro-American. (5) It has been meeting and organizing throughout Italy with the intent of having a *coup d'etat* which will be assisted by the armed forces but once installed the military would be subordinated to civilian authority. Its state of readiness is such that it can be activated in six hours. Ten to fifteen days from now was estimated for effecting the coup. … (7) They desire the U.S. Government to be informed and to recognize the group once they are installed in power. They ask no specific help and only request that their plans be kept secret and they not be exposed … It was said specifically that operations would be mounted with or without US [sic] support.[232]

On the night of December 7, 1970, the coup plot was launched without American support. Members of the FN and AN, joined by portions of the Italian Armed Forces, mobilized across the country with plans to occupy the key government and media buildings.[233] However, two hours in, the operation was called off by Borghese himself.[234] Denied support by the nation that had saved him nearly 30 years earlier, the prince fled from Italy finding refuge in Franco's Spain, dying there only four years after his abortive coup attempt.[235]

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[229] Nicola Tonietto. "Un colpo di stato mancato? Il golpe Borghese e l'eversione nera in Italia." *Diacronie. Studi di Storia Contemporanea*, no. N° 27, 3 (September 29, 2016). https://doi.org/10.4000/diacronie.4247.
[230] Jonathan Marshall. "U.S. Cold War Policy and the Italian Far-Right: The Nixon Administration, Republican Party Operatives, and the Borghese Coup Plot of 1970." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 25, no. 1 (March 3, 2023): 138–67. https://doi.org/10.1162/jcws_a_01124.
[231] "196. Telegram From the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State," August 7, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972, Office of the Historian.
[232] "196. Telegram From the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State," August 7, 1970, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972, Office of the Historian.
[233] Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sulle cause dell'occultamento di fascicoli relativi a crimini nazifascisti," Doc. XXIII, N. 18-bis, *Senato della Repubblica*, May 15, 2003, p. 157.
[234] Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sulle cause dell'occultamento di fascicoli relativi a crimini nazifascisti," Doc. XXIII, N. 18-bis, *Senato della Repubblica*, May 15, 2003, p. 158; The history behind why this occurred is unclear. Tonietto describes the events that transpired as follows: "Shortly after one o'clock at night, Borghese, anxiously awaiting the final go-ahead for the coup, received a phone call. After a brief exchange of jokes, the Prince turned to his companions and informed them that the operation had been canceled due to the lack of "cooperation from a 'group of officers' who were supposed to open the doors of the Ministry of Defense from the inside." When asked for explanations, Borghese remained reticent, merely stating that he had "obeyed higher orders." The most important thing now was to halt the operation without any unpleasant consequences" (see Nicola Tonietto. "Un colpo di stato mancato? Il golpe Borghese e l'eversione nera in Italia." *Diacronie. Studi di Storia Contemporanea*, no. N° 27, 3 (September 29, 2016). https://doi.org/10.4000/diacronie.4247).
[235] *The New York Times*. "Prince Junio Borghese, 68, Dies; Italian War Hero and Neofascist." August 28, 1974, sec. Archives.

Italian Neofascism Goes into Exile

By the 1970s, the violent actions committed by members of ON and AN forced the Italian authorities to undertake a stronger approach. By 1969, five months after Almirante returned as the secretary of the MSI following his overthrow of the moderate wing, centrist members of ON, led by Rauti, were subsumed back into the neofascist hegemon—shortly before the Piazza Fontana bombing.[236] This development was not welcomed by all of ON's members, in particular the hardliners led by Graziani. Reconstituted under the moniker Movimento Politico Ordine Nuovo (MPON), the group was headed by a quadrumvirate that included Clemente Graziani, Elio Massagrande, Roberto Besutti, and Leone Mazzeo. However, this project would not last long since, in 1973, the Italian government officially declared that the MPON must be disbanded for having attempted to reconstitute the Fascist Party.[237] Not long thereafter, a similar fate befell AN, which was disbanded three years later by Tilgher in anticipation of the official ruling mandating this.[238] Confronted with this new reality, many of the neofascist militants sought refuge abroad, turning to the regimes that initially inspired them.

By 1974, both Graziani and Massagrande had found refuge in Greece. As of October 2, 1974, Italian intelligence services had located Massagrande in Athens operating a tourism agency called Nostos along with another ON militant, Claudio Bizzarri.[239] Later on, both men would expand their business endeavors in Greece by opening a restaurant named Verona.[240] Massagrande remained politically active during his time abroad. To this end, the neofascist solidified his ties with members of the Greek neofascist August 4th Party, namely activist Aristotle Kalentzis.[241] In January of 1975, Massagrande's exile was cut short when the Greek government, no longer under the control of the colonels, extradited him and his family back to Italy, where he spent two months in jail.[242] Immediately after his release, the Massagrande family moved to Spain, where other neofascist exiles had already established a strong presence.[243] As for Graziani, his sojourn in Greece did not end in extradition. Based on information described in an international SISMI note tracking the movement of neofascists abroad, Graziani had spent time both in Corsica and in London, where he was arrested by Interpol

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[236] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 135.
[237] Davide Conti. *Fascisti contro la Democrazia*. p. 215-216.
[238] Nicola Rao. *La fiamma e la celtica*. p. 103-104.
[239] *Procedimento penale contro MASSAGRANDE Elio ed altri*, October 2, 1974, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM.
[240] *SID note on Massagrande*, January 9, 1975, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM.
[241] Aristotle Kalentzis, described as a "ranking member" of the 4th of August group, would be implicated in a series of terrorist attacks that occurred in Athens and, during his arrest, was found to be in possession of illegal explosives. A SID memo dated January 9, 1975 indicates that Kalentzis, whose last name is incorrectly spelled "Kallentsis," acted as the front man for Massagrande's restaurant. The note also details how Massagrande had visited the Libyan embassy likely in order to flee to the North African country. From another SID memo published following Kalentzis arrest, it is noted that Massagrande and the Greek neofascist remained in contact. (See Mary Anne Weaver. "Greece Probes Rightist Underground's Role in Violence." *Washington Post*, April 9, 1977; *Grecia – indagini sulle attività del neofascismo*, January 28, 1977, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM).
[242] In his testimony given after his arrest, Massagrande declared to the Greek official to have "chosen Greece as my new homeland because in Italy there is an ongoing ideological genocide against those who oppose the dictatorship of the system that has taken hold in my country [Italy]." Furthermore, he claims that, during the "Cyprus crisis" he offered to volunteer as a soldier in the Hellenic Army, a decision Graziani also took (see *Dichiarazione di Elio Massagrande*, January 14, 1975, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM).
[243] Umberto Berlenghini. "Elio Massagrande, il gaucho." *Spazio70*.

but not extradited to Italy due to an inconsistency in the evidence at hand.[244] Regardless, towards the of the 1970s, both the leader of the MPON and his right-hand man successfully made their way to Franco's Spain.

By the time the former ON cadre trickled into the Iberian country, AN member, led by Delle Chiaie, had already succeeded in setting up a sophisticated community of exiles. In July of 1970, Delle Chiaie abandoned the Italian Peninsula only to be followed by a steady stream of neofascist activists who, fearing arrest, fled their homeland as well.[245] An unsigned internal memo taken from the SISMI archives entitled "Italian Extreme Right in Spain" illustrates how the ratlines from the Italian to the Iberian Peninsula functioned: [246]

> The Italian exiles entered Spain via Barcelona, where they were welcomed and introduced into the environment of the Spanish far right. In the Catalan capital, far-right groups were thriving, the most active of which were led by Alberto Royuela, Secretary General of the Hermandad de la Guardia de Franco, and Mariano Sánchez Covisa, founder of the Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey. It was during that time that our compatriots made contact with the Movimiento Español de Amigos de Europa (CEDADE) the only Spanish far-right group that today receives substantial funding from Arab sources.[247]

Among the more practical initiatives undertaken by the exiled neofascists was the establishment of the pizzeria L'Appuntamento run by Salvatore Francia, Delle Chiaie, and Massagrande; and a tourism agency called Transalpino, which had branches in Brussels, Paris, and Palma de Mallorca.[248] While many neofascists went into exile following the failed coup attempt, there remained an active underground network in Italy. In fact, another unsigned note labeled "secret" obtained from the Roman police archives describes how members of AN met with José Luis Jerez, the leader of the Spanish neofascist organization Fuerza Nueva, and an unnamed member of the Portuguese paramilitary group Exército de Libertação de Portugal, in Italy on October 12, 1975.[249] Additionally,

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[244] *Appunto SISMI*, November 11, 1982, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM.
[245] While Delle Chiaie's new base of operations was in Spain, he would still travel abroad frequently, even returning to Italy at times.
[246] *Italian Far Right in Italy*, November 11, 1981, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM).
[247] It is worth noting that Isidro Juan Palacios, a leading figure within CEDADE, was in contact with Pino Rauti. In a letter dated March 2, 1978, Palacios writes to Rauti asking for any material he might have on Evola as the former was in the process of writing a book about the Italian philosopher (see *Letter from Isidro Juan Palacios to Pino Rauti*, March 2, 1978, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.III.1/165, BNS).
[248] *Italian Far Right in Italy*, November 11, 1981, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM.
[249] *Activities and Plan of Avanguardia Nazionale*, October 23, 1975, NR. 6/81, Processo di Catanzaro, CdM; Topic is "establish a far-right coordinated struggle to oppose communism." Furthermore, the document states that AN had plans to kidnap Italian diplomates in "New York, Argentina, and Sweden" between October and November of the same year. The report goes on to describe a planned meeting in November of the same year where members of FN, Portuguese right-wing extremists, *Ordre Nouveau*, "Croatian Yugoslavs," and far-right extremists from Holland were to meet in Trieste. Furthermore, it's worth briefly discussing the ELP in more depth. The clandestine organization was formed during Portugal's transition to democracy, seeking to restore the authoritarian *Estado Novo* regime through terrorist actions. ELP operatives relied on international contacts including Falangists, the *Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey*, members of AN, and even Aginter Press operatives who would frequently travels from Madrid to Lisbon. (see Riccardo Marchi and Raquel da Silva. "Extreme-Right Violence in the Portuguese Transition to Democracy." *Fascism* 11 (May 13, 2022). https://doi.org/10.1163/22116257-bja10037).

as a way to maintain a more public presence in Italian affairs, a radio program broadcasting news that contrasted with the what it called the "Christian-Democrat disinformation" of RAI-TV, the Italian state television, was established by the community of exiles.[250]

Among the more violent episodes that involved these Italian neofascists during their period abroad in Spain were the Montejurra and Atocha incidents. On May 9, 1976, a group of neofascists including Delle Chiaie, Augusto Cauchi (a former Avanguardia Nazionale militant) and Argentinian terrorist Rodolfo Almirón, attacked attendees of the annual meeting of Carlists at Montejurra, resulting in the deaths of two of them.[251] Seeing as Spain was now undergoing its transition to democracy, this particular attack, as Albanese and del Hierro write, "was a small part of the bigger strategy that the extreme right wing was developing and it communicated something important which shaped the whole strategy … even if you are going to change this country the process will not be peaceful because neo-fascism will claim its own space for the future."[252] While the Carlists did not represent a genuine threat to the ultra-right in Spain, attacking them in this manner was done to symbolically show strength and assert dominance within the fragmented Spanish far-right milieu, as well as to warn against the perceived infiltration of leftist ideologies within traditionally conservative spaces.[253] What came to be known as the Atocha Massacre was carried out on January 24, 1977, when a far-right commando group stormed the offices of the leftist Workers' Commissions and, after failing to locate union leader Joaquín Navarro, murdered four people present in the offices.[254] While none of the shooters were Italian, the weapon used, an M-10 Ingram gun, ties the exiled group of AN activists, hitherto referred to as the Delle Chiaie cell, to the murder, since the Ingram submachine gun was the specific weapon that former AN member Eliodoro Pomar was, with the approval of Otto Skorzeny, creating in his shop hidden in a convent in Madrid.[255]

While in Spain, the Delle Chiaie cell began to solidify its ties with the Chilean regime under General Augusto Pinochet. In April of 1974, both Borghese and Delle Chiaie flew to Chile at the behest of the Chilean dictator. According to Delle Chiaie, during the trip, Pinochet had promised his support for

[250] *Avanguardia Nazionale radio program*, October 8, 1975, NR. 9/82, Tribunale di Catanzaro, CdM; The broadcast was conducted with the support of the official state radio, *Radio Nacional de España*, that hosted the program.
[251] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 153; Carlism is a Spanish monarchist movement that seeks to establish an alternate branch of the Bourbon Dynasty on the Spanish Throne.
[252] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 153.
[253] At that time Don Hugo de Borbón-Parma had founded of a new Carlist Party inspired by Yugoslav-style socialism. Consequently, his brother Sixtus Henry, an ardent ultra-catholic traditionalist, attempted to fight for dominance within the wider Carlist movement with this episode serving as an example of his intention to control the movement, even by resulting to violence. Furthermore, regarding Sixtus Henry and the Italian neofascists, not only did the Carlist pretender share fundamental values with the community of exiles and a personal friendship with Delle Chiaie, but he also appeared as Spanish equivalent of Prince Borghese, that is to say the incarnation of values that were fading away (see Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 154,158).
[254] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 156-158.
[255] Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. p. 157; According to Albanese and del Hierro, it was a "signature weapon" with few copies produced and it the guns served as the main source of income for the Italian group.

their "international actions."[256] From this initial relationship, the ties between the two groups would intensify in 1975 with the assassination attempt against Bernardo Leighton, the former vice president of Chile then living in exile. According to Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (DINA) hitman Michael Townley, during his four-year career with the Chilean secret police agency it was he, under directives from Santiago, who recruited members of AN, with Delle Chiaie's support, to carry out the attack on Leighton.[257] On the night of October 6, Leighton and his wife were shot, but not killed, by the Italian neofascist Pierluigi Concutelli.[258]

Armed Spontaneity and the New Generation of Militants

The fracturing of ON and AN, after being officially outlawed in 1973 and 1976, respectively, represented a major turning point for groups active in the Italian neofascist milieu. While much of the old guard was in exile, a younger generation of militants emerged, giving rise to new organizations and concocting an impulsive method of doing politics. This new modus operandi, commonly referred to as *spontaneismo armato* (armed spontaneity), an explicitly anti-hierarchical and anti-statist form of violence that was as self-destructive as it was destructive in general.[259] It is this chapter which represents the final episode of the wider history of neofascist violence. However, here it is necessary to underscore that the notion of armed spontaneity was nothing but a discursive frame. The perpetrators of this violence did not exist in a vacuum and instead emerged precisely from the networks and groups explored thus far—with some members remaining in contact with their predecessors, namely Delle Chiaie and Tilgher.

While this last chapter represented a new phase of a larger story, one must keep in mind that these groups were all connected, both ideologically and personally. Furthermore, this final section does not limit itself to the *spontaneisti* groups, as it seeks to explain what the other relevant organizations and actors, such as the MSI and the Delle Chiaie cell, were doing during the same period.

Neofascists in the Service of Latin American Dictators

As historian Vito Ruggiero uncovers in his magisterial book, *Il sogno anticomunista: Neofascisti Italiani in America Latina (1977–1982)*, the decisions made by Italian neofascists who elected to exile themselves to Latin America were not the same and two distinct trajectories emerge, one characterized by direct engagement with the repressive apparatus of the state, and the other defined by passive support through supposedly "civilian" initiatives. The former case describes the activities of Delle Chiaie and his militants from AN, while the latter characterizes that of ON militants—namely Graziani and Massagrande.

With the death of Franco in November 1975, the neofascist exiles found themselves once again threatened by the prospect of extradition. Thanks to the strong ties that existed between the Pinochet

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[256] Stefano Delle Chiaie. *L'aquila e il condor*. p. 190-191; Delle Chiaie also alleges that he played an aesthetic role in the creation of the Chilean secret services DINA by suggesting that the symbol of the Scandinavian SS be adopted as the agency's logo.

[257] "The Pinochet Dictatorship Declassified: Confessions of a DINA Hit Man," National Security Archive. November 22, 2023. https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/chile/2023-11-22/pinochet-dictatorship-declassified-confessions-dina-hit-man.

[258] Vito Ruggiero. *Il sogno anticomunista. Neofascisti italiani in America Latina* (1977-1982), (Roma: Roma TrE-Press, 2023). p 114.

[259] Nicola Guerra. *The Italian Far Right from 1945 to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. p. 143; Anna Cento Bull. *Italian Neofascism*, p. 128

regime and AN following the attack against Leighton, some of the Italian neofascists, joined by the few OAS members who remained in Spain, transferred to the Chilean capital of Santiago in 1977.[260] By the winter of the same year, Delle Chiaie and part of this group traveled to Buenos Aires at the DINA's behest. In Argentina, the group was involved in the establishment of various businesses with the purpose of self-financing Chilean intelligence operations abroad.[261] However, with the DINA's reconstitution as the Central Nacional de Informaciones (CNI), this relationship started to erode. With this change, the Chilean intelligence leadership was entirely replaced and the Italian neofascists lost many privileges, as their press agency was shut down and they lost state protection.[262]

Abandoned by the Pinochet regime, the roving neofascists turned to the Argentinian military regime for support. During their stint as DINA operatives, the neofascists had already established strong ties with the Argentinian Army's Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército (SIE), which made their eventual integration into the Batallón de Inteligencia 601 (B.Icia 601), a special branch of the SIE, easier.[263] While they no longer served a purpose in Chile, the Argentinian military regime recognized their potential for conducting anti-Communist actions in neighboring countries threatened by a strong Marxist presence, a key aspect of the Argentinian military junta's foreign policy at the time.[264] One such country was Bolivia, where the Delle Chiaie cell helped General Luis García Meza seize power on July 17, 1980, in what is known today as the Cocaine Coup.[265]

According to both American and Bolivian sources, Delle Chiaie's militants, along with former OAS operative Jaques Leclerc as well as German Nazis Klaus Barbie and Joachim Fiebelkorn, played an essential role in the Bolivian coup d'état. Operating under the moniker Novios de la Muerte, the Europeans' violent activities included the sequestering of trade unionists Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz and Carlos Flores Bedrega, who, after being disappeared, were subsequently tortured and murdered.[266] Following the Cocaine Coup, Delle Chiaie was given the role of personal advisor to García Meza and eventually became a close collaborator of Luis Arce Gómez, the Minister of the Interior, Migration, and Justice under García Meza.[267] Bolivia's experience under the García Meza narco-dictatorship was short-lived, and by 1982, with the authoritarian regime ousted, the new Bolivian government in conjunction with Italian authorities sought to apprehend Delle Chiaie. Tipped off by his local contacts, the Italian neofascist escaped back to Argentina.[268] However, by 1987, Delle Chiaie, after 10 years on the run, surrendered himself to the authorities in Venezuela.[269]

A less adventurous experience befell the ON activists who fled to Latin America. While the relationship between the Pinochet regime in Chile and the Delle Chiaie cell emerged from the

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[260] Among the first projects the DINA supervised group of neofascists undertook was to set up a press agency called Agencia Internacional de la Prensa, a front clearly inspired by AP (see Vito Ruggiero. "Do ut des. Reti anticomuniste e circolazione periferica nel Cono Sud (1975-1981)." *Confluenze. Rivista di Studi Iberoamericani* 15, no. 2 (December 19, 2023), p. 337.
[261] Vito Ruggiero. *Il sogno anticomunista.* p 125.
[262] Vito Ruggiero. *Il sogno anticomunista*. p. 126-9; It is important to acknowledge, as Ruggiero does, that the alliance between Delle Chiaie's group of neofascists and the Chilean junta was fragile, limited to lower-level intelligence ties, and they were ultimately purged once it became politically inconvenient to maintain them.
[263] Vito Ruggiero. *Il sogno anticomunista*. 131; In particular, the Italians operated within thee B.Icia 601's *Jefatura II – Inteligencia* unit tasked with carrying out activities abroad.
[264] Vito Ruggiero. "Do ut des." p. 342.
[265] The coup was given this name in part because narcotrafficker helped finance it.
[266] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p 141-142.
[267] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p 143.
[268] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p. 147.
[269] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p. 147.

former's desire to improve its repressive capabilities, the presence of ON activists in the region stemmed from the neofascists' desire to live peacefully in exile under a regime conducive to their beliefs. By 1977, Massagrande had established contact with representatives of the Paraguayan military dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner through the regime's embassy in Madrid, and successfully emigrated to Paraguay in August.[270] The following year, Graziani would join Massagrande in Paraguay and was recognized as a "political exile" by the regime.[271] During their time in Latin America, both men embarked on economic and political endeavors. Massagrande, with government support, became an instrumental figure in the establishment of agricultural settlements in the Chaco lowland region of Paraguay, while acting as a facilitator for foreign investments from European far-right networks, essentially serving as a liaison between the Paraguayan government and international neofascist circles.[272] Graziani had also taken a similar path by becoming a farmer in the Chaco. As Ruggiero writes, the "former members of *Ordine Nuovo*, now living in Paraguay, thus shed their neo-fascist militant identities to take on the roles of respected businessmen with jobs that were, all things considered, fairly normal."[273] Both men remained in Latin America until their deaths.[274]

The MSI and Euro-Right

While not related to the Strategy of Tension, it is important to take a brief step back to discuss the evolution of Italo-French neofascist ties during this period, since this key development helps to clarify the wider political situation. As the remnants of ON, AN, and the FN were scattered across the globe, the ever-dominant MSI reasserted its hegemonic position over the neofascist scene. Still, this comeback did not come without its own complications, as this period from 1973 to 1978 was characterized by clashing intraparty currents, with Rauti's own "national-revolutionary" formation representing a strong basis of critique against the conservative and moderate wing of the party.[275] Regardless, the consolidation phase permitted the MSI to relaunch its presence on the old continent under the banner of a new formation: that of the Euro-Right.

In anticipation of the first European Parliament elections, in 1979, Almirante envisioned the creation of a far-right bloc to contrast leftist and moderate conservative forces across Europe. In a letter dated April 18, 1978, Almirante wrote to Rauti stating that from April 19 to 21, members of the Spanish party Fuerza Nueva and the French Parti des Forces Nouvelles (PFN) would come to Rome for the

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[270] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p 158-159; Massagrande was joined by Gaetano Orlando, an activist in the anti-communist and republican *Movimento di Azione Rivoluzionaria*.
[271] Vito Ruggiero*. Il sogno anticomunista.* p. 165.
[272] Vito Ruggiero. "Il neofascismo italiano nel Paraguay di Stroessner: L'asilo, l'"Internazionale Nera economica" e la rimozione del passato criminale." *Ciencia Nueva: revista de historia y política* 3, no. 2 (2019), p. 10-13; In fact, as Ruggiero wrties, "a search conducted by the DIGOS of Verona at the home of Pietro Gunnella, a former Ordine Nuovo member from the Veneto cell, a series of letters from Paraguay were found, with Massagrande identified as the sender."
[273] Vito Ruggiero. *Il sogno anticomunista*. p. 174.
[274] Here it is worth highlighting an interesting SISMI note dated January 26, 1987 which reads as follows: "Licio Gelli, head of the Masonic Lodge P2, […] appears to gravitate within the Latin American area, with reference to Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina, where he would enjoy the protection of old friendships […] Elio Massagrande […] Clemente Graziani (see *Wanted right-wing extremists*, January 26, 1987, SISMI, Faldone Elio Massagrande, Corte d'Assise di Bologna, Bc-7, CdM). Gelli remains a noteworthy figure in the history of Italy's so called "first republic" due to his role as the grandmaster of the secretive P2 Lodge. While Gelli and P2 deserve a piece in their own right, this connection highlights one of the many links between neofascism and secret societies.
[275] Piero Ignazi. *Il polo escluso.* p. 157. See also pages 167-195 for more on the internal crisis.

purpose of forming a permanent European alliance under the moniker Euro-Destra (meaning "Euro-Right").[276] According to Almirante, this initiative was conceived as a response to perceived threats to European civilization, particularly from Euro-Communism, and urged for the mobilization of youth groups against Marxism and Communism.[277] While the MSI obtained four seats in the EU Parliament, the Euro-Right alliance did not last long: it was dissolved six years later when Almirante brought the MSI into the Group of the European Right headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, then the leader Front National (FN) party in France.

The decision to include the PFN rather than the FN in the Euro-Right alliance is worth noting. In France, the MSI perused what was essentially a double role. This is exemplified by the Italian party's balancing act, which aimed to provide support for both the FN and its rival groups: Ordre Nouveau and, later, the PFN.[278] By the end of the 1970s, it appeared as though the PFN had prevailed over Le Pen's group since, in the eyes of Almirante, it represented a more serious partner with MSI-like policies, with the FN maintaining links with the Italians as a form of courtesy.[279] Yet, following Le Pen's victories in 1984, the MSI reconsidered its relationship with the PFN, whose members gradually migrated to other parties on the political right, and began pivoting toward the FN, a partnership that would persist after the death of Almirante.[280]

Terza Posizione: Third-Way Militancy and Ideological Exportation

While the MSI's dominant status on the Italian far right persisted up until the party's eventual dissolution in January of 1995 and with the organization of its youth groups into an effective structure capable of minimizing the creation of breakaway organizations, minor splinter groups still emerged to fill the vacuum left by ON and AN. One such organization was Terza Posizione (TP). Inspired by the ideology of Franco Freda, who met with TP militants during the group's creation, it advocated for a third way, whereby Italy would emerge as a third center of power opposed to both American and Soviet forms of materialism—a doctrine akin to that proposed by Romualdi.[281] It must be noted that third-positionisim was no less neofascist than the other ideological formulations that similar Italian organizations adopted during this period but was uniquely syncretic in its economic and geopolitical orientation. In fact, TP placed itself distinctly within the "Third Wordlist" camp supporting the Palestinian, Libyan, and even Nicaraguan causes. In February 1976, TP was created by a trio consisting of Gabriele Adinolfi, Roberto Fiore, and Walter Spedicato, former members of AN, ON, and the group Lotta di Popolo, respectively.[282]

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[276] *Letter from Giorgio Almirante to Pino Rauti*, April 18, 1978, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.III.1/166, BNS; The other party was the Greek National Political Union.
[277] *Letter from Giorgio Almirante to Pino Rauti*, April 18, 1978, Fondo Pino Rauti, ARC.67.III.1/166, BNS.
[278] Valérie Igounet and Pauline Picco. "Histoire du logo de deux « partis frères » entre France et Italie (1972-2016)." *Histoire@Politique* 29, no. 2 (2016): 220–35. https://doi.org/10.3917/hp.029.0220.
[279] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, p. 190-1; It's also worth noting that bilateral secret financing networks existed between the MSI and PFN. Picco writes that large sums of money were funneled primarily through the Paris-based Worms Bank with Georges Albertini, an ex-Vichy collaborator, playing the key role of intermediary (see Pauline Picco. *Liaisons Dangereuses*. p. 254).
[280] Andrea Mammone. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, p. 200.
[281] Anna Cento Bull. *Italian Neofascism*, p. 13; Guerra, Nicola. *The Italian Far Right from 1945 to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict*. p. 137; A collection of writings by TP militants was released in 2020 by the *CasaPound* adjacent publishing house *Passagio al Bosco*. For more see Gabriele Adinolfi. *Né fronte rosso né reazione. Gli scritti politici di Terza Posizione*. (Rome: Passaggio al Bosco, 2020).
[282] David Holcombe. "Gabriele Adinolfi: Architect of a European Neofascist Network." *IERES Occasional Papers*, Transnational History of the Far Right, no. 26 (July 2024), p. 8; Initially TP was called *Lotta Studentesca* but quickly changed its name to TP.

The TP militants' engagement in acts of violence is well documented, as they would engage in street fights against both leftist and MSI activists in addition to conducting robberies undertaken by the "operational nuclei" of the group.[283] In December of 1979, these operational nuclei faced a major setback when leader Giuseppe Dimitri was caught while depositing a cache of weapons, leading to his arrest.[284] On August 26, 1980, 24 days after a bomb detonated in the central train station in Bologna killed 85 people, 28 arrest warrants were issued, which included those for certain key members of TP.

As Holcombe writes, much of the TP leadership abandoned the Italian Peninsula in for France, Spain, and the United Kingdom, where they were able to depend on a network of neofascists which included Degrelle, Action Française member René de Says, and activists from the French neofascist Groupe Union Défense.[285] While these ties are noteworthy, and already explored in depth by Holcombe, what is less known is the ideological influence that the exiled TP activists had within the countries they settled in. While in France, Adinolfi established ties with Jean-Gilles Malliarakis, leader of the Mouvement Nationaliste Révolutionnaire (MNR), a revolutionary neofascist movement that argued for a second French Revolution and a European third way.[286] So strong was the influence of the TP cofounder over Malliarakis that the MNR was reorganized under the moniker Troisième Voie ("third way") in 1985.[287]

In England, where Fiore had settled down, ties were established with the National Front (NF), a neofascist party. According to Nick Griffin, an active figure in the NF and future leader of the equally radical British National Party, Fiore was seen as a "charismatic" figure with a great deal of experience in political organization, thus making him a reference point within the NF.[288] Fiore had persuaded the NF to remodel itself in the style of the Romanian Iron Guard, headed by the anti-Semite Corneliu Zelea Codreanu.[289] In particular, the NF was split into cells consisting of "political soldiers," something that Terza Posizione had also done as the Italian group was divided into a series of *cuib* (nest), a term borrowed from Codreanu's Iron Guard.[290] Additionally, Fiore introduced NF members to Evolian traditionalism, but it is unclear to what extent this particular segment of TP's ideological corpus was adopted. In summary, while TP's leadership uprooted itself from its homeland, the group remained active in exile, continuing to preach its revolutionary neofascist ideology and influencing friendly parties.

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[283] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 350; Filippo Cerantola. "Franco Freda e La Destra Radicale Italiana Vicende, Personalità e Movimenti Dagli Anni '50 Ad Oggi," Master Thesis, Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia, 2020, p. 80.

[284] Filippo Cerantola. "Franco Freda e La Destra Radicale Italiana," p. 80; Dimitri would later act as consultant to future mayor of Rome Gianni Alemanno during the latter's term as chief of Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forests.

[285] David Holcombe. "Gabriele Adinolfi: Architect of a European Neofascist Network." *IERES Occasional Papers*, Transnational History of the Far Right, no. 26 (July 2024), p. 10-16.

[286] Jeffrey M. Bale. "'National Revolutionary' Groupuscules and the Resurgence of 'Left-Wing' Fascism: The Case of France's Nouvelle Résistance." *Patterns of Prejudice*, 2002, p. 32

[287] Périne Schir. "The French Connections of the Italian Far Right, from the MSI to Fratelli d'Italia." *Illiberalism Studies Program*, November 2022. https://hal.science/hal-03858802.

[288] *The Lost Race*. Documentary. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), BBC Radio 2, 1999.

[289] *The Lost Race*. BBC Radio 2, 1999.

[290] Filippo Cerantola. "Franco Freda e La Destra Radicale Italiana Vicende, Personalità e Movimenti Dagli Anni '50 Ad Oggi," p. 81.

The Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari and Lebanese Maronites

The other major organization to emerge from the same milieu as TP was the Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari (NAR). First coming onto the scene in 1978 as an outgrowth of the FUAN, the group engaged in acts of guerilla warfare and operated without a formal leadership structure, although former child actor Valerio Fioravanti and his girlfriend Francesca Mambro acted as the group's core instigators.[291] While the group professed resistance to ideology, Evola's philosophy underpinned their actions.[292] Between 1978 and 1981, the group would commit acts of violence against left-wing activists, civil servants, and even fellow neofascists, with the Bologna bombing serving as the group's major action.

Among the founding members was Alessandro Alibrandi, the son of Roman magistrate Antonio. A member of the MSI youth-group FdG, Alibrandi would become one of the group's integral cadres and its quasi-leader following Fioravanti's arrest. By the 1980s, the NAR hitman was identified as one of the leading killers on the Roman neofascist scene, or in the words of *l'Unità* journalist Bruno Miserendino the "perfect *squadrista*."[293] Unlike most of the neofascist groups covered thus far, the NAR did not seek out transnational partnerships for the sake of creating a neofascist network the way that ON or AN did. However, under Alibrandi's initiative, some NAR militants, recognizing the importance of experience in genuine wartime combat in order to better carry out their guerrilla activities, joined the Lebanese Maronites as foreign fighters in that country's civil war.

According to NAR cadre and former TP activist Walter Sordi, he left Italy with Alibrandi on September 10, 1980, for Lebanon, using fake passports, and stayed in the Middle Eastern nation for exactly one year and 10 days.[294] According to Sordi, the reason they fled to Lebanon was animated primarily by their fear that, following the Bologna bombing, the chances that they would be arrested were really high. Yet the former NAR operative clarified that his intention to travel abroad had existed for some time, stating that:

> … the previous year Alibrandi and I were set to go to South Africa … but for a series of different reasons this project never materialized, yet we still strongly felt the need to experience direct combat, unlike the guerilla warfare that we could experience in Italy, on one end to improve our technical capacities and on the other for ethical concerns we might have had during that period.[295]

The reason Lebanon was chosen was due to a mutual contact, the neofascist activist Livio Lai, having already established ties with the Maronite Falangists. Little is known about the activities of NAR activists in Lebanon aside from the verbal testimonies of Sordi and others. Rao constructs part of the group's period abroad through his interviews with Roberto Cetin and Gabriele De Francisci, former MSI activists who also fought alongside the Maronites. According to the latter, Alibrandi admired the

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[291] "Italian Neofascism and the Years of Lead: A Closer Look at the Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari." *Middlebury Institute of International Studies*, March 4, 2022. https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/centers-initiatives/ctec/ctec-publications/italian-neofascism-and-years-lead-closer-look.
[292] "Italian Neofascism and the Years of Lead." *Middlebury Institute of International Studies*.
[293] Bruno Miserendino. "Profilo d'un perfetto squadrista," *l'Unità*, February 23, 1980, p. 5.
[294] *Interrogation of Walter Sordi*, November 4, 1989, BO D/b-12, Tribunale di Milano, CdM
[295] *Testimony of Walter Sordi*. Tribunale di Bologna, January 20, 1988. Radio Radicale. https://www.radioradicale.it/scheda/25679/strage-alla-stazione-di-bologna.

efficiency of the Israeli military, with whom he trained in the Maronite camps, and considered the Falangist struggle as a fight for national dignity and independence.[296] The same year Alibrandi returned from Lebanon he was shot dead by Italian police during a failed attempt at disarming their officers.

Conclusion

As this article has sought to demonstrate, the neofascist organizations active in Italy during this period were characterized by transnational liaisons and foreign meddling, be they state or nonstate. To view this period in Italian history as a purely domestic affair, wherein the state clashed with its radical periphery, would not only be reductive but categorically false. Therefore, this article presents a systematic overview of the main neofascist transnational ties that defined the Years of Lead.

While the string of bombings and murders did eventually end in the early 1980s, the main actors involved in neofascist activism remained. In January of 1990, Rauti would come to lead the MSI he once spurned with the onetime ON founder charting the political trajectory of the Movimento Sociale Italiano party.[297] His role as party helmsman did not last long, as former FdG leader Gianfranco Fini replaced the aging Rauti one year into his stint as secretary. During the 1995 MSI party conference in Fiuggi, Fini would seek to distance the party from its neofascist past, rebranding as a liberal-conservative project under the moniker Alleanza Nazionale—a decision that did not sit well with Rauti, who would leave the party to create his own brazenly neofascist party.[298] In 2012, Rauti died an irrelevant figure in Italian politics, a fossil of the so-called first Republic devoid of any significant political power. However, his daughter Isabella would be more fortunate, becoming Deputy Defense Minister in Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's cabinet.[299] Similarly, Delle Chiaie, who was acquitted on all charges related to the bombings, failed to reconsolidate his presence within the political arena.

It was the younger generation of activists that was more fortunate. Adinolfi, upon his return to Italy in 2000 following the expiration of his arrest warrant, played an essential role in the formation of the neofascist movement CasaPound, which dominates the extra-parliamentary neofascist scene in Italy today.[300] As for Adinolfi's former brother-in-arms, Fiore established Forza Nuova (FN), a neofascist party that split from Rauti's post-MSI project and, to this day, retains a loyal base within the electorate.[301] Both men and their respective organizations continue to play a role in the transnational neofascist matrix. While Adinolfi's Ukraine connections were discussed in the opening of this article, most of his foreign initiatives are in France. As Schir observes, Adinolfi frequently travels to France

[296] Nicola Rao. *Trilogia della celtica*, p. 1235.
[297] "Biografia Pino Rauti." *Pino Rauti*. https://pinorauti.org/biografia/.
[298] Giulia Chielli. "The Flame Has Reignited: Fratelli d'Italia and the Failure of the Fiuggi Turn." *Illiberalism Studies Program.* https://www.illiberalism.org/the-flame-has-reignited-fratelli-ditalia-and-the-failure-of-the-fiuggi-turn/.
[299] Giuseppe Pipitone and Martina Castigliani. "Governo Meloni, nominati viceministri e sottosegretari: dopo lo stop a Mangialavori Berlusconi piazza i suoi a Mise, Editoria e Giustizia." *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, October 31, 2022.
[300] Holcombe writes that Adinolfi claimed credit for having trained the founders of CasaPound "during a summer university organized in conjunction with GRECE in Aix-en-Provence in 2000," thus indicating how the former TP militant acted as one of the groups ideological guru's (see David Holcombe. "Gabriele Adinolfi: Architect of a European Neofascist Network." *IERES Occasional Papers*, Transnational History of the Far Right, no. 26 (July 2024), p. 23).
[301] "Forza Nuova." Counter Extremism Project. https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/forza-nuova.

in order to help educate neofascist activists.[302] As for CasaPound, its militants formed partnerships with the Ukrainian Azov Battalion and Greek neofascist party Golden Dawn.[303] Fiore and FN also remain active internationally. Most of its partnerships stem from the role that FN plays in the EU Parliament group Alliance for Peace and Freedom, which Fiore represents as its chairman—though this group exists in name only, since it does not meet the electoral threshold for actually having any seats in the EU Parliament.[304] However, the neofascist party has also opened up to friendly organizations in the Middle East, since in January of 2025 members of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party were invited to an FN conference in Rome along with other European allies.[305]

Much has been and will continue to be said about the Strategy of Tension and the episodes of political violence that erupted across Italy during the Years of Lead. However, there are still opportunities for scholars to provide relevant and novel findings on the topic. For example, research ought to look at the flip side of this phenomenon, the interaction of transnational groups with particular nations. Additionally, research into the current manifestations of this network is needed. Historiography that traces the contemporary manifestations of Italian neofascist transnationalism is needed.

[302] Périne Schir. "The French Groupe Union Défense and the Italian Far Right: Four Generations of Transalpine Cooperation." *IERES Occasional Papers*, Transnational History of the Far Right, no. 24 (May 21, 2024), p. 13.
[303] Christopher Miller. "Azov, Ukraine's Most Prominent Ultranationalist Group, Sets Its Sights On U.S., Europe." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 11:30:05Z, sec. Ukraine. https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html; Moira Lavelle. "Greece after Golden Dawn: 'We Didn't Finish with the Far-Right.'" Al Jazeera. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/4/greek-far-right-new-era.
[304] "APF | Our Board," Alliance for Peace and Freedom. January 6, 2017. https://web.archive.org/web/20170106061017/https://apfeurope.com/our-members/.
[305] Mauro Cifelli. "L'internazionale di estrema destra si riunisce a Roma con Forza Nuova." *RomaToday*. https://www.romatoday.it/politica/evento-fascisti-forza-nuova-roma-26-gennaio-2025.html; The Syrian Social Nationalist Party is a neofascist group that envisions the creation of a Greater Syria. Those interested on the subject are invited to read Carl C. Yonker. *The Rise and Fall of Greater Syria: A Political History of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party*. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).