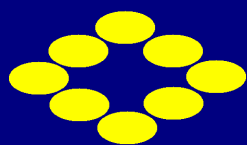


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(Massimo de Leonardis, coord.)

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Leonardis*

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**EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTA EDITORIAL**

Antonio Marquina¹
UNISCI's Director

This issue of the journal is dedicated to Italian foreign and security policy. Professor Massimo de Leonardis, professor of History and Institutions and of History of Treaties and International Politics at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, has coordinated the first part of the issue. The articles present a vision of the makeup of Italian politics. Professor Leonardis explains that some traditional features of Italian diplomacy are still present today. This includes the issue of Italy's rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers which had been central in its foreign policy since the birth of the country, the attitude to compromise and even the reliance on armed forces to enhance Italy's status.

The collection of articles explains Italian Atlanticism, Italian-European policy, Italian foreign policy in general, the approach to international crisis, the politics of cooperation and development, defence policies, nuclear choices and finally the Italian military missions since the 1980's. Regarding Atlanticism, Professor de Leonardis explains the paramount importance of Atlanticism with two principle objectives: military purpose and internal political stability. In regards to European policy, Professor Antonio Varsori presents the necessary steps in the European integration process. Despite the euro-scepticism that has begun to surface, the European choice is still of fundamental importance in Italian foreign policy. Ambassador (ret.) Guido Lenzi analyzes the ups and downs of the role of Italian diplomacy in foreign policy and highlights the set of current difficult decisions that Italy must make at the global level. Professor Luciano Tosi outlines Italy's role in the United Nations and its position regarding UN Security Council reforms. In respect to cooperation and development policy, Professor Lorella Tosone presents the priorities of these policies which were centred on the Mediterranean and Africa, describing the increasing amount of funds for cooperation, a change in their composition, and finally, its discredit due to corruption. Towards the end of the nineties, the funding for cooperation rose and is now in line with international parameters.

Three articles focus on defence aspects. The article by Professor Nicola Labanca focuses on the civil-military relations in Italy. The second, by Professor Leopoldo Nuti, presents Italy's military nuclear policy during the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods, explaining the rationale of Italy's nuclear policies, its relation with the US, and the Western European government's perception of Italian nuclear policies. Finally, Professor Gianluca Pastori explains the evolution of the military missions abroad, their changes after the cold war and their impact in internal politics.

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This first set of articles is especially interesting because it explains the historical process, allowing the reader to understand the evolution of Italian politics and the dynamics of change.

The second part of the issue contains an interesting article by Rohan Gunaratna and Karunya Jayasena on global support for Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. The article shows that despite anti-American sentiment and a wide-spread opposition to the U.S.-led War on Terror, majorities demonstrate openness to improving their country's relations with the U.S. This is followed by an article describing the historical analysis of the relations between the European Union and Algeria after the Cold War. It shows the political and economic difficulties between the two during the process of negotiating the Partnership Agreement.

This issue closes with an article about Pope Benedict XVI's Message for the World Day of Peace in January 2011 and its content. The article emphasizes the topic of liberty, the importance of religious freedom and the respect of human rights of all citizens. The message confronts one of today's most pressing problems, describing the condemnation of relativism and religious and anti-religious fanaticism.

I would like to thank Professor Massimo de Leonardis for his efforts in coordinating this special issue on Italian foreign and security policy, and also the UNISCI team, in particular Eric Pardo and Daniel Barnes, for their collaboration.



INTRODUCTION: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Massimo de Leonardis¹
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart

Abstract:

The years 1943-45 marked the fundamental turning point in the history of Italian foreign policy. The breakdown of the traditional foreign policy of the Italian state made necessary to rebuild it on new foundations in the new international context. The real rehabilitation came in 1949, when Italy was admitted to the Atlantic Alliance as a founding member, changing in a little more than two years her status from that of a defeated enemy to that of a full fledged ally. Since unification, Italian governing elites had two basic doctrines of foreign policy. During the monarchist period (both Liberal and Fascist), Italian elites fully shared the traditional concepts and practices of traditional diplomacy: power politics, the games of the alliances, defence of national interest, gunboat diplomacy, colonialism and so on. Italy seemed to be particularly cynical (boasting her «sacred egoism»), for the reason that she was a newcomer looking for room. During the Cold War there was a sometimes uneasy compromise between the requirements of Realpolitik and the culture of a political class, which, also as a reaction to Fascism's excesses, aimed to replace the old tradition with an internationalist outlook. Therefore Italian foreign policy between 1947 and 1950 has been described as the anxious transition from the status of «Great Power» to that of «democratic power», whatever that could mean. After the defeat, the “new” Italy seemed to reject power politics as the essence of international relations, giving importance to multilateral diplomacy and rejected nationalism, replaced by three types of internationalism: Atlanticism, Europeanism and Third Worldism. However we must remark that some traditional features of Italian diplomacy remained: the issue of the rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers which had been central in the foreign policy since the birth of the country, the attitude to compromise and even the reliance on Armed Forces to enhance her status.

Keywords: Italian Foreign Policy, Second World War, National Interest, Internationalism.

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**Resumen:**

Los años 1943-45 marcaron un punto de inflexión fundamental en la historia de la política exterior italiana. El derrumbe de la política exterior tradicional italiana hizo necesaria su reconstrucción sobre nuevas bases en un contexto internacional diferente. La verdadera rehabilitación llegó en 1949 con la admisión de Italia en la Alianza Atlántica como miembro fundador, modificando en poco más de dos años su estatus: desde enemigo derrotado a miembro fundador de pleno derecho. Desde la unificación, las élites gobernantes italianas mantuvieron dos doctrinas básicas en su política exterior: durante el periodo monárquico (tanto liberal como fascista), las élites italianas compartían plenamente los conceptos tradicionales las prácticas de la diplomacia tradicional: políticas de poder, juegos de alianza, defensa del interés nacional, diplomacia militar, colonialismo, etc. Italia parecía ser particularmente cinica (hacienda alarde de su "sagrado egoísmo"), por la razón de que era una nación recién llegada en busca de un espacio propio. Durante la Guerra Fría, existía un difícil equilibrio entre los imperativos de la Realpolitik y la cultura de una clase política, que por reacción a los excesos del fascismo, buscaba sustituir la antigua tradición con una postura internacionalista. Por tanto la política exterior italiana entre 1947 y 1950 ha sido descrita como la difícil transición desde un estatus de "gran poder" hacia el de un "poder democrático", fuese cual fuese el significado exacto de ello. Tras la derrota, la "nueva" Italia parecía rechazar políticas de poder como esencia de las relaciones internacionales, dando importancia a la diplomacia multilateral, rechazó el nacionalismo, sustituido por tres tipos de internacionalismo: Atlantismo, Europeísmo y Tercermundismo. Sin embargo, hemos de destacar que ciertas características de la diplomacia tradicional italiana permanecieron: el asunto del rango y su posición en la jerarquía internacional que fue central en la política exterior desde el nacimiento del país, la disposición favorable al compromiso e incluso el apoyo en las fuerzas armadas para reforzar su estatus.

Palabras clave: *Política exterior de Italia, Segunda Guerra Mundial, interés nacional, Internacionalismo.*

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1. Introduction

Since the unification of Italy in 1861 the years 1943-45, not the First World War or the advent of Fascism, marked the fundamental turning point in the history of foreign policy². Two of the most important Italian diplomats of the period after the Second World War have stressed the importance of 1943 as a watershed. In 1967 Pietro Quaroni wrote: «The armistice of 1943 marked not only the breakdown of Fascist foreign policy, but also ... of the entire foreign policy that ... had been pursued by the Kingdom of Italy since the beginning»³. In 1993 Sergio Romano wrote that the events of 1943 demonstrated that «Italy could neither take care alone of her security nor give a primary contribution to the defence of her territory»⁴. It was the end of Italy as a Great Power, a rank that had instead been confirmed by the victory in the First World War. Actually the end of Italy as a Great Power had already taken place with the end of Mussolini's project of a «parallel war» and the reduction of Italy to a satellite of Germany, after the failure of the campaigns against Greece and in Northern Africa.

In any case, the Second World War gave birth to an international system at the same time bipolar and not homogeneous, in which the concept of Great Power was replaced by that of Superpower, while the Cold War confrontation of the two blocs made almost impossible for Italy to perform her traditional role of index, renamed by Fascist foreign minister Dino Grandi «policy of the determinant weight», and prevented to «have a waltz» with the adversaries, according to the expression of the German chancellor Bernhard von Bülow at the beginning of the XIX century, when Italy was at the same time allied with the Austro-Hungarian and German Empires but also had friendly relation with the United Kingdom, France and Russia, whose side she finally joined in the First World War.

The breakdown of the traditional foreign policy of the Italian state made necessary to rebuild it on new foundations in the new international context. The first leg of this rebuilding was the period of «co-belligerency» with the former enemies (1943-45), during which Italy «had a little waltz» resuming full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, provoking the annoyance of the Anglo-Americans. From the formal and legal point of view the terminal point of this reconstruction was the signature of the Peace Treaty in February 1947 (but the last negative consequences of the defeat were eliminated only in 1955); however from a much more relevant political perspective the real rehabilitation came on 4th April 1949, when Italy was admitted to the Atlantic Alliance as a founding member, changing in a little more than two years her status from that of a defeated enemy to that of a full fledged ally.

² So it's justified a work on the period from 1870 to 1940 as Lowe, Cedric James and Marzari, Frank (1975): *Italian Foreign Policy 1870-1940*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul. On the entire period since unification to the recent years see Mammarella, Giuseppe and Cacace, Paolo (2006): *La politica estera dell'Italia. Dallo Stato unitario ai giorni nostri*, Bari, Laterza and Saiu, Liliana (1999): *La politica estera italiana dall'Unità a oggi*, Roma-Bari, Laterza. On the different periods, general books are: Cacace, Paolo (1986): *Venti anni di politica estera italiana (1943-1963)*, Roma, Bonacci; Decleva, Enrico (1974): *L'Italia e la politica internazionale dal 1870 al 1914*, Milano, Mursia; de Leonardis, Massimo (ed.) (2003): *Il Mediterraneo nella politica estera italiana del secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, Il Mulino; Ferraris, Luigi Vittorio (1996): *Manuale della politica estera italiana (1947-1993)*, Roma-Bari, Laterza; Pastorelli, Pietro (1987): *La politica estera italiana del dopoguerra*, Bologna, Il Mulino; Pastorelli, Pietro (1997): *Dalla prima alla seconda guerra mondiale. Momenti e problemi della politica estera italiana 1914-1943*, Milano, Edizioni Universitarie di Economia Lettere Diritto; Torre, Augusto (1960): *La politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1914*, Bologna, Zanichelli; Tosi Luciano (ed.) (1999): *L'Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali*, Padova, Cedam; Varsori, Antonio (1999): *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

³ Quaroni, Pietro, "Chi è che fa la politica estera in Italia", in Bonanni, Mario (ed.) (1967): *La politica estera della Repubblica Italiana*, Milano, Comunità, vol. III, p. 810.

⁴ Romano, Sergio (1993): *Guida alla politica estera italiana*, Milano, Rizzoli, pp. 5-6.



Since unification, Italian governing élites had two basic doctrines of foreign policy. During the monarchist period (both Liberal and Fascist), Italian élites fully shared the traditional concepts and practices of traditional diplomacy: power politics, the game of the alliances, defence of national interest, gunboat diplomacy, colonialism and so on. Italy seemed to be particularly cynical (boasting her «sacred egoism»), for the reason that she was a newcomer looking for room. As remarked by Morgenthau, sometimes Italian foreign policy «earned only the moral condemnation, but not the respect, which similar policies had brought Great Britain»⁵, just because her power was inferior to that of the United Kingdom.

During the Cold War there was a sometimes uneasy compromise between the requirements of *Realpolitik* and the culture of a political class, which, also as a reaction to Fascism's excesses, aimed to replace the old tradition with an internationalist outlook. Therefore Italian foreign policy between 1947 and 1950 as been described as the anxious transition from the status of «Great Power» to that of «democratic power», whatever that could mean⁶. After the defeat the “new” Italy seemed to reject power politics as the essence of international relations. «We neither have the instruments to pursue power politics – declared foreign minister Carlo Sforza in Parliament announcing Italy's membership of the Atlantic Pact⁷ – nor do we want to have them». The same way of thinking was expressed in the statement of an Italian defence minister (probably Paolo Emilio Taviani) to Field-Marshal Montgomery, NATO Deputy SACEUR: Italy «is a great nation, not a great power»⁸.

This new foreign policy vision was reflected in the new republican constitution which expressed the «need of the complete openness of the state to the international community; pacifism; the aspiration to promote also internationally the values of freedom and democracy ...; international solidarity; ... the necessity to assure that specific issues of foreign policy ... were “controlled” by Parliament»⁹. This vision was shared by parties (Christian Democrats, Communists and Socialists) occupying almost 80% of the seats in the Constituent Assembly.

They were divided on internal not on foreign politics. As a consequence the Italian republican constitution has many articles dealing with foreign policy. Art. 11 echoed the Briand-Kellogg pact of 1928: «Italy rejects war as an instrument of aggression against the freedoms of others peoples and as a means for settling international controversies». The formulation was criticized by some constituents, not only conservative ones¹⁰. In any case this article must not be interpreted as an expression of absolute pacifism, but only as a repudiation of aggressive wars. This interpretation is supported by the fact that art. 52 gave constitutional strength to compulsory military service, stating that «the defence of the Fatherland is a sacred

⁵ Morgenthau, Hans J. (1950): *Politics among Nations. The struggle for power and peace*, New York, Alfred Knopf, p. 144.

⁶ Vigezzi, Brunello: “De Gasperi, Sforza, la diplomazia italiana e la politica di potenza dal trattato di pace al patto atlantico”, in Di Nolfo, Ennio; Rainero, Romain H. and Vigezzi, Brunello (eds.) (1988), *L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1945-50)*, Milano, Marzorati, p. 5.

⁷ Speech of 15th March 1949 in Sforza, Carlo (1952): *Cinque anni a Palazzo Chigi. La politica estera italiana dal 1947 al 1951*, Roma, Atlante, pp. 189, 234.

⁸ Quoted in Rumi, Giorgio: “Opportunismo e profezia. Cultura cattolica e politica estera italiana 1946-63”, *Storia Contemporanea*, vol. XII, no. 4-5 (October 1981), p. 811.

⁹ Cassese, Antonio in Branca, Giuseppe (ed.) (1975): *Commentario della Costituzione*, vol. I, *Principi fondamentali*, Bologna-Roma, Società editrice del Foro Italiano, p. 465.

¹⁰ The populist (*Partito dell'Uomo Qualunque*) Russo-Perez labelled the formulation as «ridiculous», because Italy was by then a «disarmed nation» and declared difficult to discriminate between just and unjust wars, because the former were those won and the latter those lost. The former centre-left Prime Minister Francesco Saverio Nitti stated that no constitution of a «serious country» included such statement and that abroad people would laugh at the idea that «being as a matter of fact under the domination of other nations and weak and unarmed, we afford the luxury of being the first to take this kind of moral obligation».



duty for every citizen» (the only instance employing this adjective¹¹) and considering that the new national anthem recalls «Scipio's helmet» and the «victory ... slave of Rome». Actually, as remarked by most of the articles in this issue, Republican Italy has largely used her Armed Forces as a major instrument to enhance her status in the International arena.

Also the second part of art. 11 is important and significant: the Republic «agrees, on conditions of equality with other states, to the limitations of sovereignty necessary for an order that ensures peace and justice among Nations; it promotes and encourages international organizations having such ends in view». This formulation expressed the belief that contemporary wars largely arose from the States' absolute sovereignty. Curiously, various efforts to amend the text talking of «European and international organizations» were rejected with the strange motivations that it was superfluous and that it was necessary to look «also beyond the borders of Europe». The Constituents clearly looked at UNO as their ideal.

More in general, after the war for many reasons Italy gave importance to multilateral diplomacy, as can be seen particularly in Tosi's article. First of all, inside international organizations middle Powers have more opportunities to press their points of view. In the specific case of Italy many factors of her political and diplomatic situation favoured this approach: the loss of power after the defeat, the geopolitical location at the crossroads of East and West and North and South, the effort to find room to manoeuvre in the strict bipolar system, the presence of a strong Communist party, the internationalist culture of the ruling Catholic party, the influence of the Holy See and of the Church.

Even without sharing some authors' opinion about the «death of the Motherland»¹² after the events of September 1943, certainly after the Second World War and the fall of the Monarchy «nationalism is officially buried under the ruin of Fascism and defeat in the war», reappearing only in 1952-54 on the issue of Trieste. However, as it was clear in the phase of *neo-Atlanticism*, «nationalism camouflaged under internationalist clothes»: Atlanticism, Europeanism and Third Worldism¹³.

Going back to the text of the Constitution, also art. 80 («The houses authorize through laws the ratification of international treaties which are of a political nature, or which call for arbitration or legal settlements, or which entail changes to national territory or financial burdens or changes in the laws») marked a strong discontinuity with the past, which is evident comparing the two fundamental alliances of the Liberal Monarchy and of the Italian Republic. The text of the Triple Alliance of 1882 not only was never submitted to ratification but also was known only to a very restricted number of people (essentially the King, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister); moreover its signature was not disclosed for one year. It is also known that in May 1915 the Parliament was faced by *a fait accompli* and had to approve reluctantly the declaration of war. On the contrary the signature of the Atlantic Pact was discussed in advance at all levels.

A corollary of the repudiation of nationalism, indeed of the same concept of «national interest», was the «the tendency to deal with issues of international politics in juridical terms and not in the light of *Realpolitik*», because «it is obvious that a rather weak state tries to

¹¹ The objections raised to the use of the word «sacred» were silenced when the Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti informed that the Soviet Constitution of 1936 had the same formulation.

¹² Galli della Loggia, Ernesto (1996): *La morte della patria. La crisi dell'idea di nazione tra Resistenza, antifascismo e Repubblica*, Bari-Roma, Laterza.

¹³ Panebianco, Angelo (1997): *Guerrieri democratici*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 245-51.



found its external action more on juridical argument than on power»¹⁴. The cultural approach of the ruling Christian Democrat party to international affairs was based on the concept of natural law and DC had to learn how adapt her cultural tradition to the realities of the government. It is interesting to note that in the period in which Italy joined the Western Alliance, the offices of Foreign and Defence Ministers were occupied by lay politicians linked to the tradition of the *Risorgimento*: Carlo Sforza (1947-51) and Randolfo Pacciardi (1949-53).

2. Continuity and Change

Having stressed the prevailing different culture of Republican Italy in respect to previous periods in the field of foreign policy, we should however note that some traditional features of Italian diplomacy remained. First of all, as remarked here by Nuti, for Italy «the issue of its own rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers had been central in its foreign policy since the birth of the country» and this didn't change after the war. The aspiration to be again considered a Great Powers became particularly evident after 1955, when on one hand Italy had liquidated the negative heritage of the defeat on the other the international situation (the first *détente*) seemed to allow room for manoeuvring.

In NATO, in the EEC-EU, at the UNO Italy always struggled to be in the “inner circle” of the key actors, giving the cue to her description as a “lunching power” (for the desire of being invited to restricted lunches before the meetings of the Atlantic Council) or to the definition of “policy of the chair” (the aspiration of having one at the important table). The susceptibility about the rank not always was matched by the capacity to advance concrete proposals and even less by the availability of means to carry out them.

Actually in various phases, particularly the late 60s-late 70s, Italy's international action was particularly handicapped by her internal situation, as appears in most of the articles. But also in the whole post-war period Italy's foreign policy was always hindered by the instability of her political system, by the inefficiency of several sectors of public administration, by the economic and civilian gaps between North and South. During the Cold War Italy had to cope with the presence of the strongest Communist party in the West (which arrived to poll more than one third of the votes).

Here we find a continuity with the past, since Italian politicians and diplomats tried to transform weaknesses into a leverage, many times asking concessions to avoid a breakdown of the government or of political system. Instead of boasting power, sometimes Italian governments displayed, or feigned, their impotence. In this respect a general remark made by Harold Nicolson in 1938 was still valid: «The aim of Italy's foreign policy is to acquire by negotiation an importance greater than can be supplied by her own physical strength»¹⁵.

Another important continuity is the Italy's attitude to compromise, of being loyal to her alliances, but at the same time looking for her own “dialogue” with the “enemy” and pursuing an autonomous policy in the “grey zones”. *Neo-Atlanticism*, described in some of the articles, is a typical example of this, by no means the only one or the most important. At

¹⁴ Gaja, Roberto, (1995): *L'Italia nel mondo bipolare. Per una storia della politica estera italiana (1943-1991)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, p. 28.

¹⁵ Nicolson, Harold George (1963): *Diplomacy*, London, Oxford University Press, 3rd ed., p. 152 (the first edition was published in 1939).



least until the beginning of the XXIst century, Italy didn't seem to notice that a strain could exist between Atlanticism and Europeanism. While the United Kingdom always chose Washington and France on the contrary tried to contrast American hegemony, Italy, like Federal Germany, kept her balance between Washington and Brussels/Paris (i. e. EEC/EU), even if certainly the relationship with the White House was paramount, as argued in my own article.

Last but not least, in the Republic the Armed Forces didn't enjoy the privileged position occupied in the Kingdom of Italy, but, as Labanca's articles shows, their situation was not so bad and the Italian governments, in spite of their almost total lack of strategic and military culture, relied on them as a key instrument to enhance the Italian international position.

We may conclude that the political class of Republican Italy facing the realities of the international situation had to moderate its initial idealism and come to terms with *Realpolitik*. A degree of continuity with the past was thus maintained even in a completely different international and internal situation.

The reader will verify if these general introductory remarks, not necessarily shared by the authors, as I do not necessarily agree with all their considerations, find confirmation in the articles of this issue.





ITALY'S ATLANTICISM BETWEEN FOREIGN AND INTERNAL POLITICS

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Abstract:

In spite of being a defeated country in the Second World War, Italy was a founding member of the Atlantic Alliance, because the USA highly valued her strategic importance and wished to assure her political stability. After 1955, Italy tried to advocate the Alliance's role in the Near East and in Mediterranean Africa. The Suez crisis offered Italy the opportunity to forge closer ties with Washington at the same time appearing progressive and friendly to the Arabs in the Mediterranean, where she tried to be a protagonist vis a vis the so called neo-Atlanticism. This link with Washington was also instrumental to neutralize General De Gaulle's ambitions of an Anglo-French-American directorate. The main issues of Italy's Atlantic policy in the first years of "centre-left" coalitions, between 1962 and 1968, were the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Italy as a result of the Cuban missile crisis, French policy towards NATO and the EEC, Multilateral [nuclear] Force [MLF] and the revision of the Alliance' strategy from "massive retaliation" to "flexible response". On all these issues the Italian government was consonant with the United States. After the period of the late Sixties and Seventies when political instability, terrorism and high inflation undermined the Italian role in international relations, the decision in 1979 to accept the Euromissiles was a landmark in the history of Italian participation to NATO. After the Cold War, Atlanticism emerged stronger than ever and in the last 15 years the participation of the Italian Armed Forces to military missions abroad has been a primary factor in enhancing the Italian status in international relations. For example two Italian Admirals have been elected Chairmen of NATO Military Committee, in 1999 and in 2008. There is no doubt that during the Cold War the importance of Atlanticism was paramount, as Italy boasted her friendship with the United States, hoping to obtain advantages from it. Italian governments valued the Atlantic Alliance not only for its fundamental military purpose, but also for its importance for the internal political stability. In spite of all her limits and considering both the strictly military and the political aspects, Italy more than other Mediterranean allies, was a sure pillar of NATO.

Keywords: NATO, US-Italian relations, Mediterranean, Communism.

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**Resumen:**

A pesar de tratarse de un país derrotado en la Segunda Guerra Mundial, Italia fue un miembro fundador de la Alianza Atlántica, porque los EEUU valoraban su importancia estratégica y deseaban preservar su estabilidad estratégica. Después de 1955 Italia intentó abogar por un papel de la Alianza en Oriente Próximo y en la África Mediterránea, para lo cual la Crisis de Suez le proporcionó la oportunidad tanto de forjar unos lazos más próximos con los EEUU como mostrarse como un país progresista y amigo de los países árabes en el Mediterráneo, donde intentó ser un protagonista del así llamado neo-Atlantismo. Tal conexión con Washington resultaba igualmente instrumental para contrarrestar las ambiciones del General De Gaulle de establecer un directorio Anglo-Francés. Los principales asuntos en la Política Atlántica italiana en los primeros años de las coaliciones de "centro-izquierda" entre 1962 y 1968, eran la retirada de los misiles Júpiter de Italia como resultado de la Crisis de Cuba, la política francesa hacia la OTAN y la CEE, la Fuerza (nuclear) Multilateral (MLF) y la revisión de la estrategia de la Alianza desde la doctrina de la "Represalia Masiva" hacia la de "Respuesta Flexible". En todos estos asuntos el gobierno estuvo en consonancia con los EEUU. Tras el periodo a finales de los años 60 y principios de los 70 cuando la inestabilidad política, el terrorismo y la elevada inflación dañaron el rol italiano en la escena internacional, al decisión de 1979 de aceptar los Euromisiles fue un hito en la historia de la participación italiana en la OTAN. Tras la Guerra Fría, el Atlantismo emergió con mayor fuerza que nunca y en los últimos 15 años la participación de las Fuerzas Armadas Italianas en misiones militares en el extranjero se ha convertido en un factor esencial en el refuerzo del estatus internacional de Italia. Por ejemplo dos almirantes italianos han sido elegidos en el Comité Militar de la OTAN, en 1999 y en el 2008. No hay duda que durante la Guerra Fría la importancia del Atlantismo era esencial: Italia presumía de su amistad con los EEUU, deseando así obtener ventajas de ello. Los gobiernos italianos valoraban no solo su propósito militar, sino también su importancia para la estabilidad política interna. A pesar de todos sus límites y considerando tanto los aspectos estrictamente militares como los políticos, Italia, más que cualquier otro de los aliados del Mediterráneo, era un pilar seguro de la OTAN.

Palabras clave: OTAN, relaciones EEUU-Italia, Mediterráneo, Comunismo.

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1. Italy's Difficult Accession to the Atlantic Pact

On 15th December 1947, Italy recovered formally her full sovereignty when the last Anglo-American occupation troops left the Italian territory, as envisaged by the peace treaty signed on the previous 10th February. On 1st January 1948 the new republican constitution came into force. The same weeks saw the beginning of the process which about 16 months later brought to the formation of the Atlantic Alliance, of which Italy was a founding member.

Italy was on the Western side of the iron curtain: she had been conquered by the Anglo-Americans, the Communist party (and its fellow travellers the Socialists) had left the government coalition on 31st May 1947, just in time to allow Rome's acceptance of the Marshall plan, the general elections of 18th April 1948 will see a great victory of the moderate and pro-Western parties. Notwithstanding, the road to the Atlantic Alliance's membership was by no means easy, for external and internal reasons. This article will concentrate on the former² and mention just very briefly the latter.

The Italian constitution, as a reaction to Fascism, reflected a political culture which was largely dominated by internationalism and by the rejection of power politics, political realism and the use of military force as an instrument of diplomacy. Art. 11 stated: «Italy rejects war as an instrument of aggression against the freedoms of others peoples and as a means for settling international controversies; it agrees, on conditions of equality with other states, to the limitations of sovereignty necessary for an order that ensures peace and justice among Nations; it promotes and encourages international organizations having such ends in view»³. The majority party, the Christian Democracy [DC], could not be described as pacifist, but was particularly attentive to the Catholic doctrine with required a number of conditions to fight a war (the doctrine of «just war») and to the Church's teaching, which was inclined to consider military force more the source than the solution of problems. In August 1917 Pope Benedict XV had described the First World War as the «useless massacre». Pius XII on 24th August 1939 had proclaimed: «nothing is lost with peace; everything can be lost with war». Catholics believed in the value of international ethic and international right in settling international disputes. However, with the progress of the Cold War, the Pope fully supported the Western determination to defend itself. In his radio message for Christmas 1948 Pius XII described in religious terms the concept of deterrence: «Defence against unjust aggression is absolutely legitimate. To this defence must be committed also the solidarity of the nations, which has the duty of not abandoning the people attacked. The certainty that this duty will be accomplished, will be useful to discourage the aggressor and therefore to avoid war, or, at least, in the worst case, to abbreviate its sufferings»⁴.

² On the negotiations leading to the Italian membership see Barié, Ottavio: «Gli Stati Uniti, l'Unione Occidentale e l'inserimento dell'Italia nell'Alleanza Atlantica», in Barié, Ottavio (ed.) (1988): *L'alleanza occidentale. Nascita e sviluppi di un sistema di sicurezza collettivo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 115-207; Barié, Ottavio: «The Final Stage of Negotiations: December 1948 to April 1949», in Di Nolfo, Ennio (ed.) (1991), *The Atlantic Pact Forty Years Later. A Historical Reappraisal*, Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, pp. 41-57; Varsori, Antonio: «The First Stage of Negotiations: December 1947 to June 1948», *Ibid.*, pp. 19-40; Varsori, Antonio: «La scelta occidentale dell'Italia (1948-1949)», *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 1 no. 1 (1985), pp. 95-160 and no. 2, pp. 303-368; Pastorelli, Pietro: «L'adesione dell'Italia al Patto Atlantico», *Storia Contemporanea*, vol. 14, no. 6 (1983), pp. 1015-1030.

³ The Italian Constitution includes 15 specific articles (over 139) on foreign relations. See de Leonardis, Massimo: «Costituzione, politica estera italiana e scenario internazionale», in Poli, Luigi (ed.) (1997), *Costituzione e difesa*, Roma, Istrid, pp. 65-78.

⁴ Text in

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/speeches/1948/documents/hf_p-xii_spe_19481224_un-tempo_it.html (Author's translation).



In view of the departure of the Anglo-American troops and fearing a Communist *coup* supported by Yugoslavia, the Italian government requested from the United States a guarantee of intervention if the country's territory or its democracy were threatened. On 13th December the White House confined itself to recall that in the case «freedom and independence of Italy ... are being threatened directly or indirectly, the United States, as a signatory of the peace treaty and as a member of the United Nations, will be obliged to consider what measures would be appropriate»⁵. On 22nd January 1948, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, describing at the House of Commons his project of *Western Union*, stretched his hand to Italy: «We shall have to consider the question of associating other historic members of European civilisation, including the new Italy, in this great conception. Their eventual participation is of course no less important than that of countries with which, if only for geographical reasons, we must deal first»⁶. But the Italian government didn't like the military character of the proposed Union; moreover in the previous days a crisis had exploded in the Anglo-Italian relations⁷ when in Mogadishu Somali bands killed 54 Italians and injured are 55, without the intervention of British forces. Rome suspected the instigation of the British, who wished to boycott any prospect of giving back that colony to Italy.

In the first half of March, the *coup* of Prague and the Soviet threats to Norway hastened the process leading to the *Western Union* and paved the way to the negotiations for the Atlantic Alliance. On 11th March Bevin proposed to American Secretary of State George Marshall besides the «United Kingdom-France-Benelux system with United States backing» and «a scheme of Atlantic security with which the United States would be even more closely concerned», «a Mediterranean security system, which could particularly affect Italy»⁸.

On 17th March the Brussels Pact (United Kingdom, France, and Benelux) was signed. After some hesitation, Bevin had proposed also to Italy to join the Pact, but Italian Prime Minister De Gasperi refused any commitment with the impeccable motivation that he could not take major decisions of foreign policy on the eve of general elections due on 18th April. The British reacted negatively to this refusal of what they considered a generous offer to a weak former enemy and saw it as an expression of the Italian wish to steer a middle course avoiding a precise choice of ends. De Gasperi also refused an American offer of military equipments in order not to give the left a good argument for its propaganda; this refusal was badly received by the U. S. government.

After winning the elections, De Gasperi in a public interview and in a conversation with the British ambassador, mentioned that Italy was in a position inferior to the other members of the Brussels Pact owing to the military articles of her peace treaty. The Premier left to understand that amending the peace treaty was a pre-condition for joining the Pact, a position later openly taken by Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Vittorio Zoppi. Bevin reacted strongly, talking at the House of Commons of «big obstacles» to be removed before clarifying Italy's position in the post-war world. Rome was told that her membership of the Pact would be a liability for the other members and an advantage for Italy, which therefore could pose no condition for her access. The British internal diplomatic correspondence labelled the Italian attitude as blackmail. On 27th April, in a meeting of

⁵ *Foreign Relations of the United States-Diplomatic Papers (FRUS)*, 1948, Vol. III: *Western Europe* (1974), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 749.

⁶ Text in http://www.ena.lu/address_given_ernest_bevin_house_commons_22_january_1948-2-9439.pdf.

⁷ See Varsori (1981): «*Il diverso declino di due potenze coloniali. Gli eventi di Mogadiscio del gennaio 1948 e i rapporti anglo-italiani*», Quaderni della FIAP no. 40, Roma, Edizioni FIAP.

⁸ «Bevin to Lord Inverchapel» [British Ambassador to Washington], *The National Archives-London [NA], Prime Minister's Papers [PREM]*, 8/788. (11 March 1948).



Secretary of State Marshall with the leaders of the Republican Party, which controlled the Senate: «All felt that the inclusion of Italy, unless it had theretofore become a member of the Brussels Pact, would be a mistake because it would destroy the natural geographic base of the North Atlantic area»⁹.

Within Italy the summer 1948 saw a debate among the Foreign Minister, the main diplomats and the military on the strategic choice to be made. Sforza and Zoppi believed that Italy could negotiate her accession to the Atlantic Pact asking for the revision of some articles of the Peace Treaty. The Italian ambassadors in the main Western capitals, Alberto Tarchiani in Washington, Duke Tommaso Gallarati Scotti in London and Pietro Quaroni in Paris, stressed the impossibility of that: Italy had to hope for the admission but it was out of question to pose “conditions”. A peculiar position was taken by the ambassador to Moscow, Manlio Brosio¹⁰, a future Secretary General of NATO (1963-1971), who stressed two points. Italy had some important problems, Trieste, the revision of the peace treaty’s military articles and the admission to the UNO, the favourable solution of which depended as much from Moscow as from Washington; therefore joining an anti-Soviet military alliance would mean to lose definitely any Russian benevolence. Secondly he raised the strategic issue: since Western military plans didn’t consider the defence of the Italian territory (and even the defence of the French territory was a mere wishful think), he argued the opportunity to explore the possibility of an armed neutrality of Italy, supported by American supplies of weapons and equipment. This same argument was advanced by the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Claudio Trezzani, in his memorandum of 30th July. This solution, which was also easier from the internal point of view, was explored by the government, but met an American *fin de non recevoir*.

Most of the seven countries negotiating the Atlantic Pact (United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France and Benelux) were opposed to the Italian membership. Besides her background punitive attitude towards Italy, London thought Rome’s membership valueless owing to her military weakness and the neutralist attitude of her public opinion. Moreover accepting Italy would arouse the problem of admitting also Greece and Turkey. Therefore London proposed to add to the Pact a statement expressing the members’ interest to the security of Italy, Greece, Turkey and Iran. The British position was supported by the other countries with the exception of France.

Paris was rather in favour of Italy’s membership¹¹, since it would redress towards continental Europe the balance of the Pact, which looked too “Atlantic”. But French support would weaken if the Pact guaranteed the defence of the line of the Rhine and include Algeria. Moreover France was opposed to include Italy in the Brussels Pact not to be committed to the defence of the Italian peninsula without an American guarantee.

Washington was doubtful and inclined to leave the decision to the European countries of the Brussels Pact. The issue remained undecided when in December the negotiations came

⁹ “Memorandum of Conversation by the Undersecretary of State (Lovett)”, (27 April 1948), *FRUS, 1948, Vol. III: Western Europe* (1974), Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, pp. 104-108.

¹⁰ See de Leonardis, Massimo: “Manlio Brosio a Mosca e la scelta occidentale dell’Italia”, in Di Nolfo, Ennio; Rainero, Romain H. and Vigezzi, Brunello (eds.) (1988): *L’Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1945-50)*, Milano, Marzorati, pp. 123-52.

¹¹ See Bagnato, Bruna: “France and the Origins of the Atlantic Pact”, in Di Nolfo, “The Atlantic Pact Forty Years Later...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-110.



to a conclusion¹². In the same month, the Chief of Staff of the Italian Army General Efsio Marras undertook a long exploratory mission to Washington, where he ascertained the American attitude. It's very revealing a memorandum by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared on the occasion of Marras' mission, which is a clear indication that Italy was looking for a direct relation with the United States: «Talking frankly, we should let understand that, for the requirements of bases and support for the defensive organization in North Africa, we certainly would be allies much more comfortable than the English». However Marras received a final clear indication that Washington was not prepared to underwrite bilateral obligations with Italy: «the US government could not consider any request for military supplies because it was setting up a coordinated program of assistance for the Western European countries as a whole ... – he was told by one of his counterparts – so long as the Italian foreign policy was somewhat ambiguous, no coordination of operational plans was feasible»¹³.

In January 1949 Italy gave to Washington a fairly clear indication of her interest in the Pact. Since the admission of Norway, subjected to renewed pressures by the Soviet Union, appeared now quite likely, then France conditioned her approval to the inclusion of Italy. On 2nd March Secretary of State Acheson submitted to President Truman one list of 8 «Arguments against the inclusion of Italy in the North Atlantic Pact» and another list of 14 «Arguments for ...». Here we shall focus only on few of them. Some arguments were in both lists in an opposite perspective. For example: «The arms limitation clauses of the Peace Treaty strictly limit the size of Italy's military establishment» versus «Even under the limitations of the Peace Treaty, Italy has the third largest Navy in Western Europe, an authorized army of 12 combat divisions ..., an air force of 350 planes including 200 fighter planes, and one of the largest merchant navies in Europe»¹⁴. From the political point of view it was stressed that Italy was «by race, history, and civilization a natural member of the Western European community» and that «a rebuff would increase Communist influence in Italy».

One of the arguments in favour quoted a document by the U. S. Joint Chiefs of Staff according to which «in terms of land warfare in Western Europe, Italy is strategically important. In terms of sea warfare, there is no question as to her critical strategic potentiality with respect to control of the Mediterranean». But it added another consideration: «It is of great importance to deny an enemy the use of Italy as a base for sea and air domination of the Central Mediterranean, as well the use of Italy's industrial complex and manpower». A very similar consideration had been made on 31st December 1948 by the British General Sir William Morgan, who remarked that the problem was to find the best and most inexpensive way to encourage Italy to deny her territory to the enemy. It has correctly been pointed out that in the years after the Second World War «from the military point of view the common perception of Italy was that of a strategic theatre not of an actor in the strategic field»¹⁵.

¹² See the «Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassadors' Committee» (24 December 1948), in *FRUS 1948, Vol. III: Western Europe, op. cit.*, pp. 333-4.

¹³ See Nuti, Leopoldo (1989): *L' Esercito italiano nel secondo dopo guerra, 1945-1950: la sua ricostruzione e l'assistenza militare alleata*, Roma, Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito, pp. 197-204.

¹⁴ *FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV: Western Europe* (1975), Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, pp. 141-44. The reference to the Navy and to the merchant fleet was the main new element added to the similar list of arguments in favour of Italy's admission attached to the *Report* cited at footnote 11.

¹⁵ Sebesta, Lorenza: "Politica di sicurezza italiana e innovazioni strategiche nell'Europa degli anni cinquanta", in Di Nolfo, Rainero and Vigezzi (eds.) *op. cit.*, p. 674. On the importance of the Italian territory as location of naval and air bases see the *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA) report of April 1948 in Brogi, Alessandro (1996): *L'Italia e l'egemonia americana nel Mediterraneo*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, p. 47.



Acheson recorded that President Truman, «would have preferred, certainly at this time, a pact without Italy» but accepted his advice that in the current circumstances and considering the French position she had to be accepted in the Pact. So Italy became a founding member of the Atlantic Pact, the text of which she had to accept without any possibility of discussion.

2. In Defence of National Interest

Joining the Atlantic Alliance, Italy had guaranteed her primary national security, but at the same time had also shot ahead towards her full inclusion in the new international system. As a member of the Alliance, Italy hoped to enhance her international rank and to promote her national interests, first of all obtaining a favourable solution of the problems still opened after her defeat in the Second World War: Trieste, the admission to the UNO and the abolition of the military articles of the peace treaty. She was successful when her interests coincided with those of the Alliance, but unsuccessful when they didn't.

Italy tried to have an important rank inside the Alliance and to safeguard her strategic interests. Since the unification, Italy had always been concerned about her rank in the international arena. Now the government asked to have Italy as a fourth member, alongside United States, United Kingdom and France, of the *Standing Group*, the Alliance's military directorate. The request was highly unrealistic and was rejected¹⁶. Italy also requested to be admitted in two of the five regional strategic groups of the Alliance's military structure before the creation, after the outbreak of the Korean War, of SHAPE and of the other integrated commands. Italy had been admitted in the *Mediterranean* group and wished to be a member also of the *Western Europe* group (the three others being *Canada-United States*, *North-Atlantic Ocean* and *Northern Europe*). Italy wanted to stress the link between the Mediterranean and Continental Europe theatres, including her entire territory in the Alliance's defensive plans. More in general Rome wanted to emphasize her Atlantic and European posture and to avoid being relegated in the Mediterranean¹⁷.

Since Britain wished to limit the participation to the *Western Europe* group only to the members of the Brussels pact, Italy obtained only a partial satisfaction: her group was renamed *Southern Europe-Western Mediterranean* and she obtained to be consulted by the *Western Europe* group when her strategic interests were at stake. Moreover the *Strategic Guidance for North Atlantic Regional Planning*¹⁸, prepared on 1st March 1950 by the *Standing Group* stressed that «the three European Regions [*Western Europe*, *Southern Europe-Western Mediterranean* and *Northern European*] must be considered as a whole». In 1951 the exercise *Lago di Garda*, in the context of NATO exercise *Grand Slam*, tried for the first time the defence of the Isonzo line, at the North-Eastern border of Italy.

Atlantic rearmament following the outbreak of the Korean War prompted the revision

¹⁶ Actually when in summer 1949 the American *Joint Chiefs of Staff* met their European counterparts, the Italian Ambassador in Paris, Pietro Quaroni, remarked that: "While the conversations with the minor allies, included ourselves, took about one hour, those with the French and the British lasted one day and half" (quoted in Varsori: "Il ruolo internazionale dell'Italia negli anni del centrismo (1947-1958)", in De Lucia, Franco, et al.: (1990): *1947/1958. L'Italia negli anni del centrismo*, Roma, Acropoli, p. 218, n. 55).

¹⁷ Brogi, *op. cit.*, p. 345; cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 50-51, 63-65.

¹⁸ Published in Pedlow, Gregory W. (ed.) (1997): *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, Bruxelles, NATO Office of Information and Press, pp. 91-105.



of the military articles of the Italian Peace treaty¹⁹. It was decided to revise it according to international practise and with the justification of the «developments unforeseen during the negotiations» for its preparation. On 26th September 1951, United States, United Kingdom and France expressed their favour to the revision, in a joint statement underwritten in December by 11 other treaty's signatories, while the Soviet Union and its satellites subordinated their assent to Italy's retreat from NATO. The procedure was completed in May 1955, when, at the Atlantic Council, United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Belgium, Netherlands and Greece, i. e. the signatories which were NATO members, formally declared superfluous the discriminatory articles of the Italian peace treaty

NATO membership didn't favour, indeed was an obstacle, to Italy's membership of UNO²⁰. Neither it was of much help in the issue of Trieste, which opposed Italy to Yugoslavia. This problem, the most important for Italy²¹, provoked a serious crisis in the relations between Rome on one side and London and Washington on the other, because, after Moscow's excommunication of Tito in June 1948, the Yugoslav dictator was considered by the Anglo-Americans a potential ally to be wooed in every possible way, while Italy was taken for granted and did not require concessions²². In 1950 foreign minister Carlo Sforza had explained to the Cabinet why Italy was unable to exploit her NATO membership for national goals: «The Italian government had wished to join the Atlantic Pact where we were not welcomed»²³. As in the XIX century the membership of the Triple Alliance guaranteed Italy against isolation but did not allow the attainment of her colonial ambitions, now NATO membership did not favour her claims in the Trieste issue.

Between 1952 and 1954 Yugoslavia came very close to NATO; Beograd received economic and military supplies, had military conversations with the British and American General Staffs and concluded a political and military alliance with Athens and Ankara, which however remained a dead letter. Italy had favoured the admission to NATO of Greece and Turkey, hoping to exercise a sort of leadership in the Southern front and now was margined in that same area²⁴. Faced with Italian protests against the American "betrayal", president Eisenhower, overestimating the incoming detente, in July 1954 wrote: «I do not feel that bases in Italy are vital at all and ... the importance of having them there diminishes every day»²⁵.

More than any other country Italy would have benefited of a strong Yugoslavia ready to resist a Soviet bloc's invasion, but she had to oppose Beograd's integration in the Western security system pending a satisfactory settlement of the Trieste issue. It was a position similar to that of France, suspicious and reluctant towards the German rearmament of which she would be the first beneficiary. In August-September 1953, in response to Tito's threats, Italy

¹⁹ Cfr. Smith, E. Timothy: "From Disarmament to Rearmament: The United States and the Revision of the Italian Peace Treaty of 1947", *Diplomatic History*, vol. 13, no. 3 (Summer 1989), pp. 369-71.

²⁰ See Tosi's article in this same issue.

²¹ The issue of Trieste was an «omnivorous presence» in the Italian foreign policy, according to Di Nolfo, Ennio: *La «politica di potenza» e le formule della politica di potenza. Il caso italiano (1952-1956)*, in Di Nolfo, Rainero and Vigezzi (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 713.

²² The American explained brutally to Egidio Ortona, Italian Counsellor in Washington: "We take you for granted!" [in English in the original] ... *You are not Communists to be wooed*.

²³ Minute di verbali del Consiglio dei ministri, 1950, b. 10, *Archivio Centrale dello Stato - Roma [ACS]*. On the impact of the issue of Trieste on NATO policies see de Leonardis, Massimo (1992): *La "diplomazia atlantica" e la soluzione del problema di Trieste (1952-1954)*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane.

²⁴ de Leonardis, "La diplomazia atlantica...", *op. cit.*, cap. II, § 3, cap. III, § 2, cap. V, § 3.

²⁵ "Memorandum by the President" (09 July 1954), in *FRUS: 1952-1954, Vol. VIII: Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union* (1988), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 471.



had to mobilize her Armed Forces at the frontier with Yugoslavia and SACEUR General Alfred Gruenther did not object, admitting that Trieste was a top priority for the Italians²⁶.

According to the Italian Minister of Defence Paolo Emilio Taviani, the problem of Trieste could «affect the Atlantic Alliance», since it «poisoned» Italy's relations with Washington and London²⁷. As a matter of fact, although seriously annoyed, Rome could not go beyond what Ambassador Quaroni termed the «Atlantic punt». «For many reasons – this very smart diplomat wrote in September 1953²⁸ – we came to conclude that, in internal and social matters, we could find an agreement with Nenni's Socialists and even almost with the Communists and that only foreign policy divides us. If then, albeit for tactical reasons, we slacken our Atlantic policy» how can we avoid to «appoint Togliatti [the Communist leader] President of the Council [of Ministers]»²⁹. Two years later American ambassador Clare Boothe Luce will remark that if the Christian Democratic Party did not found his policy on international issues, focusing instead on economic and internal problems, was unable to keep his position in front of the left»³⁰.

In the end Italy's resentment convinced Washington and London to work hard to obtain a solution of the Trieste issue acceptable to Rome. This happened in October 1954; next year Moscow reconciled herself with Tito and a new phase of Italian foreign policy also began.

3. The First Détente and Italian neo-Atlantism

The year 1955 marked the beginning of a new phase of Italian foreign policy, for internal and international reasons. After recovering Trieste, Italy joined the Western European Union (i. e. the Brussels Pact, enlarged also to Western Germany), was allowed to consider obsolete the military clauses of the Peace Treaty and was admitted to the UNO, solving all the problems inherited from the defeat in the war. In June 1955 the leftist Christian Democrat Giovanni Gronchi was elected President of the Republic³¹, to the annoyance of the President of the Council Mario Scelba, belonging to the right wing of the same party, who stressed the negative effects of his election on the NATO allies³². In 1949 Gronchi had opposed Italian

²⁶ His Deputy British Field-Marshal Montgomery, criticized the Italian move, but was silenced by the British government.

²⁷ Taviani, Paolo Emilio (1998): *I giorni di Trieste. Diario 1953-1954*, Il Mulino, Bologna, p. 28.

²⁸

«Quaroni a Pella» (22 September 1953), *Archivio Storico-Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri - Roma [ASMAE] Direzione Generale Affari Politici [DGAP]*, Trieste, 1953, b. 625. For similar comments by Quaroni and by other diplomats on the importance of foreign policy as the only real discriminant issue between the government and the leftwing opposition see Quaroni a Martino (11 November 1955), *ASMAE, Ambasciata a Parigi*, b. 55, published in Quaroni, Pietro (1973): *Collana di Testi Diplomatici, Riservato*, 1, Roma, Ministero degli Affari Esteri - Servizio Storico e Documentazione, pp. 63-8.

²⁹ «Quaroni a Zoppi» [Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], (09 June 1954), *Archivio Manlio Brosio* [the Brosio archive was seen while in his home; now it is held by the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi, Torino].

³⁰ 17 October 1955, cited in Nuti, Leopoldo (1999): *Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra. Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, p. 44.

³¹ Gronchi managed to defeat the DC official candidate, Cesare Merzagora, obtaining, in the final vote, the support of most of his fellow party members and of both oppositions, left and right (including Communists and ex-Fascists).

³² See Di Capua, Giovanni (1971): *Le chiavi del Quirinale. Da De Nicola a Saragat, la strategia del potere in Italia*, Milano, Feltrinelli, p. 128; Ortona, Egidio (1986): *Anni d'America. La diplomazia 1953-1961*, Bologna, Il Mulino, p. 129; Wollemborg, Leo J. (1983): *Stelle, strisce e tricolore. Trent'anni di vicende politiche fra Roma e*



participation to the Atlantic Alliance and now supported the «opening to the left», i.e. including the Socialists in the government. He had great ambitions; according to his diplomatic adviser, Mario Lucioli, who later resigned in disagreement with him, he «dreamed Italy entering a directorate of the Great Powers, playing a mediation role in the Near East, gaining prestige, obtaining recognition»³³.

The evolution of the international situation seemed to provide room to realize these ambitions. During the Stalinist period the rigid confrontation between the two blocs didn't allow any autonomous initiative by the minor powers; now detente and the incoming decolonization appeared to offer Italy the opportunity to enhance her role primarily in the Mediterranean. Most Italian politicians thought that their country could be again a "Great Power", whatever this could mean in a bipolar system. They diverged on the link between foreign and internal politics: the moderates wished to preserve a centre coalition and a strong alignment with West, while progressive wished to move towards the left, soften the Cold War confrontation and open to the Third World.

Career diplomats were more sceptical about Italy's ambitions and warned against «any attenuation of the efficiency of the Western defence system which cost so many efforts and so much time»³⁴. Ambassador Quaroni denounced the «risks of detente» and the «frenzy of letting be cheated ... by the first Moscow's smiles»³⁵. But even the magazine of the semi-official *Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale*, certainly above suspicion in its Atlanticism, described «an Alliance ... in crisis» and stressed the necessity of acknowledging that «the original purpose of the Atlantic Pact no longer conform to international realities»: «the Russians had destalinization, we need deatlantification»³⁶.

Italy tried to stress the political role of NATO instead of the military one, asking to implement art. 2 of the Pact in the point which said «they [the Parties] will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them». She was supported particularly by Canada and certainly it was not by chance that «the three wise men» charged to prepare the report on «Non-Military Cooperation in NATO», were the Italian Gaetano Martino, the Canadian Lester Pearson and the Norwegian Halvard Lange. On the implementation of article 2 American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was sceptical: «All of our allies are willing to follow the Italian lead and have NATO turned into an economic organization which can probably extract a little more money out of the United States; but when it comes to develop Western European unity or any real cohesion with respect to policies vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, then there is very marked evasiveness»³⁷. Actually NATO never was a vehicle for economic collaboration

Washington, Milano, Mondadori, pp. 31-4; Id.: "Il presidente Gronchi e i rapporti con gli Stati Uniti", *Civitas*, Vol. 38, no. 3 (May-June 1987), pp. 62-3; Vezzosi, Elisabetta: "La sinistra democristiana tra neutralismo e Patto Atlantico (1947-1949)", in Di Nolfo et al., "L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1945-50)..." *op. cit.*, p. 219; Bedeschi Magrini, Anna: "Spunti revisionistici nella politica estera di Giovanni Gronchi presidente della repubblica", in Di Nolfo et al., "L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1945-50)..." *op. cit.*, pp. 59-73.

³³ Lucioli, Mario: "Diciotto mesi al Quirinale con il presidente Giovanni Gronchi", in Serra, Enrico (ed.) (1988): *Professione: diplomatico*, Milano, Franco Angeli, p. 117.

³⁴ "Memorandum" without date, title and signature, probably prepared on the occasion of the vote of confidence in Parliament on the first Segni government, *ASMAE, Ambasciata a Parigi*, (1955), b. 56.

³⁵ Quaroni a Martino, (11 November 1955), *ASMAE, Ambasciata a Parigi*, b. 55, published in Quaroni, "Collana di Testi Diplomatici, Riservato, 1...", *op. cit.*, pp. 63-8.

³⁶ E. G. [signed only with initials]: "Crisi atlantica e coesistenza pacifica", *Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 20, no. 19 (12 May 1956), pp. 555-6; cfr. Id.: "L'Alleanza Atlantica ed i saggi", *Ibid.*, vol. 20, no. 26 (30 June 1956), pp. 783-4.

³⁷ Dulles ad Eisenhower, (05 May 1956), *FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. IV*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.



among its members and the European Economic Community provided the means to attain that among Europeans.

While trying to stress the political role of NATO, in any case «the Italian Government and the parties supporting it were greatly relieved by the failure of the Geneva conference», as noted an American report³⁸. Foreign Minister Martino on 4th May 1956 at the Atlantic Council «raised question whether closer East-West contacts were good for states with strong Communist parties»³⁹. A similar concern will express in 1964 the President of the Republic Antonio Segni: peaceful coexistence could make more difficult to fight Communism in Italy⁴⁰. The repression of the revolt in Hungary dissipated the illusions on Soviet foreign policy⁴¹. Having a good hand to embarrass the leftwing opposition, the Italian government presented at the UNO a resolution much stronger than the American one; it was deemed not «constructive» by the United States, unwilling to endanger détente.

The Suez crisis offered Italy the opportunity to forge closer ties with Washington at the same time appearing progressive and friendly to the Arabs in the Mediterranean⁴², the region where she tried to be a protagonist with the so called neo-Atlanticism [*neo-Atlantismo*]. Italian politics are particularly tortuous; the expression was invented in April 1957 by rightist Christian Democrat Giuseppe Pella, while that kind of policy was already supported by the left wing of the same party. The American embassy in Rome remarked that Pella's nationalism could match the ambitions of Gronchi⁴³; the common ground was Italy's desire to be a protagonist in the Mediterranean and to become the United States' "privileged partner"⁴⁴ in the region, taking advantage of the colonial powers' difficulties. The divergence was in internal politics: leftists wished to open the government to Socialists, while moderates were opposed. Actually Pella himself in September 1957 disowned the word neo-Atlanticism, stating in New York that the issue at stake «was not to revise the [Atlantic] Pact to tone it down, but instead to strengthen it, expanding its tasks and reach»⁴⁵. As a consequence since the second half of the '50s foreign policy aroused some bitter polemics and sometimes appeared to waver. However in the end, in those years Italy was aligned with the United States on all the major issues of Atlantic policy⁴⁶.

Between 1958 and 1968 the personality dominating Italian foreign policy was Amintore Fanfani, various times Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He belonged to the left wing of DC, had been mildly critical of Italy's accession to the Atlantic Pact in 1949 and was a supporter of the "opening to the left". After the elections of May 1958,

³⁸ "Progress Report on United States policy Toward Italy", (04 January 1956), in *FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. XXVII: Western Europe and Canada* (1992), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 320.

³⁹ *FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. IV*, op. cit., p. 59.

⁴⁰ *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XII: Western Europe* (2001), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 2.

⁴¹ Presenting in December the report of the three "wise men", Martino remarked the worsening of the international situation since the previous Spring (*FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. IV*, op. cit., p. 138).

⁴² As it's well known, Washington condemned the Anglo-French attack to Egypt.

⁴³ Nuti, "Gli Stati Uniti...", op. cit., p. 140.

⁴⁴ On this subject see de Leonardis, Massimo: "L'Italia 'alleato privilegiato' degli Stati Uniti nel Mediterraneo?", in Id. (ed.) (2003): *Il Mediterraneo nella politica estera italiana del secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 61-93.

⁴⁵ Re, Giulio Cesare (1971): *Fine di una politica: momenti drammatici della democrazia italiana*, Bologna, Cappelli, p. 347; Ortona remarked the «strong Atlanticism» of Pella ("Anni d'America. La diplomazia...", op. cit., p. 253, diary entry of 20 September 1957).

⁴⁶ In spite of the initiatives of Enrico Mattei's ENI [the state company] in the oil producing countries which annoyed the "seven sisters", between 1956 and 1962, Italy «became the closest collaborator of the United States' Mediterranean policy» (Di Nolfo: "Italia e Stati Uniti: un'alleanza diseguale", *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1990), p. 27).



Fanfani formed a government which appeared a true expression of neo-Atlanticism. Exercising a strong leadership unusual in the Italian political system, Fanfani cumulated the offices of President of the Council, Minister of foreign affairs and Secretary of DC. “Orthodox” Atlanticists like Scelba, Pella and Taviani were excluded by the Government, mainly for reasons of internal politics, but certainly this appeared to mark a shift also in foreign policy. Fanfani stressed the necessity to conciliate the Western and the Mediterranean soul of Italy and of her full parity with the allies, to be obtained through a reciprocal and permanent consultation but also Italian autonomous initiatives in the Mediterranean. Towards the United States Fanfani tried «to conciliate the maximum of loyalty with the maximum of independence»⁴⁷. This link with Washington was also instrumental to neutralize General De Gaulle’s ambitions of an Anglo-French-American directorate, against which Fanfani protested strongly⁴⁸, being soon reassured by Dulles that «the directorate of the three cannot be made»⁴⁹.

Fanfani didn’t share the uncritical and aprioristic admiration for the United States so common among Italian moderate politicians. On the contrary in 1961 he expressed to NATO Secretary General Dirk Stikker an opposite opinion: «Christopher Columbus discovered America but was unable to take to the new Continent the wisdom and the experience of the Europeans ... to NATO the United States provide strength, the Europeans experience»⁵⁰. In any case Fanfani had no doubt that the Atlantic Alliance was the main pillar of Italian foreign policy. He wished to «make more effective the Italian role» in NATO, advocating an Alliance’s role in the Near East and in Mediterranean Africa: «We must preserve our political friendships and alliances and, at the same time, restrain the estrangement from the West which had taken place or could further on take place by countries which have other obligations»⁵¹. To the American ambassador to Rome David Zellerbach Fanfani said: «The West must do nothing to appear or to be an enemy of the Arabs, in order not to foster their sliding towards the USSR»⁵² and later with Admiral Ephraim P. Holmes, NATO Supreme Commander he claimed: «We have been the first to care about avoiding the Mediterranean becoming an extension of the Black Sea»⁵³.

During his visit to Washington, Fanfani immediately expressed to President Eisenhower his agreement to the allocation in Italy of the intermediate range missiles, formally requested by SACEUR General Lauris Norstad on 26th July⁵⁴. Besides Turkey, Italy was the only country of continental Europe to accept the missiles⁵⁵, for a number of reasons: to gain credit as the most important Mediterranean ally, to partially satisfy her nuclear

⁴⁷ Romano, Sergio (1993): *Guida alla politica estera italiana*, Milano, Rizzoli, p. 99, who adds: «Italy was the smallest and the weakest of the Great Powers, but could exploit the others’s strenght and share results which enhanced her role ... That of Fanfani was the updated and voluntarist version of the policy of “determinant weight” put into practice by his country during most of his unitary history» (*ibid.*, p. 98).

⁴⁸ See Ortona, *op. cit.*, p. 322 (diary of 01 October 1958); Nuti, “Gli Stati Uniti...”, *op. cit.*, p. 180; “Diario Fanfani”, 01 October 1958, *Archivio Fanfani, Senato della Repubblica*, Roma [AF].

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* (16 December 1958).

⁵⁰ Meetings in Rome with Stikker (09-10-1961), *AF, Sez. 1, Serie 1, Busta 14, Fasc. 17*.

⁵¹ *AF, Sez. 1, Serie 1, Busta 34, Fasc. 1*

⁵² “Diario Fanfani” (16 July 1958).

⁵³ Meeting of 13 October 1967, *AF, Sez. 1, Serie 5, Busta 40, Fasc. 31*.

⁵⁴ Memorandum of Conversation (30 July 1958), in *FRUS, 1958-1960, Vol. VII*, *op. cit.*, n. 217, p. 2. On Norstad’s satisfaction see “Diario Fanfani”, (08 August 1958). Already the previous government had given its preliminary assent.

⁵⁵ See Nuti: “Dall’operazione Deep Rock all’operazione Pot Pie: una storia documentata dei missili SM 78 Jupiter in Italia”, *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1996), pp. 95-140 and vol. 12, no. 2 (1997), pp. 105-149; *Id.* (2007): *La sfida nucleare. La politica estera italiana e le armi atomiche 1945-1991*, Bologna, Il Mulino, cap. V; Brogi, “L’Italia e l’egemonia americana...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 292 e 315.



ambitions and to give Washington a proof of loyalty while the “opening to the left” was being discussed. At the same time, just to avoid internal polemics, Fanfani invited Washington to keep a low profile on his decision.

The United States were lavish with oral recognitions and some formal gestures to satisfy the ambitions of Italy, but deemed that she overestimated her influence in the Middle East and lacked the economic means to support an effective mediation⁵⁶. Quite likely American regards towards Italian self-esteem were less a sign of appreciation of Rome’s Mediterranean policy than recognition and an incentive for the free availability of her territory guaranteed to NATO; Washington was also careful to strengthen the weak and unstable Italian governments.

Fanfani resigned his three offices on 26th January 1959, being attacked mainly for reasons of internal politics, but also for his foreign policy. The following government, chaired by Segni and with Pella as foreign minister, lasted about one year and stressed a staunch Atlanticism and Europeanism and toned down Mediterranean policy, meeting a strong opposition by the Socialists and the Communists⁵⁷.

After an interim government chaired by Fernando Tambroni⁵⁸, Fanfani was again Prime Minister between March 1960 and June 1963; Segni was foreign minister until May 1962, when he was elected President of the republic and was replaced (after a short interim of Fanfani), by Attilio Piccioni, a rather unsuitable choice for this office. These two Fanfani governments paved the way to the “opening to the left”; foreign policy was a key issue in this transition and Fanfani needed to reassure Washington on Italy’s Atlanticism. The author of the most authoritative book on the American attitude towards the new political formula writes correctly that «in every discussion on the foreign policy of a future centre-left government the central issue ... was always the same: which attitude would a centre-left government take towards the Atlantic Alliance?»⁵⁹. The programme of internal reforms of the future coalition didn’t worry at all the Americans; on the contrary it appeared fully consonant with the progressive tendencies of the Kennedy administration. A sign of the great caution required in dealing with international issues was that in January 1962 Aldo Moro, secretary of DC and a supporter of the “centre left”, devoted to foreign policy a rather limited part of his seven hour speech opening the VIIIth party congress.

Most Italian politicians, with the partial exception of Fanfani, loathed General de Gaulle whom they considered too authoritarian, almost a “fascist”, and this attitude pleased the Americans⁶⁰. On the necessity of coordinating Atlantic policies “out of area” Fanfani

⁵⁶ See the “Staff Study Prepared in the Department of State, Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East” (30-10-1957), in *FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. XII: Near East Region; Iran; Iraq* (1991), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 643. Pella himself later admitted that «it was well to be in making proposals in order not to raise too many illusions» (cfr. “Memorandum of Conversation with the Secretary of State Herter” (12 July 1959), in *FRUS, 1958-1960, Vol. VII, Part 2: Western Europe* (1993), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 536).

⁵⁷ Re, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

⁵⁸ Tambroni was close to the President of the Republic Gronchi, but his government was supported by the extreme right.

⁵⁹ Nuti, “Gli Stati Uniti...”, *op. cit.*, who describes the centre-left «a political formula ... definitely preferable, from the American perspective, to all the available alternatives» (p. 665).

⁶⁰ Romano, Sergio (1995): *Lo scambio ineguale: Italia e Stati Uniti da Wilson a Clinton*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, p. 44.



agreed with de Gaulle, even looking at him as a competitor⁶¹. In his speech at the Atlantic Council on 11th May 1965 Fanfani plainly said that ignoring the problem could bring «to a creeping shattering of our Alliance»⁶².

The main issues of Atlantic policy in the first years of “centre-left” coalitions between 1962 and 1968⁶³, were the removal of the *Jupiter* missiles from Italy (and Turkey), as a result of the Cuban crisis, the French policy towards NATO and the EEC, the Multilateral [nuclear] Force [MLF] and the revision of the Alliance’ strategy from “massive retaliation” to “flexible response”. Italy favoured Great Britain’s admission to the EEC and in any case viewed European integration «in the spirit of Atlantic partnership as outlined by President Kennedy»⁶⁴. On all the issues the Italian government created no problems to the United States, on the contrary was consonant with them. However it doesn’t seem that the position of Italy had much importance for the Americans, concerned primarily about the triangle of the relations between Great Britain, France and Germany and the necessity to re-orient their position on the MLF, which the Kennedy administration came to consider useless and even dangerous. The start of “great détente” could have marked a particular harmony between Rome and Washington, which however was hampered by various factors, as the relative neglect of President Johnson, engaged in Vietnam, for Europe and Moro governments emphasis on internal politics⁶⁵.

On one hand the Italian government was relieved by the removal of the obsolete and vulnerable *Jupiter* missiles, which made Italy a primary target of a Soviet attack; on the other hand Rome didn’t want to admit their uselessness and feared a weakening of her bilateral relations with Washington. The Fanfani government discussed the opportunity to announce the removal before the elections of April 1963⁶⁶ and the American ambassador in Rome advised to stress Italy’s role as a great power at the moment of the announcement⁶⁷. Later, on the occasion of Moro’s visit to Washington in April 1965, Johnson’s Special Assistant advised the President to «show great warmth and affection for Moro and Italy in some visible way», to strengthen his political position and because «the Italians are quite sensitive about their position in the European power structure. ... Like any human or nation that once tasted great glory and then settled into a decline, the Italians thirst for recognition as a nation to be reckoned with in the affairs of the world»⁶⁸.

Italy’s nuclear ambitions were placed on the MLF, of which she was a supporter, but expressing reservations on its technical realization. Rome hoped for an atomic partnership

⁶¹ Cfr. *FRUS, 1958-1960, Vol. VII, Part II: Western Europe* (1993), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 105. On the contrary the Socialist leader Nenni stressed the Alliance’s geographic limits (Grassi Orsini, Fabio: "La ‘svolta diplomatica’ del secondo governo Fanfani", in Craveri, Piero and Quagliariello, Gaetano (eds.) (2003): *Atlantismo ed europeismo*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino Editore, p. 340).

⁶² *Sez. 1, Serie 5, Busta 37, Fasc. 1.*

⁶³ In this period Italy had five government, the first chaired by Fanfani, one caretaker chaired by Giovanni Leone and three by Moro.

⁶⁴ So spoke on 14th January 1964 foreign minister Saragat to secretary of state Rusk (*FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. XIII: Western Europe Region, n. 2* (1995), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 3).

⁶⁵ See Kissinger, Henry (1980): *Gli anni della Casa Bianca*, Milano, SugarCo, pp. 93;730. According to Varsori (Varsori, Antonio (1998): *L’Italia nelle relazioni internazionali del 1943 al 1992*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, p. 156) between 1964 and 1968 Italy Italian foreign policy kept a low profile.

⁶⁶ “Diario Fanfani”, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 20, 21 January 1963.

⁶⁷ See Nuti, "Dall’operazione Deep Rock all’operazione Pot Pie", *op. cit.*, pp. 114, 122, 130-3, 139-41; Id. (2007): *La sfida nucleare: la politica estera italiana e le armi atomiche, 1945-1991*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 248-62, which gives a complete picture of the Italian attitude towards the MLF.

⁶⁸ *Memorandum From the President’s Special Assistant (Valenti) to President Johnson* (16 April 1965), in *FRUS 1964-1968 vol. XII*, *op. cit.*, n. 109.



with Washington and considered the MLF an instrument to weaken the French-German axis, seen as an expression of a “reactionary” policy, opposed to the “centre-left”⁶⁹. Initially the Socialists were perplexed on the project, but, also in opposition to de Gaulle, accepted Italian participation during the negotiations to form the second Moro government in July 1964⁷⁰. However already in April 1964 secretary of state Rusk had advised to drop MLF, indicating among the reasons that of avoiding further tensions to the Italian government which had been weakened by the electoral results; but this, indicated as an additional motivation, sounds rather as a pretext. Later Ambassador Fenoaltea stressed that «if and when the U.S. changes course on a major issue, it is extremely important that the Italian Government be informed in advance. When a change is made (for example the MLF) the best friends of the United States are left out on a limb, having fought a tough political battle at home»⁷¹.

In June 1966, in Brussels, Fanfani painted to Secretary of state Dean Rusk a rosy picture of how dislike of Gaullist France had strengthened Atlanticism in Italy: «before committees of Italian Chamber of Deputies and Senate, larger majority supporting Italian sharing in material burdens arising from France-NATO crisis than usually supported government on other issues. ... no members of committees had objected when informed Italy prepared accept NATO Defense College in Rome if asked», «no serious opposition» in the Cabinet when «he had estimated possible cost to Italy of France-NATO problems at 60 billion lire», «his statement that Vicenza depots might have to be enlarged evoked no protest ... As by-product of France-NATO crisis, Fanfani said Italian Socialist Party now aware of positive benefits of NATO integration». However «on political right, within Christian-Democratic, Social-Democratic and Liberal Parties, Fanfani said there was preoccupation with strategic isolation of Italy as result France-NATO crisis. These elements felt maximum links with France had to be maintained to facilitate France’s future reassociation»⁷². The Socialists preferred to stress the political aspects of NATO and in 1966 and 1967 the Atlantic Council «handled routinely» a «Fanfani initiative»⁷³ for a “Marshall plan” aimed to reduce the technological gap between United States and Europe.

The war in Vietnam caused little turbulence in Italian-American relations. Prime Minister Moro more than once expressed his «understanding ... for the motivations of the United States’ action in Viet Nam»⁷⁴. Foreign minister Fanfani was more critical. In December 1965 talking to Rusk about the American role as superpower he said: «the fact exists ... that while being a faithful ally of the United States, Italy cherishes the liberty to disagree. ... It is possible that in two or three months the United States may find itself in the position of bearing great burdens and of not having the full support of its friends and allies. This is a tragedy but it is also a fact»⁷⁵. Just owing to Vietnam at the end of 1965 Fanfani had to leave for a few months the ministry of foreign affairs⁷⁶. Back in office he reiterated his criticism of American commitment in Indochina⁷⁷.

⁶⁹ Nuti stresses the MLF’s importance as «a kind of yard-stick» for «the United States attitude towards the opening to the left» in Italy (“Gli Stati Uniti...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 574-583, 614-619, 639-655, 658-659).

⁷⁰ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII*, *op. cit.*, n. 87, pp. 171-3; Nuti, “Gli Stati Uniti...”, *op. cit.*, p. 578.

⁷¹ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII*, *op. cit.*, n. 122.

⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. XII, n. 123.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, vol. XIII, n. 258, p. 17.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. XII, n. 115.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. XII, n. 121.

⁷⁶ His close friend Giorgio La Pira had met Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi and given to a right wing journalist an interview arranged by Fanfani’s wife.

⁷⁷ *AF, Sez. 1, Serie 5, Busta 39, Fasc. 16.*



In any case President Johnson, visiting Italy in December 1967 stated to Saragat, Moro and Fanfani that «he almost always found his own views in harmony with those of the Italian government»⁷⁸. In the previous September, President of the republic Saragat visiting the United States «warned against any delusion that the USSR no longer wished to establish hegemony in Europe. Although the Russians had perhaps renounced their former means of achieving their goal, their basic aims had not changed»⁷⁹. However in spite of all these reassuring Italian positions on 11th December 1967 Rusk bluntly asked Fanfani if «doubts will arise on the possibility of Italy leaving the Alliance in 1969», receiving an obvious and sharp denial⁸⁰.

It is worth mentioning that in 1964 the Italian Brosio (a liberal politician turned diplomat since 1947) was appointed NATO Secretary General, after that British Sir Harold Caccia renounced his candidature. On the occasion of his first visit to Washington, the Americans commented that «Mr. Brosio sees his role as that of the honest broker. Although he gave the impression that he does not wish to take sides publicly on issues which are divisive, he appears personally to support most of our policies»⁸¹. Actually in his previous appointment as Ambassador to Paris, Brosio had been rather critical of the United States and not prejudicially opposed, unlike most Italians, to General De Gaulle⁸². As Secretary General he contributed well to ferry NATO beyond French abandonment of the Alliance's military structure.

4. Aspects of the Italian Military Performance in NATO

Also for the unavailability of domestic archival sources, few studies deal with the military performance of Italy in the Atlantic Alliance. In NATO military structures Italy obtained three major commands: the *5th Allied Tactical Air Force*, the *Allied Land Forces Southern Europe*⁸³ and the *Allied Forces Central Mediterranean*; when this was abolished in 1967, an Italian Admiral became *Commander Allied Naval Forces Southern Europe*, based in Malta and since 1971 near Naples.

Italy favoured German rearmament, but didn't press France on the issue. The Italian military were very sceptical about the European Community of Defence, preferring the sound reality of NATO to a dream which is still unfulfilled 60 years later⁸⁴. The government signed the treaty but, sheltering behind the French hesitations, did not ratify it as a pressure for achieving a settlement on Trieste.

In the Korean War, Italy kept a low profile, just sending there a military hospital. At the same time, with much internal debate on the allocation of her scant economic resources

⁷⁸ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII, op. cit., n. 137.*

⁷⁹ "Memorandum of Conversation" (18 September 1967), *ibid.*, vol. XIII, n. 265.

⁸⁰ *AF, Sez. 1, Serie 5, Busta 40, Fasc. 40, Fasc. 35; "Diario Fanfani"*, 11 December 1967.

⁸¹ "Circular Airgram From the Department of State to Certain Missions" (08 October 1964), *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII, op. cit., n. 39.*

⁸² See Brosio, Manlio (2009): *Diari di Parigi: 1961-1964*, edited by Umberto Gentiloni Silveri, Bologna, Il Mulino.

⁸³ Greece and Turkey refused to place their Armies under the Italian General Commanding LANDSOUTH, and obtained a separate Command, LANDSOUTHEAST, given to an American, since neither Athens nor Ankara obviously accepted a General from the other nation.

⁸⁴ See Caviglia, Daniele and Gionfrida, Alessandro (2009): *Un'occasione da perdere: le forze armate italiane e la Comunità europea di difesa (1950-1954)*, Roma, Apes.



either to the Armed Forces or to the welfare state, Italy carried out a considerable effort of rearmament. According to a *Central Intelligence Agency*'s report, in reaching the goals of conventional rearmament fixed by NATO following the Korean War, among the smaller allies «only Italy demonstrated a strong determination to carry out the maximum effort»⁸⁵. At the end of her mission to Rome, Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce, certainly to stress the success of his work, wrote to Secretary of State Dulles that Italy had become «the main support of NATO in Europe, from the moral, political and – even if this may sound unbelievable – military point of view»⁸⁶, albeit remarking that the force levels assigned to Italy were too ambitious to be attained after the end in 1958 of the military assistance programme. Other documents confirm her opinion.

At the beginning of 1956, the Americans noted that the programme of military assistance «generally met its objective in counteracting military deficiencies in the past year. Italy still accepts NATO force goals but its military budget is insufficient to permit attainment of these goals. There will be shortfalls in all three services in relation to 1954 annual review of force goals. The most serious weaknesses are in the air control and warning system, anti-submarine warfare, and deficiencies in the whole field of logistics. Although the effectiveness of the Italian defense forces has increased, deficiencies remain outstanding among all three services»⁸⁷. In February 1956, at a meeting of the *National Security Council*, Admiral Arthur Radford, Chairman of the *Joint Chiefs of Staff*, reported that General Giuseppe Mancinelli, Chief of the Defence Staff had informed him «that unless the United States provided support for the Italian armed forces at the rate of about \$ 250 million a year, the Italian Government would have to reduce the level of its armed forces»; the Admiral «charged that the Italians not only expect us to give them new weapons; they also want our financial help to support the existing force levels. It was tantamount to blackmail». Secretary to the Treasury added: «that we were everywhere going to be faced with the proposition that either we help support the armed forces of our allies or else they would quit being allies»⁸⁸.

At the beginning of 1957, it was remarked that «the Suez crisis makes it less likely that Italy will in the near future reduce the gap between the financial requirements of her force goals and of the Italian defense expenditure ... Italy may in the near future exert pressure to secure a reduction of its NATO force goals to a level more realistically within its willingness and/or capability to support ... The Italian defense picture is further complicated by Italy's desires, military and political, to shift from conventional to advanced weapons and to obtain U.S. technical plans and contracts for the manufacture of missiles»⁸⁹. These estimates were confirmed in September, noting that «U.S. progress toward its objectives in Italy is presently proceeding at a slower pace than previously, except in the field of the military where progress is more marked», but «overall Italian military effectiveness remains relatively low when compared to U.S. combat effectiveness standards»⁹⁰. The first comment is significant, the second rather naïve and obvious and probably was applicable to most NATO allies.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Smith, E. Timothy (1985): *The United States, Italy and NATO: American Policy Toward Italy, 1948-1952*, Ann Arbor, University Microfilm International, p. 188.

⁸⁶ «Luce to Dulles» (10 October 1956), *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. XXVII*, op. cit., pp. 389, 396, quoted in Nuti, «Gli Stati Uniti...», op. cit., p. 104.

⁸⁷ «Progress Report on United States Policy toward Italy» (04 January 1956), *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. XXVII*, p. 321.

⁸⁸ *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. XIX: National Security Policy* (1986), Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, p. 212.

⁸⁹ Report Prepared by the Operations Coordinating Board, 13-3, *Ibid.*, p. 403.

⁹⁰ Report Prepared by the Operations Coordinating Board, 3-9, *Ibid.*, p. 422.



A confirmation of the Italian fairly good military performance was given by famous British military historian and strategist Sir Basil Liddell Hart, who in 1960 wrote that Italy was the only member of NATO in continental Europe which had met the goals in the number of troops⁹¹. Certainly we may ask if the number of draftees was matched by the level of their operational capacity, but again this question could be posed for most NATO members. Certainly at the end of the '50s Italian Armed Forces were at the top of their power both in numbers and quality⁹². NATO membership was obviously a factor of strong modernization and strengthening of the Italian Armed Forces. «The Navy was soon the Service more integrated in the Allied organization»⁹³. In the '50s the Italian Navy tried in vain to exploit its excellent relations with the *U. S. Navy* to obtain its own naval aviation, a goal reached only in 1989⁹⁴. The rebirth of the Air Force and of the Aviation industry received a great impulse from Italian membership of NATO; in 1958 the first operational jet plane built in Italy won the NATO competition for a light tactical fighter (even if it was purchased only by Italy herself and by the German *Luftwaffe*, which later sold some of them to Portugal).

According to the Americans, in the '50s Italy's geostrategic importance was to be the «Southern buttress of the Central front and, together with Yugoslavia, the bastion of the Western flank of the Alliance's Southern land forces», the territory of naval and air basis and the location of defence industries⁹⁵. After the Suez crisis in 1956 the Segni government and the General Staff repeatedly offered to strengthen the bilateral military collaboration with the United States and increase the number of American troops in Italy, both in response to the increased Soviet influence in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean and for the internal reason of reducing the risks of the «opening to the left»⁹⁶. It appears that in 1964 President Segni opposed reductions of American forces in Italy, fearing a strengthening of neutralist attitudes⁹⁷.

In March 1964, NATO Secretary General Stikker remarked that «when the imminence of the military threat decreased, it was natural that there should be less concern for the strength of an Alliance. ... the Germans too had kept up their guard, but this was no longer true in Belgium. It was hard to make a judgment about Norway and Denmark (the Secretary commented that Foreign Minister Lange had realistically remarked that we had not yet reached the promised land); the UK was concerned with internal problems but had somewhat increased its defense budget; and in Italy, Segni, Saragat and Andreotti had kept the Italians in a good position»⁹⁸. In 1968, after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, at a meeting of the *National Security Council*, the representative of the *Joint Chiefs of Staff* commented: «a. The

⁹¹ Liddell Hart, Basil Henry (1962) [english edition 1960]: *La prossima guerra*, Milano, Edizioni del «Borghese», p. 228.

⁹² Cfr. Ilari, Virgilio (1994): *Storia militare della prima repubblica 1943-1993*, Ancona, Nuove ricerche; de Leonardis: "L'Aeronautica Militare Italiana dalla ricostituzione postbellica alla fine della guerra fredda", in Bozzo, Luciano (ed.) (1999): *Dal futurismo al minimalismo. Aeronautica e "potere aereo" nella politica internazionale tra XX e XXI secolo*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, pp. 71-84; de Leonardis: "The Italian Navy in NATO during the Cold War", in *Maritime Power and National Force in the 20th Century*, Proceedings of the 3rd Pelagic Meeting (2001), Athens, Hellenic Navy-Naval Academy and National Defence Minister's Staff, pp. 161-166.

⁹³ Jean, Carlo: "La politica di sicurezza e la concezione difensiva italiana dal 1945 al 1975", in Id. (ed.) (1994): *Storia delle Forze Armate italiane 1945-1975. Aspetti ordinativi e sociologici*, Milano, Franco Angeli, p. 38.

⁹⁴ See Swartz, Peter M.: "The U.S. Navy's Relations with the West European Navies in the First Cold War Decade: The Italian and German Cases", paper presented to the *11th Naval History Symposium United States Naval Academy*, Annapolis (MA), (22 October 1993), pp. 14-20.

⁹⁵ See the documents of 1954 quoted by Sebesta, *op. cit.*, p. 683.

⁹⁶ See Nuti, "Gli Stati Uniti...", *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.

⁹⁷ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII*, *op. cit.*, n. 88.

⁹⁸ "Memorandum of Conversation" (18 March 1964), *Ibid.*, vol. XIII, n. 12.



Germans, the Italians and the Dutch have the resources needed to build up their military forces. The question is whether they have the will to do so. b. Possibly the Norwegians and the Danes would do more. c. The British attitude is uncertain because their current military power is being reduced». President Johnson concluded: «We should have our Ambassadors go to the Germans, the Italians and the Dutch to find out specifically what they are willing to do now to strengthen NATO»⁹⁹.

5. Crisis and Recovery of Italian Foreign Policy

Only a brief summary of later events will be presented here, also because detailed researches are still in progress. After the elections of 1968, Italy saw a period of political unrest which generated the spread of leftwing and rightwing terrorism, culminating in May 1978 with the kidnapping and assassination of Moro, leader of the DC, by the Red Brigades. Governments changed rapidly and at the political elections in June 1976 the Communists polled 34.4% of the votes. In those years other countries members of NATO or linked to the United States by military agreements undertook profound political changes. After the end of rightwing dictatorships in Portugal, Greece and Spain Secretary of State Henry Kissinger feared a «Mediterranean crisis» involving the countries of NATO's Southern flank and watched with pessimism the sliding to the left of the Portuguese political situation¹⁰⁰.

Political instability, terrorism and high inflation undermined the Italian role in international relations. The Communist party became a member of the governing coalitions described as «national solidarity» or «historic compromise» and Washington warned against its full participation to the government; Communists accepted the membership of NATO, but Italian foreign policy lost effectiveness. At the end of the '70s, while détente vanished, the Communist party withdrew its support to the government and voted against the deployment in Italy of the new short range missiles *Pershing* and *Cruise* (opposing also the Italian participation to the European Monetary System). The decision to receive the missiles was a landmark in the history of Italian participation to NATO and was of fundamental importance for the Alliance, since Germany had subordinated her own acceptance to that of at least another continental member of NATO. The new five-parties (*pentapartito*) coalitions, DC, Socialists, Social Democrats, Republicans and Liberals, defeated terrorism and assured a decade of political stability; for the first time since 1947 Christian Democrats lost the premiership in favour of the Republican Giovanni Spadolini and then of the Socialist Bettino Craxi, who remained Prime Minister (in two successive governments) between August 1983 and April 1987, a long period according to Italian standard. In internal politics Craxi had the ambition to break the DC hegemony and also to make the Socialists stronger than the Communists he greatly disliked.

His governments and in general those of the '80s tried to enhance the role of Italy as a medium regional power in the Mediterranean¹⁰¹. In September 1980 Italy guaranteed the

⁹⁹ «Summary Notes of the 590th Meeting of the National Security Council» (04 September 1968), *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII, n. 324.

¹⁰⁰ On the events of 1974-76 see Teixeira, Nuno Severiano: "O 25 de Abril e a Política Externa Portuguesa", *Relações Internacionais* (Março 2004), pp. 5-12; Moreira de Sá, Tiago: "Os Estados Unidos da América e a transição para a democracia em Portugal", *Política Internacional* (Autumn-Winter 2002), pp. 117-59.

¹⁰¹ See Cremasco, Maurizio: "Italy: A New Role in the Mediterranean?", in Chipman, John (ed.) (1988): *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges*, London-New York, Routledge, pp. 195-235 and in general Di Nolfo, Ennio (ed.) (2007): *La politica estera italiana negli anni ottanta*, Padova, Marsilio.



neutrality of Malta, to counteract Libya's influence, in 1982 accepted the transfer from Spain of the F 15 American fighters, Italian armed forces inaugurated their peacekeeping missions abroad, most notably in Lebanon and started to discuss a «new model of defence policy», paying attention to the «risks from the South», beyond the borders of NATO and outside the context of the Cold War.

In October 1985 a rather astonishing episode took place at the air base of Sigonella in Sicily. The *Carabinieri* (military police) and the guards of the Italian Air Force prevented the American *Delta Force* from capturing four Palestinian terrorists after their plane had been compelled by the American aircrafts to land, while President Reagan and Prime Minister Craxi exchanged excited phone calls. The terrorists had attacked the Italian liner *Achille Lauro* killing a disabled American citizen of Jewish religion. We cannot describe here the complex negotiations which followed; it's sufficient to say that from the legal point of view the Italian government was right, but certainly it appeared weak with the terrorists and traditionally biased in favour of the Palestinians¹⁰². The crisis was quickly overcome but certainly it appeared quite significant that for the first time Italy refused the United States the free use of her territory.

The end of the Cold War provoked the fall of the traditional party system in Italy. Democratic parties were swept away when the judiciary decided that the international situation no longer prevented the prosecution of the widespread corruption existing to finance political activities. The Communists were spared by the investigations, but had to change their name. They had also taken advantage of their local power but had been financed primarily by the Soviet Union. The neo-fascist party (*Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale*), which was immune by corruption, also because held no political power, changed also its name, shelved nostalgic ideas and was allowed to enter the government area.

Keeping to the subject of this article, it must be remarked that Atlanticism emerged stronger than ever. The first post-Communist Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, in 1999 staunchly supported the Kosovo war. The leader of the centre-right Silvio Berlusconi, who dominates Italian politics since 1994, in 2003 took sides with George Bush Jr. on Iraq; he skilfully managed to be considered by the President a close ally while at the same time not taking part to the invasion of Iraq, since he was aware of the public opinion's feelings and of the obstacles posed by art. 11 of the Constitution.

Actually in the last 15 years the participation of the Italian Armed Forces to military missions abroad has been a primary factor in enhancing the Italian status in international relations. A leading editorial writer has remarked the «new and now permanent factor of the Italian foreign policy in the recent years. The fact that Armed Forces have become the central instrument of this policy»¹⁰³. On the whole it may be said that Italy is the third largest contributor to NATO missions. Certainly it not by chance that, beyond holding the office of NATO Deputy Secretary General without interruption since 1971¹⁰⁴, in the last ten years two

¹⁰² Silj, Alessandro (ed.) (1998): *L'alleato scomodo. I rapporti fra Roma e Washington nel Mediterraneo: Sigonella e Gheddafi*, Milano, Corbaccio; Ronzitti, Natalino (ed.) (1990): *Maritime Terrorism and International Law*, Dordrecht-Boston-London, Martinus Nijhoff.

¹⁰³ Venturini, Franco: "Mass media, forze armate e operazioni militari", in de Leonardis and Pastori, Gianluca (eds.) (2007): *Le nuove sfide per la forza militare e la diplomazia. Il ruolo della NATO*, Bologna, Monduzzi, pp. 97-98. On the subject see de Leonardis: "Le Forze Armate nella strategia e nella politica estera della Repubblica", *Informazioni della Difesa*, no. 6 (2006), pp. 6-11 and Professor Pastori's article in this issue.

¹⁰⁴ Two Italians filled the post between 1958 and 1964, when Brosio was elected Secretary General. Former minister of foreign affairs and defence Antonio Martino in 2003 was in the front line to succeed Lord Robertson of Port Ellen as Secretary General but declined the candidature.



Italians have been elected as Chairmen of the Military Committee: Admiral Guido Venturoni (1999-2002) and Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola (since June 2008).

6. Conclusion

The two pillars of Italian foreign policy since the middle of the XX century have been Atlanticism and Europeanism. There is no doubt that during the Cold War the importance of Atlanticism was paramount. First of all for the reason mentioned in February 1963 by the diplomat Roberto Ducci to the Foreign Minister Attilio Piccioni: «Since Italy cannot be independent staying alone and Europe is unable to progress towards a real integration then the richer and farther master is always the best»¹⁰⁵. Also because the near allies were by no means disposed to give satisfaction to Italy's long standing ambition to be accepted in the Great Powers' club: «For France and for the Great Britain, Italy was far from being an equal. – wrote Milward¹⁰⁶ – It was only instrumental to their policy ambitions, to be picked up or abandoned ...». Italy's diplomatic correspondence is full of protests and appeals to Washington against perspectives of “directorates” inside NATO excluding her; for example in 1957 Foreign Minister Martino expressed to Secretary of State Dulles his concern for the possible development of a «political standing group»¹⁰⁷ among France, the United Kingdom and the United States. In the mid-Sixties Ambassador to Washington Fenoaltea protested many times in strong terms against a possible “directorates” among Germany, United Kingdom and United States¹⁰⁸. It is significant that Fenoaltea's main argument against these “offending directorates” was their negative effect in internal politics: the weakening of the moderates and the strengthening of extreme left and extreme right¹⁰⁹.

Being refused admission to the club of European “Great Powers”, Italy boasted her friendship with the United States, hoping to obtain advantages from it. This quest for a “privileged relation” with Washington was a *leit motiv* of Italian Atlantic policy, the real only card to be played, being at the same time a point of strength but also a sign of weakness.

We have ample documentary evidence of the primacy of Atlanticism over Europeanism in Italian foreign policy during the Cold War. A few months before the signature of the treaties of Rome, at the Atlantic Council ambassador Cattani stated that Italy was «extremely interested in FTA [*Free Trade Association*]» and «thought economic cooperation between NATO countries and other areas should be stressed»¹¹⁰, an opinion not exactly consonant with the founding principles of the European Common Market. In 1965 ambassador Fenoaltea «reverted to one of his chronic themes that the US cannot and must not leave the Europeans to make important decisions alone. US influence and leadership is needed»¹¹¹, not precisely a statement of faith in European integration.

In September 1957, Foreign Minister Pella described precisely to Dulles the hierarchy of priorities of Italian foreign policy: «Friendship between the U. S. and Italy is a basic fact of

¹⁰⁵ Cited in Nuti, “Gli Stati Uniti...”, *op. cit.*, p. 577, n. 115.

¹⁰⁶ Milward, Alan: “Foreign Light on Italy's Foreign Policy”, *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 13 (1998/2) - 14 (1999/1), p. 377.

¹⁰⁷ *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. IV*, *op. cit.*, p. 585.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII*, n. 122 and 126, *vol. XIII*, *op. cit.*, n. 123.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. XII, n. 122 and 126, *vol. XIII*, n. 123.

¹¹⁰ *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. IV*, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

¹¹¹ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XII*, *op. cit.*, n. 105.



Italian political life and the foundation of its foreign policy. The second important basis of Italian foreign policy is the NATO alliance ... Italy maintains her faith in the “European idea”¹¹². As much clear was Social Democrat foreign minister Giuseppe Saragat in May 1964: «NATO was more important and necessary than ever. In fact, NATO was more important to Italy than the Common Market. Without the latter Italy could pull through; without NATO it was doubtful that Italy could survive. ... He had told de Gaulle that if Moro and the Italian Government were to follow the same policy as he, we would “in six months have handed Italy over to the Communists”». ¹¹³ As President of the Republic, in September 1967, Saragat confirmed to President Johnson: «The mainstay of Italian foreign policy is the Atlantic Alliance ... Italy ... is equally convinced that without the Alliance, there would be little hope of solving Europe's problems ... In France there exists a government that is both conservative and nationalistic. Even if de Gaulle were to disappear from the scene, little change could be expected in French policy. Unlike the situation which exists in Italy, de Gaulle and his policies are supported both by the forces of nationalism on the right and by communism on the left, for other, but obvious, reasons. ... The Italian Government remains firmly convinced of the necessity of NATO not only for military purposes, but also as a vital instrument to secure the existing bonds between the US and Europe»¹¹⁴.

It is evident that Italian governments valued the Atlantic Alliance not only for its fundamental military purpose, but also because it was the institution linking the United States to the European countries and this link was particularly important for Italy's internal political stability¹¹⁵. The second and the third reason marked the difference between Italy and the other European countries, which had no problems of internal political stability. But, as remarked by Saragat and all moderate politicians, the Italian situation was also different from that of France, the other nation with a strong Communist party and an unstable political situation until de Gaulle stabilized his power. In the Vth French republic a position critical of the United States and defiladed towards NATO strengthened the government and clipped the wings to Communist opposition; in Italy a weakening of Atlantic orthodoxy would cause the decay of the government coalitions. Since nationalism in Italy was dead after the Second World War, if Atlanticism slackened, foreign policy would be characterized by a neutralism sympathetic to the third world, that the Communist party would have been happy to support. This strong link between Atlanticism and internal politics was the real Italian peculiarity, not the issue on Italy's uncritical loyalty to the United States (e. g. the slogan labelling the country as the «Bulgaria of NATO») or the opposite view on the ambiguity of Italian foreign policy, both recurring in unscholarly publications.

To stress that for many Italian politicians (but with notable exceptions as for example Taviani, Cossiga and others) viewed NATO primarily from the political point of view than from the military one, does not allow an underestimation of Italy's commitment to common defence. We still lack detailed and scholarly studies on the importance of Italy as a “strategic player” and not only as a “strategic theatre” in the Mediterranean; the latter cannot be denied, even if this region was for NATO a minor front, particularly until 1968. However if we compare the Italian role to that of the other allies bordering the Mediterranean, some of which

¹¹² “Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State”, (25 September 1957), in *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. XXVII*, op. cit., pp. 430-31.

¹¹³ See the memorandum of conversation between Saragat and Rusk at the Atlantic Council of The Hague (12-14 May 1964), in *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XIII*, op. cit., n. 24.

¹¹⁴ Memorandum of Conversation (18 September 1967), op. cit.

¹¹⁵ During the Cold War, Atlanticism, or better the relation with Washington, was much more important than Europeanism for internal political evolution, but this doesn't mean to share «the myth of the omnipotence of the America presence in Italy» (Nuti, *Gli Stati Uniti*, op. cit., p. 676).



during the Cold War in different periods were not members of the Alliance (Greece, Turkey and Spain) or of its integrated military structures (France, Greece and Spain) or were ruled by dictatorship which caused embarrassment (Greece and Turkey), we may conclude that, in spite of all her limits and considering both the strictly military and the political aspects, Italy was, more than the others, a sure pillar of NATO¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁶ Raimondo Luraghi ("L'Italia nel fronte sud della NATO", in de Leonardis, "Il Mediterraneo nella politica estera italiana...", *op. cit.*, pp. 225-36) strongly underlines Italy's role as «pillar of the Alliance's Southern front» in the second half of the XXth century.





ITALY'S EUROPEAN POLICY¹

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Abstract:

After the Second World War Italy's international position was very weak, sharply contrasting her aspirations. For a few years, Italy's European choice was largely influenced by the belief that it would strengthen Italy's international status and would favour the revision of the peace treaty. Such a choice was also part of a wider Western alignment which would offer the Italian moderate political forces a further boost to impose themselves as the leaders of the country and to win the harsh contest with the powerful forces of the Left. The real turning point in Italy's European choice was the emerging functionalist approach advocated by Monnet, and the launching of the Schuman Plan in 1950. While Italy was sceptical of the EDC, she could not contradict her Europeanist commitment. Therefore in 1951, Prime Minister De Gasperi launched an ambitious scheme for a European Political Community. This period can be regarded as the climax in both De Gasperi's and Italy's federalist choice. Through the participation to the EEC, Italy experienced a process of economic and social modernization that contributed to the radical transformation of the country. Later, in spite of these achievements, Italy's position in the integration process was severely hampered by her internal political and social crisis and by the mid-70s she was perceived as one of the weakest links in the Western European system. In the 1980s Italy experienced a period of apparent economic recovery, political stability and social modernization. The period between 1992 and 1996 was characterised by a series of weak governments having as a main goal the recovery of the Italian economic and financial system to comply with the demanding economic clauses of the Maastricht Treaty. In this connection, Italy's faithfulness to the European integration was a vital factor as the country's future was closely tied to the EU and its developments. The majority of the Italian public opinion was mobilized through the catchword of "Italy must join Europe", but some forms of euro-scepticism began to surface in the centre-right parties. The European choice is still a paramount aspect of Italy's foreign policy and the country's international role is still linked to the developments in the European construction.

Keywords: EEC, EDC, EU, Italian Europeanism.

¹ The present article is a synthesis of a recent volume in which the author has dealt with Italy's European choice; see Varsori, Antonio (2010): *La Cenerentola d'Europa? L'Italia e l'integrazione europea dal 1947 a oggi*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino. See also Craveri, Piero and Varsori, Antonio (eds.) (2009): *L'Italia nella costruzione europea. Un bilancio storico (1957-2007)*, Milan, Franco Angeli.

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**Resumen:**

Tras la 2ª Guerra Mundial la posición internacional de Italia era muy débil, en marcado contraste con sus aspiraciones. Durante unos cuantos años, la elección europea de Italia se vio influida por la idea de que ello reforzaría el estatus internacional de Italia y favorecería la revisión de un tratado de paz. Tal elección se enmarcaba igualmente en un alineamiento más amplio con Occidente, lo cual ayudaría a que las fuerzas moderadas italianas se impusiesen como líderes del país ganando la partida a las fuerzas de la izquierda. El verdadero punto de inflexión en la apuesta pro-europea de Italia llegó con el enfoque propugnado por Monet y el lanzamiento del Plan Shuman en 1950. Si bien Italia era escéptica de la CED, no podía en todo caso contradecir sus compromisos europeístas, de manera que en 1951 el primer ministro de Gasperi lanzó un ambicioso proyecto de Comunidad Política Europea. Este periodo puede verse como el clímax de la apuesta tanto de Gasperi como de Italia misma por el federalismo. Por su participación en la CEE, Italia experimentó un proceso de modernización económica y social que contribuyó a una transformación radical del país. Más tarde, a pesar de tales logros, la posición de Italia en el proceso de integración se vio muy dificultado por la crisis social y política, y a mediados de los años 70 era percibida como uno de los miembros más débiles del sistema europeo occidental. En la década de los 80, Italia gozó de un proceso de aparente recuperación económica, estabilidad política y modernización social. El periodo desde 1992 a 1996 se caracterizó por una serie de gobiernos débiles cuyo principal objetivo era la recuperación del sistema económico y financiero con el fin de lograr cumplir con las exigentes cláusulas económicas del Tratado de Maastricht. En relación con ello, la fidelidad de Italia a la integración europea fue un factor vital ya que el país estaba ligado muy estrechamente a la UE y sus logros. La mayoría de la opinión pública italiana se movilizó detrás del lema "Italia debe unirse a Europa", pero ciertas formas de euro-escepticismo empezaron a emerger en el seno de los partidos de centro-derecha. La apuesta europea de Italia sigue siendo un aspecto vital en su política exterior y en su proyección internacional, y se mantiene ligada a los éxitos de la construcción europea

Palabras clave: CEE, CED, UE, Europeísmo italiano.

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1. The Origins of Italy's European Choice: a Matter of Prestige?

On June 1947 the Italian Government led by Alcide De Gasperi immediately joined the project for the reconstruction of the European economy that the US Secretary of State George C. Marshall had sketched out in his speech delivered at the Harvard University. In his positive reaction to the US initiative the Italian Foreign Minister Count Carlo Sforza, a former diplomat and politician of the pre-fascist period, pointed out that Italy gave a positive evaluation of the American pro-Europeanist stand, moreover he pointed out that Italy would participate to the European project on the condition of being recognised a status of perfect equality with the other participants. Italy's reaction to the Marshall Plan appears to sum up the main characters of the nation's early position towards the launching of the European integration process.

In the aftermath of the Second World War Italy's international position was a very weak, almost a desperate one. Although in summer 1943 Mussolini had been overthrown and the Badoglio Government with the support of King Victor Emmanuel III had been able to disengage the country from the alliance with Nazi Germany and in October, owing to the declaration of war to the German Reich, Italy had achieved the status of a co-belligerent nation, Italy was perceived by the major victorious powers as a defeated enemy country. During the negotiations that would lead to the drafting of the Italian peace treaty, a punitive approach had prevailed and in February 1947, when the Italian representative had signed in Paris the treaty, the Italian Government had been compelled to accept a sort of "diktat". On the basis of the peace treaty provisions Italy had been obliged to accept a series of territorial losses: from the Dalmatian territories to the Istria peninsula, from some minor areas along the border with France to the African colonies, to the Dodecanese islands. Moreover Italy would be compelled to pay heavy reparations to some victorious nations, especially the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and would be subject to severe limitations, as far as its military apparatus was concerned. When the Marshall Plan had been launched, the peace treaty's ratification process had not yet been completed and, at least in theory Italy was still subject to the armistice terms and foreign occupation troops would leave the country only in November 1947³.

Italy's international status sharply contrasted with the aspirations nurtured by the Italian anti-Fascist political class, by the diplomatic corps and by most Italian opinion-makers. In their opinion Italy had to recover the role of a middle-rank power, which could exert its influence in the two traditional areas of Italy's foreign policy: the European continent and an "enlarged Mediterranean", that could be widened to some part of the Middle East and Africa. In this connection the rapid revision of the most severe clauses of the peace treaty and the recognition of the nation's international status were the main goals of Italy's foreign policy; moreover, although the United States were regarded by the Italian moderate pro-Western political class as the most obvious and powerful ally, it was easily recognised that Italy's international role mainly meant the achievement of a status of equality with Italy's traditional European partners, that in the immediate post-war period meant Britain and France⁴. So De Gasperi's and Sforza's almost enthusiastic reaction to the Marshall Plan is not surprising, as for the first time after the end of the Second World War, in July 1947, Italy could join the

³ For a general assessment of Italy's attitude towards the peace treaty see Lorenzini, Sara (2007): *L'Italia e il trattato di pace del 1947*, Bologna, il Mulino.

⁴ For an overall evaluation of Italy's International role see Romero, Federico and Varsori, Antonio (eds) (2005/2006): *Nazione, interdipendenza, integrazione. Le relazioni internazionali dell'Italia (1917-1989)*, 2 vols, Roma, Carocci.



Paris conference on the US project convened by France and Britain on a ground of formal parity with the other western European nations, which included two major victorious powers. The interpretation by most Italian decision-makers of the European choice as a useful instrument in order to achieve national, if not nationalist, goals did not exclude a real interest in the European ideal by influential sectors of Italy's political scenario⁵. During the wartime period numerous representatives of some anti-Fascist political forces, especially the Christian Democracy, the Liberal Party, the Action Party and the Socialist Party, in their programmes had dealt with the issue of Europe's future in the post-war international context. They had rejected the nationalist concepts of the Fascist period and had been aware of the moral and political crisis that Europe would have to face in the post-war period. Only the creation of a European federation would save the Old Continent from new wars, economic plights and moral decadence, as well as it would avoid the end of Europe's pivotal role in international affairs. In this context the Ventotene Manifesto, drafted in 1941, was just an example of such a tendency⁶.

Although the presence of strong Europeanist influences cannot be neglected, for a few years Italy's European choice was largely influenced by the belief that such an approach would strengthen Italy's international status and would favour the revision of the peace treaty. Furthermore such a choice was part of a wider Western choice, which would offer the Italian moderate political forces a further boost to impose themselves as the leaders of the country and to win the harsh contest with the powerful forces of the Left, especially the Italian Communist Party, which could profit from both the influential patriotic role it had played in the Resistance and from the strength of the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement.

In autumn 1947, in the wider context of the Marshall Plan negotiations, the French and the Italian Governments put forward the project for the creation of a French-Italian customs union. In spite of talks that would last for a long period, as well as of the signature of preliminary agreements, the plan was doomed to failure. In the late 1940s the project would involve also the three Benelux countries – the so-called FRITALUX/FINEBEL negotiations – but in the mid-1950s no concrete result would be achieved. In spite of this lack of any practical outcome, the project for a French-Italian customs union was regarded by the Italian authorities as a serious attempt at achieving some important result in the field of the European integration, as the Italian authorities hoped that the realization of the customs union would give Italy some economic advantage. However the interpretation of the European choice as a useful instrument in order to achieve a political and diplomatic success was not absent from the minds of Italian decision-makers, especially in the early stages of the negotiations. Through the creation of a customs union with France Italy would be recognised an equal status with one of the four victorious powers; moreover both Paris and Rome would please the US administration, so strengthening the position of both countries in the context of the Marshall Plan negotiations, as well as in the context of the transatlantic relationship⁷.

Actually, in spite of its involvement in the Marshall Plan and its being a founding member of the OEEC in 1948, Italy's position in the emerging western system was still very

⁵ On Italy and the Marshall Plan see the recent contribution: Campus, Mauro (2008): *L'Italia, gli Stati Uniti e il Piano Marshall*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

⁶ See Pistone, Sergio (ed.) (1992): *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1945-1954*, Milano, Jaca Book; Spinelli, Altiero (1994): *Machiavelli nel secolo XX. Scritti dal confino e dalla clandestinità 1941-1944*, Bologna, il Mulino.

⁷ For a thoughtful analysis of this episode see Bagnato, Bruna (1995): *Storia di un'illusione europea. Il progetto di unione doganale italo-francese*, London, Lothian Foundation Press.



weak. Such an element had some relevant consequence on the Italian policy towards the European integration too in the immediate following years. When, in January 1948, Britain's Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin launched the proposal for a Western Union, Count Sforza showed some interest in the British project, although once again he pointed out Rome's aspiration at being recognised a status similar to the one enjoyed by the major Western European nations, i.e. Britain and France. In a few months Bevin's initiative would lead to the signature of the Brussels Pact, a political and military alliance that would include the UK, France and the Benelux nations. During the negotiations the project for a western European alliance had been labelled by the Italian parties of the left as a sort of "anti-Komintern" pact, so implying an anti-Soviet and aggressive character. In the heated atmosphere that characterised the first Italian electoral campaign De Gasperi feared that a premature Italian involvement in the five power talks would offer to the left parties a useful propaganda tool against the moderate coalition. So the Italian authorities decided to avoid any involvement in the future Brussels Pact. Moreover Italian political and diplomatic milieu was sceptical of any military alliance that would not include the US, the only real guarantee of the western European security. In May 1948, on the morrow of the April 1948 elections, which had marked the triumph of De Gasperi's Christian Democratic Party, the Italian Foreign Ministry thought that Italy now enjoyed a full US support and on the basis of such a wrong assumption some top Foreign Ministry officials hoped that Italy could bargain its adherence to the Brussels Pact. Palazzo Chigi – at that time the seat of the Italian Foreign Ministry – thought that it would be possible to achieve some concession from Britain on the issue of the former Italian colonies. The British Foreign Office rejected, almost with contempt, Rome's move. Moreover in that same period the major western powers were starting important negotiations which would lead to the creation of the Atlantic Alliance, the future main pillar of the western system⁸. Last but not least in the Autumn of 1948, owing to the initiatives promoted by European movements and as a consequence of the Congress of Europe held at the Hague in May, the five powers of the Brussels Treaty were going to initiate negotiations in order to create a "European assembly", the future Council of Europe⁹.

In an early stage the Italian political and diplomatic authorities had some difficulty in understanding what was going on in the emerging Western bloc, although they understood that Italy was risking to be marginalised by the "inner circle" of the western system. So the European integration appeared to Sforza and De Gasperi a useful instrument that would help Italy: in July 1948 Sforza held an important public speech in Perugia and he strongly advocated the transformation of the OEEC into a political body which would aim at the creation of a European union. Moreover he sent to the French government a memorandum in which he sketched out his plan. But the major western powers, France included, showed no interest whatsoever in the Italian proposal, as they were involved in the negotiations for the creation of a far more relevant Atlantic alliance. In October 1948 Sforza sent a further memorandum to the member states of the OEEC, but the reaction was at the best a lukewarm one¹⁰. Only in late 1948 the Italian leaders realised that the real issue at stake was the creation of the Atlantic Alliance: if Italy wished to be a member of the core of the western system, it had to be involved in this military alliance, although such a choice would be an impervious one, especially for domestic reasons related to the still uncertain Italian political balance. In spite of that, Britain, which opposed Italy's adhesion to the Atlantic Pact, began to think that

⁸ On the issue of Italy's involvement in the Atlantic Alliance see the article in this issue by de Leonardis, Massimo: *Italy's Atlanticism between Foreign and Internal Politics*.

⁹ Varsori, Antonio (1988): *Il Patto di Bruxelles (1948): tra integrazione europea e alleanza atlantica*, Roma, Bonacci.

¹⁰ On Sforza's policy see Sforza, Carlo (1952): *Cinque anni a Palazzo Chigi. La politica estera italiana dal 1947 al 1951*, Roma, Atlante.



Italy could join the future Council of Europe, which in Whitehall was perceived as by far less relevant than the Atlantic alliance. In January 1949 the Italian government, which was strongly supported by France and some US State Department officials, put forward its candidature to the Atlantic Alliance. In spite of British continuing opposition, Italy was accepted as a founding member of the western military alliance; moreover the Italian authorities could take part to the final negotiations that, in May 1949, would lead to the signature of the London Treaty and to the setting up of the Council of Europe¹¹.

In spite of this official recognition which appeared to mark Italy's full involvement in the European integration process, the Italian authorities did not focus their interest on this aspect of the nation's foreign policy. During the second half of 1949 and early 1950 the Italian government showed more interest in the revision of some clause of the Italian peace treaty, especially the fate of the former African empire¹²; moreover Italy aimed at being recognised, though with scant results, an influential role in the early structures of the Atlantic Alliance, so Italy's general attitude seemed to confirm that its European choice was subject to more relevant goals, especially the recovery of a relevant international status, as well as a place in the new western system.

2. Alcide De Gasperi and the Climax of Italy's Commitment to a Federal Europe (1950-1954)

The real turning point in Italy's European choice was closely linked to the dramatic development in the European integration process which was the consequence of the emerging functionalist approach advocated by Jean Monnet, as well as of the launching of the Schuman Plan in May 1950. When the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, in his famous speech, announced the plan for the creation of a supranational community that would administer the French and West German coal and steel industries, he pointed out that this new body would be open to other European countries¹³. Almost immediately the Italian Government declared its willingness to join the Schuman Plan. Once again in an early stage the Italian authorities' first goal was a further official recognition of Italy's international status; moreover De Gasperi and his close advisers did not ignore that such a plan was welcomed in Washington, so strengthening Italy's image in the eyes of US decision-makers. The participation to the Schuman Plan, however, involved some important decision about the nation's economic future and in early stage private industrial milieu was sceptical, if not hostile to the plan¹⁴. Italian entrepreneurs, especially in the steel sector, had been accustomed to the protectionist policies pursued by both pre-Fascist liberal governments and the Fascist regime, and they feared the competition with stronger and more powerful industrial systems. In spite of that the influential state-owned steel industry under the control of the IRI had been aware of the dramatic changes which were taking place in the international economic system dominated by

¹¹ Merlone, Roberto: "Faire du Conseil de l'Europe l'Union Européenne": le projet de Carlo Sforza", in Bitsch, Marie-Thérèse (ed.) (1997): *Jalons pur une histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*, Bern, Peter Lang, pp. 79-82.

¹² For a general assessment see Rossi, Gianluigi (1980): *L'Africa italiana verso l'indipendenza (1942-1949)*, Milan, Giuffrè.

¹³ There is a wide scholarly production on the Schuman Plan and Monnet's role; nevertheless see Spierenburg, Dirk and Poidevin, Raymond (1993): *Histoire de l'Haute Autorité de la Communauté Européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier. Une histoire supranationale*, Brussels, Bruylant; Bossuat, Gérard and Wilkens, Andreas (eds) (1999): *Jean Monnet, l'Europe et les chemins de la paix*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne.

¹⁴ On the Italian entrepreneurs' early attitude towards the European integration see Petrini, Francesco (2005): *Il liberismo a una dimensione. La Confindustria e l'integrazione europea 1947-1957*, Milan, Franco Angeli.



the US and they thought that a modernized Italian steel industry could favourably compete in a wider Western European market. The Marshall Plan ideals of an enlarged and integrated economic system had been welcomed by a tiny, although influential, group of politicians and state technocrats, who saw the Italian involvement in the Schuman Plan as a fundamental instrument in order to modernize the nation's economic system¹⁵. Moreover in the immediate post-war period the Italian political leadership had been confronted with a traditional social problem that had represented a stumbling block to Italy's economic progress: the presence of a large surplus of manpower, mainly composed by unskilled unemployed labour force from Southern Italy. Emigration had always been the easiest solution to such a traditional problem. In the immediate post-war years the Italian authorities had tried to work bilateral agreements with some European nation in order to open foreign labour markets to Italian immigrants, but with scant results; then they had hoped that the Marshall Plan could favour Italy's claims, but most western European countries had been hostile to the opening of their labour markets¹⁶. Now the Italian Government hoped that in the context of a wider and more ambitious project of a supranational character, such as the Schuman Plan, Italy could raise once again in a more effective way the thorny issue of Italy's unemployment.

The Italian delegation which took part to the Schuman Plan negotiations was effectively led by an influential Christian Democrat politician, Paolo Emilio Taviani and Italy's position was largely and positively influenced by the position of the tiny élite of politicians, diplomats and state technocrats who began to regard the country's adhesion to the integration process, not only as a way to strengthen Italy's international status, but also as an instrument to modernize the Italian economic system, a contribution to the solution of some long-term economic and social problem and a boost to Italy's economic and social progress¹⁷. Actually in that same period the Minister for Foreign Trade, the Republican Ugo La Malfa, enacted a series of liberalisation measures and an Italian economic expert¹⁸, Guido Carli, became the first president of the European Payment Union (EPU)¹⁹. Also private entrepreneurs began to be less sceptical towards the European integration as they realised that the governmental authorities would take into consideration their concerns. So the Italian delegation to the Schuman Plan negotiations was able to defend successfully the nation's interests: Italy's would accede to French iron material from Northern Africa, the principle of manpower mobility was recognised in the treaty and the Italian steel industry would enjoy a period of respite before being fully involved in the new integrated market. Especially the last provision offered the Italian authorities the opportunity for further modernising the state-owned steel industry, so the Italian steel plants would be able to compete successfully with their foreign competitors. In 1951 the Paris Treaty was signed and in 1952 the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was implemented. The economic factor became an important, almost vital, aspect of Italy's European choice.

The outbreak of the Korean War and the worsening contrast between the Western world and the Soviet bloc led to US and British pressures in order to rearm West Germany.

¹⁵ Ranieri, Ruggero and Tosi, Luciano (eds) (2004): *La Comunità Europea del Carbone e dell'Acciaio (1952-2002). Gli esiti del trattato in Europa e in Italia*, Padua, CEDAM.

¹⁶ On the emigration issue see Romero, Federico (1991): *Emigrazione e integrazione europea 1945-1973*, Rome, Edizioni Lavoro.

¹⁷ See the thoughtful analysis by Ranieri Ruggero, "L'Italia e i negoziati sul Piano Schuman", in Di Nolfo Ennio; Rainero, Romain; Vigezzi, Brunello (eds) (1986): *L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1945-1950)*, Milan, Marzorati, pp. 547-573.

¹⁸ On La Malfa see in general Mechi, Lorenzo (2003): *L'Europa di Ugo La Malfa. La via italiana alla modernizzazione (1942-1979)*, Milano, Franco Angeli.

¹⁹ On Guido Carli see Carli, Guido (1993): *Cinquant'anni di vita italiana*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.



France rejected the Anglo-American plans for creation of independent West German armed forces and in October 1950 the French Government, led by René Pleven, launched the plan for the creation of an integrated European army. Such a project, which was largely influenced by Jean Monnet and his advisers, would quickly develop into the scheme for the setting up of a European Defence Community (EDC) of a supranational character along the model of the ECSC. Although in an early stage both the US and France's Western European partners were sceptical of the French project, in February 1951 a conference was opened in Paris, which involved the six nations, which were already negotiating the Schuman Plan²⁰. So Italy joined the Paris talks, although the Italian authorities were convinced that such a scheme was doomed to failure and that the creation of a Western German army, integrated in the Atlantic Alliance machinery, would be the most obvious and feasible solution. But in summer 1951 the Paris conference was able to draft an important memorandum which appeared as a viable point of reference for the implementation of the Pleven plan. In the meantime the US administration had reassessed their policy towards the EDC and they became the staunchest advocates of a European Defence Community, which, in their opinion, could become the cornerstone of a federal anti-communist Europe. The Italian authorities, however, were sceptical of the EDC as the new Community was perceived as a threat to Italy's national interests from the political, military and economic viewpoints²¹. Nevertheless Italy could not contradict its Europeanist commitment, so in summer 1951 Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi, who was now also Foreign Minister, decided that Italy would launch an ambitious scheme based on the creation of a European Political Community (EPC). There have been different interpretations about De Gasperi's initiative. Some authors have interpreted De Gasperi's move as an instrument in order to safeguard the country's vital interests, as the political integration would conceal Italy's economic and military weakness. Other scholars claimed that the EPC scheme was the climax in the Italian growing commitment to the federalist ideal and De Gasperi's main goal would be the creation of a federal Europe. Perhaps there is some truth in both interpretations: De Gasperi thought that it would be possible to reconcile a strong federalist approach and the safeguard of the nation's most relevant interests. Moreover in De Gasperi's opinion there was no contradiction between Italy's commitment to the European integration and the country's faithfulness to the Atlantic alliance, without forgetting the defence of Italy's national interests²². This period can be regarded as the climax in both De Gasperi's and Italy's federalist choice. In May 1952 the EDC treaty was signed and article 38 foresaw the creation of a European Political Community, although such a scheme would be dealt with only after the implementation of the EDC. In the autumn of that same year, however, De Gasperi convinced his European partners, especially Schuman and Adenauer, that it would be possible to start immediate talks about the EPC: an "ad hoc" assembly was set up and in 1953 this body worked out the project of a European Political Community which, if implemented, would be a fundamental step towards the creation of a federal Europe²³.

²⁰ On the Pleven Plan see in general Ballini, Pier Luigi (ed.) (2009): *La Comunità Europea di Difesa (CED)*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino and Dumoulin, Michel (ed.) (2000), *La Communauté Européenne de Défense, lécons pour demain ?*, Bern, Peter Lang.

²¹ Varsori Antonio, "L'Italia fra alleanza atlantica e CED (1949-1954)", in *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 3, no. 1(1988).

²² For a "traditional" interpretation of De Gasperi's European choice see Pastorelli, Pietro (1987): *La politica estera italiana del dopoguerra*, Bologna, il Mulino; for a "federalist" interpretation see Preda, Daniela (2004): *Alcide De Gasperi federalista europeo*, Bologna, il Mulino. For a nuanced and balance view see Craveri, Piero (2006): *De Gasperi*, Bologna, il Mulino.

²³ Preda Daniela (1994); *Sulla soglia dell'unione. La vicenda della Comunità Politica Europea*, Milano, Jaca Book.



Nevertheless in a short while De Gasperi's hopes were frustrated: the development in the international situation, especially the growing opposition to the EDC in France and the change in the Soviet leadership after Stalin's death, would cause serious obstacles to the ratification of the Paris treaty. Moreover De Gasperi had to face a difficult domestic situation: both the right and the left criticised the Prime Minister for the still unsettled Trieste question and both the Communists and the Socialists had launched an effective propaganda campaign against the ratification of the EDC. De Gasperi tried to strengthen his political position through the implementation of a new electoral law, but the general elections held in June 1953 sealed the defeat of De Gasperi's electoral reform and in summer 1953 the Christian Democrat leader was compelled to resign from office. The new Italian government led by the Christian Democrat Giuseppe Pella, was strongly influenced by nationalist bias and Pella almost tried to "blackmail" Italy's western partners: Italy would ratify the EDC treaty if the US and Britain would comply with Italy's claims on the Trieste issue. In fact it was less and less likely that the French National Assembly would ratify the EDC treaty²⁴.

Although Pella's nationalist ambitions were largely frustrated and he was compelled to resign, the new government, formed by the Christian Democrat Mario Scelba in early 1954, was very cautious about the EDC issue and while the Italian cabinet confirmed its commitment to the European choice and the EDC, it would choose a "low profile" attitude and would wait for a clarification of France's position. In August 1954 the French National Assembly rejected the EDC treaty. Such an event was perceived in Western Europe as the failure of the functionalist approach advocated by Europe's "founding fathers". Actually the Italian authorities were mainly worried about the US reaction and by the American threats to come back to a sort of "neo-isolationist" policy. For the Italian moderate politicians the bond between Europe and the US, that mainly meant the Atlantic alliance, was a vital goal, as it was not only the symbol of the US commitment to western Europe's security, but was also the symbol of Italy's domestic balance, which would mean the main obstacle to the coming to power of the Italian Communist Party²⁵.

During the second half of 1954 Italy's main concern was the preservation of the unity of the West and of the Atlantic alliance. So the Italian authorities complied with the Eden plan, which in October 1954 led to the Paris agreements. Such treaties marked the full sovereignty of the German Federal Republic, as well as its involvement in NATO and in the new Western European Union (WEU), which was joined also by Italy. Although the Atlantic Pact had been saved and Italy could claim to be a partner also in the Western body that had been the outcome of the Brussels Pact's transformation, Italian political and diplomatic milieu were not too happy of the new western European balance, which appeared to be shaped by some special relationships: the Anglo-American bond, a renewed British-French "entente", a strengthened relationship between Bonn and Washington. In such a context, characterised by traditional military and political alliances, Italy seemed to be a minor partner²⁶. The threat of marginalisation would favour Italy's renewed commitment to the functionalist approach to the European construction.

²⁴ De Leonardis, Massimo (1992): *La "diplomazia atlantica" e la soluzione del problema di Trieste (1952-1954)*, Naples, ESI.

²⁵ Canavero Alfredo: "La politica estera di un ministro degli Interni. Scelba, Piccioni, Martino e la politica estera italiana", in *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1990), pp. 63-97.

²⁶ See the revealing evaluations in "memorandum by L. Benvenuti" (13 July 1954), *Archivio Storico del Ministero Affari Esteri* (ASMAE), "Direzione Generale degli Affari Politici" (DGAP), box No. 331. L. Benvenuti was a Christian Democrat and in that period he was the under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. A disciple of De Gasperi, he was a convinced federalist.



3. Italy and the re-Launching of Europe: a more Pragmatic Approach to the European integration (1955-1957)

During the mid-1950's, also owing to the developments in the domestic political situation, especially the crisis of the centre coalition governments, Italy's foreign policy experienced some relevant change. A new generation of Christian Democrat politicians, such as Giovanni Gronchi and Amintore Fanfani, advocated the launching of bold initiatives in the international context, which had to point out Italy's influential role in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Such a new tendency was labelled "neo-Atlanticism", a definition which implied a different interpretation of the Atlantic alliance and Italy's ambition, through a closer partnership with the US, to profit from the crisis of Britain's and France's imperial role²⁷. In spite of those ambitious goals, most Italian foreign policy makers did not forget the nation's Europeanist tradition and Italy joined the so-called "re-launching of Europe" from the Messina conference to the signature of the Rome Treaties. Although most scholarly contributions have played down Rome's role in the negotiations which led to the setting up of both the EEC and EURATOM, Italy's policy on those issues was an effective and coherent one. If West Germany and France were obviously the major players in the diplomatic game which characterised the "re-launching of Europe", from the beginning the Italian authorities singled out relevant practical goals, which were coherent with Rome's major national interests²⁸. As far as the project for a nuclear energy community, the Italian government was obviously interested in the creation of EURATOM as any development in this field would favour a country which had scant, if any, autonomous energy resources; moreover the Italian authorities had already showed their interest in developing a nuclear industry and Italy could enjoy an influential scientific tradition based on the studies developed in the 1930s by Enrico Fermi and other scientists²⁹. So the access to cheap energy sources would be an almost obvious boost to the country's economic development. The creation of a common market could pose some difficulties to the weak Italian industrial system, but Italy was ready to accept the challenge of competition with more powerful industrial partners if the Italian government could achieve some concession from the partner countries involved in the negotiations. In the opinion of some politicians, diplomats, industrialists and technocrats the participation to the European Economic Community could be a precious opportunity for the take-off of the Italian economy and for the economic and social modernization of the peninsula; last but not least, it could concur to the solution of the Mezzogiorno problem³⁰.

In this context the Italian delegation in the Spaak committee and later on in the inter-governmental conference aimed at achieving the following aims: a) the setting up of a European social policy that could solve the problems caused by the creation of a unified market, b) the recognition of the principle of manpower mobility, which could open the labour markets of the Community to Italian immigrants, c) the principle of a regional European policy which would concur to the solution of the *Mezzogiorno* [i. e. Southern Italy] problem, d) a policy of European investments that would boost the development of the Italian economic system, e) some reference to supranational political goals which would favour

²⁷ On this aspect of Italy's foreign policy see Brogi, Alessandro (1996): *L'Italia e l'egemonia Americana nel Mediterraneo*, Florence, La Nuova Italia and Id. (2002): *A Question of self-esteem. The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and in Italy, 1944-1958*, Westport/London, Praeger.

²⁸ See in general Serra, Enrico (ed.) (1989): *Il rilancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma*, Brussels-Milan-Paris-Baden Baden, Bruylant-Giuffrè-LGDJ-Nomos.

²⁹ Curli, Barbara (2000): *Il progetto nucleare italiano (1952-1964). Conversazioni con Felice Ippolito*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino.

³⁰ See the important memorandum on a meeting held in Rome on the eve of the Messina conference: "Note for the Minister" (26 May 1955), *Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU), R. Ducci Records*.



Italy's position vis-à-vis its major European partners. Although the signature of the Rome treaties was mainly the outcome of a series of compromises between West Germany and France, Italy was able to achieve most of the goals the Rome authorities had been singled out in May 1955 on the eve of the Messina conference: manpower mobility was accepted by Italy's partners, the EEC treaty foresaw the creation of a European Social Fund (ESF) and of a European Investments Bank (EIB), the need to develop a regional policy was officially recognised and in the treaties there was some reference to the supranational political integration³¹. So Italy's policy was at the origins of the European social policy and the regional policy; from the late 1950s Italian immigrants could reach the new promising West German labour market and Italy's economic miracle was also the outcome of the setting up of a wider European market where the Italian booming industry would find an outlet for its manufactured products. Italy's confirmation of the European choice was perhaps less appealing and idealistic than the one advocated by De Gasperi, but it was a practical and rewarding one, as it became an important, almost a vital, stimulus to the country's rapid economic growth and to its social transformation and modernization³². Such factors would not be forgotten by Italian decision-makers in the following decades and they were perhaps the most important pillars of Italy's long-term steady commitment to the integration process.

4. Italy and the European Choice during the Centre-Left Era: Ambitions and Disappointments (1958-1968)

Between the late 1950s and the early 1960s Italy experienced the most dramatic transformation in its history: owing to a tumultuous economic boom the nation passed from a mainly backward society to a modern industrial one, although serious contradictions still characterised the Italian scene. Moreover a new political formula was worked out and in 1963 the first centre-left government was created, owing to the dialogue between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists which had started some years earlier³³. That was a period of great hopes and an optimistic mood shaped the attitude of the centre-left politicians, who thought that Italy had recovered the full role of a middle rank power, whose status was similar to the one enjoyed by the major western European nations: France, West Germany and Britain. The European construction was one of the contexts, with the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the East-West dialogue, in which the Italian Governments aimed at developing a more determined and ambitious foreign policy. In that same period, however, the European scene was strongly influenced by the coming back to power in France by General de Gaulle and by his foreign policy, so Italy was often confronted with de Gaulle's policy and goals³⁴.

In an early stage General de Gaulle was compelled to focus his attention and energies on the solution of the Algerian crisis, while, as far as France's international status was concerned, the French President hoped that NATO could be transformed through the creation of a "directorship" composed by the US, the United Kingdom and –obviously –

³¹ The position of the Italian delegation during the negotiations which led to the Rome treaties can be analysed through the records kept at the HAEU, CM 3/NEGO.

³² Ranieri, Ruggero: "L'Italia e l'integrazione economica europea negli anni Cinquanta", in *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 13-14, no. 1-2 (1998-1999), pp. 361-376.

³³ On Italy during the centre-left see Craveri, Piero (1996): *La Repubblica dal 1958 al 1992*, Milan, TEA. See also Castronovo, Valerio (2010): *L'Italia del miracolo economico*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

³⁴ On de Gaulle's foreign policy see Vaisse, Maurice (1998): *La Grandeur. Politique étrangère du Général de Gaulle 1958-1969*, Paris, Fayard.



France. But neither Washington nor London could accept de Gaulle's project, while France's European partners, especially West Germany and Italy, were obviously suspicious of France's motives and goals. In 1960, however, de Gaulle realised that his project for a reform of the NATO structures had failed and he switched his attention to the European Community. In this context de Gaulle launched the project for a European union, the so-called Fouchet Plan, which would favour close forms of intergovernmental cooperation in the political, cultural and military fields³⁵. Italy's reaction was a cautious one, but the Italian authorities favoured the starting of negotiations and they took an active part in the talks on the Fouchet Plan. In this context a leading role was played by Amintore Fanfani, who in this period was perhaps the most influential member of the Christian Democracy and Italy's Prime Minister³⁶. Both Fanfani and the Italian Foreign Ministry, which had changed its seat to the Farnesina building, were suspicious of de Gaulle's hegemonic goals, but they were convinced that France was a vital factor in the European construction. Moreover there were some positive elements in the French project as it would strengthen the position enjoyed by the "Six" in a rapidly changing international system and it was hoped that Italy could profit from such a development. So between 1960 and 1962 the Italian delegation tried to favour a compromise solution which would reconcile the French position with the one advocated by the Benelux countries, especially the Netherlands which were hostile to de Gaulle's schemes. The Italian authorities did not forget the need to maintain a close bond between the Fouchet Plan and both the EEC and the Atlantic alliance. In late 1961 Rome's efforts for a compromise appeared to be successful, but the dramatic change in de Gaulle's position led to the failure of the whole project. Nevertheless it is not surprising that the Italian Government tried to avoid any decision which could lead to a crisis of the EEC as the Rome authorities were too conscious of the advantages the Italian economy was obtaining from the country's participation to the Common Market³⁷. The aspiration at playing the role of a mediator characterised Rome's European policy also on the issue of the first attempt at an enlargement of the European Community. In spite of their early hostility to the "re-launching of Europe" and of the creation of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), in summer 1961 the British authorities put forward Britain's candidature to the EEC; a few months later an official negotiation started in Brussels³⁸.

The Italian government openly supported Britain's application. In Rome it was thought that Britain's involvement in the EEC would have a moderating influence on de Gaulle's hegemonic goals; moreover the Italian authorities were aware of Washington's support to London's candidature and Fanfani and his political allies hoped that Italy could please the US administration, whose recognition of the centre-left experiment was a major goal for the Italian politicians who favoured such an initiative³⁹. Last but not least members of the centre-left parties regarded Britain as a political and social model for the policy of bold

³⁵ Soutou, Georges-Henri: "Le Général de Gaulle et le Plan Fouchet d'union politique européenne: un projet stratégique", in Deighton, Anne and Milward, Alan (eds) (1999): *Widening, Deepening and Acceleration. The European Economic Community 1957-1963*, Baden-Baden, Nomos and Caviglia, Daniele (2000): *De Gaulle e il tentativo di spostare l'asse politico europeo: il Piano Fouchet*, Padua, CEDAM.

³⁶ Martelli, Evelina (2008): *L'altro atlantismo. Fanfani e la politica estera italiana 1958-1963*, Milan, Guerini; Giovagnoli, Agostino and Tosi, Luciano (eds) (2010): *Amintore Fanfani e la politica estera italiana*, Venice, Marsilio.

³⁷ On Italy's position see for example the documents: Documents no. 118 and no. 120, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1962, Bern, Peter Lang.

³⁸ Kaiser, Wolfram (1996): *Using Europe Abusing the Europeans: Britain and European Integration*, London, Macmillan; Ludlow, Piers (1997): *Dealing with Britain: the Six and the First UK Application to the EEC*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

³⁹ Nuti, Leopoldo (1999): *Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra. Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.



reforms they were advocating in the domestic context. So the Italian authorities did their best in order to solve the numerous problems that were threatening the successful outcome of the Brussels negotiations. Although the British cabinet appreciated the Italian delegation's initiatives and they formed a positive opinion of Emilio Colombo, the head of the Italian delegation, the British government perceived Italy as a minor actor, unable to exert a vital influence on the political aspects of London's application to the Common Market. On its part, in late 1962 the Italian Foreign ministry realised that the French were stiffening their position and put pressure on London in order to do some concession in the economic field as a means to overcome the growing political difficulties; moreover the Italian authorities thought that British economic claims would never be fully accepted by the "Six", as they would threaten the main characters of the EEC, especially its being a regional economic area, as well as the attempts at creating a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Italy's advice, however, was not taken into consideration in London, where Italy's influence was underrated⁴⁰. Some Italian politician, such as Ugo La Malfa, put forward the project for an Anglo-Italian cooperation treaty on the model of the French-German one that Adenauer and de Gaulle were negotiating, but in London such an initiative was regarded as a bizarre move, while Fanfani and the Italian Foreign Ministry disavowed La Malfa's initiative as it was too risky and they still hoped that some compromise solution could be achieved⁴¹. Actually in January 1963 General de Gaulle publicly announced his veto to Britain's admission to the EEC. The Italian authorities confirmed their support to London's candidature, but they were not ready to put much pressure on de Gaulle, as the preservation of the Common Market machinery and its economic advantages were the top priorities of the Rome Government⁴².

So, although most Italian politicians pointed out their commitment to the Europeanist ideals, the Italian government's attitude to the European Community was a pragmatic one. Such a position was confirmed on the occasion of the "empty chair" crisis which took place in 1965/1966. Italy played a leading role in unleashing the crisis, as, especially in an early stage, the contrast between the "five" and France was the outcome of the negative evaluation by both the Italian and the German authorities of the CAP early machinery. Especially in the Italian case the CAP was becoming a burden to the Italian budget and Italian peasants enjoyed very few advantages from this European policy⁴³. When the crisis broke out in summer 1965 the Italian Foreign Minister, Fanfani, had no intention to give up on the agricultural issue, while he appeared more ready to find out a compromise on the political aspects, that is the political role of the European Commission. But in the later phase of the crisis Fanfani, who was compelled to stay in New York as he had been appointed chairman of the UN Assembly, played a minor role. So it was to the Treasury Minister, Emilio Colombo, to represent the Italian position; Colombo favoured a compromise solution and in a meeting he had with the French Foreign Minister, Maurice Couve de Murville, he sketched out a formula that was similar to the so-called Luxembourg compromise. Once again the Italian authorities, in spite of the lip service paid to the competences and role of the European Commission and to the federalist ideals, were more interested in the economic advantages of the EEC and in

⁴⁰ Varsori, "La Cenerentola ...", *op. cit.*, pp. 175-187.

⁴¹ For the British Cabinet's reaction to La Malfa's initiative see the documents in *National Archives London (NAL)*, Foreign Office 371 (FO 371), CJ 1051/4 and CJ 1051/11 (163718).

⁴² On the Italian Foreign Ministry's evaluation of the whole episode see "memorandum by R. Ducci to A. Piccioni (04 February 1963), ASMAE, "Pansa Cedronio Files".

⁴³ See the important "letter by the Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro to the President of the European Commission, W. Hallstein" (06 June 1964), *Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS)*, Presidenza Consiglio dei Ministri 1962-1964, box No. 667.



safeguarding the Common Market⁴⁴. Such a cautious and pragmatic attitude was confirmed on the occasion of the second British application to the European Community: the Italian authorities confirmed their support to London's candidature but they were sceptical about the possibility to have Britain as a full member of the EEC, at least until de Gaulle was in power⁴⁵. On the contrary the Italian authorities focused their attention on the possibility that some form of European construction could lead to scientific and technological cooperation, as in the late 1960s there was a growing awareness in Europe of the technological gap between the "old continent" and the US and such a gap would negatively influence the future perspectives of western Europe's economy and industrial system. However Italy's initiative in both the EEC and NATO was premature and the only result was a bi-lateral agreement with the US⁴⁶.

Although Italy's political initiatives during the de Gaulle era had scant results, the Italian economy profited in a substantial way from the nation's involvement in the integration process. Moreover, through the participation to the European Community, Italy experienced a process of economic and social modernization that contributed to the radical transformation of the country. The political, diplomatic and economic elites were fully aware of the important role the EEC played in such a process and, in spite of their concern about the lack of a political integration, they thought that the defence of the European Community, especially of its customs union, was a vital national interest⁴⁷. It is a commonplace that the Italian authorities paid scant attention to the role Italian officials and diplomats could play in the structures of the European Community. Actually, although during the late 1950s and the 1960s there were some inconsistencies in the policy pursued by Italian governments on this issues, from the mid-1960s onwards some Italian members of the European Commission had an important part in the Commission's activities; in this context it would be possible to remember the role played by Lionello Levi Sandri, who was also deputy-President of the Commission and his activities were at the origins of important decisions in the field of the Community's social policy, especially as far as the regulations related to manpower mobility were concerned. Another Italian Commissioner, Edoardo Martino, exerted some influence in the early decisions by the Commission dealing with the Community's external relations and, for example, he supported the freezing of the Association agreement with Greece as a consequence of the military coup of April 1967. So, if Italy's role during the first decade of the Community's life cannot be compared to the one played by France and West Germany, Italy was not a passive actor and both its initiatives and the ones by the Italian representatives in Brussels concurred in shaping some relevant character of the European Community⁴⁸.

⁴⁴ Varsori (2010): "La Cenerentola...", *op. cit.*, pp. 187-203. Several important records about Fanfani's role are available in the *Archivio Storico del Senato (ASS)*, *Amintore Fanfani Files*, box No. 35. In general about the "empty chair crisis" see Palayret, Jean-Marie; Wallane, Helen and Winand, Pascaline (eds) (2006): *Visions, Votes and Vetoes. The Empty Chair Crisis and the Luxembourg Compromise Forty Years On*, Brussels/Bern, PIE/Peter Lang.

⁴⁵ "Record of conversation Brown-Fanfani" (29 December 1967), *NAL*, *FCO 33/344*.

⁴⁶ On this Italian initiative see the records in *ASMAE*, *Bettini Files*.

⁴⁷ Ranieri, Ruggero: "L'industria italiana e l'integrazione comunitaria: una sfida riuscita", in Craveri, Piero and Varsori, Antonio (eds.) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 187-210.

⁴⁸ See in general Varsori, Antonio: "L'Italia a Bruxelles: i membri italiani della Commissione", in Craveri Piero, and Varsori, Antonio (eds) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 145-164. On Levi Sandri see Mechi, Lorenzo and Varsori, Antonio (eds.) (2008): *Lionello Levi Sandri e la politica sociale europea*, Milan, Franco Angeli.



5. Italy Confronts a New European Integration (1969-1973)

The Hague summit conference held in December 1969 marked a turning point in the European integration; the process that was initiated on this occasion led to a Community that had different characters and goals⁴⁹. From the late 1940s till the late 1960s the European construction had been characterised by definite patterns: a) the pivotal role played by the Europe of the “Six”, b) the implementation of very few European policies - mainly the customs union and the CAP, c) the leading influence exerted by moderate, usually Christian Democrat, parties, d) a strong pro-Atlanticist and pro-US position, in spite of de Gaulle’s attempt at pursuing a more independent policy. The late 1960s, however, meant a sort of “revolution” in the European social and political scenario, which, at least for a decade, saw a definite switch to the left; as far as the international context was concerned, the transatlantic relationship weakened and western Europe aimed at developing a more independent role from the US, the hope of a continuing economic growth was frustrated by the economic crisis of the early 1970s and the monetary turmoil which characterised the whole decade; some of the values on which the European integration had been built up, such as a moderate Catholic Europe, disappeared or weakened. So, although in the Community’s activities there were some relevant elements of continuity, especially as far as the institutions and the treaties were concerned, a new “spirit” in the European integration surfaced: the decisions taken at the Hague conference were the early evidence of such a change, which was confirmed by the declaration of the Paris summit of October 1972 on Europe’s social identity and of the Copenhagen summit of December 1973 on Europe’s political identity. The Community experienced its first enlargement and the “Six” were joined by Ireland, Denmark and the UK; new policies were launched or old policies were strengthened (social policy, regional policy, energy policy, environmental policy, monetary policy); a Community budget was set up, an embryo European foreign policy was created through the European Political Cooperation (EPC)⁵⁰.

Which was Italy’s reaction to such a dramatic change in the characters of the European integration? With the exception of the decision on the Community’s enlargement which had been a traditional goal of Italy’s foreign policy, the other goals approved at The Hague appeared to create concern rather than enthusiasm in Rome. The creation of a common budget was tied to the implementation in the member states of a fiscal reform, the implementation of the Value Added Tax (VAT), that would cause serious difficulties to both the Italian public administration and the country’s weakening economic system as the Italian economy was entering a long period of growing difficulties (inflation, high state deficit, etc.). The Community’s aspiration at launching a monetary policy was perceived in a negative way by Italian economic and political milieu and by the Bank of Italy, which had scant confidence in a system that aimed at becoming independent from the dollar. Last but not least the strengthening of the CAP was still interpreted as a novelty which would not give Italy relevant advantages⁵¹. In order to counterbalance such developments, the Italian authorities singled some goals whose achievement would be a positive factor for Italy’s national interests. In this context Italy advocated the reform of the Community’s social policy and the launching of a new and bold European regional policy; from the implementation of both

⁴⁹ On the Hague summit see Guasconi, Maria Eleonora (2004): *L’Europa tra cambiamento e continuità. Il vertice dell’Aja del 1969 e il rilancio della costruzione europea*, Florence, Polistampa.

⁵⁰ See Van der Harst (ed.) (2007): *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community’s Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion 1969-1975*, Brussels-Paris-Baden Baden, Bruylant-LGDJ-Nomos. For an analysis of the social and cultural transformations see Chassaigne, Philippe (2008) : *Les années 1970. Fin d’un monde et origine de notre modernité*, Paris, Colin.

⁵¹ For a general assessment see Varsori (2010): “La Cenerentola ...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-283.



policies Italy hoped to profit very much, as usual in order to face the *Mezzogiorno* problem. Actually, at least in theory, Italy's initiatives were partially successful as there was a reform of the ESF, in 1974 the first European Social Action Programme was launched, while in 1975 the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was set up⁵². Moreover during the early 1970s Italy's role in Brussels appeared to be strengthened: in 1970 an Italian, the Christian Democrat Franco Maria Malfatti, was appointed President of the European Commission, and a well-known and active representative of the federalist movement, Altiero Spinelli became member of the Commission. Moreover during the 1970s Italy could rely on other influential Commissioners such as Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza and Lorenzo Natali⁵³. In spite of those achievements, in a few years, Italy's position in the integration process was severely hampered and by the mid-1970s Italy would be perceived as "Europe's Cinderella"⁵⁴. Such a negative evolution had some definite reasons: a) the worsening of Italy's domestic situation from the economic, social and political viewpoints; b) the lack of confidence in the European partners showed by relevant sectors of Italy's political world, c) the negative perception of the Italian internal situation offered by the international media, d) some decision taken by the Italian authorities such as the floating of the lira and its leaving the European monetary "snake" in 1973, as well as the decision to rely on the US financial support in order to face the financial and economic crisis⁵⁵.

Although in the aftermath of The Hague Summit conference, Italy tried to pursue a consistent European policy and the Italian authorities could claim some partial achievements, by 1973/1974 Italy was perceived by most member states more as a problem rather than an asset for the European Community

6. Italy and the European Community: Crisis and Recovery (1974-1979)

By the mid-1970s Italy was perceived by its western powers as one of the weakest links in the Western European system. The economic system appeared on the verge of a total collapse; the traditional moderate political class seemed to be unable to cope with the serious domestic problems that were shaking the nation's structures; social turmoil was widespread; terrorist attacks both from the extreme right and the extreme left were threatening the basis of the Italian democratic system; last but not least, the only solution to the country's plight appeared to be the involvement of the powerful Communist Party in governmental responsibilities, a perspective which was feared by Italy's Western allies. So in the European context some foreign opinion-makers opined the Italy could be left out of the Western European system. Italy's shaky position was not isolated, as in the mid-1970s most western decision-makers were concerned about the future of the whole southern European area: in April 1974 the "Carnation Revolution" in Portugal opened a period of social turmoil and political uncertainty and in Lisbon the extreme left seemed to be on the eve of coming to power; in July 1974 the

⁵² Mechi, Lorenzo and Varsori, Antonio: "At the Origins of the European Structural Policy: the Community's Social and Regional Policies from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s", in Van der Harst (ed.) (2007), *op. cit.*, pp. 223-250.

⁵³ Varsori Antonio: "L'Italia a Bruxelles ...", *op. cit.*, in Craveri Piero and Varsori Antonio (eds) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 145-164. Important primary sources about the role played by Malfatti, Spinelli, Scarascia Mugnozza and Natali are available in the HAEU.

⁵⁴ This definition was the title of an article written by the "Times" correspondent in Rome, Peter Nichols in 1973 (*Italy feeling itself the Cinderella of Europe*).

⁵⁵ On Italy's position see the interesting records available in *Luigi Sturzo Institute (AILS), Giulio Andreotti Archive, box No. 353*.



military regime in Greece fell and, although a moderate government, led by Konstantinos Karamanlis, took power, the new Prime Minister was almost compelled by a wave of strong anti-American feelings to announce Greece's decision to leave NATO; Greece's internal developments had been fuelled by the failed coup d'état in Cyprus and by the island's Turkish invasion; last but not least in 1975 Franco's illness was opening the path to a phase of political and social uncertainty about Spain's future. As nobody could foresee the positive developments that would characterise Southern Europe in the following decades Italy was not perceived as an exception in this gloomy scenario⁵⁶. Although during the second half of the 1970s the Italian governments were very weak and shaken by tragic episodes such as in spring 1978 the kidnapping and assassination of former Prime Minister Aldo Moro, most Italian leaders and diplomats were aware that the confirmation of Italy's loyalty to the European integration was a vital choice in order to defend Italy's being a full member of the western system. So, in spite of their weakness, the Italian governments strongly reaffirmed their commitment to the European construction and, for example, were strong advocates of the political integration and of a strengthened role for the European Parliament through the direct election of the members of the Strasbourg assembly.

In this context a major development was the radical change in the Italian Communists' attitude towards the integration process. From the late 1960s onward members of the Italian Communist Party had been admitted to the European Parliament; moreover the Communist leadership led by Enrico Berlinguer, although still critical of some aspects of the European integration, began to regard the integration process as an important positive phenomenon and during the 1970s they began to support a federalist approach. In 1976 the federalist leader and former European Commissioner, Altiero Spinelli, announced his candidature as an independent for the PCI to the Italian elections and in 1979 the Italian Communist Party supported his candidature to the first European elections. Actually the Communist Party's position about the European construction, as well as Berlinguer's acceptance of Italy's membership in NATO were characterised by some ambiguities; as far as the European choice was concerned, the Italian Communist leaders always referred to a federal Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to the Urals in an international context, where military alliances would be abolished⁵⁷. It was very difficult for Western leaders and diplomats to regard in an enthusiastic way such projects and they were still very sceptical about the Italian Communists' real conversion to both the western world and the European ideals. So, in spite of the Italian Communists' statements of their loyalty to the Europeanist ideals, Bonn, Paris and London, with the obvious support of Washington did every effort in order to avoid the Communist Party's direct involvement in governmental responsibilities.

Western fears reached their climax between 1975 and 1976, especially on the occasion of the Italian general elections which appeared destined to lead to the Communist Party's "overcoming" (*sorpasso*) the Christian Democracy. In spite of Christian Democrats' maintaining a leading position, the Communist scored about 34 % of the polls and the new Prime Minister, the Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti, was compelled to form a government which had to rely on the benign attitude of the Communists in the Parliament. In this period Italy's economy was experiencing serious financial difficulties and the Rome authorities needed the support of their major Western European partners, as well as of the US

⁵⁶ For the western reaction to the crises in Southern Europe of the mid-1970's see the recent contribution De Piero, Mario; Gavin, Victor; Guirao, Fernando; Varsori, Antonio (2010): *Democrazie. La fine delle dittature nell'Europa meridionale*, Florence, Le Monnier.

⁵⁷ Varsori (2010): "La Cenerentola...", *op. cit.*, pp. 299-314. Relevant documents about the Italian Communists' attitude towards the European integration are available at the archives of the "Fondazione Istituto Gramsci" (Rome).



and the IMF. The major members of the European Community, with the support of the US administration, worked out a strategy which was based on the assumption that Italy would receive western financial aid subject to the condition that the Communists would not be directly involved in the future Italian cabinet. In the policy pursued by Bonn, Paris, London and Washington the European Community was a useful instrument in a western strategy whose main goal was Italy's political and economic stabilisation⁵⁸. On the other hand, in the opinion of Rome's moderate leaders and diplomats, Italy's European choice was an important way to maintain the peninsula's link with the western world, while the Italian Communists' European choice was not enough to convince Italy's major western allies of the Communist Party's conversion to the West and its fundamental ideals.

Between 1976 and 1978 the Italian political class, especially Prime Minister Andreotti, was able to achieve some respite from its Western partners and in spite of the fact that in 1978, due to the dramatic crisis provoked by the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, Andreotti formed a government of "national unity", indirectly supported by the Communists, there was no open negative reaction on the part of both the major western partners and the European Community. But during the second half of 1978 the European choice would lead to a further dramatic change in Italy's domestic situation. Between late 1977 and early 1978 West Germany and France began to work out a plan which aimed at the creation of a more effective European monetary system⁵⁹. Italy joined the negotiations and hoped to achieve relevant concessions about the rate of exchange, the funding the regional policy and the CAP; in such a context the Italian diplomacy thought that the Italian government could create a common front with Britain. Although in an early stage Italian political milieu and public opinion did not pay much attention to this issue, during the second half of 1978 numerous influential milieu showed a sceptical attitude towards the project for a European Monetary System: the Governor of the Bank of Italy, Paolo Baffi, was doubtful about its effectiveness, the Italian industrialists preferred the short-term advantages of a weak lira, the parties of the Left, especially the Communists, feared that the lira's involvement in the future EMS would involve deflationary policies that would hit the working class⁶⁰. In late November, on the eve of the final European summit due to be held in Brussels, the British Cabinet informed the Italian authorities that London would not join the European project, so leaving the Italians to face alone the other European partners⁶¹; moreover the Italian Communists openly stated their objections to the lira's immediate participation to the EMS; the Communist Party's opposition to the EMS very likely would involve a governmental crisis a few months after Moro's assassination and in a troubled political atmosphere⁶². In spite of all that, Andreotti and the Christian Democracy, supported by the small moderate parties, decided that Italy would immediately join the European Monetary System. Such a decision, which was coherent with Italy's traditional European commitment, would cause the end of the "national unity" government and in a few months the Communists came back to the opposition⁶³. Moreover in 1979 the Italian Government would comply with the NATO's decisions about the euro-missiles. In a few months Italy had confirmed both its loyalty to the Atlantic alliance and to

⁵⁸ Varsori, Antonio: "le potenze occidentali e il problema comunista in Italia", *Ventesimo Secolo*, no. 16 (2008).

⁵⁹ On the creation of the EMS see Ludlow, Peter (1982): *The Making of the European Monetary System. A Case Study of the Politics of the European Community*, London, Butterworth.

⁶⁰ On Italy's adhesion to the EMS see the important records available at AILS, *Giulio Andreotti Archive*, box No. 399 and box No. 400. See for example box No. 400, "letter P. Baffi to G. Andreotti" (09 November 1978).

⁶¹ "Letter. J. Callaghan to G. Andreotti" (29 November 1978), AILS, *Giulio Andreotti Archive*, Box No. 400.

⁶² On the Italian Communists' position see Barca, Luciano (2005): *Cronache dall'interno del PCI*, 3 vols, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, pp. 474-763.

⁶³ "memorandum" (09 December 1978), AILS, *Giulio Andreotti Archive*, box No. 399.



the European Community, so joining the western bloc in the emerging second cold war. Italy's participation to the EMS was not only a confirmation of the nation's steady alignment to the West and the end of the uncertainties of the 1970s, but it also represented an early test of what would be labelled as Italy's European "external bond". Through the involvement in the EMS Italian decision-makers could impose to the Italian public opinion unpopular economic policies, which they would be unable to pursue without the international constraints decided in Brussels. So the European choice would become an almost vital element of internal economic policy, to which the Rome authorities would resort on further occasions in the future⁶⁴.

7. Italy and the European Integration in the 1980s: the Ambitions of the Craxi Era (1980-1992)

During the 1980s Italy experienced a period of apparent economic recovery, political stability and social modernization. The Italian Governments, characterised by politicians such as Craxi, Andreotti, De Michelis, etc. were able to overcome the difficulties and problems of the 1970s and Italy recovered a positive international image⁶⁵. As an almost obvious consequence Italian decision-makers came back to an ambitious foreign policy; actually Italy appeared to play a relevant role in the Atlantic Alliance and profited from a renewed strong bond with the US, especially owing to its firm commitment to the instalment of the euro-missiles; in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the Italian authorities launched a series of initiatives that marked Rome's independent and influential role. As far as the European integration, in an early stage Italy's position was negatively influenced by the general stalemate which characterised the European Community during the early 1980s, although the Rome government strongly advocated the reinforcement of the political integration –Italy's usual long-term European goal – and tried to launch some joint German-Italian initiative, such as in the case of the Colombo-Genscher declaration⁶⁶. Actually a new "re-launching of Europe" took place between 1983 and 1984 as a consequence of a new French-German rapprochement, which was sealed in 1985 with the appointment of Jacques Delors as President of the European Commission. Both President François Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl had realised that only through a renewed European commitment the "old continent" could face the challenges posed by a rapidly changing international context and by the early symptoms of a globalised economy⁶⁷.

Especially during the first half of 1985 Italy played a relevant and autonomous role in supporting this new French-German strategy. In January 1985 the Italian Government, led by Bettino Craxi, took the presidency of the European Community and the Rome authorities aimed at marking this period through some relevant achievements. First of all, also owing to

⁶⁴ On the "external bond" see Gualtieri, Roberto: "L'Europa come vincolo esterno", in Craveri and Varsori (eds) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 313-331.

⁶⁵ On Italy in the 1980s see Di Nolfo, Ennio (ed.) (2003): *La politica estera italiana negli anni Ottanta*, Manduria, Lacaita; Colarizi, Simona; Craveri, Piero; Pons, Silvio and Quagliariello, Gaetano (eds.) (2004): *Gli anni Ottanta come storia*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino and the recent Gervasoni, Marco (2010): *Storia dell'Italia negli anni Ottanta. Quando eravamo moderni*, Venice, Marsilio.

⁶⁶ See Stark, Hans (2004): *Kohl, l'Allemagne et l'Europe. La politique d'intégration européenne de la république Fédérale 1982-1988*, Paris, l'Harmattan, pp. 32-42.

⁶⁷ On the French-German relationship see in general Soutou, Georges-Henri (1996): *L'alliance incertaine. Le rapports politico.stratégiques franco-allemands 1954-1996*, Paris, Fayard. On the French-German initiatives see also Delors, Jacques (2003): *Mémoires*, Paris, Plon.



the initiatives of the Italian Foreign Minister, Giulio Andreotti, Italy favoured the quick conclusions of the negotiations which led to the adhesion of both Spain and Portugal to the EC. In the opinion of the Italian authorities such a development would favour a new balance in the Community, so if the Italian agriculture would have to face the competition of the Mediterranean products from the Iberian peninsula, southern European interests would have a major influence in Brussels and in the long run the Italian agriculture and the regions of the “Mezzogiorno” would profit from such a new balance. However Italy’s attention focused on the plans for a reinforcement of the political integration and for a reform of the Rome treaties⁶⁸. As in the past the Italian authorities, whose position was strengthened by the initiatives pursued during the early 1980s by Altiero Spinelli and by the European Parliament, hoped that a supra-national approach would be also a boost to Italy’s national interests⁶⁹. In this context on the occasion of the Milan European Council the Italian delegation, led by Craxi and Andreotti, played a significant role, as the two Italian leaders were able to impose a majority vote on the issue of the convening of an intergovernmental conference which would deal with the reform of the Rome Treaties. The Italian delegation’s initiative led to the Luxembourg conference and to the signature of the Single European Act, the first significant change in the Rome Treaties. In spite of this relevant diplomatic achievement, the Italian government appeared unable to rip the fruits of this success as during the Luxembourg negotiations the Rome authorities decided to stick to a strict federalist approach, which was not shared by Italy’s European partners. So it is not surprising that while some Italian scholars still regard the Milan council as a cornerstone in Italy’s European policy, several foreign historians and witnesses have played down the importance of such a Council, as well as Italy’s role⁷⁰.

That was not, however, the only contradiction of Italy’s European policy. Most Italian decision-makers still regarded the country’s European choice mainly as a matter of high politics and usually in such a context the Italian position was an effective one. Few Italian politicians on the contrary understood that, also owing to the Single European Act, the European integration had experienced some relevant developments, especially the implementation of a new budget and of new European policies. But such a radical change involved new responsibilities and duties for the member-states at every level, from the parliament to the national bureaucracy, to the local authorities, especially the regions. Such an attitude often prevented Italy from exploiting the opportunities offered by the European Community in various fields: the CAP, the regional policy and from the late 1980s in general the launching of the structural funds. On the contrary on several occasions, also as a consequence of the Italian civil service’s ineffectiveness, the Italian Government was compelled to face onerous fines for lack of compliance with Brussels’ regulations⁷¹. So during the second half of the 1980s there was a steady decline of Italy’s role and image in the

⁶⁸ On Italy’s role on the occasion of the Milan European Council see the documents in *AILS, Giulio Andreotti Archive, box No. 377*.

⁶⁹ On Spinelli’s initiatives see Spinelli, Altiero (1992): *Diario europeo, 1976-1986*, vol. 3, Bologna, il Mulino. In general on Spinelli see Graglia, Piero (2008): *Altiero Spinelli*, Bologna, il Mulino.

⁷⁰ For a contrast of views see Mammarella, Giuseppe: “Il Consiglio Europeo di Milano del giugno 1985”, in Di Nolfo (ed.) (2003), *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300 ; Védrine, Hubert (1996), *Les mondes de François Mitterrand. A l’Elysée 1981-1995*, Paris, Fayard; Dumas, Roland (2007): *Affaires Etrangères, 1981-1988*, vol. 1, Paris, Fayard.

⁷¹ Mechi, Lorenzo, “Abilità diplomatica, insuccessi economici, progressi amministrativi. Appunti per una storia dell’Italia e i fondi strutturali”, in Craveri, Varsori (eds.) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 187-210.



integration process, although the Italian decision-makers appeared to be only partially aware of such a development⁷².

The fall of the Berlin wall and the process of German reunification led to an acceleration of the integration process. Italy favoured both the intergovernmental conference on the EMU and the one on the political integration, moreover some Italian politicians and diplomats hoped that Italy could play a relevant role in the quick change of the European scenario caused by the end of the cold war⁷³. As far as the European Monetary Union was concerned, Italy's position was mainly shaped by the Treasury Minister, Carli, and the Governor of the Bank of Italy, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. Especially the latter was a staunch Europeanist and during the 1980s under his leadership the Italian central bank had become the point of reference of a small group of technocrats, who were convinced that Italy's economic future was closely tied to the progress of the political and economic integration as only through such a determined choice Italy could overcome its structural economic and financial problems, as well as the weakness of its political class. So the Italian delegation strongly supported the project for the completion of the EMU, especially the creation of a European common currency. Moreover they were in favour of the so-called "Maastricht parameters": they were aware that such clauses would impose a dramatic change in Italy's economic policy, especially as far as the tendency to a growing state deficit, but they had confidence in the validity of the "external bond", which in their opinion had already demonstrated its vital role in the late 1970s owing to the participation of the lira in the EMS⁷⁴.

As far as the political integration was concerned, such a development was the almost obvious consequence of both the fall of the Berlin wall and the perspective of a rapid German reunification. In an early stage Italian foreign policy makers, like other western European leaders, nurtured some suspicion about the creation of a reunified Germany. But in a few weeks both Andreotti, now Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis realized that the German reunification would be an unavoidable development and they openly stated Italy's support to Kohl's foreign policy. Nevertheless they thought that such a radical change in the European continent and the emergence of a powerful German state could be counterbalanced by a strengthening of the European political integration and the maintenance of the Atlantic alliance. The European Union and a closer link with the US would be the safeguard against any German "sonderweg". In this connection the Italian authorities were very active and they tried, especially in 1990 when Italy had the presidency of the European Community to play a leading role in the intergovernmental conference that would lead to the Maastricht Treaty. Moreover, it is not surprising that, as far as the issue of European defence was concerned, the Rome government was suspicious of a too strong European defence system, which would be based on a French-German "directorate" and in 1991 Rome and London, through a joint declaration, stated their interest in the link between the future EU and NATO. When the Maastricht treaty was signed it seemed that Italy's goals had been partially achieved and, although Germany and France had played a major role in the negotiations, the

⁷² See the interpretations offered in Soutou, Georges-Henri, "L'Italie et le 'couple' franco-allemand", Ludlow, Piers: "In Search of a Balance: Italy, Britain and the Dream of another European Axis", Neri Gualdesi, Marinella: "L'Italia e l'Europa negli anni Ottanta: tra ambizioni e marginalità", in Craveri and Varsori (eds.) (2009), *op. cit.*, pp. 43-108.

⁷³ See Varsori Antonio: "Italy and the German reunification", paper presented at a conference on *Europe and 1989* held in Geneva in October 2010.

⁷⁴ Dyson, Kevin and Featherstone, Kevin (1999): *The Road to Maastricht. Negotiating Economic and Monetary Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 508-533. See also Craveri, Piero (ed.) (2009): *Guido Carli senatore e ministro del Tesoro 1983-1992*, Milan, Bollati Boringhieri.



Italian government had contributed to the successful outcome of a complex set of negotiations⁷⁵.

Although some Italian statesmen, especially Prime Minister Andreotti, and the Bank of Italy were aware of the demanding implications of the economic clauses of the Maastricht treaty, it is very likely that the majority of the Italian political class thought that Italy could successfully face the challenge posed by the treaty on the European Union. On the contrary the perspective of the radical changes foreseen in the Maastricht agreement negatively influenced the Italian economic and financial system, which was perceived by most international economic actors as very weak. Such an attitude indirectly concurred to the sudden outbreak of the collapse of the country's political system and to a dangerous crisis of Italy's role in the emerging European Union. In 1992 the "clean hands" scandal led to the tragic end of the Italian party system which had dominated the country from the late 1940s onwards. Such a change was also the consequence of the end of the cold war and of the political allegiances which had shaped the attitude of the Italian voters owing to the hopes and fears created by the world confrontation between East and West. But such a dramatic development took place on the morrow of the Maastricht Treaty signature; so Italy's political turmoil almost obviously led to a serious financial crisis, whose outcome was the ousting of the lira from the EMS and to the perception by its European partners of Italy as the "sick man" of Europe and as an unfeasible candidate to the final step in the EMU process⁷⁶.

8. Italy and the European Union in the Prodi and Berlusconi Years: Success and Crisis (1993-2010)

The collapse of the Italian party system, worsened by the uncertainties and doubts about Italy's role in the new European system created by the Maastricht Treaty favoured the emergence of new political actors and of a new balance in the country. The period between 1992 and 1996 was characterised by a series of weak governments and it is not surprising that the main goal of the Amato, Ciampi and Dini cabinets was the recovery of the Italian economic and financial system, which had been severely shaken by both the 1992 monetary crisis and the political uncertainty about the country's political system. In this connection Italy's faithfulness to the European integration was a vital factor as the country's future was closely tied to the EU and its developments. So it is not surprising that both Ciampi and Dini were perceived in Brussels as two technocrats with strong European credentials and especially the former was a well-known Europeanist⁷⁷. As far as the domestic balance was concerned, the most striking novelty was the appearance of a new political force "Forza Italia" and by its leader, the media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi. In 1994 "Forza Italia", which led a centre-right coalition formed by the Northern League and Gianfranco Fini's "National Alliance" won the elections. The creation of the first Berlusconi government was viewed with some concern in Brussels and in several European capitals, not only for the characters and goals of the coalition members, but also as it appeared to show a very weak commitment to the Europeanist ideals. It is of some relevance to notice that Berlusconi appointed Foreign Minister Antonio Martino, an economist and son of Gaetano Martino, who however was an

⁷⁵ On Italy's position see the documents in *AALS, Giulio Andreotti Archive, box No. 382, box No. 411, box No. 458*.

⁷⁶ On this economic crisis see Rossi, Salvatore (1998): *La politica economica italiana 1968-1998*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, pp. 94-97.

⁷⁷ See for example Ciampi, Carlo Azeglio (2010): *Da Livorno al Quirinale. Storia di un italiano*, Bologna, il Mulino, pp. 143-166.



avowed sceptical of the EMU and a supporter of Margaret Thatcher's position on the European integration. However the Berlusconi cabinet was a very brief episode and on its resignation, most European opinion makers opined that his political career had already reached its end. On the occasion of the general elections held in 1996 the centre-left coalition, the "olive tree", led by Romano Prodi, a professor of Economics at the University of Bologna, former Chairman of the IRI state corporation and a left-wing Christian Democrat, came to power. Actually a strong commitment to the Europeanist ideals was the most important unifying factor in the centre-left coalition, composed by former left-wing Christian Democrats, former Communists and "liberals" coming from former small lay parties. Especially among the former Christian Democrats a central role was played by some technocrats and intellectuals, who had always been the standard-bearers of the European integration, while for the former Communists the European choice, which had its roots in the Berlinguer era was the evidence of the their full and sincere "conversion" to western ideals.

The Prodi government's main goal was Italy's participation to the new European currency and through a rigid fiscal policy the Italian cabinet was able to comply with the Maastricht criteria. The centre-left coalition was able to mobilise the majority of the Italian public opinion through the catchword of "Italy must join Europe". This period can be viewed as the climax of Italy's European commitment: the European choice became both an international and a domestic issue and numerous Italians were convinced that "Europe", whatever it meant, was the model for Italy and the involvement in the European integration process would favour the solution to the crisis which was threatening Italy's international role and domestic balance; everything "European" was pictured in a positive way by the media and most "liberal" opinion-makers and intellectuals, who strongly contributed to the spreading of the European ideal among large sectors of the Italian population, although the European choice began to overlap with the policy of the centre-left coalition⁷⁸. On the contrary some vague form of euro-scepticism began to surface in the centre-right opposition, especially in the Northern League, which in its infancy had favoured the European Community as a safeguard to regional claims and by the late 1990s began to criticise Brussels "centralism" and the "politically correctness" of the EU institutions' jargon⁷⁹. In spite of that in Brussels the centre-left experience was favourably viewed and it is not surprising that Romano Prodi, no longer Prime Minister, would become President of the European Commission after the crisis of the Santer presidency. Such an appointment can be regarded as the most evident recognition of Italy's contribution to the European construction and of the Italian commitment to the European ideals, which appeared to be widespread, not only among the members of the political class, but also in the Italian society⁸⁰.

In 2001 the centre-right and Berlusconi came back to power. Such an event led to a troubled period in the relationship between Italy and the EU and to a change in the Italian attitude towards the European construction. The small but influential group of opinion-makers, EU top officials, EU Members of Parliaments and media which concur in forming the "European" opinion almost immediately developed a negative evaluation of the Berlusconi government, which was often pictured as influenced by racism, led by a leader "unfit to govern", and hostile to the values of the European integration, as they were perceived in Brussels. Berlusconi had tried to balance such a negative attitude through the appointment as Foreign Minister of Renato Ruggero, a former diplomat and top European official, whose

⁷⁸ Varsori (2010), "La Cenerentola ...", *op. cit.*, pp. 375-389.

⁷⁹ Piermattei, Massimo: "Piu' lontani da Roma e piu' vicini all'Europa': la Lega Nord e l'integrazione europea (1988-1998)", in Di Sarcina, Federica; Grazi, Laura and Scichilone, Laura (eds.) (2008): *Europa vicina e lontana. Idee e percorsi dell'integrazione europea*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, pp. 113-124.

⁸⁰ Prodi, Romano (2008): *La mia visione dei fatti. Cinque anni di governo in Europa*, Bologna, il Mulino.



Europeanist record would be destined to reassure the Brussels milieu. But in a few months Ruggiero resigned from office for serious difference of opinions which opposed him to Berlusconi and the majority of the Cabinet. Moreover Berlusconi's reactions to European criticism usually worsened Italy's image in Brussels as well as in other European capitals. Last but not least Berlusconi's pro-US choice on the occasion of the second Iraqi war further embittered the relations between Italy and the two major member states of the EU. France and Germany. In spite of that the Berlusconi cabinet was not euro-sceptic at least in principle; on the contrary the centre-right coalition was eager to achieve some outstanding diplomatic success in the European context; so the Italian authorities did their best in order to play some role in the negotiations which would lead to the constitutional treaty and especially Gianfranco Fini and Franco Frattini, who were the heads of the Italian Foreign Ministry were eager to be regarded in Brussels as "good Europeans", while Berlusconi strongly claimed Italy's aspiration at hosting the signature of the new treaty. In spite of those efforts the European choice had become a source of strong division and continuing contrasts in the domestic political debate, which had obvious negative consequences in the EU milieu and contributed to the uncertainty and weakness of Italy's position in Brussels. So, in spite of Berlusconi's boasting, his government's European record was usually regarded as a negative one by foreign commentators. On the other hand it is not surprising that for the first time some form of euro-scepticism began to spread in the Italian public opinion, at least among the supporters of the centre-right coalition, especially the Northern League⁸¹.

In 2006 the centre-left won the general elections and although with a very slight parliamentary majority Romano Prodi was able to form a new government. Such a cabinet however was very weak and it was destined to last less than two years. In spite of a renewed and convinced commitment to the Europeanist ideals, it is difficult to state that the new Prodi cabinet was able to exert a strong influence in the European integration, which on the other hand was shaken by the failure of the constitutional treaty and by a growing euro-scepticism which appeared to influence also some traditional pro-European electorates. On the other hand the renewal of the European choice was unable to mend the fences in the centre-left coalition and in 2008, as a consequence of a governmental crisis, the Italian voters were called once again to the polls. As it is well known the centre-right coalition led by Berlusconi won the elections with a large majority. Once again in European milieu new criticism hit Berlusconi, although the political and economic conditions of the European scene were completely different: the EU appears by far weaker and most governments of the EU member-states, usually led by conservative governments, are more worried about the financial crisis rather than of the domestic situations of the Union's partners; Berlusconi is the main target of international criticism but some members of his cabinet, such as Tremonti and Frattini, had been able to achieve some consideration in Brussels, while the centre-left appears divided and the European issue is no longer the main factor of its identity, which is definitely more vague than in the Prodi years. Actually, in spite of Italian leaders' official statements, Italy's role in the European context had suffered during the last decade, although the main issue at stake in Europe is not Italy's European choice but the future of the EU itself. In spite of everything the European choice is still the most important aspect of Italy's foreign policy and the country's international role is still subject to the developments in the European construction.

⁸¹ We still lack an analysis of the European policy pursued by the Berlusconi governments. I draw some interesting information from a Master dissertation, discussed in 2010 under my supervision at the University of Padua by Antonio Pantano.



DIPLOMATS, POLITICIANS AND FOREIGN POLICY IN POST-WAR ITALY

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Abstract:

The role of diplomacy in post-war Italian foreign policy increased as Italian politics polarized around two mass parties, the Christian Democrats and the Communists, taking their cues respectively from Washington (and the Vatican) and from Moscow. A domestic “diplomatic conspiracy” can be evoked, bent upon preserving and promoting essential foreign policy tenets, with respect to national politicians who, both in government and opposition, reacted to external events rather mechanically, indifferently, half-way between pragmatic expediency and lofty idealism. Unable to express strong national convictions and discomfort with having to take sides, Italy displayed an inclination for multilateral forums. While holding firm to its international moorings, it indulged in occasional drifts, always dispensing with the need to declare its own vital interests. Even though endowed with broad (at times contradictory) instructions, Italian diplomacy performed quite effectively and credibly in the European Communities, in NATO and towards the ‘third world’, achieving a visibility somewhat higher than the country’s actual influence would have allowed. After the Cold War, the very structure of party politics disintegrated and foreign policy was relegated anew to the background, just when world events accelerated dramatically. Nowadays, Italy finds itself back to square one, and this time without the same type of a safety net from NATO or the EU. Hard choices present themselves to a country suddenly bereft of the clear international coordinates that have kept it going so far. Nevertheless, foreign policy has finally become largely bipartisan. The 919 career diplomats were entrusted with more creative and proactive political tasks than the current ‘economic diplomacy’ that they are presently asked to devote themselves to (supported financially by only 0.23% of the national budget, 0.11% of the GNP). The Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Massolo, maintains that «with the appropriate mix of realism and long-term vision», Italian diplomacy should «pursue a stable inclusion of our country in the new equations that are consolidating at the global level»; warning however that «in order to be in Europe, we must be well-structured nationally».

Keywords: Italian Diplomats, Italian Politicians, National Interest.

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**Resumen:**

El papel de la diplomacia en la política exterior italiana de pos-guerra aumentó a medida que la política italiana se fue polarizando alrededor de dos partidos políticos, los democristianos y los comunistas, que seguían respectivamente directivas de Washington (y el Vaticano) y de Moscú. Se puede hablar de una “conspiración doméstica”, destinada a preservar una serie de principios con respecto a los políticos italianos, que tanto desde el gobierno como desde la oposición, reaccionaban de una manera más bien mecánica e indiferente, a medio camino entre el mero pragmatismo y un noble idealismo. Incapaz de expresar fuertes convicciones nacionales y contraria a tomar posturas claras, Italia mostraba una inclinación por los foros multilaterales; mientras se mantenía firmemente asida a sus apoyos internacionales, se permitía divergencias ocasionales, siempre evitando la necesidad de declarar sus intereses vitales. Aun con instrucciones vagas (y a veces contradictorias), la diplomacia italiana lograba actuar con bastante efectividad y credibilidad tanto en las Comunidades Europeas, la OTAN y hacia el “tercer mundo”, logrando una visibilidad superior a la que le habría otorgado su verdadera influencia a nivel mundial. Tras la Guerra Fria, la estructura misma de la política de partidos se desintegró y la política exterior quedó relegada a un segundo plano, justo en el momento en el que los sucesos se aceleraban drásticamente. Hoy en día Italia se encuentra con en la casilla de salida., y esta vez ello sin el tipo de seguridad que la OTAN o la UE proveen. Difíciles decisiones se le presentan a un país súbitamente carente de claros referentes internacionales. Afortunadamente por fin la política exterior se ha convertido en un tema de carácter bi-partisano. A los 919 diplomáticos de carrera se les asignaron tareas diplomáticas más creativas y proactivas que la “diplomacia económica” que es lo que en la actualidad se les está pidiendo (apoyados financieramente con solo 0.23 % del presupuesto nacional, es decir, el 0.11 % del PIB). El Secretario General del Ministerio de Exteriores, el Embajador Massolo, mantiene que “con la mezcla apropiada de realismo y visión a largo plazo, la diplomacia italiana puede “lograr una inclusión estable de nuestro país en las nuevas ecuaciones que se están consolidando a nivel global”, avisando sin embargo que para estar en Europa, debemos estar igualmente bien estructurados a nivel nacional.

Palabras clave: *Diplomáticos italianos, políticos italianos, interés nacional.*

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Diplomacy has for centuries, to this very day, stitched the Italian nation together. As a matter of fact, diplomatic skills were perfected by Italian city-States in order to deal with each other, settle conflicts and, especially in the case of Genoese and Venetians, open up profitable markets abroad. Unable to wield sufficient power or influence, the many Italies resulting from the disintegration the Roman Empire thus managed to survive, even prosper at times, through negotiation and compromise, in the wake of great historical flows. The unification of Italy was a much celebrated diplomatic achievement, that resulted in a protracted effort to establish the country's identity and position in the international arena.

The role of diplomacy in post-war Italian foreign policy has however been underrated even by national historians, in a country torn apart for a long time by ideological differences, which accounts for the fact that many relevant documents are still locked away. Italian diplomats have since the war plied their trade in isolation, remedying the occasional political shortcomings, improvising at times, but always with an eye on the compass². One of its most eminent personalities, Roberto Ducci, even evoked a domestic 'diplomatic conspiracy' bent upon preserving and promoting essential foreign policy tenets, with respect to national politicians who, both in government and opposition, reacted to external events rather mechanically, indifferently, half-way between pragmatic expediency and lofty idealism.

The young country that emerged a mere 150 years ago was born ideally as a liberal democracy in the best tradition of English political enlightenment, contrary to Bismarck's Germany and Napoleon III's France, let alone Habsburg Austria or Bourbon Spain. Its geo-political situation had however set it apart for centuries from mainstream continental politics, especially after history turned its back on the Mediterranean and its Far Eastern lifeline in order to gaze at the 'New World'. Its DNA was therefore maimed by the imprint of centuries of foreign rule that had turned it into the object of historical developments alien to it: at first the drawn-out rivalries between the Empire and the Papacy (with the resulting national fracture between *Guelphs* and *Ghibellines*), then the very many Wars of Succession between absolute monarchies. Having gradually lost its very sense of national identity (a condition bemoaned as far back as Dante and Machiavelli), surviving as best it could through the fissures of European and world events, it had to extricate itself out of its status of a "mere geographic expression", as Metternich had put it. From the very beginning, therefore, the ambition of the new State was to recover a prominent place in continental equations, a task that soon proved very straining and divisive.

The *Risorgimento* (rebirth) that unified the ancient nation had been a top-down affair, not a groundswell: the product of an intellectual élite³, the so-called 'carbonari', huddling under the banner of an ambitious House of Savoy. Shrewd diplomacy was what Cavour resorted to at the Paris Conference of 1856 ending the Crimean War, where he managed to capitalize on the participation of a small contingent of Piedmontese troops; then enlisting the support of the French monarch against Austria, but also towards the very many local sovereignties and allegiances dividing the peninsula. The "founding fathers" (D'Azeglio, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cattaneo, Rosmini, Gioberti, De Sanctis, Balbo, Pisacane) were a motley of idealists and adventurers that Cavour skillfully steered in creating a new State. A very disparate nation, that Depretis, Crispi and Giolitti, having to cope with rising social unrest, then tried to reconcile also with the absorption of the emerging socialists and alienated

² Perfetti, Francesco: "Verso i Trattati di Roma. L'europeismo di Palazzo Chigi", *La Comunità Internazionale*, vol. 62, no. 1 (2007), pp. 23-49; Melchionni, Maria Grazia (2004): *Quale domani per questa Europa*, Roma, Studium.

³ Only a tiny fraction of the population then spoke correct Italian.



Catholics, in what came to be known as *trasformismo*, resulting in a mixture of compromises at home and adventurism abroad, as the young country elbowed its way through European big-power politics, especially in the Mediterranean sea and in Africa (Eritrea and Libya).

The geographic and historical divisions, just as the political rift between right and left, have never been properly healed. From different but converging angles, political philosophers, such as Gobetti, Gramsci at both ends of the political spectrum, and Croce from the middle, never succeeded in weaving together the many national strands - North and South (the '*questione meridionale*'⁴), industrial and rural (that massive internal migrations exacerbated), Catholics and lay (the *questione romana*, the remnants of which are still to be felt in the political influence of the Church) - in a coherent civil society. Even the two world wars, with their very different results, did not provide the national patchwork with the much-needed catalyst, exacerbating instead of clarifying national feelings. Shifting alliances before deciding, agonizingly and belatedly, to join the first World War on an 'irredentist' platform, Italy only ended up feeling cheated by the terms decided at the Peace conference (resented as a 'mutilated victory'). Such frustrations contributed to the advent of Fascism, and to a more assertive foreign policy (with further forays in aggressive adventures, such as Corfu and Ethiopia), in a revisionist attitude addressed the world 'haves' while craving their solidarity, until the final disastrous association with Nazi Germany. The Second World War left it panting, yet again hesitant about its identity and place in the world.

Such a succinct historical excursus indicates the very special Italian mould, that continues to obstruct a shared vision of the most appropriate way ahead, and consequently of the means best suited to protect and promote them. A task that post-war Italian diplomacy was saddled with, since national political life was otherwise busy. The country remained fractured, held together by the uneasy truce between two mass parties competing for a heterogeneous electorate. Unable therefore to express strong national convictions and uncomfortable with having to take sides, Italy displayed an inclination for multilateral forums. Which also accounts for the fact that, while holding firm to its international moorings, it indulged in occasional drifts, always dispensing with the need to declare its own vital interests. A behavior that served Italy well while the automatic pilots of European and Atlantic discipline lasted, only to be laid bare when the Cold War ended. The following more elaborate description of Italy's post-war foreign policy should illustrate it with greater accuracy.

With the fall of Fascism and the ensuing armistice in 1943, Italy sought to obtain a treatment more benign than the unconditional surrender that was in store for the vanquished. As the government and the king fled Rome, it befell once again to diplomacy to try and salvage what could from the political ruins. While diplomats in neutral capitals such as Lisbon and Madrid tried to achieve more favorable peace terms (with Croce arguing unsuccessfully that Fascism had been but an unfortunate parenthesis inflicted on the Italian people), the then Secretary General of what was left of the Foreign Ministry, Renato Prunas, even attempted to weaken the Allies' resolve by establishing separate links with Moscow. To no avail, as the Paris Conference imposed its harsh terms. It took all the determination and rhetorical ability of Prime Minister De Gasperi and Foreign Minister Sforza (with the assistance of Stalin's intransigent behavior) to brush aside the rejectionist streak that pervaded the political parties across the board, and persuade the then Constitutional Assembly to ratify the Peace Treaty (supplemented by the most timely De Gasperi-Gruber bilateral agreement that settled the border issue with Austria). Vaccinated by the fascist experience against the

⁴ With its socio-economic backwardness resulting in the infiltration of the *mafia* and conversely, of late, in the emergence of the *Northern League*.



virus of nationalism, the overriding ambition became to extract Italy from international marginalization and even, as Sforza boldly stated, to “encourage other nations to see the bigger picture”⁵. A call echoed by the economist Luigi Einaudi, soon to become the first President of the new Republic: “the only hope to save ourselves as well as others consists in becoming with them, or if need be alone, the standard-bearers of a higher ambition”. The primary role of diplomats being that of imagining the future, the argument was brought home insistently and forcefully by the Ambassadors posted in the main capitals (career diplomats such as Quaroni in Moscow, but also political appointees such as Brosio in Moscow, Tarchiani in Washington and Carandini in London), that the most urgent need for battered Italy was to resist the temptation to remain aloof and instead urgently reintegrate the community of democracies.

The role of diplomacy in post-war Italian foreign policy then increased as Italian politics (after a couple of ‘national unity’ governments) polarized around two mass parties, the Christian Democrats (DC) and the Communists (PCI), taking their cues respectively from Washington (and the Vatican) and from Moscow, thereby replicating the Cold War division and ossifying the domestic political debate. The PCI was barred from power, and the 30% of votes it consistently reaped joined the almost 8% or so of the extreme right in a political limbo. On the other hand, in a fully proportional electoral system, the DC’s lack of an absolute majority forced it into an unending series of ‘revolving-door’ coalition governments with lesser, basically élite parties. A situation giving rise to what was considered a ‘limping democracy’. The Communists, in control of the trade unions and many local administrations, were able to influence political decision-making: even though their head-on ideological opposition would never take matters to the brink, they preserved a severe ‘nuisance value’, constituting an underlying constraint in foreign policy matters (fundamentally objecting to both NATO and the European Community). When it was all over, fifty years later, Ambassador Sergio Romano put it quite bluntly: “we pretended to speak with the whole world, but we actually spoke with the Italian Communist party, to which we tried to prove that there were also other ways to be democratic, peace-loving and progressive”⁶.

Even though endowed with broad (at times contradictory) instructions, Italian diplomacy performed quite effectively and credibly in the European Communities, in NATO and towards the surrounding ‘third world’, achieving a visibility somewhat higher than the country’s actual influence would have allowed. As already indicated, its twin lodestars were the security linkage with the Atlantic Alliance and the political implications of the European integration process, indispensable domestic catalysts (‘external federative factors’) as they both were. The dedication to both, reflected in the repeated sudden pronouncements and actual (at times decisive) contributions to the common cause, was however diminished by an otherwise erratic and often passive participation in shaping practical decisions and strategies, a contribution that Italian political parties were unable to provide as readily as needed. The role of diplomacy was therefore essential as the political class, while obviously holding the high ground, entrusted it with the gyroscope, i.e. not only with the execution but often also with the practical formulation of Italian foreign policy. In its permanent balancing act between Washington, Brussels and Moscow, towards Eastern Europe, the Arab World and the Mediterranean region. All of which under a multilateral cloak, partially inspired by the American brand of international liberalism that would eventually assemble together the most

⁵ Sforza went as far as to argue that “Italy must become for Europe what the Piedmontese monarchy was for Italy”.

⁶ In his introduction to Gaja, Roberto (1995): *L’Italia nel mondo bipolare*, Bologna, il Mulino, p. 13.



ardent Euro-federalists (Spinelli, La Malfa), Atlanticists (Cossiga, Spadolini), third-world idealists (La Pira, Fanfani), and the ever-present Andreotti.

Left therefore to their own devices, overcoming almost single-handedly the pacifist and neutralist instincts of a battered nation, under the vigorous prodding of President Truman and the Marshall Plan, Italian diplomats set the basic post-war parameters to which the country would thereafter cling: “the Italian diplomatic service became tasked, almost unwillingly, with an avant-garde position - nay, a dragging role - in the post-war Italian political thought”, was how former Secretary General Roberto Gaja put it⁷. Obtaining initially the inclusion in the North-Atlantic Treaty and then engineering, under the decisive impulse of the Schuman-Adenauer-De Gasperi ‘trio’⁸, the Coal and Steel Community under which old European rivalries were buried. Originally left out in the cold from the Brussels Treaty (as, until 1955, from the UN), Italy’s diplomacy threw its lot in very straightforwardly also with the European Defence Community (EDC, that the French Parliament eventually shot down), the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, as well as with the ill-fated Fouchet Plan, all of them in the direction of a more unified political Europe. A series of stepping stones that established a *fait accompli* into which the opposition was thereafter stuck and the whole country could safely prosper in a slow but widely-shared socio-economic progress.

In the post-war reconstruction of a traumatized country, very exposed geo-politically, national strife (at the beginning, even civil war) was averted through constant bargaining and compromise, political patronage and back-door deals, a mixed economy between State capitalism and private inventiveness. Such an indigenous brand of ‘social contract’, possibly the most expensive welfare state in Europe, eventually achieved what was hailed as an ‘economic miracle’. For the very same prevailing domestic purposes, foreign policy contributed in generating the critical mass (and the occasional wake-up call). The Italian nation, in other words, would be brought together not in a top-down fashion, as the founding fathers and then Mussolini would have had it, but from the bottom up, painstakingly, slowly but surely. On the international scene, such an endless consensus-seeking exercise produced the occasional waywardness, never a parting of ways with the indispensable Atlantic and European solidarities.

At times, ill at ease with the strictures of East-West confrontation, in an ‘ecumenical approach’ that suited both the DC and the PCI, Italy muddled through, acquiescing in Brussels’ directions while consorting with a host of different interlocutors and relationships, attempting at times to punch well above its weight. Some unilateral initiatives, however well-meaning, were improvised, unpredictable, untimely, insufficiently prepared, in the end irrelevant to the course of events. Rome was in any case mostly concerned with never being left out of any restricted group such as the Paris-Bonn-London trio, the G7 or other ‘directorates’, not only for reasons of national pride but essentially in order not to lose the external pegs indispensable to the cohesion of a fragile domestic political environment. At the same time, ironically, Italy always sought more elbow-room, in the pursuit of a side-agenda reaching out to the ‘left-outs’ of great-power politics, i.e. the Arab World, the newly independent African states, the frail Latin American republics. A ‘third-world’ instinct that belonged to the DNA of both the DC and the PCI.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁸ The three of them Catholics, born and raised in border regions.



The tendency to play at the margins of great-power politics was even theorized by the Christian Democrats Fanfani and Moro⁹ and the Socialist Nenni as the need to recognize “existing realities” (the “emerging countries”, one would say nowadays). Reaching out to communist China, North Vietnam and North Korea, opposing intransigently Pinochet’s Chile, openly supporting *détente* with Eastern Germany and Soviet Russia during their most critical moments. Such waywardness proved however in the end mostly declaratory, as the country was unable to sustain it single-handedly. These occasional shifts in attitude or emphasis were attributable not only to the vagaries of international navigation and to Italy’s geo-political overexposure, but also to specific political personalities playing to different domestic audiences. Additionally, especially with respect to the Arab world, there were, and still are, obvious economic considerations, inaugurated by the ‘oil-diplomacy’ of Mattei’s ENI well before the crisis of 1973.

No wonder that Italian diplomats proved more influential in multilateral contexts such as the protracted European integration process or the CSCE negotiations, which proceeded by steady accumulation and thrived with multiple contributions. Some¹⁰ deem that Italy’s role was seldom acknowledged and rewarded, thus giving rise to a “Cinderella” syndrome: the impression of considered a free-rider, a junior partner, taken for granted, not consulted, a consumer rather than a producer of continental policies. Others¹¹ have instead described how Italian diplomacy often contributed the additional element indispensable to the overall critical mass. Even though the exertions of Italian diplomacy have seldom been capitalized upon by political parties always otherwise engaged, they have in fact proved instrumental in more than one critical occasion: under Gaetano Martino’s careful guidance in the Messina Conference that opened the way for the Rome Treaties in 1957, after the Suez crisis that had thrown Europeans in disarray; with Aldo Moro promoting the drawn-out pan-European process that led to the Helsinki Final Act and eventually brought down the Berlin wall; with Emilio Colombo persuading the European Council, in 1980 in Venice, to back Palestinian self-determination and association with the Middle Eastern negotiations; and then engineering the ‘Luxemburg compromise’ that solved the French ‘empty chair’ attitude and, with Dieter Genscher, opening the way for the Single European Act leading to the ‘Declaration on the European Union’; with Bettino Craxi, at the Milan European Council in 1985, overcoming the British attitude and stimulating European integration; not to mention the decisive impulse that Italy provided to the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Initiatives taken in quite different circumstances, that Italian diplomacy was called upon to prepare, promote and sustain in European, Trans-Atlantic, Mediterranean and broader environments, not always responsive or cohesive. Back in 1957, the *New York Times* observed that “Italian politics, which are always complicated, are now going through some complex maneuvers ... solving these problems in a lively but democratic manner”. Nothing much has changed, it seems. As the following chronology may indicate.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, as the Italian Republic’s politics took root, a succession of leaders, albeit with different emphases and motivations, ensured a steady if subdued stream of contributions to the European and Atlantic common causes. Which did not prevent the President of the Republic Giovanni Gronchi to try his hand at great-power politics,

⁹ For Moro, somewhat philosophically, “growth could also result in decay and death”.

¹⁰ Most recently, Perissich, Riccardo (2008): *L’Unione Europea; una storia non ufficiale*, Milano, Longanesi, and Varsori, Antonio (2010): *La Cenerentola d’Europa? L’Italia e l’integrazione europea dal 1946 ad oggi*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino.

¹¹ Most notably Ducci, Roberto (2007): *Le speranze d’Europa*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino; more recently, Fagiolo, Silvio (2009): *L’idea dell’Europa nelle relazioni internazionali*, Milano, Franco Angeli; see also Albonetti, Achille (2005): *L’Italia, la politica estera e l’unità dell’Europa*, Roma, Edizioni Lavoro.



intervening openly in East-West relations, to little practical avail and some international embarrassment. Prime Minister Fanfani and Foreign Minister Pella then experimented with what was labeled “neo-Atlanticism”, essentially an early (too early?) attempt at *détente*, also reaching out to the newly decolonized States and to the Palestinians, not to mention an ill-conceived attempt at mediating with Hanoi¹². In foreign policy, Prime Minister Aldo Moro went as far as to announce at the 1969 UN General Assembly an “Italian peace doctrine”, equivocally at odds with European and Atlantic solidarity. Even though, as Amb. Quaroni back then firmly stated, “Italy, probably the only country sincerely pro-European among the (then) Six, refuses to follow a European policy that may be perceived as anti-Atlantic or anti-American”¹³.

The 1970s saw the first center-left governments and the gradual emergence of Enrico Berlinguer’s ‘eurocommunism’, with the resulting siren-calls for ‘historical compromises’, ‘national solidarity’, “converging parallels” and other such verbal contortions, that raised eyebrows in NATO, Bonn and even Moscow (but eventually, in 1973, produced the PCI’s formal acceptance of the implications of both the EC and NATO). All of which in the midst of the terrorist upheaval of the Red Brigades and their Black equivalents, that exposed a deep rift in Italian political life (and led to the murder of Moro). Two important achievements were however reached, both in 1975: bilaterally, the ‘Osimo agreement’ with Yugoslavia which settled (without healing) what had long been an open wound along the North-West border and boosted Tito’s non-aligned stance; and multilaterally, in the same spirit of East-West reconciliation and encouragement, the Helsinki Final Act. Full credit for the latter must be given to the skillful persistence of Italian diplomacy, especially in adding the “third basket” (i.e. human dimension) provisions, in close cooperation with the delegation of the Holy See (under Paul VI’s *Ostpolitik*) and of neutral Switzerland. Serendipitously, Moro’s signature on the Final Act was affixed also on behalf of the European Community, which he was then chairing; which constituted the first tangible expression of the much vaunted European political cooperation.

It was only in the 1980s, as the international going got rougher, that governments of a new generation (successively led by Christian-Democrat Francesco Cossiga, Republican Giovanni Spadolini and finally Socialist Bettino Craxi) took a more decisive attitude to foreign policy matters, starting with the sending of a peacekeeping contingent to Lebanon (the first Italian non-UN led post-war overseas military mission), then concurring crucially with Germany in the ‘double decision’ on intermediate nuclear missiles. It was however Craxi¹⁴ that utilized foreign policy in a more extensive and assertive fashion, partly as an additional instrument to break apart the DC-PCI logjam. Unfazed by the ‘Achille Lauro/Sigonella’ incident with Washington (soon overcome), Craxi’s determination proved decisive in restarting a stalled European integration process, developing parallel avenues of dialogue in the Middle East, sending the Italian military ‘East of Suez’ with a flotilla of minesweepers in the Persian Gulf, and accepting the transfer to Southern Italy of NATO’s Torrejon air-base evicted by the Spanish government. Such an unusual foreign policy activism from the Prime Minister’s office sent shockwaves throughout the Italian system, scattering the acquired habits of political parties and bureaucrats alike. Deprived of its prominent role, the Foreign Ministry became vulnerable to conflicting political allegiances that gravely affected its professional cohesion, and the very effectiveness of the whole.

¹² Leading to the resignation of the Ambassador in Washington, Sergio Fenoaltea, the last of the post-war breed of political appointees in Italian diplomacy.

¹³ Quaroni, Pietro (1966): *Problemi della politica del nostro tempo*, Milano, Garzanti, p. 154.

¹⁴ In coalition with DC’s Andreotti as Foreign Minister and the Republican Party’s Spadolini in charge of Defence.



In the 1990s, with the end of the Cold War, a new stage was set. The collapse of the Yugoslav federation brought about another burst of Italian foreign policy activism, spurred by the personalities of Minister Gianni De Michelis (Socialist) and Beniamino Andreatta (Christian-democrat), not influentially enough to avert the bloody aftermath. A short-lived phase, stopped in its tracks by renewed fierce domestic infighting that went under the misleading name of 'clean hands'. The very structure of party politics, the parties themselves, disintegrated and foreign policy was relegated anew to the background, just when world events accelerated dramatically, and the European Union finally emerged in Maastricht, Amsterdam and Laeken. A non-politician closely connected to the leftwing Christian-Democrats, Romano Prodi, was entrusted with a government essentially bent upon not losing ground with the leading pack, deciding therefore single-handedly to reinforce UNIFIL in Lebanon and managing even to bring the country into the 'Euro'. Bold decisions that were not followed-through with the dedication that the concurrent qualitative leaps in the EU would have required¹⁵. In a world transformed, Italian diplomats found themselves once again with little guidance from above, having however lost in the meantime much of their adrenalin. They shifted into an 'overdrive' gear, always useful of course but not as inspiring or creative as in their best days.

Nowadays Italy finds itself back to square one, and this time without the same type of a safety net from NATO or the EU. Hard choices present themselves to a country suddenly bereft of the clear international coordinates that have kept it going so far; some old facts of life will need to be faced. Fortunately, foreign policy has finally become bipartisan, so much so that the first government led by a former Communist, Massimo D'Alema, actively contributed to the military operations on Serbia (not without some ambiguities that persisted afterwards), even in the absence of a Security Council Resolution. An Atlantic reflex that resurfaced during the Iraq crisis in 2003, after Schroeder and then Chirac dramatically broke ranks for narrow national considerations. There is however no blueprint to go by anymore. In an enlarged Europe, where the Union and individual States are not in contradiction with each other but could instead usefully reinforce the respective credibility, Italy finds itself in the predicament of having to elaborate a more precise national identity and vital interests. The European act, with the reshaping of the Franco-German relationship, the UK challenge, the institutional dilemma between 'deepening' and 'enlargement', the many newcomers, the challenges raised by the Lisbon Treaty's 'structured reinforced cooperation' and more coherent common foreign policy, will all require a more active national participation

More than ever, Rome will therefore have to weigh the respective merits of the EU and NATO, with the greater leeway they have both acquired. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, not immune to the populist streak that pervades the world scene, has appeared consistently more sensitive to the American connection. Which is how Italian politics always reacted, ever since the immediate post-war years, whenever Italy found itself off-balance or isolated in Europe. All the more so nowadays when America relies increasingly on bilateral partnerships, since the EU is still struggling with its ESDP. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, irrespective of the various governments, Italy has readily contributed to peace-support or straightforward military operations, in the Balkans, Timor, the Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan, underlining their 'humanitarian' rather than strategic relevance, seeking the acquiescence rather than the support of public opinion. Italy has thus become the third contributor to

¹⁵ Membership of the Euro failed to spur structural economic reform, and the Vice Chairmanship of the European Convention awarded to Giuliano Amato did not stimulate the more active national contributions that the EU reform process would have suggested.



international peacekeeping operations, with more than 10,000 troops overall deployed in 21 countries.

In the process, Italian diplomats have found an additional role, unusual for them, joining the military as agents of foreign policy in the new international environment. For both, the mere fact of being there, on the ground, reliably, whenever needed, constitutes in itself a statement of responsible foreign policy. If only the 919 officials of the Foreign Ministry were entrusted with more creative and proactive political tasks than the ‘economic diplomacy’ they are presently asked to devote themselves to (supported financially by only 0.23% of the national budget, 0.11% of the GNP). Yet, the Foreign Ministry should invest more energy (and officials) in the machinery of international organizations, avoiding to find itself short of candidates when asked. As was blatantly the case with the recent enrolment into Lady Ashton’s European own diplomatic corps (indicating the extent to which a new generation of national diplomats should be more appropriately selected and trained).

All of which indicates how much ground Italian diplomacy still needs to cover, while domestic political parties lag in sorting themselves out. Keeping in mind furthermore the present uncharted international territory, where foreign policy has become very much a matter of individual personalities and Summit meetings, showcasing the ambitions of an increasing number of would-be protagonists, to a great extent away from the expert care of diplomats. Which may not be a good thing, especially for a country like Italy that does not benefit from international overexposure. All the more so since Italian politicians, instead of taking the high ground in the much needed reshaping of international relations (which they very well could), still seem to rely on ‘personal diplomacy’ with some of the ‘mavericks’ such as Putin, Gadhafi or Erdogan, and ‘outcasts’ like Lukachenko and Chavez, in pursuit of immediate economic deals if not of far-fetched mediations or mere tactical advantages, seemingly out of step with its allies.

In a globalised world, suddenly out in the open, deprived of its usual moorings, Italy’s foreign policy must finally grow out of its protracted adolescence, and contribute more decisively to international affairs, participating suggesting, stimulating according to its own very specific strategic and political sensitivity. It could even be argued that the EU’s newly-born foreign policy and security ambitions could benefit from a more distinct contribution from its Mediterranean countries (the so-far derided ‘Club Med’), particularly exposed as they are to the intervening transnational challenges of migration flows, illegal trafficking of all kinds, violent extremism, endowed as they are with their ‘Latin’ sensitivity to the heterogeneous and unsettled Southern neighborhood in the Balkans, the Middle East and Africa.

In many respects, Italian foreign policy has so far been the public face of a still adolescent nation, that has at first tragically failed (with Fascism) and then proved unwilling or unable (with two mass-parties locking horns, both of them quite alien to the original *Risorgimento* ideals) to clarify and promote its own national interests. A late-comer in many crucial international situations, but always eager to catch up, with a penchant for building bridges, and seeking mediation and compromise that mirror-image its national fabric, Italy should resort more to the ways and means of multilateral institutions, where its unselfishness could be appreciated, instead of trying to compete for attention with the permanent members of the Security Council or those who aspire to become one (Italy does not¹⁶). An additional

¹⁶ Italy has opposed the creation of new permanent members, formulating proposals for reforming the membership of the Security Council [editor’s note].



soft-power, in other words, could prove very useful in the present ‘post-modern’, rougher international terrain.

Appropriate on-the-job training and exposure to the new international realities will of course be an indispensable part of the much-needed adaptation. The Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Giampiero Massolo, maintains that, ‘with the appropriate mix of realism and long-term vision’, Italian diplomacy should “pursue a stable inclusion of our country in the new equations that are consolidating at the global level... contributing thereby to the reorganization of the system of international relations”; warning however that “in order to be in Europe, we must be well-structured nationally”¹⁷. A requirement, the latter, that has indeed bedeviled Italian post-war diplomacy. And therefore possibly exalted its qualities.

¹⁷ Massolo, Giampiero, “Fare di più con meno: perchè riformiamo la Farnesina”, *Limes*, July 2010.





ITALY, THE UNO AND THE INTERNATIONAL CRISES

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Abstract:

In post-war Italy, the refusal of nationalism and the aspiration to a policy of international cooperation both at the European and world level were widely shared. At the Potsdam conference American President Truman proposed to admit Italy to UNO, however, this was met with Soviet opposition. In the context of the Cold War, Italy entered the UNO in 1955, together with other 15 countries. At the UNO, Italy's performance, for example on decolonization issues, was conditioned by her links with the USA, by the membership of the Western bloc and by her economic interests. Italy recognised Communist China only in 1970 and in 1971 voted for its admission to the UNO. In 1969 Prime Minister Moro described at the UN General Assembly a «global strategy of maintaining peace», a manifesto of a détente based on the UNO and on the equality of states as opposed to the «concert of powers». These ideas contrasted the détente pursued by Nixon and Kissinger that were based on traditional power politics and on bilateral relations between the superpowers. In the 1970s Italy's international status was seriously handicapped by its internal crisis. In the latter part of the Cold War and afterwards, Italian Armed Forces started to participate in military missions abroad with or without UN mandate. These missions aimed to give support to international security and to enhance Italy's international status within and outside UNO. Italy successfully opposed plans to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council by proposing a new category of semi-permanent members. In 1999 and 2000, Italy was the fifth contributor to the UN budget and the third in providing troops to UN missions. In 2006 was elected for the 6th time as a member of the Security Council.

Keywords: UNO, Internationalism, Multilateralism, Peacekeeping.

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**Resumen:**

En la Italia de post-guerra el rechazo al nacionalismo y a la aspiración a una política de cooperación internacional tanto a nivel europeo como mundial eran ampliamente compartidas. En la Conferencia de Potsdam Truman propuso la admisión de Italia en el seno de la ONU, pero se encontró con la oposición de la URSS. En el contexto de la Guerra Fría, Italia solo pudo entrar en 1955, junto con otros 15 países. En la ONU, la participación de Italia, por ejemplo en asuntos relativos a la descolonización, se veía condicionada por sus lazos con los EEUU, por su pertenencia al bloque Occidental y por sus intereses económicos. Italia reconoció a la China comunista solo en 1970 y en 1971 votó a favor de su admisión en la ONU. En 1969 el primer ministro Moro describió en la Asamblea General de la ONU su “estrategia para una paz global”, un manifiesto de distensión basado en la ONU y en la igualdad de los estados y no en un “concierto de potencias”. Tales ideas contrastaban con la distensión llevada a cabo por Nixon y Kissinger, basada más bien en una política tradicional de poder y en las relaciones bilaterales entre las superpotencias. En los años 70 el estatus internacional de Italia se veía seriamente limitado por su crisis interna. En el último periodo de la Guerra Fría, las Fuerzas Armadas italianas empezaron a participar en misiones en el extranjero con o sin mandato de la ONU. Tales misiones tenían como objetivo dar apoyo a la seguridad internacional y reforzar el estatus internacional de Italia dentro y fuera de la ONU. Italia se opuso con éxito a los planes para incrementar el número de miembros permanentes del Consejo de Seguridad proponiendo a cambio una nueva categoría de miembros semi-permanentes. En 1999 y el 2000 Italia fue el quinto mayor contribuyente al presupuesto de la ONU y el tercero en contribuir con tropas en misiones de la ONU. En el 2006 fue nombrado por sexta vez miembro del Consejo de Seguridad.

Palabras clave: ONU, Internacionalismo, Multilateralismo, Mantenimiento de la Paz.

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1. Introduction

Italy's intervention in the Second World War in some way marked the conclusion of the extreme power politics that Fascism had always strived for. The disastrous outcome of the conflict proved fatal to the regime. The political forces that subsequently came to power had ideals and cultural conceptions of foreign policy that were distinctly different from those espoused by the Fascists and the early stages of this foreign policy developed while the international anti-Fascist coalition was still in place with power in the hands of National Liberation Committee factions who were in substantial agreement about basic aspirations and the new orientation of the foreign policy that seemed to be affirming itself on an international level. There was no choosing of sides yet, as such, and this helped the country to define a new and shared foreign policy, especially where method was concerned. The Internationalist ideals and the need to safeguard national interests were elements shared by most of the political parties, although in different ways and with diverse emphases depending on the political tradition from which they came².

The rejection of nationalism and a desire for international cooperation, European and worldwide, was also reflected in most of Italy's public opinion. The Italian Society for International Organisation (SIOI) was formed in October of 1944 by a group of authoritative men of law and culture, and supported by Palazzo Chigi (i. e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The Society's promoters had a vision of highly innovative international relationships that optimistically strove for the creation of supranational bodies - bodies which would limit the principles of national sovereignty that had led to such disastrous consequences. They aimed to reconnect with similar ideals that were emerging in other countries, especially in the United States.

As interpreters of the orientation of the political forces of the National Liberation Committee (CLN) that supported it, the second Badoglio government approved a declaration on Italy's international relationships during a session of the Council of Ministers on 23rd May, 1944, formulated by Carlo Sforza, a Minister without Portfolio, in which it was declared, among other things, that the "ultimate objective" of Italian foreign policy was to "contribute to the creation of a new international law that would assure liberty and prosperity for all peoples as delineated in the Atlantic Charter, and which, through the interdependence of nations and their cooperation on a wholly democratic basis, would prevent any new danger of war." Soon afterwards, the Bonomi government closely watched the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, which took place from 21st August to 7th October of 1944, as it strove to lay the basis for the foundation of an international organisation for security and peace.

Alcide De Gasperi became Foreign Minister on 12th December, 1944 and his work left its mark on all of Italy's post-war foreign policy. He worked, above all, to ease the way to Italy's rejoining the community of nations and, through international actions, to consolidate

² In matters of international cooperation, the new Catholic ruling class closed the apparent dichotomy between its pursuance of national interests and its ideals of an international community. In substantial accord with the Catholics were the left-wing parties, with their traditional internationalism, awareness of an increasingly interdependent economy and conviction to the continuance of the great war alliance between the USSR and Western democracies. Lay parties were also strongly in favor of international cooperation as the most important aspect of international relations and Italian foreign policy. As opposed to the DC and the PCI, who in their formulations looked above all to a world order, they were more concerned with the European scenario. The leaning towards international cooperation by the right, the monarchists and neo-fascists, on the other hand, was either feeble or practically inexistent.



its image and the country's true nature.³ His efforts were guided by his strong sense of patriotism and, more generally speaking, of the nation, together with its ideals of liberty, justice and democracy. He had a vision of international politics as collaboration between peoples and nations, not just on a political level, but also on an economic and social one as well.

De Gasperi also had a clear perception of the structural weaknesses of his country, intensified by the destruction suffered during the war, and was very aware of public opinion. He moved, therefore, with circumspection and with his well-known pragmatism. As the international reality of the post-war era gradually came into clearer focus, making certain nationalistic views which were still tied to the legends of the recent past seem naïve and old-fashioned, De Gasperi, while still aiming to give the country an international role in keeping with its history, made international cooperation one of his primary foreign policy objectives, leaving behind the methods and substance of the foreign policy that had characterised the country under its Fascist rulers, yet still championed by an authoritative functionary or two at Palazzo Chigi⁴. He believed in a style of cooperation that, on the one hand, safeguarded peace by seeking just solutions to international political problems, and, on the other hand, safeguarded the economic and social interests of various countries, a conception which, furthermore, helped to advance the various objectives of Italian foreign policy as well.

From the time he had become Foreign Minister, De Gasperi followed the nascent United Nations with great interest and worked energetically to be granted admission to the San Francisco Conference which opened on 25th April, 1945. He saw Italy's presence in that conference as a chance, in view of the discussions on the Peace Treaty, for the country to be fully readmitted into the international community⁵. The desire to participate in the birth of the United Nations was also a way to irrevocably prove to its allies that the new mindset of Italian politics was one that revolved around the repudiation of war and favoured international cooperation, as well as a choice favouring liberty and democracy.

He put his trust in the long wartime cooperation with and personal favour of Roosevelt⁶, but his attempts at getting Italy admitted to the conference, even as an observer failed: Italy, in keeping with the accords stipulated at the Yalta Conference, was not invited⁷. On the other hand, it could not be any other way. The Allies did not want it and did not know

³ Pombeni, Paolo; Corni, Gustavo: "La politica come esperienza della storia", in Conze, Eckard; Corni, Gustavo and Pombeni, Paolo (ed) (2005): *Alcide De Gasperi: un percorso europeo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 42 – 46.

⁴ See Tosi, Luciano: "Governo e diplomazia nell'Italia repubblicana: il confronto su alcune scelte di politica estera", in Petracchi, Giorgio (ed) (2005): *Uomini e nazioni. Cultura e politica estera nell'Italia del Novecento*, Udine, Gaspari, pp. 155 – 180 and also Lorenzini, Sara (2007): *L'Italia e il trattato di pace del 1947*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 26 – 27.

⁵ Cf. Ortona, Egidio (1984): *Anni d'America, I, La ricostruzione (1944 – 1951)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 126 – 129 and Andreotti, Giulio (1956): *De Gasperi e il suo tempo*, Milan, Mondadori, p. 212.

⁶ See in this regard Mae – Sioi (2005): *Obiettivo Onu: l'Italia e le Nazioni Unite, 1945-1955*, Napoli, Editoriale Scientifica, doc. n. 3.

⁷ "Documenti diplomatici italiani", *Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Mae) (1985 – 1992), serie X, 1943 – 1948, Libreria dello Stato*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, (from now on DDI, X) vol. II, 116, 123, 133 and 150; Tarchiani, Alberto (1955): *Dieci anni tra Roma e Washington*, Milan, Mondadori, pp. 28 – 39 and 44 – 47, Ortona, "Anni d'America I", *op. cit.*, pp. 125 – 131, Di Nolfo, Ennio (1999) "La mancata ammissione dell'Italia all'Onu nel 1945-1947" in Tosi, Luciano (ed.) (1999): *L'Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali, Diplomazia multilaterale nel Novecento*, Padova, Cedam. p. 181 and Mae – Sioi, *op. cit.* pp. 6 – 21.



enough – at and as far as they were concerned, the changes in the ruling class of the country had much less significance to them than the events of the Fascist war⁸.

De Gasperi was deeply pained by the exclusion and personally wrote a resolution, which he had approved by the Italian Council of Ministers, in which he expressed the disappointment of the Italian people at its exclusion and highlighted the country's contribution to the cause of democracy alongside its allies, as well as Italy's willingness to participate in the reconstruction of the world⁹. Subsequently, at the Potsdam Conference which took place from 17th July to 2nd August, 1945, US president Harry Truman proposed Italy's admission to the United Nations, in view of the fact that his own country had, in the meantime, declared war on Japan¹⁰. His proposal was not accepted. Great Britain's initial opposition was substituted by that of the Soviet Union, who would not agree to admit Italy unless Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria were also admitted. Truman abandoned his efforts and postponed the admission of former enemy countries to after the ratification of their respective peace treaties¹¹ and by doing so, especially after the Moscow Conference of December 1945, he favoured the link between the admission of Italy to the UN together with that of the three Eastern European countries and Finland. The particular situation of Italy, however, is evident in the final document that emerged from the Potsdam Conference. In point IX of the document it was written that preparation of the peace treaty with Italy had to be one the Allies' priorities in view of the fact that Italy had been the first to break away from the Germans, had contributed to its defeat and had now declared war on Japan; it had freed itself from its Fascist regime and was moving towards the reestablishment of a democratic government and institutions. It affirmed that the signing of a peace treaty with a recognised and democratic Italian government would have made it possible for the Allies to "satisfy their desire to support Italy's petition to join the United Nations"¹², a formula which was then transferred to the preamble of the peace treaty¹³.

In Italy, in the meantime, there was a strong desire to renew international political life. In the second half of 1946, at Italy's Constituent Assembly, while discussing the internationalist norms of the Constitution, there was wide agreement among the various political forces regarding several innovative principles of foreign policy: maximum openness towards the international community, pacifism, the promotion of the values of liberty and democracy on an international scale, international cooperation and Parliamentary control over foreign policy. These principles were tightly intertwined and had their origins in the programmes and ideologies of various political parties constructed around the ideals of liberty, democracy, justice, the value of the human being, a shared reaction to the disastrous Fascist war and on ethical grounds. These ideals also found expression in various articles of the Italian Constitution, in particular in article 11 which, apart from "rejecting war as an instrument of aggression against the freedom of other peoples and as a means for the settlement of international disputes", affirms Italy's commitment, "on conditions of equality with other States, to the limitations of sovereignty that may be necessary to a world order

⁸ Pastorelli, Pietro: "L'ammissione dell'Italia all'Onu", in Tosi, Luciano (ed) (1999): *L'Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali, Diplomazia multilaterale nel Novecento*, Padova, Cedam, pp. 190 - 194.

⁹ "Cf. De Gasperi to Tarchiani", 26 April 1945, DDI, X, II, 150.

¹⁰ Cf. G. Filippone Thaulero, Giustino (1979): *La Gran Bretagna e l'Italia dalla Conferenza di Mosca a Potsdam 1943 - 1945*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, pp. 86 - 87 91 - 93 and Pastorelli, "L'ammissione...", *op. cit.*, pp. 192 - 193.

¹¹ *Ibid.* and Bedeschi Magrini, Anna: "Le condizioni internazionali che favorirono l'ingresso dell'Italia nell'Onu" in *Id.* (ed) (1997): *L'Italia e l'Onu. Esperienze e prospettive*, Padova, Cedam, pp. 11-12.

¹² "Great Britain's representative in Rome, Charles, to Foreign Minister De Gasperi", 3 August, 1945, Mae - Sioi, *op. cit.* p. 22.

¹³ See "Preambolo del Trattato di Pace con l'Italia", 10 febbraio 1947, *Ibid.*, pp. 23 - 24.



ensuring peace and justice among the Nations” and to promote and favour “international organisations furthering such ends.”

Nonetheless, as the Italian peace treaty gradually took shape, De Gasperi pointed out the “injustices” that the victors were setting out to commit where Italy was concerned, noting how they had given life to an organism that was based on rules of international conduct that were at extreme odds with the politics of power which seemed to inspire the solutions they were about to adopt where Italy was concerned. De Gasperi aimed, on the one hand, to highlight the contradictory behaviour of its allies and, on the other hand, to enhance coherence of the solutions hoped for by Italy with the founding principles of the United Nations. He projected confidence in the organisation’s ability to find a fair solution to the problems facing the peace treaty, but in July 1946, with regards to the Conference of the 21, he realistically commented how the will of the Four was imposing itself on the will of the smaller powers and raised the question – a grave one in the presence of an organism such as the UN – “if... and up to what point the smaller states should passively subject themselves to the will of a very restricted directorship of Major powers.”¹⁴ Hope and misgivings also featured in De Gasperi’s noted speech at the Conference of Paris¹⁵ on 10th August, 1946, where he presented Italy’s positions on the peace treaty, the preamble of which, as already mentioned, called for, should it be ratified, the admission of Italy to the United Nations.

De Gasperi’s reactions to the treaty were very harsh. He still, his doubts notwithstanding, had faith in the potential of the United Nations, and in December convinced himself that it should be ratified in the hopes of being able to modify it once Italy had become a member. On 10 February, 1947, he placed his signature on the document. The Truman Doctrine was launched in March of that same year by the United States, who had begun to close the ranks of the western camp. There they found De Gasperi who, having put his disappointment in the peace treaty behind him, was busy stabilizing the country and constructing a realistic foreign policy framework, aimed also at helping resolve the country’s dramatic economic condition. On 20th March, the US Department of State alerted the government in Rome to the possibility of presenting an admission request to the United Nations ahead of schedule, even before ratification and the coming into force of its peace treaty¹⁶. The date was not a random one: the invitation to present the petition of admission had been extended to Italy just eight days after the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine. The aim of this move was, in substance, to facilitate Italy’s entry into the western bloc and avoid its falling under the influence of the Soviets, an event considered not unlikely seeing as the Italian CLN coalition government was still in power and had not yet made its definitive choices on an international level.

¹⁴ “De Gasperi to representatives in Brussels, The Hague, Oslo, Rio de Janeiro, Nanking and Pretoria”, 12 July, 1946, DDI, X, III, 698.

¹⁵ See De Gasperi, Alcide (2008): “Per una pace nella fraterna collaborazione dei popoli liberi” in *Scritti e discorsi politici*, vol. 3; Capperucci, Vera; Lorenzini, Sara (eds.): *Alcide De Gasperi e la fondazione della Democrazia Cristiana, 1943-1948*, vol. 2, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 1738–1746.

¹⁶ “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 20 March, 1947, DDI, X, V, 228, see, furthermore, “Appunto”, 21 April 1947, *Archivio Storico Ministero Affari Esteri (from now on Asmae)*, n. 31/246/I in AP, 1946 – 1950, Carte ONU, b. 15 and “Sforza to Tarchiani”, 25 March 1947, DDI, X, V, 251. Once contact regarding admission had been made with the United States, Acheson brought to Tarchiani’s attention that the Peace Treaty would have been ratified at the same time as discussion regarding the petition, see “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 9 April, 1947, DDI, X, V, 320; “The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State”, 09 April 1947, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (from here on forward to be known as FRUS), 1947, III; *The British Commonwealth; Europe*, Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1960–1992, pg. 536–537 and Pastorelli, “L’ammissione...”, *op.cit.*, pp. 192–194.



Encouraged by the favour manifested by public opinion and the major political forces for international cooperation, the government did not delay, quickly overcame remaining objections to entrance into the UN, most of which came from its own diplomacy¹⁷, and, on 7th May, 1947, presented their petition for admittance to the United Nations¹⁸. For the country it symbolized the conquest of equal status among nations, its re-entry into the international community and a chance to participate in the discussions revolving around its former colonies and the governor of the Free Territory of Trieste. It would also favour desired changes to their peace treaty.

After the treaty was ratified by the Constituent Assembly on 31st July, 1947 Italy's admission to the UN was less of an automatic step than the Italian representatives had presumed it would be. The Italian petition to join the international organisation was presented by the American delegate and supported by France and Great Britain but found resistance from the Soviets, who tied their support for it to their own request for admission of the other three former enemy states – Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. The United States was opposed to the admission of the latter three because of their domestic situations. When on 21st August the question was voted upon, Italy's petition was rejected by the Soviet Union's veto and, in return, the Eastern European countries supported by the Soviets were denied entrance by the veto of the United States¹⁹. The event was emblematic of the new international order that emerged after the breakup of the anti-fascist coalition: the Cold War had broken out and Italy found herself entrenched with the Western bloc before she even had a chance, for purely internal reasons, to make her own foreign policy decisions. Once it had conquered the Italian peninsula for the Western camp, the United States did not have any intention of backing off from their position regarding Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania in order to favour the admission of Italy to the UN, even though it had declared its full support for it. The reasons for the Cold War were, to them, vastly more important than Italy's aspirations, even though, in this case, membership in the UN of the three eastern European countries would not have substantially changed the power balance within the organisation, considering the overwhelming majority of pro-Western member states.

Perhaps the bitter rivalry between the USA and the USSR, of which the counter-vetoes were merely a reflection, was not yet clear to the Italian representatives. De Gasperi and Sforza had counted on Italy's merits during the last part of the war, on the democratic and pacifist mindset of the new and republican Italy, and on the promise made by its allies in the preamble of the peace treaty, not to mention the support it had from the United States. Fully aware of Italy's responsibility and the price that had to be paid, they were convinced – De Gasperi in particular – which a stable international balance could not be built on punishment

¹⁷ See Tosi, Luciano: "Alle origini della politica estera della Repubblica. L'Italia e la nascita dell'Onu", *La Comunità Internazionale*, LIX, 3 (2004), pp. 449 – 452.

¹⁸ "Sforza to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Lie", 07 May 1947. in Mae – Sioi, p. 35.

¹⁹ "Tarchiani to Sforza", 19 (2), 20, 21 August 1947, DDI, X, VI, 347, 348, 351, 364; "The Italian Embassy in Washington to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs", 21 August 1947 (5) in ASMAE, AP 1946 – 1950, *Carte ONU*, b. 15, "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Italian Embassy in London", 21 August 1947, *Ibid*; furthermore *United Nations, Security Council, Official Records, Second Year, 81*, New York, (1947), pp. 2117 – 2136. At Palazzo Chigi the failure of the admission petition to the UN was the subject of variously remarked upon and if on the one hand it helped to clear the international question, on the other hand it gave credence to the position of the "realists", those that saw Italy's admission to the UN only in terms of advantages and disadvantages, without too much consideration about the ideals it implied and they considered the admission petition humiliating, ill-timed and useless, flaunting a realism which had always been denied by the insistent re-proposal of Italy's role and failing to either understand or accept the international downsizing of the country, above all its new foreign policy; on this topic see Tosi, "Alle origini della politica estera della repubblica...", *op. cit.*, pp. 456 – 457 and 460.



and retaliation. The government, invited to do so by the United States, had, in fact, forced the timing somewhat, presenting their petition for admission before the procedures leading to the ratification of the peace treaty had even been completed²⁰. Timing aside, Italy would anyway have been denied admission in view of the grave conflict of power between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Sforza and De Gasperi did not, however, give up their quest and, encouraged by the approval they had received from the Italian Constituent Assembly, they continued their efforts to gain admission to the UN. They saw that their chances could lie in an agreement between the two superpowers to allow a “block” admission of the various countries requesting it²¹ and, seeing how inflexible the Americans were on the question of the Balkan countries, they decided not to put all of their faith in just the actions of the US but to promote their own autonomous action to favour the compromise²². The US Department of State, however, remained inflexible, especially where the exclusion of Bulgaria and Albania were concerned, countries it considered non-democratic states and that actively supported the Greek communist partisans. The only issue on which it might have shown some flexibility was an exchange between Italy and Finland²³. The Soviets, for their part, made their refusal to engage in any sort of compromise or concession clear if it did not fit in with their “everyone or no one” formula.²⁴ The second Soviet veto to Italy’s admission took place on 1 October, justified by the American veto of the membership petition by the three eastern European countries and the US violation of the commitments it had made in Potsdam²⁵.

The failure of Italy to gain entrance to the UN also had consequences on the political front in Rome, where it became the object of heated discussion between the majority and the opposition. The United States, on their part and aiming to favour those political factions of the country that supported the western countries, proposed, in view of the elections to be held on 18th April, 1948, to once again open the question of admission and, once again, promised to support it²⁶. Once they had obtained the approval of those running the Italian government²⁷, they, together with France and Great Britain, requested that Italy’s candidacy be re-examined by the Security Council. On 10th April, 1948, once again, however, the Soviet Union vetoed

²⁰ In this sense also Di Nolfo, “La mancata ammissione dell’Italia...”, *op. cit.*, in particular pp. 184–187.

²¹ “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 09 September, 1947, in Mae–Sioi, pp. 56–57.

²² “Sforza to Tarchiani”, 07 September, 1947, DDI, X, VI, 426; “Sforza to Brosio, Donini and Migone”, 15 September 1947 in Mae–Sioi, pp. 60 – 61 and “The Italian Embassy in Washington to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs”, 21 September 1947, in ASMAE, AP 1946 – 1950, *Carte ONU*, b. 15 and “Sforza to Tarchiani”, 20 September 1947, DDI, X, VI, 487 and “Memorandum of Conversation Lovett – Tarchiani”, 15 and 28 August 1947 in Frus, 1947, I, *General; The United Nations*, pp. 249 – 251, “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State”, 28 August 1947, Ivi, III, *The British Commonwealth; Europe*, pp. 957–959 and “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Armour)”, 11 September 1947, Ivi, pp. 965–967.

²³ *Ibid* and “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 11 September, 1947, DDI, X, VI, 446.

²⁴ “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 24 (2), 26, 27 September, 1947, DDI, X, VI, 514, 517, 528, 530.

²⁵ “The Italian Embassy in Washington to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs”, 01 and 02 October 1947, ASMAE, AP 1946–1950, *Carte Onu*, b. 15, “Brosio to Sforza”, 2 October, 1947, DDI, X, VI, 551, Vedovato, Giuseppe: “La revisione del Trattato di Pace con l’Italia”, *Rivista di Studi politici internazionali*, vol. 43, no. 3 (1974), pp. 438 - 439 and Pastorelli, “L’ammissione...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 193 – 194. Denied admission, Italy, in October of 1947 had an “observer” credited to the United Nations.

²⁶ “Tarchiani to Sforza”, 4 and 26 March, 1948, Mae – Sioi, pp. 65 – 66 e 68 – 69. Andreotti already noted that American support was “conditioned by other admissions and was a purely theoretical support”, Andreotti, Giulio (2005): *1948, L’anno dello scampato pericolo*, Milan, Rizzoli, pp. 48–49.

²⁷ “Sforza to Tarchiani”, 27 March 1948, in Mae – Sioi, pp. 69–70.



the petition – for the third time – insisting on the admission of all of the former enemy states²⁸.

New roads, in the meantime, were opening up that might secure Italy's full reinstatement to the international community and the politics of international cooperation that were coming into being in other circles. Between April and May of 1949, Italy joined the Atlantic Pact and became a member of the Council of Europe. The United Nations, in the meantime and without Italy, dealt with problems that nonetheless affected it: Trieste and the destiny of its former pre-Fascist colonies. De Gasperi and Sforza monitored the negotiations on the two problems from the outside²⁹, trying to promote the Italian stance with various members of the organisation³⁰ who, with a resolution of the Political Committee dated 21st November, 1949, gave Italy the Trusteeship of Somalia for ten years. On 13th September the UN Security Council once again called for a vote on the admission to its ranks of Italy, and once again the motion was vetoed by the Soviet Union – for the fourth time. Two months later, however, the General Assembly, acting on a proposal by Argentina, reaffirmed, with 51 votes for, 5 against and 1 abstention³¹, Italy's right to be admitted to the United Nations.

In the summer of 1950 the Korean conflict broke out and the UN intervened. De Gasperi, while in favour of the objectives to the UN intervention³², feared Italy's involvement in the conflict, both because of the devastating effect the heavy military costs would have on the country, which could ill-afford it, as well as for the repercussions it could have on the Italy's fragile democracy and in a 10th July, 1950, meeting he asked Sforza to retract Italy's UN admission petition. Italy's entrance to the UN at that time, he felt, could have "caused the country embarrassment and perhaps even participation in the Pacific"³³. The Korean War and the fact that the United Nations had declared communist China an aggressor, among other things, and De Gasperi's position notwithstanding, had killed any illusions Sforza might have nurtured in the latter half of the 1950s to have Italy be admitted to the UN together with China, whose admission he saw as imminent after the People's Republic had been recognised by Great Britain³⁴ in January 1950.

When in July 1951 De Gasperi took over as Minister of Foreign Affairs from Sforza, who was unwell, he put renewed energy into the effort to have Italy admitted to the UN, a problem which continued to be linked, in some way, to the revision of the peace treaty. His conviction that Italy was the victim of wrongdoing, not only by the USSR but also, and above all, by the United States, who continued to oppose the admission of the Balkan states without considering its consequences for Italy, steadily increased. The USA and Italy had, after all,

²⁸ "The Italian observer at the United Nations in New York to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs", 10 April, 1948, *Ibid*, pp. 70–71.

²⁹ Sforza was called upon twice, 11 April and 1 October, 1949 to lay out Italy's point of view regarding the destiny of its former colonies to the Political Committee. On 1 October 1949, Sforza defended the principles of full independence for African nations; cf. Sforza, Carlo (1952): *Cinque anni a Palazzo Chigi. La politica estera italiana dal 1947 al 1951*, Rome, Atlante, pp. 145–157 and 171–182.

³⁰ Regarding cf. Mae (2005-2007): "I documenti diplomatici italiani", s. XI: 1948–1953, vol. I - III, Rome, Istituto Poligrafico and Zecca dello Stato, *passim*.

³¹ "The office of the Italian observer at the United Nations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs", 01 December, 1949, Asmae, AP, 1946 – 1950, *Carte Onu*, b. 7.

³² See Andreotti, "De Gasperi e il suo tempo...", *op. cit.*, p. 361.

³³ See in this regard see Ballini, Pier Luigi: "De Gasperi, La costruzione della democrazia (1948 –1954)" in De Gasperi, Alcide, *Scritti e discorsi politici*, vol. IV, Lorenzini, Sara; Taverni, Barbara (eds.), "Alcide De Gasperi e la stabilizzazione della Repubblica", 1948-1954, vol. 1 *op. cit.*, pp. 100–101.

³⁴ Cf. Pini, Mario Filippo: "L'azione diplomatica dell'Italia per l'ammissione all'ONU e il fattore Cina", *Nuova Storia contemporanea*, vol. 10, no. 6 (2006), pp. 83–102.



become allies and yet the former's position became increasingly hard-line, although, realistically speaking, Italy had many advantages to offer the United States. It was a great delusion for the man who had chosen to side with the West, and the United States in particular, to favour his own country's re-admittance onto the world stage. It was a great disappointment to the enthusiastic supporter of the universality of the UN³⁵.

De Gasperi brought up the topic once again during a trip to Ottawa to participate in the seventh session of the Atlantic Council in September 1951. In an attempt to offer the Americans a concrete proposal to favour Italy's admission, De Gasperi gave Dean Acheson, the then Secretary of State, a memorandum prepared by several Italian jurists which, after the Atlantic session, was then discussed in Washington DC and in which Italy asked, among other things, to be admitted together with the other democratic states. In it, De Gasperi underscored the particularity of the Italian case and sustained that it should be up to the General Assembly, the "guardian" of the statute, to decide the case with a 2/3rds majority. In support of his petition, he recalled several cases in which the Assembly had substituted the Security Council and, above all, the resolution Uniting for Peace, approved on 3rd December, 1950, to overcome impasses at the Council - in such cases as, for example, the Korean War - and on the basis of which, should there be a paralysis at the Council, the Assembly could intervene with a recommendation³⁶.

The Italian memorandum did not, however, meet with the approval of Department of State experts, who maintained that the Security Council could not be overruled and a negative vote could not be overturned³⁷. Acheson made these opinions his own and declared that the United States could never have violated the UN Statute, reiterating, nonetheless, their promise to do everything within their power to assure Italy's admission³⁸. The only concrete result achieved at this point was a tripartite declaration dated 26th September, 1951, in which the United States, France and Great Britain would work in unison to, among other things, "expend every effort to assure Italy's admission into the United Nations", in the hopes that the declaration would receive the consensus of the other peace treaty signatories and that "they too would be equally disposed to act on Italy's behalf"³⁹.

In a note written by the Soviet Union to the three powers dated 11th October, 1951, it denied any responsibility for Italy's exclusion from the UN and reiterated its well-known

³⁵ According to De Gasperi: "l'Onu o è un organismo universale o non lo è. E pertanto non si debbono in via pregiudiziale porre divieti neppure agli Stati balcanici che ora sono esclusi. I regimi dei vari Stati non debbono costituire una questione pregiudiziale"; *Verbale del Consiglio dei ministri*, (17 February 1951), in De Gasperi, Alcide, "Scritti e Discorsi politici...", IV, *op. cit.*, Lorenzini, Sara; Taverni, Barbara (eds.) *Alcide De Gasperi e la stabilizzazione della Repubblica, 1948-1954*, vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 707.

³⁶ "The Italian Prime Minister (De Gasperi) to the Secretary of State." Aide Mémoire, Frus, 1951, II, *The United Nations; The Western Hemisphere*, pp. 335 – 341 and Pastorelli, "L'ammissione...", *op. cit.* pp. 196 – 197.

³⁷ "Memorandum of Comment on the Italian Government Memorandum on the Admission of Italy to the United Nations, by Mr. Paul B. Taylor of the Office of United Nations Political and Security Affairs" [s.d.], Frus, 1951, II, pp. 342-344 and also pp. 345-347; see also "Memorandum of Conversation, Guidotti, Lucioli, Hickerson, Greene, Taylor", Italy's Membership in the United Nations (16 October 1951), *Records of the Office of Western European Affairs Relating to Italy, 1943-51, box 9, National Archives and Records Administration* (from now on Nara).

³⁸ De Gasperi, *Scritti e discorsi politici*, IV, 3, *op. cit.*, pp. 2415 – 2416.

³⁹ Editorial Note, Frus, 1951, II, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-349; Declaration by the United States, France, and United Kingdom on the Italian Peace Treaty, 26 September 1951, Frus, 1951, vol. IV, part. I, *Europe: Political and Economic Developments 1951*, pp. 717 – 718.



position⁴⁰. De Gasperi responded harshly to this note during a speech to the Italian Senate five days later⁴¹. Italy, he maintained, was the victim of the crossed-vetoes of the two superpowers. He understood the motivations behind the Soviet vetoes, as well as those of the United States, so as not to circumvent it. In his opinion, they were political, and not juridical, reasons, which nonetheless did not justify American behaviour against an allied nation. De Gasperi's reaction to America's hard line position against the Soviet Union was a series of three energetic speeches aimed at American Secretary of State Acheson – on 23rd October⁴², 23rd November⁴³ and 27th November⁴⁴ - urging him to approve the admission petitions of Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary and decrying the lack of incisive action on the part of the Americans, as well as the lack of follow up to the 26th September tripartite declaration⁴⁵. The Secretary of State, however, remained evasive in his answers, which confirmed American commitment to the issue but also reiterated the fact that the United States would not stoop to any compromises with the Soviet Union and that it would not violate the United Nations Statute⁴⁶, something which De Gasperi denied ever having had intentions of doing.

The Secretary of State actually had little interest in having Italy admitted to the United Nations and did not want to make concessions of any sort to the Soviets in the tense climate of the Cold War, but in his memoirs he wrote that the Italians had too quickly forgotten their own culpabilities and defeat and that they considered themselves absolved by the merits of their late wartime alliance, misinterpreting the favours requested for justice which, "if denied, could abnegate the firm identification of Italian interests with those of its allies in the NATO. Only De Gasperi's transparent honesty prevented this posturing from tainting them with any hint of blackmail."⁴⁷

Realistically speaking, while Acheson was right about some of the power politics methods adopted at times by Italian diplomacy, he nonetheless minimized the differences in interests between the two countries, which were substantial, and at the time manifested themselves, for example, not only in the realm of admission or lack thereof to the UN – which was certainly not a favour – but also on the theme of emigration and economic aid, not to speak of Trieste⁴⁸. Not even the requests sent out by Italian diplomats helped to soften the Secretary of State's position, according to whom American public opinion would not have been able to justify a favourable vote for Eastern European countries and the vote itself would have taken a card away that they could have played in exchange for the admission to the UN of Japan⁴⁹. And so, on 6th February, 1952, the proposal to admit Italy to the United Nations was once again turned down by the USSR in the Security Council. It was the fifth time Italy had had to suffer a veto for its candidature, while the Soviet proposal for the "block"

⁴⁰ De Gasperi: "Intervento al Senato della Repubblica", 16 October, 1951, in *Id. Scritti e discorsi politici*, IV, Tonezzer, Elena; Bigaran, Mariapia and Guiotto, Maddalena (eds.): "Alcide De Gasperi nel Trentino asburgico", vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 874.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 874–877.

⁴² Frus, 1951, II, pp. 351-365.

⁴³ Cf. "transcripts of a meeting between De Gasperi-Acheson", 23 November, 1951 in De Gasperi, "Scritti e discorsi politici", vol. IV, 3, *op. cit.*, pp. 2458 – 2459.

⁴⁴ "The Italian Prime Minister to the Secretary of State", Dean Acheson, 27 November, 1951, *Ibid*, pp. 2467 – 2468.

⁴⁵ "The Italian Prime Minister (De Gasperi) to the Secretary of State", 23 October 1951, in Frus, 1951, II, pp. 365–366.

⁴⁶ "The Acting Secretary of State", 30 October 1951, *Ibid*, p. 367 and "the Secretary of State to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)", Washington, 15 December 1951, *Ibid*, p. 410.

⁴⁷ Acheson, Dean (1949): *Present at the Creation. My Years in the State Department*, New York, Norton, p. 732.

⁴⁸ See in this regard also Craveri, Piero (2006): *De Gasperi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, p. 499.

⁴⁹ "The Secretary of State to the United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)", 18 January, 1952, Frus, 1952, II, pp. 431- 432.



admission of 14 states was rejected with 6 votes against, 2 for (the Soviet Union and Pakistan) and 3 abstentions (Chile, France and Great Britain)⁵⁰. The abstentions were a signal that the American position was losing its consensus, while the Soviet one was gaining ground, just like the principle of the universality of the United Nations, but the Cold War tensions did not leave much room for either side to manoeuvre in, for the moment. The Italian government protested angrily with the Soviet ambassador to Rome and used the episode to inform Moscow that it no longer had any intention of further applying the obligations Italy had towards it as per the peace treaty⁵¹. At the same time it let Washington DC, Paris and London know that Italy was convinced that they had not “expended every effort” to favour Italy’s admission to the UN as they had promised in their tripartite declaration of 26 September, 1951, and that Italy reserved the right to re-examine its own position on the basis of the decisions taken regarding allied powers⁵².

Interest in Italy’s admission to the UN awakened once again towards the mid-1950s, when Austria was easily admitted, after the signing of its peace treaty and with the Conference of Bandung, which opened the doors to admission for developing countries. The first weak signs of détente, after the death of Stalin in March 1953 and the rise to power of the more pragmatic Eisenhower in the United States, brought with it renewed hope. The positions of the superpowers changed and they accepted a Canadian proposal which, reworking the Soviet – and Italian – proposal, called for, as is known, the admission of a group of 16 states, Italy among them, to be voted on as a block. And so, on 14th December, 1955, Italy was, at long last, admitted to the United Nations⁵³. Ten years had passed since the birth of the organization!

2. Atlanticism and Collective Security (1956-1968)

The formula of *neo-Atlanticism*⁵⁴ now began to mature in Italy. It was born in left-wing Christian-democratic political environments and espoused a new vision of Italian foreign policy that blended a commitment to Atlantic and European alliances with a renewed interest in the Mediterranean area, the Arab world and, more generally speaking, the so-called Third World. The promoters of neo-Atlanticism, which included Amintore Fanfani, Giovanni Gronchi and Enrico Mattei, sought to gain a parity status for the country with its allies and, at the same time, expand its diplomatic horizons by creating an international political strategy founded on the call for international cooperation, dialogue with Mediterranean countries and the mediation between western interests and the requests of the Third World. The United Nations was, in this context, the ideal multilateral framework within which to realise these political aspirations and see results, even though inside the government there were those who

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 448, 451–452 and United Nations (1951): *Yearbook of the United Nations*, V, New York, United Nations Office of Public Information, pp. 204–206.

⁵¹ “Mae to embassy in Washington – Paris – London”, 23 february 1952, Mae-Sioi , pp. 80 - 81 e De Gasperi, Alcide: “Intervento alla Camera dei deputati”, 28 July 1953, in *Id.*: “Scritti e discorsi politici...”, vol. IV, 1, *op. cit.*, pp. 1095.

⁵² “Mae to embassy in Washington – Paris – London”, 23 february, 1952 in Mae-Sioi, pp. 80-81.

⁵³ See Perfetti, Francesco: “L’ammissione dell’Italia alle Nazioni Unite: il ruolo della diplomazia italiana”, *La Comunità Internazionale*, vol. 61, no. 2 (2006), pp. 254-275 e Costa Bona, Enrica; Tosi, Luciano (2007): *L’Italia e la sicurezza collettiva. Dalla Società delle Nazioni alle Nazioni Unite*, Perugia, Morlacchi, pp. 179–183.

⁵⁴ See Martelli, Evelina (2008): *L’altro atlantismo. Fanfani e la politica estera italiana (1958-1963)*, Milan, Guerini, and also Bagnato, Bruna (2002): “Introduzione”, in *I diari di Luca Pietromarchi: ambasciatore italiano a Mosca, 1958-1961*, Firenze, Olschki, pp. XXIV-XXVI.



preferred the Atlantic side, while others tended towards the UN, and thus Italian foreign policy was not altogether cohesive all of the time, sometimes siding with the United States, other times with the UN⁵⁵.

From the time it was admitted to the United Nations, Italy worked to enhance the organization's image as the most appropriate forum for international crises. There was ample agreement on this point by both the majority and the opposition parties within the government, as well as on the need to make Italian foreign policy more dynamic. During its first five years at the UN, if you exclude the brief period of the second Fanfani cabinet, Italy's main priority was, however, to gain a non-permanent seat on the Security Council, symptom of the search for prestige and visibility so desired by the centrist governments, and, more generally speaking, the strengthening of western cooperation. In line with the logic of the Three Essay Report, composed at NATO headquarters and to which the Italian Foreign Minister, the Liberal Gaetano Martino gave a substantial contribution, the Segni government sought to blend the renewal of the Atlantic alliance with the creation of institutionalized forms of consultation among the western countries in New York. And so the challenges posed by the new course of Soviet politics were dealt with not so much by promoting the reasons for an East-West dialogue, something that was only just beginning, and the need to put a distance between themselves and the colonialist positions of several allied countries, as the neo-Atlanticists claimed, but rather maintaining on a strong position in their relationship with the Soviet bloc regarding security and disarmament, hoping to promote the role of NATO through public opinion and asking that the Atlantic alliance be given competences to be able to assist underdeveloped areas⁵⁶. This would have allowed, in the view of the Segni government, a limitation of the possible repercussions from the East-West dialogue inside the Italian political system itself, *in primis* the prospect of involvement by the PSI in government, which would have had echoes in the country's foreign policy as well, for example, in its relationship with the United Nations, which was one of the common grounds between the DC and the PSI, the latter still tied to an image of the organisation as the "centre of irradiation of a coherent Italian peace policy" marked by détente, disarmament and collective security⁵⁷.

The Suez crisis was one of the first occasions in which Italy could test its policies at the UN. The main political forces of the majority and the opposition were in agreement on two aspects: that any diplomatic solution to the crisis must take into account the needs of Egypt and that the UN was needed to resolve it. It was a middle road between the aggressiveness shown by the governments of London and Paris, the latter an essential partner in the negotiations of the treaties of Rome, and the support of Egypt, considered a representative of the Third World and its requests⁵⁸.

Nonetheless, divided between orthodox Atlanticists and neo-Atlanticists, the Italian government chose to contribute to the formation of the emergency forces in the Sinai Desert

⁵⁵ De Leonardis, Massimo: "La politica estera italiana, la NATO e l'ONU negli anni del neoatlantismo (1955-1960)", in Tosi, Luciano (ed.) (1999): "L'Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali...", *op. cit.*, pp. 204-206; Bagnato, "Introduzione...", *op. cit.*, pp. XVII; Brogi, Alessandro (1996): *L'Italia e l'egemonia americana nel Mediterraneo*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, pp. 58-65, 176-207, 237-339.

⁵⁶ Villani, Angela (2008): *Un liberale sulla scena internazionale. Gaetano Martino e la politica estera italiana (1954-1967)*, Messina, Trisform, pp. 96 and foll.

⁵⁷ Nenni, Pietro (1974) : *I nodi della politica estera italiana*, in Zucaro, Domenico (ed.) (1974), Milan, Sugarco, p. 129.

⁵⁸ *Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei deputati* (from now on Aa Pp, Camera), II, Discussions, vol. IV, p. 3348; Martino, Gaetano: "L'Italia e il Canale di Suez", *Oggi*, no. 37 (13 September 1956). See also Riccardi, Luca (2006): *Il "problema Israele". Diplomazia italiana e Pci di fronte allo stato ebraico (1948 - 1973)*, Milan, Guerini, pp. 124-130.



(UNEF). They supported the peacemaking efforts of the UN but at the same time chose to abstain when the UN asked the Anglo-French occupation forces to leave Egypt. Basically, there was a continuous effort to find ground for mediation, as the United States was doing, appealing to the universal values of the United Nations and their role as guarantor of collective security. At the same time, they did not want to risk the positions of their European allies, indicating that through the strengthening of the Atlantic alliance and in their choice of shared Western-leaning politics lay the only road to deal with relationships with the Third World in the face of the Soviet threat⁵⁹.

When the crisis in Hungary broke out, Italy requested the intervention of the United Nations, even threatening to break off diplomatic relations with the Moscow. In this case, however, Italy's rigid position found itself isolated since its allies considered the Hungarian problem of lesser importance than the Suez⁶⁰ crisis.

The attitude of the Italian delegation during the two emergency sessions at the UN would be a precursor to the general framework of conduct Italy pursued during the 11th General Assembly meeting inaugurated 12th November, 1956. Beyond professing faith in the organisation and its ideals of peace and cooperation, in substance, Minister Martino confirmed a strategy of mediation determination and the development of not-yet-independent or recently independent countries should be "encouraged but guided" in order to prevent nationalistic degeneration. To this end, he cited the case of Somalia and said that only in a climate of international cooperation could decolonization be effected without trauma⁶¹. The general debate and discussions that took place between November and December in the Commission of the Protection of Rights confirmed that Italy rejected the interpretation offered by the Afro-Asians, according to whom the General Assembly should have competences covering the activities of colonial powers in non-independent territories.

On other topics Rome showed itself to be more open to mediation and dialogue, as in the case of Southwest Africa⁶². Sensitive to topics regarding racial discrimination and well aware of their impact on the Afro-Asian world, in December 1956 Italy proposed the institution of a new and restricted committee at the Fourth Commission, or, alternatively, to ask the Secretary General to direct negotiations with the South African government; an attempt at conciliation evidently stemming from the need to prevent a break with its bond with the Pretoria government and embarrassing reproaches against that government, to whom Italy was tied by important commercial interests⁶³.

⁵⁹ See Martino, Gaetano (1977): *Discorsi parlamentari*, Rome, Grafica Editrice Romana, pp. 696-705; 713-728; Brogi, *op. cit.*, pp. 223-225; Riccardi, "Il "problema Israele..."", *op. cit.*, pp. 128-130.

⁶⁰ Pastorelli, Pietro: "Italy in the double crisis of 1956", in Nuti, Leopoldo (ed.) (1998): *Diplomatic Sources and International Crisis, Proceedings of the 4th Conference of Editors of Diplomatic Documents*, Rome, Ipzs, pp. 197-198; Ispi (ed.) (1957): *L'Italia alle Nazioni Unite: dicembre 1955 – Marzo 1957*, Milan, Ispi, pp. 127-131; Ortona, Egidio (1986): *Anni d'America, II, La diplomazia, 1953-1961*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 209-211; de Leonardis, Massimo (1999): "La rivolta d'Ungheria e la situazione internazionale", in Betizza, Enzo et al. (1999): *La crepa nel muro: Ungheria 1956*, Roma, Fondazione Ugo Spirito, p. 109.

⁶¹ A/Pv. 588, XI, 21 November 1956.

⁶² See Vismara, Maria (1966): *Le Nazioni Unite per i territori dipendenti e per la decolonizzazione 1945-1964*, Padova, Cedam, pp. 399- 485; Slonim, Solomon (1973): *South West Africa and the United Nations: an International Mandate in Dispute*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press; Megevand, Beatrice (1982): *La questione della Namibia*, Giuffrè Milan; Emiliani, Marcella: "Namibia l'indipendenza negata", in Emiliani, Marcella; Ercolessi, Maria Cristina and Gentili, Anna Maria (eds.) (1987): *Sud Africa: i conflitti dell'apartheid*, Roma, Editori Riuniti.

⁶³ Villani, Angela (2007): *L'Italia e l'Onu negli anni della coesistenza competitiva (1955-1968)*, Padova, Cedam, p. 69.



The mediation line chosen by the Segni government seemed, nonetheless, increasingly difficult to uphold. The neo-Atlanticists put pressure on the government until it abandoned its fears of breaking western solidarity. They saw, in the new course of American politics, a chance to definitively distinguish the Italian position from that of colonialist countries and to assume a role of regional power, which worked, apart from safeguarding national interests, to stabilise and develop the area. It was an intertwining of economic, political and cultural interests which greeted the Eisenhower Doctrine⁶⁴ with favour, but which did not find agreement with the caution shown by Segni government when it came to the Afro-Asian world in and outside of the United Nations⁶⁵.

Following the same train of thought, in February 1957 and during the subsequent General Assembly meeting, the Italian delegation followed the debate about the crisis in North Africa and in Cyprus, not giving in to pressure from anti-colonialist nations but attempting to find compromises that would be valid for all. For the first time, Paris that year had accepted the addition of the Algerian problem to the agenda, giving its allies the difficult task of adopting a position on it. Martino proposed a postponement of the problem, also to avoid the serious embarrassment the request to send UN observers to Algeria would cause to Italy, brought up by several delegations, for the similarities it had with the Hungarian situation. Italy agreed, in that session and in following sessions, to all of the resolution proposals that invited the parties to cooperate in order to find a peaceful solution to the problem and thus also avoid condemnation of French policies⁶⁶.

In much the same way, the Italian delegation attempted to find compromises to help solve the problem on Cyprus, facilitating negotiation between the conflicting parties even outside of the realm of the United Nations. In both cases and, more generally speaking, when dealing with questions that brought the right to self-determination to the forefront, Rome always moved with extreme caution, supporting the defense of the principle of private domain, reluctant to set a dangerous precedent should the Austrians appeal the question of the South Tyrol area⁶⁷.

Italy's commitment to the United Nations got a fresh boost during the second Fanfani cabinet. In the summer of 1958, the Jordanian-Lebanese crisis and the Anglo-American intervention in the Middle East gave rise to a new Italian initiative. In the Chamber of Deputies on 15 July, Fanfani supported the role of the United Nations in resolving the crisis, with the support – in this case - of Pietro Nenni⁶⁸, the secretary of the socialist party, and moved the focus from a military operation to a more comprehensive program for the stabilization and economic development of the Middle East. Much like the Pella plan⁶⁹, the

⁶⁴ Brogi, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-251. Regarding the Eisenhower Doctrine Cf. De Luca, Daniele: "Gli Stati Uniti e i nuovi rapporti di forza in Medio Oriente: la dottrina Eisenhower, 1957-1958", *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, vol. 11, no. 2 (1995), pp. 117-146.

⁶⁵ Regarding the role of ENI as a tool of neo-atlantic, Mediterranean and Middle East policy, Cf. Bucciante, Giovanni (2005): *Enrico Mattei: assalto al potere petrolifero mondiale*, Milan, Giuffrè; Tonini, Alberto (2003): *Il sogno proibito. Mattei, il petrolio arabo e le "sette sorelle"*, Firenze, Polistampa; Bagnato, Bruna (2004): *Petrolio e politica. Mattei in Marocco*, Firenze, Polistampa; Maugeri, Leonardo (1994): *L'arma del petrolio. Questione petrolifera globale, guerra fredda e politica italiana nella vicenda di Enrico Mattei*, Firenze, Loggia de' Lanzi.

⁶⁶ Luard, Evan (1989): *A History of the United Nations, II, The Age of Decolonization, 1955-1965*, London, Basingstroke, pp. 96-98; Villani, *L'Italia e l'Onu, op. cit.*, pp. 82- 83.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 67 foll.

⁶⁸ Nenni, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-157; Aa Pp, Chamber of Deputies, 3rd Legislature, debates, vol. I, 15 July 1958, p. 192.

⁶⁹ About the Pella Plan Cf. Brogi, *op. cit.*, pp. 280 - 289; Ortona, "Anni d'America...", vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 271.



Fanfani proposal was based on the need to provide multilateral economic assistance, on a regional level and within the framework of the Eisenhower Doctrine, to be, however, developed under the aegis of the United Nations and not exclusively by the West⁷⁰ as Pella had called for. Unfortunately, the reference to the UN of the Fanfani plan did not pass: much like the Sunfed case in which the USA appeared reluctant to give the UN functions and competences where economic assistance to developing nations was concerned, instead conferring to it less far-reaching tools of strictly US hegemony that excluded Soviet participation⁷¹.

The Fanfani government had tried to introduce a different orientation than the line followed by the Segni and Zoli governments, identifying friends within the Arab world, and not just Western solidarity, as a sort of benefit to hold on to, proposing solutions all of which fit into the multilateral framework of the United Nations. This choice expressed the desire to give the organisation not so much the function of a body that manages assistance, but that of one guaranteeing a wider involvement of the countries that benefitted from it and a de-politicization of aid itself. His desire to enhance and support the role of the United Nations as the forum in which to resolve international crises was, nonetheless, in line with the thinking of his predecessors. Turning to the UN was a useful tool to remain involved in Middle Eastern decision-making and to play the role of regional power to which Rome so aspired. Beyond the politics of being present, the ruling class in Italy sought to use their country's potential to contribute to containment strategy, to the stabilization of the area and to the development of a region to which Italy was tied by close economic interests and cultural affinity⁷². This tendency matured in the context of the new orientations of the Catholic church, which with the election of Angelo Roncalli to the its highest power and the prospect of an ecumenical council, began to pay more attention, as compared to the past, to human rights, freedom and the development of the Third World and the UN's peacemaking⁷³ efforts.

It cannot be said, however, that the second Fanfani government took a more markedly anti-colonialist stance compared to its allies and friends. With regards to the question of Algeria, for example, Italy continued to avoid condemnation of French conduct so as not to jeopardize the negotiations that General De Gaulle was involved in during that phase and prevent bothersome meddling⁷⁴. A similar mode of conduct was clear during the discussion revolving around the question of Cyprus, which had been once again placed on the agenda of the General Assembly to be dealt with in its 13th session and regarding which the Italian delegation expressed its habitual tendency towards mediation⁷⁵. The commitment to a program of expanding freedom and prosperity did not translate into a specific change in the

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 306-315, 433-435; Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 90-94, 364-368.

⁷¹ Brogi, *op. cit.*, p. 323. About the US position see Kaufman, Burton I. (1982): *Trade and Aid. Eisenhower's Foreign Economic Policy 1953-1961*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, pp. 141-145. On the UN debate see Weiss, Thomas. G.; Forsythe, David P. and Coate, Roger A. (2007): *The United Nations and changing world politics*, 5th, Boulder, Westview, pp. 234-236. Regarding Sunfed Cf. Toye, John; Toye, Richard (2004): *The UN and Global Political Economy. Trade, Finance, and Development*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, pp. 172-174.

⁷² Villani, Angela: "Fanfani, l'Onu e la politica italiana di distensione internazionale", in Giovagnoli, Agostino; Tosi, Luciano (eds.) (2010): *Amintore Fanfani e la politica estera italiana*. Venezia, Marsilio, p. 212.

⁷³ On the new direction of the Catholic Church see Tosi, Luciano: "La cooperazione allo sviluppo dalla Pacem in Terris alla Populorum Progressio", in Giovagnoli, Agostino (ed.) (2003): *Pacem in terris: tra azione diplomatica e guerra globale*, Milan, Guerini, pp. 147-167; *Id.*: "Il Terzo Mondo", in Impagliazzo, Marco (ed.) (2004): *La nazione cattolica. Chiesa e società in Italia dal 1958 ad oggi*, Milan, Guerini, pp. 481 foll.

⁷⁴ Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, p. 96.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* On the Cyprus question see Greco, Vincenzo (2007): *Greci e Turchi tra convivenza e scontro. Le relazioni greco-turche e la questione cipriota*, Milan, Angeli.



allied position neither in the UN nor in other contexts. Apart from the brevity of the duration of the government, which ended within one semester, the other factor limiting the Fanfani government was opposition inside his own party, which interpreted the principles of the Premier mainly as permission to openness towards the left. It cannot be denied that this was an integral part of the Fanfaniana vision, but it is also equally true that the country's international dynamism had generated an economic boom and that the possibilities offered by decolonization could bring with it a different sort of benefit for the Atlantic alliance, bringing the exigencies of neutral countries closer to those of western positions and thus avoiding the possibility that Moscow could gain advantage from the serious differences that separated the allies and conferring to Italy a role as bridge, a role to which it had always aspired to raise its own status within the alliance.

This last tendency also marked the Italian request to participate in UN disarmament debates⁷⁶. The Fanfani government tried, on several occasions, to reopen these negotiations, careful, as in the past, to make known its preference for debate in a multilateral forum and the need to safeguard Western security. It did not, however, fail to underline the need to find openings, however small, to enter into a dialogue with the Soviet bloc. An ampler need, therefore, aimed at favouring international détente and to deal with the topic of disarmament not just as an anticommunist move, as centre governments had insisted on, but with a new attitude which, among other things, was closer to the positions of the PSI⁷⁷.

As we know, the Italian suggestions were not welcomed by its main ally, but it marked not only the need to be included in talks but also the desire to exercise a mediating role at the United Nations to facilitate a compromise with the Soviet bloc, with whom Italy had begun a policy of openness towards trade. The accent on peace, solidarity with neutral countries and disarmament, as well as the desire to contribute to international détente, also aimed to remove these themes from the realm of PCI propaganda and help towards easing domestic tensions that prevented the PSI from getting close to the area of the government⁷⁸.

The subsequent phase, characterised by a return to a more orthodox foreign policy line, did not erase the mark of this experience, which came back in the years during which Fanfani presided over the two governments which between July 1960 and June 1963 readied themselves for a turn towards the left. Before that, Italy had obtained its much-desired entrance onto the Security Council and, there, through the actions of Egidio Ortona, the permanent representative, dealt with various issues: the crisis in Laos, which caused the Council to send a commission of inquiry to that country, which included an Italian representative, to verify the communist infiltration from neighbouring Vietnam; the Sharpeville episodes, which confirmed apartheid as a menace to collective security; the U-2 issue and the resulting USA-USSR tensions on the eve of the meeting between the Big Four in Paris; and the Congo crisis. On all of these issues Italy sided with moderate positions, close to those of the United States, except when facing the South African problem towards which its position was more advanced, not failing, however, to underscore the special circumstances

⁷⁶ Fanfani, Amintore (1959): *Da Napoli a Firenze: 1954-1959. Proposte per una politica di sviluppo democratico*, Milan, Garzanti, pp. 255, 306-307; Damilano, Andrea (ed.) (1967): *Atti e documenti della Democrazia Cristiana, 1943-1967*, Rome, Cinque Lune, pp. 928-937 (cit. p. 936).

⁷⁷ Nenni, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-149 and Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu.", *op. cit.*, pp. 286-287.

⁷⁸ Martelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-196 and Bagnato, Bruna (2003): *Prove di Ostpolitik. Politica ed economia nella strategia italiana verso l'Unione Sovietica, 1958-1963*, Florence, Olschki.



surrounding the UN intervention in the case of the Sharpeville massacre and the fundamental respect for the principle of reserved domain⁷⁹.

Starting in 1960, the United Nations was involved in intense debates about decolonization, the fight against racial discrimination, the development of the Third World and petitions for the reform of the organisation which saw its first massive wave of admission to newly independent African countries. The conduct of the new Fanfani government, the fine intentions announced at its installation notwithstanding, was restricted by several evident limitations. The actions of the Italian representatives were first of all conditioned by the South Tyrol issue which, as mentioned, had been placed on the agenda of the General Assembly in the autumn of 1960 and forced, during the two subsequent sessions, extreme containment on all themes linked to the principles of self determination of nations and in cases in which direct intervention by the UN seemed to exceed the concept of reserved domain sanctioned by its Charter⁸⁰.

The caution that characterised Italian conduct was particularly evident when dealing with the crisis in the Congo, during which Italy, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, backed the role of the organisation, and specifically the Secretary General, in its management of the crisis and participated with both financing and troops to the peacekeeping mission sent there⁸¹. These premises notwithstanding, the Fanfani government did not abandon the policy framework set up by its predecessors, above all when it came to facing the prospect of a UNOC operation in the secessionist Katanga region⁸². The Italian representative, whilst confirming Italy's support for the mission, abstained from voting on the proposal, choosing instead to safeguard western economic interests in the region and avoiding the establishment of dangerous precedents that could be used by Austria in the South Tyrolean issue⁸³. And so Italy joined ranks with the defenders of the principle of domestic jurisdiction, not, however, without seeking common ground with Western nations that could soften the most intransigent positions of Brussels and avoid a crisis within the United Nations. Evident proof of this tendency was given by its decision to support the refinancing of the UNOC, together with Great Britain and the USA, and the doubling of its contribution to the peacekeeping mission in the Congo between 1960 and 1961. This trend was also evident in the number of civilian and military personnel operating within the African nation. The growing financial and logistic aid, which saw Italy at par with such medium-sized powers as Japan, Canada and Scandinavia, further proved the interest Italy had in resolving crises through the

⁷⁹ A. Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 99-113; Ortona, "Anni d'America...", vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 379 and United Nations (1994) *The United Nations and Apartheid 1948-1994*, New York, Department of Public Information, pp. 13-16.

⁸⁰ See Toscano, Mario (1968): *Storia diplomatica della questione dell'Alto Adige*, Bari, Laterza; Conci Francesco (1961): *L'Accordo De Gasperi - Gruber e il dibattito all'ONU*, Roma, Edizione Montecitorio.

⁸¹ Regarding this aspect of Italian activity see Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 119 foll. Regarding the contribution of Italian armed forces in the Congo see also Zagarese, E.: "Il contributo dell'Aeronautica militare italiana alla causa delle Nazioni Unite e della pace", *Rivista aeronautica*, no. 3 (1966), pp. 353-383; Potre, Rock (1969): *L'Aeronautica militare italiana nell'ex Congo Belga*, Rome, Agran.

⁸² Ortona, "Anni d'America...", *op. cit.*, pp. 389, 392-393; Rognoni, Maria Stella (2003): *Scacchiera congolese. Materie prime, decolonizzazione e guerra fredda nell'Africa dei primi anni Sessanta*, Firenze Polistampa, pp. 94-98, 100-101; Vismara, Maria (1983): *L'azione politica delle Nazioni Unite: 1946-1976, I*, Padova, Cedam, pp. 1150-1154.

⁸³ Regarding reactions inside the government see Brosio, Manlio (2008): *Diari di Washington 1955-1961*, in Gentiloni Silveri, Umberto (ed.): *L'Italia e la nuova frontiera: Stati Uniti e centro sinistra: 1958-1965* Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 532-533.



efforts of the United Nations, and its commitment to guaranteeing efficiency and functionality to their operations⁸⁴.

The debate regarding the presumed right of self-determination of the German-language minority in South Tyrol made it extremely difficult to maintain the anti-colonialist and anti-racial discrimination proposals put forth by the Afro-Asian countries. As Belgium, but also in the cases of Portugal, Great Britain, France and South Africa, Italy also worked towards the acceptance of compromise formulas to avoid sanction resolutions against its allies and friends. It did so in the case of South Rhodesia, the Portuguese territories, Algeria and Cyprus both within the main organs of the UN and as a member of the special committee for decolonization, of which it had been a member since its institution in 1961.

In the case of the Portuguese colonies, in particular, both Italy and other western delegations could no longer ignore international public opinion, nor ignore the new political reality in the United States which, after the advent of Kennedy to the White House, had begun to review its approach to the Salazar regime in Lisbon. In December 1961, when the General Assembly was debating the project which listed the “Principles” on the basis of which a territory could be considered “non autonomous” and obliged the administrative and colonial powers to recognise the authority of the Information Committee, the Italian representatives, the pressure from Lisbon notwithstanding, abstained from voting together with Canada and the United States, as opposed to Great Britain and Belgium, who voted against it⁸⁵. A few months later, these same countries voted in favour of Angolan independence, underlining, however, that the intervention of the United Nations should not invade Portuguese national spheres of interest⁸⁶. Once again, in early 1963, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs found that it was indispensable to seek moderate solutions on the basis of an action that included the concerns of the Third World, maintaining “cordial rapports” with allied nations, in particular with that of the government of Lisbon. By speaking of “comprehension” towards the Third World and “cordiality” towards an ally such as Portugal was a sign of the slow evolution in Italian positions regarding topics of anti-colonialism. The policy of abstention, systematically practiced when dealing with these topics, was the symptom of a change that was certainly amplified by the increasing pressure Afro-Asian countries were placing on the United Nations⁸⁷.

The other factor that was influencing Italian conduct at this stage was its rapport with the South African Union, which the government in Rome did not want to strain in view of the importance of the commercial interests many Italian industries – Fiat, Macchi, ENI, and Alitalia - had with it. After the events of Sharpeville, Italy and its Western partners could not exempt themselves from condemning the policies of apartheid with even more conviction. Nonetheless, during the 1960s, the Italian representatives to the UN avoided adherence to economic sanctions and UN requests for direct intervention, both so as not to upset the South African government, but also so as not to create a precedent for the South Tyrol question⁸⁸.

⁸⁴ Villani, “L’Italia e l’Onu...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-136.

⁸⁵ A/C.4/Sr.1049, XV, 14 November, 1960.

⁸⁶ A/Pv. 992, XV, 20 April, 1961; Vismara, “Le Nazioni Unite...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-278; Firestone, Bernard J. (2001): *The United Nations under U Thant, 1961-1971*, Lanham, Scarecrow Press, pp. 48-49.

⁸⁷ Villani, “L’Italia e l’Onu...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175. See also United Nations (1980): *The United Nations and decolonization: highlights of United Nations action in support of independence for colonial countries and peoples*, New York, Department of Public Information; El-Ayouty Yassin (1971): *The United Nations and decolonization: the role of Afro-Asian*, The Hague; Martinus Nijhoff; Vedovato, Giuseppe: “La Conferenza interafricana di Addis Abeba” *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1963), pp. 343-352.

⁸⁸ A/C. 4/Sr. 1029, XV, 31 October, 1960. A/C. 4/Sr. 1063, XV, 24 November, 1960.



The increasingly bitter confrontations that dominated UN debates regarding racial discrimination pushed Italy, in the 1970s, to favour conciliatory proposals and continue with its policy of abstention from voting⁸⁹.

The South Tyrol issue, solidarity and economic interests thus contributed to slowing the process of differentiation from the positions held by the colonial powers that Fanfani had tried to affirm. This, however, did not prevent, during a debate on the declaration against colonialism in December 1960, Italy from voting with the developing nations in favour of Resolution 1514, with which the General Assembly declared colonialism illegal on 14th December, 1960. The United States, Great Britain and France abstained⁹⁰. It also did not prevent Italy from repeatedly urging UN interventions in the international crises that marked the decade. The country's support of the organism was proven through financial and logistical support to peacekeeping missions already in operation – UNEF and UNOC – but was also evident in the management of the financial crisis the UN began to suffer starting in the early 1960s⁹¹.

Italy was a regular contributor to the UN coffers and in 1962 its contribution amounted to \$ 1,459,906. In 1957 it supported the UNEF and subsequently the UNOC, and in 1962 it also responded to the appeal sent out by the Secretary General to purchase UN bonds to contribute to decreasing the organisation's budget deficit. During the course of 1963, the Italian representatives, wrestling with problems with various organs of the UN, declared themselves favourable to a division of the financial load to be spread out in percentages between the ordinary budget and voluntary contributions, but they then distanced themselves from their allies both because they accepted differentiated contributions from developing countries, declaring a desire to make up for part of the debt resulting from the reduction of costs accorded to the Third World, as well as by their opposition to any sanctions whatsoever against defaulting countries with whom Italy felt that increasing pressure would be enough to avoid another of the crises of confidence afflicting the UN⁹².

With the aim of promoting the efficiency of the United Nations, Italy also supported the calls for reform that came from Afro-Asian and Latin-American countries. Approving their requests for a greater presence within the main organs of the UN could become a useful tool in isolating the socialist group and resizing its proposals for changes to the Statute, beginning with the reform of the Secretary General. Renewing a tendency that was already expressed in autumn 1958⁹³, during the 15th session of the General Assembly, Italy sponsored, the only Western state to do so, a plan calling for the expansion of the permanent councils⁹⁴. The accommodation requested by the Afro-Asian states would have contributed to a normalization of the political climate within the UN without, however, altering the geographical balance of

⁸⁹ Cf. A/SpC/Sr. 331, 342, XVII, 16 October, 2 November, 1962. A/C. 4/Sr. 1378, XVII, 9 November, 1962.

⁹⁰ Ris. Ag 1514-XV, 14 December 1960. Vismara, "Le Nazioni Unite...", *op. cit.*, pp. 202-211; Cadin, Raffaele: "L'evoluzione storico-giuridica del concetto di sviluppo nel diritto internazionale", in *Id. et al. (2003): Sviluppo e diritti umani nella cooperazione internazionale*, Torino, Giappichelli, pp. 16-21 See also A/Pv. 937, XV, 6 December, 1960 and Tosi, Luciano: "Sicurezza collettiva, distensione e cooperazione internazionale nella politica dell'Italia all'Onu", in Ballini Pier Luigi; Guerrieri, Sandro and Varsori, Antonio (eds) (2006): *Le istituzioni repubblicane dal centrismo al centro-sinistra (1953-1968)*, Milan, Carocci, p. 205.

⁹¹ Gerbert, Pierre et alii (1996): *Le rêve d'un ordre mondial de la SDN à l'ONU*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, pp. 253-254; Firestone, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

⁹² Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 161-165. Mae, Servizio Storico e Documentazione: in D'Anneo, A. (ed.): *Cronistoria documentata delle attività italiane alle Nazioni Unite (1 October 1947 - 31 December 1969)*, Rome, s.d.

⁹³ A/SpC/L.29, 26 November, 1958. A/SpC/Sr. 138, XIV, 28 October, 1959.

⁹⁴ A/SpC/L.51, 3 November, 1960; A/SpC/Sr. 192, XIV, 4 November, 1960.



the allotment of seats to the detriment of the Western position⁹⁵. The competition with the Soviet bloc had to be managed, according to the Italian government, by favouring the solidity of the neutral bloc, whose greatest aspiration was not ties to Moscow, but the recognition of its political weight within the organization. If, therefore, inflexibility in the rejection of the troika proposal regarding the Secretariat was indispensable, it was, within certain limits, possible to agree to the proposals that called for the reform of the UN as advanced by the Afro-Asian countries, above all the one relative to an increase in the permanent seats⁹⁶.

If, therefore, on questions relating to the decolonization process Italy still expressed a line that was compromised by its own commitments, economic interests and the omnipresent issue of the South Tyrol, faced with the chance to weaken the organisation it sided strongly in favour of an opening, cautious but sincere, towards the calls for participation that came from the non-aligned countries, also to contrast the tendency of the Soviets to control them and their revisionist tendencies⁹⁷.

Italy's support of the organisation's role as a tool for international détente also guided its attitude during disarmament talks, an issue for which Fanfani continued to apply pressure in the summer of 1960, just after the failure of the Geneva Conference that involved the ten powers. Italy often reiterated her hopes for more flexibility regarding this complex issue, proposing a less technical approach on the question of controls, on which Moscow continued to maintain a hard line, showing herself willing to accept certain Soviet terms and showing a clear acceptance of the prospect of the involvement and participation in the talks of non-committed countries⁹⁸.

As part of the Geneva Committee, which started up again on 14th March, 1962, with the participation of eight neutral states, but without the French, and again during the subsequent debates in New York, Italy worked to act as mediator between the diverse positions, continuing to support, together with the United States and Great Britain, the choice of moving ahead in partial and gradual steps. On the basis of this framework, the Italian delegation was among the first and major supporters of a partial accord on the suspension of experimentation, anticipating the Test Ban Treaty, the compromise achieved in 1963 between Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. This agreement, according to Italy, would have smoothed the way for other and more ample measures of general disarmament, especially where issues of non-dissemination were concerned. Italy also believed that an accord regarding the suspension of atmospheric and underwater tests, but not including underground tests, would have then been easier to reach, in view of the minor technical difficulties regarding controls, and, therefore, achieve full Soviet agreement⁹⁹. Italy's position, both in matters concerning nuclear experimentation and on other issues – from non-proliferation to the use of extra-atmospheric space and from conventional disarmament to the issue of denuclearized zones – had, as final objective, to contribute to the East-West dialogue with a vision that was explicitly different from that of its allies, above all its European allies,

⁹⁵ A/SpC/Sr. 215, XV, 1 December, 1960.

⁹⁶ Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp.141-143.

⁹⁷ Ortona, Egidio: "Sono le Nazioni Unite in crisi?", *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, vol. 3 (1961), pp. 329-353 (cit. p. 353).

⁹⁸ Villani, "L'Italia e l'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 301foll.

⁹⁹ On the value of the Italian proposal Cf. also Rossi, Christian (2006): *La Freedom Doctrine di John F. Kennedy. Cooperazione allo sviluppo e disarmo nell'Europa Mediterranea (1961-1963)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, p. 140. On the Test Ban Treaty Cf. Gala, Marilena (2002): *Il paradosso nucleare. Il Limited Test Ban Treaty come primo passo verso la distensione*, Florence, Polistampa.



where its role within the UN and the conduct it upheld with regards to Afro-Asian countries was concerned.

In Parliament, on 12 December, 1963, the President of the Council, Aldo Moro, presented his new centre-left government and confirmed Italy's interest in assuring the importance of the role of the United Nations in international détente¹⁰⁰. The tendency which saw Italy supporting Third World calls for a renewal of the UN and led it to vote for the enlargement of the permanent councils, in 1963 was confirmed once again and further enhanced by the leaders of the centre-left through a series of initiatives that supported the financing of peacekeeping missions in their efforts to find worthwhile solutions to help overcome the financial crisis of the organisation by using the tool of conciliation, chairing the debates about decolonization and safeguarding of human rights through the time-honoured tradition of mediation. With regards to the issue of human rights, however, the limits the sanctions imposed by the Security Council against South Africa and Portugal, limiting to a minimum, and compatible with the needs of national policies, the application of those decisions. It was considered, by the Italians, more useful to work with those regimes on a diplomatic level in an attempt to modify their conduct and continue to convince the UN of the utility of moral pressure in order to arrive at realistic and constructive political compromises¹⁰¹.

Italy, furthermore, continued to attribute to the United Nations a role in the political solution of conflicts, like the one in Southeast Asia, and aimed towards the transformation of the organisation into a universal one, particularly through the solution of the Chinese question. The attribution to the United Nations of such a role and the search for ways in which to strengthen its political weight meant, at this stage, making a contribution which, while still firmly anchored to Western solidarity, would open new space for international détente, of which the centre-left coalition was a result. This choice did not only point to the need for keeping the governing majority united, but expressed a more far-reaching strategy, on the basis of which the UN remained the preferred forum in which to discuss topics relating to the East-West dialogue, in which to give useful input to the solution of conflicts and through which to make a valid contribution to the disarmament debate. Enhancing the value of the United Nations meant giving the organisation the importance that the non-committed countries had given it and continue to have, with these countries, relationships inspired on the principles of international cooperation.

The return of Fanfani to the helm of the Foreign Ministry during the second and third Moro cabinet came about in this context. In front of the foreign commission of the Chamber, soon after having accepted the position, the statesman highlighted some of the main objectives of Italian foreign policy, among which the enhancement of the role of the United Nations, the reaching of a compromise regarding the organisation's finances and the renewal of disarmament talks in Geneva¹⁰² were included.

These were the same objectives which, several months later, Fanfani intended to pursue as President of the 20th session of the General Assembly. The election of the Christian Democrat leader was backed not just by the allies, who saw him as the right man to achieve

¹⁰⁰ Moro, Aldo (1996): *Discorsi parlamentari: 1947-1977*, II. Rome, Chamber of Deputies, p. 786; Id. (1986): *L'Italia nell'evoluzione dei rapporti internazionali*, in Di Capua, Giuseppe (ed.), Roma, Ebe, pp. 35-37.

¹⁰¹ On the action of the Italian government during this phase see Villani, "L'Italia e L'Onu...", *op. cit.*, pp. 189-210.

¹⁰² "Intervento del Ministro degli Affari Esteri Fanfani alla Commissione Esteri della Camera dei Deputati", 31 March, 1965.



bipartisan consensus, but also by non-Western nations, who in this way showed their appreciation of a conduct which showed particular sensitivity to the problems and role of the United Nations. Fanfani had also shown, during his previous experiences with government, a propensity towards mediation and reconciliation during debates about decolonization and the safeguarding of human rights, not only, but he was also fighting a battle in Geneva to obtain a non-proliferation treaty that more closely mirrored the needs and concerns of non-nuclear nations¹⁰³. Fanfani had, furthermore, declared his support for assistance to developing nations and had espoused a tendency which anticipated the considerations unleashed at the end of the first decade of development: the re-evaluation of social factors and of the problems relating to the redistribution of profits, jobs and poverty in view of the objective aiming at an all-inclusive human development, objectives for which the United Nations was the best arena¹⁰⁴.

Both as President of the 20th session of the General Assembly, and as Foreign Minister, Fanfani strove to give the organisation back its efficiency, convinced that it really was the very best forum for East-West mediation, but also the arena on which to manage relationships with allies and, as a result, ensure the stability of the government. It was, in fact, obvious that the call to the United Nations as a *super partes* organisation, apart from giving Italy more room to manoeuvre in and distinguish it from its allies on important issues like the Vietnam conflict and the Chinese question, would also play the delicate role of easing the tensions between the DC and PSI back home in Italy.

Fanfani's speech to the General Assembly right after his election was a strong-worded reminder for the need to support the organization, its prestige and its efficacy in solving international conflicts and crises. He decried the tardiness with which the compromise for a financial situation had been found and called attention once again on the crisis unfolding in Southeast Asia. On this last point, the new president did not hold back his criticism of the UN member states involved in the conflict who consider themselves "peace loving nations", the United States *in primis*, and hoped that the organisation would act as mediator in the region. As had been the case in the Cuban conflict, so it was also for the Vietnam conflict, the Dominican Republic conflict, the new tensions rising between India and Pakistan and, a few years later, for the Six Day War: Italy continued to demand a concrete intervention on the part of the United Nations not just a "simple appeal to good sense and humanitarian sentiments"¹⁰⁵.

The presence of the United Nations in Southeast Asia and the debate on the internal conflict racking the organisation were not touched upon by the United States, which continued to manage its affairs outside of the realm of the UN¹⁰⁶. The Italian government, while expressing a certain understanding of the American policies in Vietnam, nonetheless unanimously believed that it was necessary to find a negotiated end to the conflict and saw the UN intervention as a positive development. It still, however, harboured a caution in its dealings with the USA which represented a source of tension to the centre-left coalition then governing the country¹⁰⁷. Rome supported the peace initiatives set forth by Secretary General

¹⁰³ Regarding this aspect see L. Nuti, Leopoldo (2007): *La sfida nucleare. La politica estera italiana e le armi atomiche 1945-1991*, Bologna, Il Mulino; Id, "L'Italia e il Tnp: esserci o non esserci", *Aspenia*, no. 27 (2004), pp. 69-77.

¹⁰⁴ Villani, Angela: "Aspetti dell'attività italiana all'Onu: disarmo e cooperazione allo sviluppo dall'ammissione agli anni Settanta", *Grotius*, no. 3 (2006), pp. 128-135.

¹⁰⁵ A/Pv. 1332, XX, 21 September, 1965.

¹⁰⁶ Bloomfield, Lincoln P. (1968): *The U.N. and Vietnam*, New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, pp. 9-10. Firestone, *op. cit.*, p. 68. Gerbet *op. cit.*, pp. 302-303. On the peace initiatives of U Thant in Vietnam Cf. U Thant, Sithu (1978): *View from the UN*, Garden City, Doubleday, pp. 57-84.

¹⁰⁷ Nuti, Leopoldo : « L'Italie et l'escalade de la guerre du Vietnam », in Goscha, Christopher ; Vaisse, Maurice (eds.) (2003) : *La guerre du Vietnam et l'Europe 1963-1973*, Brussels, Bruylant, pp. 131-132.



U Thant¹⁰⁸, which, as we know, proved to be in vain mainly because of the many obstacles put up by the United States, the USSR, China and even North Vietnam¹⁰⁹. The Italian representatives often and bitterly denounced the impotence of the United Nations, both in speeches given inside the UN and at Parliament in Rome, as well as in their diplomatic relations, seeing in it the manifestation of a highly “conservative” conception of détente¹¹⁰.

Moro, then president of the Italian Council of Ministers, on 13th October, 1965, expressed himself in Parliament offering useful indications to the solution of the crisis in a context which was not as favourable as it had been in the past. Moro, moreover, linked the attitude of Peking towards the nearby Vietnam conflict to the possibility of its admission into the UN. With this mind, Moro reiterated the Italian preference for political solutions to crises, as requested by Pope Paul VI at the UN General Assembly during a visit on 4th October, 1965, and emphasized that the governments of Moscow and Peking could both serve as the essential interlocutors to reach a solution to the problem¹¹¹.

The question of Chinese representation at the United Nations was another great debate topic in Italian politics in those years. During his presidency of the General Assembly, Fanfani and the Italian representatives in New York promoted some new initiatives on that particular subject¹¹². Italy began studying the availability of those countries that had shown themselves the nearest to their own position, like Belgium, Canada and, to a certain extent, Japan, to propose an examination of the question inside of the United Nations. There was a two-sided purpose to this: one was to safeguard the US position, and the other was to show China the responsibility of expressing a true willingness to participate in the work of the organisation and accept its statutory principles¹¹³.

Talking about the application of the principle of the universality of the United Nations seemed like a good way to build a bridge between the requests from the economic arena and the left wing of the government, on the one side, and the resistance of the American administration and those Italian parties with closer ties to the US on the other. Even Nenni thought the idea of the study committee a useful one. As long as the Vietnam conflict remained open, however, a change of strategy in Washington towards the UN was not considered a possibility. The socialist secretary was well aware that the position expressed by

¹⁰⁸ Cf., for example, “interventi di Moro alla Camera dei Deputati del 6 agosto 1964 e del 12 e 18 febbraio 1965”, in Moro, Aldo (1986): *Scritti e discorsi*, vol. III, 1964 – 1965, in Rossini, Giuseppe (ed.), Roma, Cinque Lune, pp. 1623, 1736, 1740, “del 14 gennaio 1966” in Id. (1986), *Scritti e discorsi*, IV, 1966 – 1968, *Ibid.*, pp. 1987 – 1998; “del 5 maggio 1970 in Senato” in Id. (1988) *Scritti e discorsi*, V, 1969 – 1973, *Ibid.*, pp. 2834 – 2836.

¹⁰⁹ See in this regard Firestone, *op. cit.*, pp. 68, 70, 73 and 109; Harrelson, Max (1989): *Fires All around the Horizon: the U.N.'s uphill Battle to Preserve the Peace*, New York, Praeger, pp. 159, 162 – 166 and Meisler, Stanley (1995): *United Nations: The First Fifty Years*, s.l., Atlantic Monthly Press, pp. 153 – 167. See furthermore Bloomfield, *op. cit.*, and U THANT, *op. cit.*, pp. 57 – 84.

¹¹⁰ See Costa Bona; Tosi, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-219. Delusion regarding UN impotence had been manifested by Italy when Czechoslovakia was invaded; the Security Council was blocked by a Soviet veto and the Italians, in protest against the latter, had announced their suspension of the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, stating that they were against a concept of détente taken as dialogue among the superpowers, and not as a collective process of clarification in which every country should participate as equals”, and, calling for the role of the UN to be one of searching for peace; speech given 9 October 1968 by the Foreign Minister, Giuseppe Medici, to the 23rd General Assembly of the United Nations, see “La XXIII Assemblea delle Nazioni Unite”, *Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 32, no. 42 (1968), pp. 1001 – 1002.

¹¹¹ Moro, “Discorsi parlamentari...”, vol. III, *op. cit.*, 13 October, 1965, pp. 1048-50. Speech by Paolo VI to the General Assembly in A/Pv. 1347, XX, 10 October, 1965.

¹¹² Regarding this aspect see Villani, “L’Italia e l’Onu...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-210.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*



the Italian centre-left government represented an important element for the internal stability of the PSI, and, although he was an avid supporter of the admission of China to the UN, he expressed his favour of the committee proposal *ad hoc*. Admittedly, it was an idea aimed in part at easing some of the differences between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists in matters of foreign policy, but according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was brought up mainly to “open an opportunity of international politics.” Rather than reverting to the procedure of the “important question”, in fact, it had seemed “more logical” to present the proposal preventively, in agreement with the USA and other friendly delegations; that would have been the answer to the request of public opinion the world over to rein China into the UN and, at the same time, it would have highlighted the eventual refusal of Peking to join the United Nations, thus reinforcing the position of the United States¹¹⁴.

Rome’s proposal was, furthermore, in line with the invitation that the Secretary General himself had extended in his introduction to the annual report for 1965¹¹⁵ and was, without a doubt, highly original in that it regarded the “Chinese Problem” as an integral part of a more general consideration regarding the universality of the organisation which, if properly handled, would have certainly strengthened it. Italy’s opinion that the question of Peking’s membership in the United Nations was only a matter time also came clearly into focus, seeing as Rome’s government had already begun trading with the government in Peking. The initiative was presented during the general debate on 27th September, 1965 in an expressly vague manner by Senator Bosco because, although Fanfani had given his assent, the Council of Ministers had decided to maintain a “wait and see” attitude so that the United States of America would not remain isolated on a theme of this importance¹¹⁶. The objectives where the same and shared by the entire coalition, it was a question of different methods and time frames. As far as the Italian government was concerned, the absence of the People’s Republic of China in the UN was an obstacle in the road towards détente, an obstacle the government intended to help overcome¹¹⁷.

The Department of State did not show enthusiasm for the study committee’s proposal as it remained convinced that any opening towards Peking might provoke an escalation of Chinese aggression in South East Asia and, in general, dealt with the issue outside of the political frameworks proposed by its allies. It wasn’t until the following year, during the 21st session of the General Assembly, that the project was submitted for approval by the international body. It did not pass that year, nor would it the two subsequent years¹¹⁸. Italy’s backing of China’s admission to the UN finally solidified in 1971, when Italy, who had recognised China the year before, overcame even U.S. resistance to the expulsion of Formosa¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 228 foll.

¹¹⁵ A/6001, XXI, 20 September, 1965.

¹¹⁶ Toscano, Mario: “L’Italia e il seggio cinese”, *Nuova Antologia*, no. 499 (1967), pp. 308-309.

¹¹⁷ Moro, “Discorsi parlamentari...” vol. III, *op. cit.* (13 October 1965), pp. 1048-50.

¹¹⁸ Toscano, “L’Italia e il seggio cinese” *op. cit.*, Cf. also Villani, “L’Italia e l’Onu...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 232 and foll.

¹¹⁹ See Olla Brundu, Paola: “Pietro Nenni, Aldo Moro e il riconoscimento della Cina comunista”, *Le carte e la storia*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2004), pp. 29-51 and *Id.*, “Ottobre 1971, la Cina comunista nel Consiglio di Sicurezza, Taiwan espulsa dalle Nazioni Unite: analisi di una sconfitta americana”, *Le Carte e la Storia*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2006), pp. 194 – 222.



3. The Institutional Crisis of Multilateralism in the Seventies

The role of the United Nations, already marginalized by the cold war¹²⁰, declined even further in the late Seventies with the increasing importance of détente. The crisis faced by the organisation was a reflection of the more general multilateral institutional crisis that followed on the heels of Nixon's declaration of the non-convertibility of the US Dollar. This declaration, in August 1971, was a hard blow to the monetary regulatory system created by Bretton Woods and triggered an international economic and monetary crisis of grave proportions. The crisis laid bare the contrasts between Western nations and those still struggling to develop, and the UN became a battleground for a war between the world's Northern and the Southern hemispheres¹²¹.

Weighed down by massive bureaucracy and accusations of superfluous and inefficient functions badly coordinated by the various agencies, the UN was also accused of being an overly "politicized" body with a predisposition to anti-western hostility. The UN – and all of its agencies – underwent the greatest crisis of its existence, exacerbated by financial difficulties caused in great part by a unilateral reduction of financing by the industrialized world, the United States first among them.

In Italy the détente of the Seventies, together with the deterioration of the centre-left political formula, lessened the "external constraints", spurred domestic politics into action and led to the fall of the historical fences that separated the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party. It also led to a gradual increase in the involvement of the latter in government, starting with Andreotti's third (1976-1978) government. This situation favoured a broad-based consensus among the political establishment toward several basic Italian foreign policy choices (Atlanticism, European integration, détente, Mediterranean policy, human rights protection, arms reduction and development cooperation). Italy's tendency towards open dialogue and international cooperation was, therefore, further bolstered. This became abundantly clear during various international crises and in the country's growing attention to the problems facing the Third World, a sentiment shared by the various political parties as well as a majority of public opinion¹²². Nonetheless, Italy's presence on the international scene in the Seventies was effectively compromised by internal events – terrorism, wrenching social conflict and an economic crisis. The country turned its focus on its domestic problems and the importance foreign affairs diminished considerably. Détente, which had helped the superpowers to stabilize the international scene, had also limited Italy's range of action. Not only, but Italy was also being closely monitored by the United States of America ever since it had opened to the PCI¹²³.

In August 1969, as the second Rumor government was being launched and in an atmosphere of change that also saw the development of the great détente, Aldo Moro took the

¹²⁰ Cf. Kingsbury, Benedict; Roberts, Adam (eds.) (1994): *United Nations, Divided World: The UN's Roles in International Relations*, New York, Oxford University Press; Meisler, *op. cit.*; Gerbet, *op. cit.*, pp. 269 – 336.

¹²¹ For more about the attitude of industrialised nations with regards to Third World requests see Toye, *op. cit.*; Benn, Dennis (2003): *Multilateral Diplomacy and the Economics of Change. The Third World and the New International Economic Order*, Miami, Ian Randle Publishers and Garavini, Giuliano (2009): *Dopo gli imperi. L'integrazione europea nello scontro Nord-Sud*, Firenze, Le Monnier.

¹²² See Graziani, Augusto (1996): "L'economia italiana e il suo inserimento internazionale", *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana*, vol. III, t. I, Torino, Einaudi, pp. 365 – 368 and Ronzitti, Natalino (ed.) (1977): *La politica estera italiana. Autonomia, interdipendenza, integrazione e sicurezza*, Milan, Edizioni di Comunità, pp. 119 – 149.

¹²³ Gentiloni Silveri, Umberto (2009): *L'Italia sospesa. La crisi degli anni Settanta vista da Washington*, Torino, Einaudi.



reins of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moro moved with greater ease than in preceding years, partly due to the fact that he constituted a minority inside his own party¹²⁴. In keeping with his vision of international politics and the realism that characterised him, he pursued country's autonomy in matters of both internal and foreign affairs as well as a greater participation on the part of all countries, and the European Community, in the treatment of international affairs on the basis of a wider and more comprehensive vision of détente, an alternative to international Directories. He greatly enhanced the role of the United Nations, therefore, often distancing himself from the United States' positions¹²⁵. Italy, he stated, knew it did not hold "the keys to war and peace" in its hands, but it could - and should - play an important role in the evolution of the world system¹²⁶. In a September 1969 speech he gave to the House of Representatives' Foreign Commission he underscored the positive changes taking place on the international scene and his own commitment to support, better yet, to promote, these changes. Moro felt the growing weight of international public opinion and of the "moral conscience of the people"¹²⁷. The focus was on Moro's vision of foreign policy, which was based on a rejection of the politics of power, on dependence on NATO but, at the same time, on a careful and constant attempt to overcome hurdles through dialogue and international cooperation, of which the UN was one of the most important instruments - the "forum which gives a voice to the conscience of humanity"¹²⁸ - together with the process of European integration. Moro connected the affirmation of the human condition of the world's citizens, and consequently human rights, no longer under the jurisdiction of the single states, to the advent of world public opinion and the overcoming of the principle of the sovereignty of states¹²⁹.

¹²⁴ For more about Moro's attitude towards foreign policy when he moved to the left of the Party, see the speech he gave at the 11th Christian Democratic Party Congress on 29 June, 1969 in Moro, Aldo (1979): *L'intelligenza e gli avvenimenti. Testi 1959 – 1978*, Milan, Garzanti, pp. 204 – 207.

¹²⁵ Formigoni, Guido (1997): *Aldo Moro: l'intelligenza applicata alla mediazione politica*, Milano, Centro Ambrosiano, pp. 50-52.

¹²⁶ Cf. Moro, Aldo: "Discorso preelettorale del 1970", in Baget Bozzo, Gianni; Tassani, Giovanni (eds.) (1983): *Aldo Moro. Il politico nella crisi 1962-1973*, Florence, Sansoni, p. 426.

¹²⁷ *Intervento alla Commissione Esteri della Camera dei Deputati*, 12 September 1969, in Moro, "L'Italia nell'evoluzione...", *op. cit.*, p. 58.

¹²⁸ Aldo Moro's speech in General Assembly of 1971 in A/PV.1954.

¹²⁹ Moro, Aldo, "La coscienza parla più forte dello stato", *Il Giorno*, 6 settembre 1972. It was his incisive understanding of the evolution of international consciousness, as well as his conviction of the priority of the individual over the state, that led to his decrying of the anachronistic limits placed by the Charter of the UN in the organisation's handling of such cases of flagrant human rights violation as took place, for example, in Chile in 1973; cfr. "Dichiarazione dell'onorevole Ministro al Parlamento sulla crisi cilena e l'azione del governo italiano in argomento", 26 september 1973, *Archivio Centrale dello Stato* (from now on Acs), *Carte Moro*, s. I, b. 28, f. 544. His significant positioning was nonetheless marked by great prudence when it came to diplomatic relations between Italy and Chile. Italy, unlike other Western states, did not recognise the military regime even though, as its most important Atlantic partners, it did not formally break diplomatic relations with Chile - in part because of the many Italians living in Chile and in part because of the economic agreements between the two countries and, finally, because it also had to take into account its relationship with the USA, who had been favourable to the coup in Santiago; cfr. Nocera, Raffaele: "Il governo italiano e la Dc di fronte al golpe cileno", in *Nuova Storia Contemporanea*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2008), pp. 87 – 110. Moro had also called on the UN to intervene when civil war broke out in Nigeria in 1967, after Biafra's secession, a war in which the UN could not intervene because they were prevented from doing so by those running the country. The Italian government itself was in difficulty in this case because of the arms it had sold to Nigeria to favour Eni on the country and its ties to Great Britain; cfr. "Moro to Rumor", 9 october, 1969 ACS, *Carte Moro*, s. V, b. 127, f. 6 e Moro, Aldo: "Intervento alla Camera dei Deputati del 21 ottobre 1969", in *Id.*: "Scritti e Discorsi...", vol. V, 1969 – 1973, *op. cit.*, p. 2817. During the crisis which followed the expulsion of Italians from Libya in the summer of 1970, Moro repeatedly wrote to U Thant to inform him of the events unfolding, stressing Libya's violation of the General Assembly resolutions and Italian-Libyan accords, as well as its violation of fundamental international and



Moro illustrated his vision of international relations in its entirety at the 24th General Assembly of United Nations of 8th October, 1969 in his “global strategy for maintaining peace”¹³⁰, a true manifesto for a détente which was based and depended on the United Nations and its founding principles, equality and the integrity of states, and not on the Great Powers. Moro called for the world to free itself from “the old tenets of the Realpolitik” and thus eliminate the deepest causes of war, social, economic and technological inequality. It was not enough to simply disarm, he claimed, but armed conflict had to be eliminated and the political contrasts that caused it had to be overcome. In order to achieve this, the UN had to be an indispensable point of reference, its power had to be strengthened and renewed in all of the fields of its competence from disarmament to development, from the safeguarding of human rights to protecting the environment. Moro also touched on, with Italy in mind, the problem of the expansion of the Security Council to those members most active in UN activities. The “allure of military power, racial hatred and nationalistic exaltations”, he said, had to be resisted in favour of the need for, and the advantages of, serious multilateral discipline in international relations. The latter seemed to Moro to be the only way to create a foreign policy that would safeguard peace and the autonomy of various states, at the same time effectively serving mankind. These were not circumstantial or ritualistic affirmations, they were the authentic motivational inspiration of his actions, and through them he strove to blend the interests of Italy with those of the international community.

Moro’s ideas, however, contrasted with the détente plans promoted by Nixon and Kissinger, who sought to consolidate blocks, not to overcome them, by focusing not on multilateral dimensions but on those of traditional power politics, especially the bilateral rapport between the USA and the Soviet Union¹³¹. In 1971, at the General Assembly of the United Nations, Moro insisted that the conduction of the new international relations include all countries, and not just the superpowers. “Nor can we allow,” he argued, “that there are nations who are making history while others are still the victims of it: the democratic conscience of the world opposes it”¹³². On 2nd December, 1974, while presenting his 4th government to the Parliament and speaking about TNP, he maintained that détente in the world presumed détente among the great powers, but this “does not achieve its full significance if the agreements between them exclude constant and constructive contact among all nations”. Détente could no longer be, as it was originally, simply “a policy aimed at stabilizing international coexistence. What is needed here is an active phase of cooperation among all nations, in pursuit of a new way of conducting all international relations, not just those between the East and the West”¹³³.

After this formulation, one of Moro’s favourite foreign policy goals was the United Nations, which often represented the independent nature of the country’s foreign policy, especially where the United States was concerned, giving rise to frequent divergences. In

human rights; cfr. “Discorso di Moro alla Commissione Esteri del Senato del 13 ottobre 1970” in ACS, *Carte Moro*, s. I, b. 23, f. 503.

¹³⁰ “Aldo Moro’s speech to the UN General Assembly on 8 October 1969”, in A/Pv.1783, §§ 13-14.

¹³¹ For more about Nixon, Kissinger and détente, see among other texts, Hanhimäki, Jussi M. (2004): *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy*, New York, Oxford University Press; Thornton, Richard C. (1989): *Nixon-Kissinger Years: Reshaping America’s Foreign Policy*, New York, Paragon House; Garthoff, Raymond Leonard (1985): *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, Washington, The Brookings Institution and, old but still valid, Litwak, Robert S. (1984): *Detente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

¹³² A/PV. 1954.

¹³³ “Dichiarazioni programmatiche di Governo”, 2 december, 1974, in Moro, Aldo (1990): *Scritti e discorsi, VI, 1974-1978*, in Rossini, Giuseppe (ed.), Roma, Cinque Lune, pp. 3214-3215.



1970 Italy was voted in as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for a second term, 1971-1972, with a large number of votes that bore witness to the commitment Italy had shown to the UN throughout the preceding decade, as well as its commitment to developing nations. It also showed the country's importance at the Security Council, where Italy, already in November 1972, had expressed its favourable view of granting independence to the Portuguese colonies.

The country continued to strive to have international crises resolved under the aegis of the United Nations, and continued to show considerable support for petitions presented by developing nations. This stance led to Italy being voted into the non-permanent Security Council for a third two-year term, 1975-1976. Never before had a country sat at this council twice in such a short period of time. It was, for Italy and the men who guided its foreign affairs, a sign of great respect from the international community.

As mentioned, the UN was a constant point of reference for Italy as it sought to contribute to finding solutions to the crisis in the Middle East¹³⁴. All throughout the 1970s, Italy had worked hard to advance peace negotiations between the parties through "discrete and prudent, but very precise interventions"¹³⁵. Moro encouraged the UN many times to favour, in particular: 1) a system of controls, by a UN commission, to govern the supplies of arms to the warring nations; 2) a renewal of the ceasefire; 3) respect for the status of the occupied territories and the populations affected by the conflict, in particular a strong commitment to safeguard the territorial integrity of Lebanon¹³⁶; as well as continuing to call attention to the "human and political" plight of the Palestinian refugees¹³⁷.

Due to his preoccupation with the ever increasing presence of the Soviets in the Mediterranean area, Aldo Moro was always favourable to the mission of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, the UN envoy, to continue "clarification and friendly contact between all of the parties"¹³⁸, and in June of 1970 he wholeheartedly supported a plan proposed by US Secretary of State Rogers who, through intermediaries, aimed to pass resolution 242, a goal towards which Italy had also been working. The resolution, furthermore, would have led to the reopening of the Suez Canal, something Italy was most interested in¹³⁹.

After the Yom Kippur War, Moro worked hard for a ceasefire, calling upon the UN to intervene and re-proposing a close collaboration between the European Community member states. In a speech he gave to the Parliament on 18th October, 1973, he once again expressed his conviction that peace could not be imposed through an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, but had to be found through dialogue between the interested parties and could be, in fact, achieved with a united European action¹⁴⁰. Aldo Moro

¹³⁴ Riccardi, "Il "problema Israele"...", *op. cit.* e Caviglia, Daniele; Cricco, Massimiliano (2006): *La diplomazia italiana e gli equilibri mediterranei. La politica mediorientale dell'Italia dalla guerra dei Sei Giorni al conflitto dello Yom Kippur (1967-1973)*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino.

¹³⁵ "Discorso alla Commissione Esteri del Senato...", 13 October, 1970, *op. cit.*

¹³⁶ "Vinci to Moro", (12 February 1970) ACS, *Carte Moro*, s. V, b. 149, f. 2, *telegrammes 1970: The Middle East*.

¹³⁷ In September 1971, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly he spoke of the "Palestinian population". See also Ducci, Roberto (1982): *I Capintesta*, Milan, Rusconi, pp. 52-54.

¹³⁸ "Intervento di Moro al Senato", 12 March 1971 in "Relazioni Internazionali...", *op. cit.*, 20 March 1971, p. 291.

¹³⁹ "Verbale della conversazione svoltasi alla Farnesina tra l'Onorevole Ministro e il Segretario Generale delle Nazioni Unite la sera del 31 Agosto 1970" in ACS, *Carte Moro*, s. V, b. 129, f. 38; "Intervento di Moro alla Commissione Esteri del Senato del 25 giugno 1971", *Ibid.*, s. I, b. 24, f. 494 bis.

¹⁴⁰ See Moro, "L'Italia nell'evoluzione...", *op. cit.*, pp. 445-446.



expanded on his ideas in a meeting with the Italian Senate Foreign Relations committee on 23rd January, 1974. He reminded them of the “global and not partial character” of Resolution 242 and the “resulting need for Israel to leave all occupied territories”. The Palestinians, he said, were not looking for “aid, they are looking for a nation”¹⁴¹. Between 1975 and 1976 Italy was a member of the UN Security Council and as such strived to strengthen the role of the United Nations in finding a solution to the crisis in the Middle East, very mindful of Arab reasoning and the political dimensions of the Palestinian problem, convinced as always that the UN would be instrumental in finding a solution¹⁴². Moro, then the President of the Council of Ministers, also continued to press for mediation by European nations, supporting the Euro-Arab dialogue not just to favour Europe’s supply of precious oil, but also as an alternative to bipolar logic.

On 10th November, 1975, the General Assembly approved Resolution 3379 (annulled in 1991) in which Zionism was equated to a form of “racism and racial discrimination” and considered a threat to peace and security in the world. Italy, represented by its then foreign minister Mariano Rumor, voted against it claiming that peace in the Middle East would not come about by moving negotiations between Arabs and Israelis onto an ideological plain, as the UN had done¹⁴³. The differences between the political parties, and even within the majority party, between those backing the Arabs and those backing the Israelis, and the unenthusiastic reaction from both Washington and Moscow to the Rome peace initiative, nonetheless had an impact on Italian Middle Eastern policy, as did the serious economic difficulties Italy was going through after the price of fuel shot up following the Yom Kippur War. The profound commitment notwithstanding, Italy’s Middle East policies, nor the policies of many other countries, did not bring about any great results at the United Nations¹⁴⁴.

After Israel’s March 1978 incursion into southern Lebanon, following a serious attack on their territory, in 1979 Italy took part in an inter-force squadron of 4 helicopters and crew (Italair) in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (or UNIFIL) to protect the southern border separating Lebanon from Israel. Mission’s task was to prevent clashes between the Palestinians, the Israelis and their allies, the Lebanese, to supervise the Israeli retreat and help the Lebanese government re-establish authority over their own territory. The mission failed in its task to prevent armed clashes and in 1982 it was quite literally surrounded by Israeli troops who, with their “Peace in Galilee” operation, invaded all of Lebanon with the aim to locate and destroy Palestinian bases in the country. By the early 1980s, as we will see later on, Italy no longer looked to the UN for a solution to the crisis in the Middle East, and instead lent its support to multilateral, non-UN peace initiatives.

Staying within our time period, starting in 1964 and resulting from a request from the United States, Italy was constant in its support for the United Nations in their efforts to resolve the crisis in Cyprus, contributing money and ships to the UNFICYP forces on the divided island both for its ties to NATO with Greece and Turkey (Moro even tried to act as a

¹⁴¹ See *Id.*, Discorso alla Commissione Affari Esteri del Senato del 23 gennaio 1974, in ACS, *Carte Moro*, s. I, b. 28, f. 550 and also *Id.*, “Discorso alla Commissione Affari Esteri della Camera dei Deputati del 28 Febbraio 1974”, in *Id.*: “Scritti e discorsi...”, vol. VI, 1974-1978, *op. cit.*, pp. 3136-3137.

¹⁴² See *Id.*: “Dichiarazioni programmatiche al Parlamento, 2 Dicembre 1974, in occasione della presentazione del IV governo Moro”, *Ibid.*, p. 3213.

¹⁴³ Tosi, Luciano (ed.) (2010): *Sulla scena del mondo. L’Italia all’Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite (1955-2009)*, Napoli, Editoriale Scientifica.

¹⁴⁴ Riccardi, Luca: “Sempre più con gli arabi. La politica italiana verso il Medio Oriente dopo la guerra del Kippur (1973-1976)”, *Nuova Storia Contemporanea*, vol. 57, no. 6 (2006), pp. 70 - 82.



mediator between the two) and for its security interests in stability in and around the Mediterranean basin, threatened by the Cyprus crisis. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations, between 1975 and 1976, Italy worked hard to mediate a ceasefire and a return to status quo after the Turks had invaded the island following a coup d'état on 15th July, 1974, by Greek-Cypriot officials who, supported by the regime of the Athens colonels, aimed to annex the island to Greece¹⁴⁵.

During the Seventies, Italy continued its involvement in disarmament negotiations, soliciting the widest possible participation in keeping with its own vision of détente and therefore trying to constantly encourage multilateral negotiations. From the beginning of the decade, however, the Italian role in disarmament negotiations was marginal at best, just like the UN had also become marginal owing to the direct negotiations insisted upon by the United States and Soviet Union. Since 1969, they had worked together on the SALT 1 and 2 treaties. These treaties were also seen with favour by Rome, although with some reserve due to their partial and highly bilateral nature. Rome continued to call for general disarmament, as well as reciprocal reduction of the forces in Central Europe, to be negotiated in the multilateral headquarters in Geneva and Vienna¹⁴⁶. Even though Italy was left out of the negotiations, it still sought to exercise an important function by working towards constructive dialogue and even helped to formulate proposals and contribute to Western statements of position, organising their initiatives with countries whose support would be concrete¹⁴⁷.

Even when the Soviet Union engaged in an energetic missile re-armament and showed expansionism tendencies towards Third World countries, Italy did not always support resolutions which mirrored those objectives it had indicated as priorities, resolutions which, while in line with the aims, more often than not remained on the paper on which they had been printed and were frequently nothing more than Member State propaganda statements or positions of Members who were not represented in the Disarmament Conference. The Italian stance towards Assembly resolutions relating to nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear wars was substantially negative. On the other hand, Italy, like most NATO countries, was favourable to approving resolutions which invited the United States and the Soviet Union to negotiate nuclear disarmament, maintaining that the two superpowers were the only ones strong enough to actually make progress on that front. Furthermore, like many other Western countries, Italy also firmly believed that problems relating to controls were a top priority¹⁴⁸.

The speeches of the Italian representatives to the General Assembly also gave ample time to new emerging problems on the world scene: of particular importance to them was the safeguarding of human rights. It was one thing, however, to affirm principles and another to make concrete political choices. When dealing with the theme of human rights, Italy encountered some difficulty in balancing the importance of that particular issue with the need to safeguard national interests and keep the positions of its main allies in mind. Its position on the problem of apartheid, for example, was hardly linear because of its economic ties with

¹⁴⁵ Costa Bona; Tosi, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-242 and Moro, Aldo: "Relazione alla Commissione Esteri della Camera del 1 Agosto 1974", in *Id.*: "Scritti e discorsi...", vol. VI, 1974-1978, *op. cit.*, p. 3165.

¹⁴⁶ See Tosi, "Sulla scena del mondo...", *op. cit.*, pp. 188-191 e Bonanni, Massimo (ed.) (1973): *L'Italia nella politica internazionale (1972-1973)*, Milan, Edizioni di Comunità, pp. 196-197.

¹⁴⁷ Tosi, Luciano: "La strada stretta. Aspetti della diplomazia multilaterale italiana (1971-1979)", in Giovagnoli, Agostino; Pons, Silvio (eds.) (2003): *Tra guerra fredda e distensione*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, pp. 252-254.

¹⁴⁸ See Tosi, Luciano: "Momenti e problemi della presenza italiana alle Nazioni Unite (1955-1989)", *La Comunità Internazionale*, vol 40, no. 3 (2000), pp. 429 e Gargiulo, Pietro, "I settori prioritari dell'azione dell'Italia all'Onu", *Politica internazionale*, vol. 15, no. 11 (1987), p. 79.



South Africa – to whom it also sold arms - and the strategic ties that linked the African nation to Italy and many other Western nations. Caught between economic ties, Atlantic loyalty and the need to maintain a good rapport with developing nations opposed to the Pretoria regime, Rome, although consistently condemning the state-sanctioned segregation, it abstained from voting or voted against sanctions and the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations¹⁴⁹.

Italy's participation in United Nations legislative activity to safeguard human rights was more incisive¹⁵⁰. Italy is one of a group of nations that, since the 1960s, has ratified the largest number of UN conventions in the field of human rights, and was one of the largest contributors to specialised UN organisations (UNRWA, UNICEF just to name a few) that were active in safeguarding those rights, although at times it seemed a bit too hesitant to follow through on certain conventions. In any case, the evolution of Italian politics regarding these particular subjects was quite slow. It was not until the late 70s that the basis for a proper and homogenous, long-term strategy could be laid, and when it was, it was in correspondence with the maturation of the importance of human rights on the international scene.

Italy's efforts at the UN increased during the 1970s, especially where North-South relations were concerned. As we already mentioned, these had become of central importance to the organisation during this period. Italy, as we know, “rarely went so far as to embrace Third World countries positions in their entirety”, as Holland and the Scandinavian countries sometimes did, and did not adopt a “truly definitive and organic” policy when confronting the problems facing developing countries. Italy did, however, especially during the last phase of the period in question and just as the European Community was showing a more marked independence from Washington DC, give the impression that it was now more open to problems afflicting the Third World than it had been on other occasions, when “its adherence to American “reservations” was a ritual taken for granted”.

In the memorable 1969 speech Aldo Moro gave to the 24th General Assembly of the United Nations, he underscored the need to remove the most basic causes of war: racial hatred, hunger, misery and persistent economic, social and technological gaps. He urged commitment to fight poverty in all of its ramifications, without sacrificing and mortifying human values but through the already mentioned “global strategy” for development. His incitements were, however, destined to fall on deaf ears as relationships between North and South deteriorated in a reality marked by a grave international economic crisis caused by the end of fixed monetary exchange rates (something which Moro severely criticized calling for a rapid return to multilateralism¹⁵¹) and, two years later, by the surge in fuel prices that followed the Yom Kippur War.

Faced with the increased tension in North–South relations, Italy, who still declared itself in favour of de-colonization, took a prudent stand: in 1970 it backed out of the United Nations Special Committee for Decolonization, a seat it had held since 1961, and went to work on the General Assembly itself to encourage Western solidarity with developing countries. Its motivation for this was certainly idealistic, but not without neglecting the country's own economic interests. A perusal of UN voting records shows that, on the whole,

¹⁴⁹ See Tosi, “La strada stretta...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-257.

¹⁵⁰ See Rossi, Miriam: “La tutela dei diritti umani nella politica estera di Aldo Moro”, in Caviglia, Daniele e De Luca, Daniele (eds.) (2011): *Aldo Moro nell'Italia contemporanea*, vol. I, Florence, Le Lettere, pp. 235 – 263.

¹⁵¹ Moro, “Intervento alla Commissione esteri del Senato del 28 Settembre 1971”, *Id.*, “L'Italia nell'evoluzione...”, *op. cit.*



when Western powers voted against resolutions that would promote decolonization, Italy abstained; when they abstained, Italy voted in favour¹⁵².

During the first half of the 1970s, in a context of increasingly difficult North-South¹⁵³ relations, Italy continued to work towards finding solutions that would bring the positions of Third World countries closer to those of the industrialized world¹⁵⁴, also keeping in mind the positive consequences an opening to developing countries could have on the severe crisis its own economy was going through. During the third UNCTAD conference in Santiago in 1972, Italy, although sharing many positions with the industrialized world, leaned favourably towards several requests set forth by the developing countries, especially where international monetary reform was concerned, with a request for a link between the creation of special taxation rights, development aid and in generalized matters regarding preferences, while it was against, for example, opening the domestic market to importation from developing countries, especially agricultural products¹⁵⁵. At the 1974 UN General Assembly Italy abstained from voting on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, as opposed to most of the industrialized world who voted against it¹⁵⁶. Moro then repeated his belief that the industrialized world should change their attitude towards developing nations and stop merely giving financial aid. It was time, he said, to promote real integration that involved not just those who have more goods to exchange among themselves – energy resources and raw materials, technology and entrepreneurial possibilities - but also those who often had nothing to offer but, according to Moro, nonetheless had the right to “benefit from the solidarity that common democratic principles should promote around the world and share in the richness that is human life”¹⁵⁷.

4. With and Without the UN. Italy and Public Safety During the Eighties

Between the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s, the politics of détente that had marked the previous decade had come to an end and the bipolar conflict - caused by American reaction to the menacing power politics developed by the Soviet Union in Europe and the Third World – once again raised alert levels leading to the so-called “Second Cold War”. The result was a further weakening of the United Nations, already marginalized from the international stage by détente and the North-South conflict. It was during the Reagan administration that US criticism of the UN reached its peak. UN resolutions, often ritualistic and repetitive, were not followed up on as the world was racked by tension and conflict from Africa to Afghanistan, from the Falklands/Malvinas to the Persian Gulf¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵² Costa Bona, Tosi, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.

¹⁵³ For more about the attitudes industrialized countries had towards Third World requests see Toye, *op. cit.*; Benn, *op. cit.* and Garavini, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, the speech given by the Italian delegate, Antonio Giolitti, to the Special Session of the UN Assembly regarding raw materials and development, in Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) (1976): *L'Italia nella politica internazionale (1974 – 1975)*, vol. III, Milan, Edizioni di Comunità, pp. 313 – 314, and also, Riva, Egidio: “Contributo positivo all’attività dell’Onu, *Politica internazionale*, vol. 2, no. 11, 1974, pp. 63-65.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Garavini, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Calchi Novati, Giampaolo (1982): “Cooperazione allo sviluppo: una scelta per la politica estera italiana”, in *Cooperazione allo sviluppo una scelta per la società italiana*, Milano, Angeli, p. 35.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Aldo Moro, “Intervento alla Commissione Esteri del Senato”, 23 January, 1974, in ACS, Carte Moro, s. I, b. 28, f. 550.

¹⁵⁸ For more on the UN crisis of the first half of the 1980s see, among others, Gerbet et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 321-329 and Palsi, Alessandro (2006): *Storia dell’Onu*, Bari, Laterza, pp. 125-141.



It was only in the second half of the decade, after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union and gradually eased tension between the East and the West, which new importance was given to the United Nations¹⁵⁹. Thanks to the low profile adopted by Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the UN, although still in the throes of its financial crisis, managed to play an important role on the world scene. By helping to resolve some of the ongoing conflicts, the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces earned the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize.

The transition period that marked international politics towards the end of the 1970s brought with it changes that also affected Italian foreign policy, which interacted with domestic factors. The return of the Cold War, together with the end of Italy's experience with Dc – Pci governments (the exclusion of the Italian Communist Party and the end of humanism in foreign policy) brought about (in 1979 the government had agreed to the installation of Euromissiles) a renewed relationship with the United States¹⁶⁰ which, thanks also to the improvement of both the domestic and international economic situation and the waning of terrorism, brought with it a strong showing of autonomy, to the point even of re-proposing détente. This autonomy did not, however, translate, as it had done before, into a markedly favourable view of the United Nations by Italy, but resulted in a renewed presence on the part of the country on the Atlantic stage, especially as regards to the Mediterranean area, the Middle East and Africa. The protagonists of this new, assertive and dynamic line of Italian foreign policy were the ruling governments of the country which, starting with the 1979 elections, were the expression of a renewed relationship between the Christian Democrats and lay parties (including the Italian Liberal Party) and, especially, the Italian Socialist Party (*Pentapartito*)¹⁶¹.

Italy, which already in the second half of the Seventies tended to reflect on the limitations of multilateral diplomacy, especially UN diplomacy, seemed now to give the United Nations even less weight¹⁶². The international body, perhaps because of its marginalization, continued to be ineffective in playing a central role on the international stage and could, therefore, not give the country the space it needed for the independent action which, in the past, had allowed Italy to distinguish itself on the Atlantic and international stage by manifesting its support for dialogue and détente¹⁶³. The United Nations crisis, together with the country's tendency towards a more active role on the foreign scene, resulted

¹⁵⁹ See Gerbet et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 337-348 and Polsi, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-148.

¹⁶⁰ Regarding the premises of this renewal cf. Del Pero, Mario: "L'Italia e gli Stati Uniti: un legame rinnovato", in Romero, Federico e Varsori, Antonio (eds.) (2005): *Nazione, interdipendenza, integrazione. Le relazioni internazionali dell'Italia (1917-1989)*, I, Roma, Carocci, pp. 301-312, especially pp. 311-312, and, for the time period in question, Quagliariello, Gaetano: "Oltre il "terzaforzismo". Craxi e le relazioni transatlantiche (1976-1983)", in Spiri, Andrea (ed.) (2006): *Bettino Craxi, il socialismo europeo e il sistema internazionale*, Venezia, Marsilio, pp. 23-47.

¹⁶¹ About Italian foreign policy in the 1980s cf. specifically Di Nolfo, Ennio (ed.) (2003): *La politica estera italiana negli anni Ottanta*, Manduria-Bari-Roma, Piero Lacaita Editore; Spiri, *op. cit.*; Colarizi, Simona; Craveri, Piero; Pons, Silvio and Quagliariello, Gaetano (eds.) (2004), *Gli anni Ottanta come storia*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino; Romeo, Giuseppe (2000): *La politica estera italiana nell'era Andreotti (1972-1992)*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino; Coralluzzo, Valter (2000): *La politica estera dell'Italia repubblicana (1946-1992)*, Milano, Franco Angeli; Varsori, Antonio (1998): *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992*, Bari, Laterza, pp. 206-245; Ferraris, Luigi Vittorio (ed.) (1996): *Manuale della politica estera italiana 1947-1993*, Bari, Laterza, pp. 317-511; Isernia, Pierangelo: "Bandiera e risorse: la politica estera negli anni Ottanta", in Cotta, Maurizio; Isernia, Pierangelo (eds.) (1996): *Il gigante dai piedi di argilla: la crisi del regime partitocratico in Italia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 139-188.

¹⁶² Regarding the debate in Italy in the 1980s about the role of the UN see Grassi Orsini, Fabio (2005): *Il mito dell'Onu. Un'istituzione discussa in un'Italia divisa*, Roma, Liberal Edizioni, pp. 65-76.

¹⁶³ Tosi, "Sicurezza collettiva, distensione e cooperazione internazionale...", *op. cit.*, pp. 189-211.



in a diminished interest towards it by the Italian ruling class. Not only, but the dominant ideals of the ruling parties in Italy with regards to foreign policy was also changing. The traditional Christian-democratic leadership, prone to policies of international cooperation and very aware of its UN role (sometimes finding agreement with communist internationalism) was being replaced by another mentality inspired by other ideals, less attentive to combining the safeguarding of domestic interests with policies of collective security. Leaders of the Christian-democrats, in their conduction of foreign affairs, were increasingly joined by other parties more prone towards solidarity with the West, and the solicitations of the USA (the Italian Republican Party), they were also more sensitive to Italy's role in the world, national pride, traditions from the Risorgimento era and national ideals mixed in with those of democracy and the safeguarding of human rights (PSI)¹⁶⁴. The "community" dimension of foreign policy was set aside and there was an increasing focus on protecting the interests of Italy. A tendency towards the country's independent international initiatives came to the forefront, without, however, lessening their commitment to international peace and stability. The new leadership was not shy about strengthening their own power base inside the country with sometimes audacious international policy choices. The PSI in particular, under the guidance of Bettino Craxi, who was very attentive to international relations, sought to gain advantage, although with a limited electoral consensus, by changing the traditional balance of political power that hinged on the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party, as a result of the difficulty of modernizing Italy and its political scene¹⁶⁵.

At the beginning of the 1980s attention to UN proposals for the resolution of international crises seemed to wane and the governments led by Giovanni Spadolini (*Pentapartito* DC, PSI, PSDI, PRI, PLI June 1981 – December 1982) and by Bettino Craxi (August 1983 – April 1987), during which time the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was alternately run by Arnaldo Forlani, Emilio Colombo and Giulio Andreotti, demonstrated great dynamism, thanks also to the aforementioned relative improvement of the country's economic situation due to the stabilization of inflation and an increase in GDP, making Italy the fifth largest economy among industrialized nations. With the intent to carve out a new role for Italy on the world scene, traditional bilateral diplomacy enjoyed new popularity and the country began to intervene first hand in crisis areas with its own military forces, whose role was beginning to be revised through a new national defense model which included inter-force cooperation and readiness for international missions¹⁶⁶.

Italy continued to voice its support for multilateral solutions of international crises and for the role of the United Nations, considered a vital forum for dialogue and cooperation, but it also began to move increasingly towards support for its ally, the United States, and away from the aegis of the UN, not just on the diplomatic front, but also when it came to initiatives of a more military nature. The country continued working towards stability and dialogue, especially in areas where it had specific interests, with greater assertiveness and confidence in its own merits, and not those of collective security. Italian foreign political dogma no longer included the UN when faced with international crises, it had become an optional choice more

¹⁶⁴ Colarizi, Craveri, Pons, Quagliariello (eds.), *op. cit.*, especially the essays by Piero Craveri, Simona Colarizi, Agostino Giovagnoli, Francesco Barbagallo and Gaetano Quagliariello.

¹⁶⁵ Colarizi, Simona, Gervasoni, Marco (2005): *La cruna dell'ago. Craxi, il Partito Socialista e la crisi della Repubblica*, Bari, Laterza.

¹⁶⁶ See in this regard Santoro, Carlo M.: "L'Italia come "media potenza". La politica estera e il modello di difesa", in Caligaris, Luigi; Santoro, Carlo M. (eds.) (1986): *Obiettivo difesa. Strategia, direzione politica, comando operativo*, Bologna, Il Mulino and Cremasco, Maurizio (ed.) (1986): *Lo strumento militare italiano*, Milano, Angeli; cf. also Nuti, Leopoldo: "L'Italia e lo schieramento dei missili da crociera BGM-109 G "Gryphon"", in Colarizi, Craveri, Pons, Quagliariello (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 119-154.



tioned to circumstances. Even the safeguarding of Italian interests abroad tended to be less linked to collective security.

With increasing frequency, Italy began to participate in multinational initiatives with western countries outside of the aegis of the UN, and of NATO. As was already hinted at, with their renewed relationship with the United States came a vivacious dialectic rapport, often in the Mediterranean and the Middle East where, in the opinion of the Italian leaders, there was less of a question of East-West conflict and where Italy should/could play a leading regional role¹⁶⁷. If Craxi became the instigator and protagonist of renewed national pride, Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, carefully tended to specific Italian interests, which did not always coincide with those of their superpower partner¹⁶⁸. It is, nonetheless, difficult to ascertain, due to lack of adequate documentation, just how much autonomy the country effectively gained and what the advantages were of the new political mindset. And it is just as difficult to say if, on the basis of the new Italian foreign policy, there were any realistic considerations for the country's possibilities and its objectives, or how domestic political reasoning conditioned foreign policy. Generally speaking, it poses the question of what the comprehensive design of the new Italian foreign policy really was. How much did the country's search for autonomy, especially in the context of the Mediterranean, take precedence over its renewed Atlanticism (Euromissiles and multinational missions)? Or, vice-versa, how much did the Pentapartito exclusion of the PCI, which tranquilized the United States, increase the country's autonomy in foreign affairs? Did the "politics of being present", although in a different way, gain in importance once again or did Italy attempt to give a specific and effective contribution to solving international crises and to détente, seeking at the same time, and more effectively than in the past, to protect and enhance its own interests?¹⁶⁹

What is certain, with regards to this particular topic of discussion, is that the changeover from one foreign policy, in which ample space was given to collective security, to another, more rooted in traditional methods, was neither clean-cut nor irreversible. It highlighted the ambivalent character of Italian post-war foreign policy, suspended between commitment to higher ideals and involvement in the UN and Atlantic restrictions, between multilateral and unilateral diplomacy¹⁷⁰. Tradition returned to let its voice heard, as did the interests of the various political parties. The country was rocked by contrasts regarding the choices it had to make in the name of international peace and stability. Two opposing camps faced off on the political arena: one favoured the return of the peace initiative to the halls of the United Nations, and the other favoured autonomous action, mostly hand in hand with Italy's most important ally. If in the past, turning to the United Nations was agreed upon – by more or less most – and more or less explicitly by the left, it was opposed by the most orthodox of NATO adherents and now this reliance on the UN had become, more often than not, a left-wing opposition prerogative on the tails of a vast and varied emerging peace movement which blended traditional anti-imperialism with protests against bipolar logic, development, security and interdependence issues.

With the advent of the Second Cold War, the tones of the speeches given by the Italian representatives at the United Nations became ever more concerned, and if on the one hand the

¹⁶⁷ Cfr. Iai (1986): *L'Italia nella politica internazionale, 1983-1984*, Milano, Angeli, pp. 68-69 e 88-94 e Id. (1988): *L'Italia nella politica internazionale, 1985-1986*, Milano, Angeli, pp. 20 e 28-29.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁶⁹ Regarding see essays by Luigi Vittorio Ferraris, in Di Nolfo, "La politica estera italiana...", *op. cit.*, pp. 323-326, and Antonio Badini, in Spiri, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

¹⁷⁰ Ferraris in Di Nolfo, "La politica estera italiana...", *op. cit.*, pp. 324-325.



two superpowers were urged to desist from hegemonic designs, on the other hand, while still showing faith in the UN and its actions, there was no lack of mention of the crisis the organisation was going through – in fact, Italy encouraged a re-launching of the United Nations. Recurring themes included imbalance between the North and the South of the world and the lack of commitment to the safeguarding of human rights due to the “inflexible application of the principle of non-interference”¹⁷¹. The Foreign Ministers, Colombo and Andreotti – 1980 and May of 1986 – with the successive governments of Cossiga II, Forlani, Spadolini I and II, Fanfani V, Craxi I and II, Fanfani VI, Gorla and De Mita, especially stigmatized the human rights violations committed during Israel’s invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan. It was the beginning of the battle against the death penalty and Italy was committed to a moratorium of the carrying out of the sentences. Its opposition to colonialism was voiced once again, as were its support of decolonization (Namibia, southern Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies) and its continued criticism of the interference of “foreign troops” in African nations. It saw the fall of the Nicaraguan dictatorship and the evolution of Latin America countries towards democracy with favour (Malfatti, 1979).

The Italian leaders deplored the outcome of the Polish crisis, the Soviet downing of the South Korean passenger jumbo jet, the occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam, South African aggression in Angola and its occupation of Namibia and they called for an immediate ceasefire after war broke out between Iran and Iraq in 1980, urging negotiations to re-establish peace in that area. Minister Colombo also expressed the “apprehension” Italy felt for Central America “where the local causes of crises traceable to no-longer acceptable historical conditions of privatization have now been compounded by inadmissible outside interference that are the offspring of the East-West conflict”. These preoccupations were repeated when the United States staged a military intervention in Granada in October 1983. On this occasion Italy, the only one of the NATO allies to do so, voted in favour of a resolution dated 2 November, 1983, condemning the intervention. The year before, Italy’s position at the UN had been at odds with the American one with regards to the El Salvador situation.

After Gorbachev’s rise to power in the Soviet Union, the Italian representatives to the United Nations lauded the Russian leader’s foreign policy agenda, which was based on cooperation, the resumption of talks between the East and the West and disarmament negotiations. They welcomed with particular enthusiasm the agreement for the total elimination of the Euromissiles. Italy hoped for a renewal of the role of the UN and was pleased to underscore the important actions the organisation had undertaken towards the reestablishment of peace in Iran-Iraq (Andreotti, 1987). Italy also began to support the idea that the UN should be active in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking (Italy was, at the time, the largest contributor to the coffers of the anti-drug abuse organization UNFDAC), organised crime and environmental hazards.

Italy did not limit itself to speeches at the UN Assembly meetings, but often got actively involved in solutions to international crises that erupted during the period at hand, with the UN or without it. In December 1979, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Italy held the presidency of the European Community and immediately consulted with all of the various European Member States in order to formulate a position and present it to the United

¹⁷¹ It must, however, be said that, even though the Italian government was reticent, in those same years Italy continued to do business with South Africa – including the sales of arms – notwithstanding the UN embargo due to the persistence of the apartheid policy; see Iai, “L’Italia nella politica internazionale, 1983-1984”, *op. cit.*, pp. 184 e 509-510.



Nations, which it did in front of the Security Council on 7th January, 1980. The invasion was condemned and the Soviet justifications based on article 51 of the United Nations Charter and the application of the 1978 Soviet-Afghan treaty were soundly rejected, maintaining them to be wholly inconsistent. It supported and voted in favour of Resolution ES-6/2, presented by 17 non-aligned countries and approved during the extraordinary General Assembly that took place between 10th and 14th January, 1980. In it the armed intervention by the Soviets was deplored, the immediate and unconditional retreat of the foreign troops was called for, the interested parties were urged to create the necessary circumstances for the voluntary return of displaced Afghan citizens to their homes and international organisations were appealed to for humanitarian aid for Afghan political refugees.

In 1982, as had happened many other times in the past, the United Nations was a comfortable refuge for Italian foreign policy. This time it was for the Anglo-Argentinean conflict over the Falkland/Malvinas islands¹⁷². The conflict was a huge embarrassment to the country, divided as it was between European solidarity with Great Britain and the many ties – demographic, cultural and economic – it had with Argentina. When the conflict erupted, after Argentina invaded the islands in April 1982, the Italian government attempted to favour the peacemaking actions of the United Nations, perhaps also to avoid having to take sides with either of the parties involved in the conflict. It voted in favour of Security Council Resolution 502 which called for a halt to all hostile action, the retreat of Argentinean troops from the islands and the initiation of diplomatic negotiations, as well as Resolution 505, which proposed the UN Secretary General as mediator between the two countries. It could not, however, at least in the beginning, avoid showing its support for Great Britain at the EC meetings. The EC adopted embargo measures against Argentina, and Italy adhered. The sanctions against Argentina divided Italian political forces – the Socialists, the Movimento Sociale, the communists and a part of the Christian-democrats were either critical or downright against them – and there was great embarrassment about the entire affair. The Spadolini government disassociated itself from part of the sanctions when they were renewed and repeatedly called on United Nations Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar to begin mediation (which failed) and upheld his motion.

After Great Britain had re-conquered the islands, Italy set to work mending the tense relations that now existed between the EC and Latin America. With this goal in mind, Foreign Minister Colombo embarked on a state visit to Peru, Brazil and Argentina in the summer of 1982. At the 37th General Assembly of the United Nations, when it was time to vote on a somewhat vague plan presented by Latin American countries to resolve the crisis (it was approved), Italy abstained from voting, as did all other EC Member States except for Greece, after having declared that “the problem of the islands that provoked the war must be brought in front of the General Assembly of the United Nations without any preconceived positions”. In 1983 at the 38th General Assembly, Italy once again abstained from voting on a similar resolution. The then Foreign Minister, Andreotti, repeated its support for a direct dialogue between London and Buenos Aires “without preliminary points on the contested subject matter” because, he said, dialogue should always make use of the context of the UN and the commendable actions of its Secretary General.

¹⁷² See in regard to the episode Cf. Mechi, Lorenzo: “Fra solidarietà europea e vincoli di sangue”. L’Italia e la crisi delle Falkland/Malvinas”, *Annali dell’Istituto Ugo La Malfa*, vol. 16 (2001), pp. 139-173 and Ferraris, *op. cit.*, pp. 501-502; furthermore Caracciolo di San Vito, Roberto: “Le Falkland-Malvine alle Nazioni Unite (1960-1983)”, *Rivista di studi politici internazionali*, no. 2 (1984), pp. 263-291.



The partial retreat of Italy from UN diplomacy was most evident during the crises that affected the Mediterranean area and the Persian Gulf, where tensions were rising. Rome made a great show of direct involvement and activity in the area as it tried to be more present in the management of crises than it had been in the past. It presented itself as the true, if not only, regional interlocutor able to have open dialogue with all parties. Initially, Rome moved forward taking advantage of its allies' requests to do so, later on it aimed to fill the power vacuum created by the end of Soviet presence in the area.

The objectives set by Italian foreign policy makers for the Mediterranean basin remained the traditional ones: stability of the area, economic development of countries along the southern shores and a commitment to wider and more comprehensive collaboration, political and economic accords of a "Euro-Mediterranean" nature¹⁷³. While in the 60s, and in the 70s but with less emphasis, Italy, although not neglecting bilateral diplomacy, was very committed to finding solutions under the aegis of the UN to the many crises in the Middle East, it now sought out solutions to these same problems first hand: bilateral relationships were brought to the forefront and the Italian armed forces entered the arena with a massive showing to keep the peace and maintain stability. In 1979 Italy took part in an inter-force UN military operation with four helicopters (Italair) in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The purpose of the forces was to supervise the retreat of the Israeli military from southern Lebanon, an area they had occupied since March 1978 after a serious attack¹⁷⁴. After that the Italian armed forces were increasingly involved in multinational missions that were, however, not under the aegis of the United Nations. There was no single institutional Mediterranean security force, the foreign policy of Europe in the area was inconsistent and the United Nations wielded little power, partly because of the renewal of the Cold War. This led Italy, in light of the various Mediterranean crises, to advance its own political, economic and security interests together with its allies. This sometimes meant a conflict of interest with the United States, which was not prone to orchestrating its moves in the area with others –outside of the realm of competences of the NATO – and sought these others out only for their consensus.

From 1981-1982, after the Soviet-caused failure of the creation of a United Nations military force, Italy participated – with the United States, France, Great Britain and The Netherlands – in the MFO (Multinational Force and Observers). This force was assembled to make sure that the 1979 Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel, and the disengagement of the Sinai, were respected. It was the first time that Italian forces had been deployed abroad outside of the aegis of the United Nations. The mission came about after bitter domestic political battles between the government and the opposition (the PCI and the PDUP), also because it was not clear who would have institutional responsibility for the operation. The PCI, in showing its opposition to the operation, did not hesitate to underscore that it was the first time that Italian troops would be involved in an area belonging to the Atlantic Alliance, and, moreover, without UN cover¹⁷⁵.

Later, between 1982 and 1984, as the civil war in Lebanon worsened after Israel's intervention to eliminate Palestinian camps there in 1982 and in a moment of severe paralysis at the United Nations – which, with Italy's vote in favour, condemned (Res. N° 509) the operation itself to failure– the Spadolini and then Craxi governments, responding to a request from the United States but then also acting on its own initiative, took part with the US, France

¹⁷³ Cf. De Leonardis, *op. cit.*; Coralluzzo, *op. cit.*, pp. 278-280 e Romeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-87.

¹⁷⁴ Biagini, Antonello e Nuti, Leopoldo: "Note sulla partecipazione italiana ai corpi di spedizione internazionali", *Studi storici militari* (1994), pp. 523-524.

¹⁷⁵ Coralluzzo, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-293.



(MNF1) and Great Britain (MNF2) in two missions with a “multilateral force” that was sent to the troubled middle eastern country (Lebanon1 26th August – 12th September 1982; Libano2 26th September 1982 – 20th February 1984). The first operation was preceded by particularly heated debates. The government tried to present the two missions as an “international police action” that involved Italy in keeping with the Security Council resolutions and as one of its obligations deriving from the UN Charter, it highlighted the humanitarian nature of the mission and repeatedly called for the multinational forces to be substituted by the so-called Blue Helmets, as soon as possible. The missions were, nonetheless, an absolute novelty in Italy’s foreign and military affairs, both from a domestic point of view (on the decision-making level) and from an international point of view (type of participation)¹⁷⁶.

The three missions had several similarities with the Italian decision to participate in a mission (to de-mine and act as an armed escort) in the Red Sea, where in the summer of 1984 mines were presenting a hazard to the shipping lines of the Suez Canal. Egypt asked France, Great Britain and the United States for help. Italy, which had initially declared itself in favour of a United Nations intervention, when asked by Egypt to collaborate, changed its mind and the government accepted the invitation also partly because of the lack of response by the UN, and without even consulting Parliament. Afterwards, in front of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the House and the Senate, Andreotti, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, maintained that a United Nations action had seemed “opportune and welcome” to the Italian government, but that a “deeper study by the Secretary General” had shown that the organisation was not “up to activating itself with the speed and efficiency necessary in the circumstances”. And so the government, while still convinced that the United Nations was the proper forum for the question, decided it should in fact participate in the operation in order to help Egypt and safeguard the right of free navigation, but also because almost a third of all cargo ships that passed through the Suez were destined to Italian ports. For Spadolini, the Minister of Defense, it was a question of national defense, and there was not much point in discussing whether the intervention would be one “mandated by the UN” or “as a surrogate UN mission”, scenarios he considered analogous. The opposition, the left, claimed to be against the operation and repeated once again that they would have preferred a UN intervention. They voiced the fear that the episode could expand NATO’s “out of area” competences¹⁷⁷.

The end of the long Craxi government, which resigned in March of 1987, coincided with a further phase of rethinking Italian foreign policy, above all because of the uncertain period international politics had been undergoing since 1985 when Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union and opened up new prospects for détente. The debate about whether or not Italy should participate in peace missions outside of the sphere of the UN continued. Between Spring and Summer 1987, after an Iraqi missile attack on the US frigate *Stark*, the United States began to ask its allies to support them in their intervention in the Persian Gulf to safeguard navigation which had become dangerous since the Iran-Iraq war had broken out in

¹⁷⁶ Cf., among others, Ferraris, *op. cit.*, pp. 383-393 e Tana, Fabio (ed.) (1985): *La lezione del Libano. La missione della Forza Multinazionale e la politica italiana*, Milano, Angeli; Abraham, Antoine J. (1996): *The Lebanon War*, Westport, Praeger; Lundari, Giuseppe (1986): *Gli italiani in Libano 1979-1985*, Milano, Editrice militare italiana; Angioni, Franco (1984): *Un soldato italiano in Libano*, Milano, Rizzoli; and Tappero Merlo, Germana (1997): *Medio Oriente e forze di pace. Cinquant’anni di guerre e interventi multinazionali in Israele, Libano e Golfo Persico*, Milano, Angeli.

¹⁷⁷ Calchi Novati, Giampaolo: “La missione delle navi italiane e il confronto fra opposti schieramenti”, *Politica Internazionale*, vo. 15, no. 11 (1987), pp. 41-54 and Iai (1986): *L’Italia nella politica internazionale, 1984-1985*, Milano, Angeli, pp. 67-69 e 166-176.



1980, but also for other reasons like reassuring moderate Arab nations and as a warning to Iran. At that time, Italy was being ruled by the 6th Fanfani transition government, which took over from the Craxi government, and the Tuscan statesman answered American pressure with a famous phrase “We are hardly the Marines!”. He let it be known, with this statement, that he was against the initiative. Foreign Affairs Minister Andreotti declared that the competence for these sorts of missions belonged to the United Nations, and that it would anyway be better to avoid involving other countries¹⁷⁸. They were averse to putting Italy’s commercial relationships with the two parties at risk and preferred to resolve the issue through mediation and peace accords.¹⁷⁹

The request was also skirted, at least in the beginning, by the following government headed by Gorla. Italy, then a non-permanent member of the Security Council, helped to pass Resolution 598 on 20th July, 1987, a comprehensive peace plan conceived by Pérez de Cuéllar that aimed to put a permanent end to the conflict between Iran and Iraq. The resolution enjoined the two warring parties to unconditionally cease hostilities, called for negotiations to find a solution to their political problems once the war was over and called on the Secretary General of the UN to constitute a specific supervisorial force and begin negotiations between the parties to “reach a global accord that is just and honourable” covering all of the unresolved questions.

The resolution aimed to strengthen the purpose of the UN, whose task it was to prevent military interventions, whether spontaneous or coordinated, between nations. The interventions, however, continued, especially by the United States, who once again put pressure on Italy. Faced with the American solicitations, the political parties reiterated their positions: the lay parties, PSI, PRI and PLI were favourable to an intervention together with the USA and the communists, who were against it, held a position similar to that of Andreotti, who preferred intervention under the aegis of the United Nations. In September 1987, following an incident in the Gulf that involved the *Jolly Rubino*, an Italian cargo ship, the Council of Ministers once again faced a choice of whether or not to intervene. They had to decide if they would offer the services of Italian military forces to the UN (as Andreotti, the PCI, DP, the Verdi and most of the DC suggested), keeping in mind the Italian interests in the Gulf and the support the country was giving to the mediation efforts of the UN Secretary General in line with Resolution 98, or whether they would follow the lead of the United States and intervene unilaterally (as a minority of the DC, PLI, PSDI and PRI hoped) with the added aim of reaffirming Italy’s role in international affairs, specifically with NATO and the greater Mediterranean basin.

The government once again opted for the latter. After a parliamentary debate resulted in support for the decision, the 18th naval group (three frigates, three minesweepers, a supply ship and a support vessel) was sent to the Gulf where it joined the naval forces of the United States, France, and Great Britain, as well as the ships in arrival from Belgium and The Netherlands. On 8 September, 1987, Andreotti pointed out that the ships constituted a deviation from the traditional foreign policy Italy had always believed in, but that it served a specific and circumscribed purpose: that of protecting Italian mercantile vessels and as a warning to those who might not respect Italy’s neutrality. The government, for the rest, retained their faith in the UN’s diplomatic initiative and excluded any sort of military or paramilitary initiative that could provoke a deterioration of an already precariously instable

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181 e 413.

¹⁷⁹ Regarding Italy’s sale of arms to Iran and Iraq, notwithstanding the UN embargo cf. Ilari, Virgilio (1994): *Storia militare della prima repubblica 1943-1993*, Ancona, Nuove Ricerche, pp. 191-196.



situation. The rules of engagement called for absolute equidistance between the warring factions. The communists, radicals, green and democratic proletarian parties declared themselves opposed to the mission as it went against the policies of coexistence and peace that had always distinguished Italian politics. They interpreted it as a manifestation of lack of faith in the United Nations which, thanks to the efforts of Pérez de Cuéllar (with the efficacious collaboration of the Italian envoy Giandomenico Picco, his special operations assistant) was working hard to put an end to the conflict between Iran and Iraq. They also deemed the mission as a function of Western interests, protected in these circumstances even outside of the NATO framework and its area of competence¹⁸⁰.

The uncertainties and perplexities, which came to the forefront with increasing frequency in Italy when it came to deciding the use of the Italian armed forces in multilateral missions, were a sign of a larger and more complex process developing in the Atlantic alliance, whose aims were evolving and whose precise definition would not come into being until 1991 and 1999. The debate on whether to intervene with or without the UN was a reflection of the perplexity and uncertainties the country harboured towards the slow expansion of the objectives of NATO. With the menace of traditional enemies waning and new outbursts of instability emerging, Italy looked to the UN and its traditional stance favouring collective security. Italy was, however, also interested in playing a leading role on the international scene, in view of the opportunities that seemed to be opening up thanks to its action, and, as a result, found herself following the United States and their increasing number of interventions on an expanded Mediterranean stage¹⁸¹.

While the Italian naval mission was underway, coordinated with the multilateral international forces, the country continued to favour the UN's peace initiatives, to which Gorbachev's rise to power had given back a certain new vitality. Italy had had the presidency of the Security Council until October of 1987 and worked hard to make Resolution 598 a reality. Andreotti, in agreement with similar Soviet Union positions, sustained the idea that the end of the conflict should be based on an agreement between the warring parties under the aegis of the United Nations, conceding time and space to it in order to reach an accord without having to resort to sanctions as, in fact, 598 specifically called for and as the United States would have wanted¹⁸². Italy manifested its support for détente and autonomy in foreign affairs, although the latter remained uncertain, suspended as it was between the UN, NATO and a more specific domestic political agenda. The international arena was, as mentioned above, still somewhat uncertain after the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev. The lessening of East-West tension that resulted from the new leader in the Soviet Union favoured, as already hinted at, a renewal of the role of the United Nations, in particular that of the Security Council, in solving ongoing conflicts and even Italy was able to carve a greater role for itself in the organization.

When, on 7th August, 1988, the Iran-Iraq conflict came to an end, Italy, between August 1988 and February 1991, participated with 15 official observers in the United Nations Iran Iraq Observer Group (UNIIMOG), whose mission it was to watch over the ceasefire agreement between the two countries as mandated by Resolution 598. After that, in February

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Iai, "L'Italia nella politica internazionale 1987-1988", *op. cit.*, pp. 257, 261-265 and Buracchia, Mario: "Golfo Persico: operazioni di scorta al traffico mercantile italiano (1987-1988)", in Pizzigallo, Matteo e Alberini, Paolo (eds.) (2002): *Missioni militari italiane all'estero in tempo di pace (1946-1989)*, Rome, Commissione Italiana di Storia Militare, pp. 333-341.

¹⁸¹ See in this regard also Calchi Novati, Giampaolo: *Mediterraneo e questione araba nella politica estera italiana*, in *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana*, vol. 2, tomo I, pp. 260-261.

¹⁸² Cf. Iai, "L'Italia nella politica internazionale 1987-1988", *op. cit.*, pp. 246-247 e 251-252.



1991 and after the UNIIMOG mission, Italy participated in the United Nations Office of the Secretary General in Iran (UNOSGI), a mission that aimed to make sure the articles of the Iran-Iraq peace accord were actually being respected. In early 1989 it was also active in the UNOCHA-Salaam operation, an international initiative promoted by the UN to watch over the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan, a mission that was half real peace enforcement and half international technical assistance. It sent, together with the US, Great Britain, France and Turkey, in the framework of a quadripartite agreement for Afghanistan, 8 military officials to help with a bomb and mine-sweeping operation, and to train Afghan refugees and partisans. During that same year, in March, Italy also participated in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) mission in Namibia, instituted after accords had been signed between Pretoria, Luanda and Havana, to watch over the transition of that country from South African administrative control to independence, as stipulated in UN Resolution 435/78.

A trend had, by now, been set which – thanks also to a greater stability in fuel supplies – saw politics increase in importance over purely economic issues, although these were by no means ignored, in order to strengthen Italy's role within the international community, especially NATO countries, and resulted in a partial neglect of purely UN-related policies and a renewed alignment with the United States, although autonomy remained an important issue on the agenda.

The new orientation was also evident in the increasing willingness to participate in peacekeeping missions, both within the aegis of the United Nations and outside of its immediate realm. These missions brought together the various aspirations Italy harboured in its foreign policy agenda: the search for international peace and cooperation, the safeguarding of its own interests and the enhancement of its role on the world stage.

Italy's actions with regards to its relationships with the southern hemisphere in the 1980s were no less innovative. This innovation was part of the wider policy of openness towards the developing world Italy had already called for in the past, especially during the 1970s when tensions had increased between the North and the South due to the refusal of the industrialized countries to yield to requests by developing nations to change the mechanisms that ruled international commerce. In the 1980s, Italy continued to show its support of the requests of developing nations, due also to the substantial consensus of most of the majority political parties and the opposition. At the United Nations and within their own agencies, Italian representatives placed the accent on the need to create a new world economic balance, to restructure the system of commerce and monetary policy, and to conciliate the development policies of non-industrial nations with those of industrialized nations, and in doing so adhere to the requests of the Group of 77. At the fifth UNCTAD assembly dedicated to the reform of the institutions that govern the world economy that took place in 1979 in Manila, the head of the Italian delegation, Mario Pedini, recognised that in order to overcome under-development issues a re-examination of “the economic and institutional reality that makes up the framework of relations among states” was needed. Moreover, he said, a “restructuring of production systems and a renewal of the institutions that guide world economy” was also needed. He proposed the transformation of the UNCTAD into a “forum for discussion and study” about all of the points inherent to North-South relations¹⁸³. The following year, at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly dedicated to North-South relations, the Italian delegate, Colombo, underscored the need to find adequate solutions to the most important problems facing developing nations.

¹⁸³ Calchi Novati, “Mediterraneo...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 250.



The action then taken by Italy proved it was able to conquer a certain margin of autonomy, international restrictions notwithstanding. A financially fragile nation, often at the mercy of the decisions of others and highly dependent on the import of raw material could not understand the positions of the developing nations, at least some of them, like those positions regarding the stabilization of the cost of raw materials. Not only, but Italy, for reasons linked to its own economic structure, had a particular interest in the expansion of international commerce and the increase in the incomes of emerging nations to which, in the mid-70s, it sold some 20% of its exports and from which it bought 28% of its imports. As a country with a medium-sized economy still in transformation, Italy needed to export many goods and import many others, especially raw materials. It needed the strong development of newly independent countries. Italy's weak negotiating position did not favour the success of its proposals, particularly where countries with strong economies were concerned, and it was even excluded from the Cancun Conference of October 1981, which marked the apex of attempts to find an agreement between the world's northern and southern hemispheres.

Italy's openness towards the appeals of third world countries did, however, favour its election for a fourth time, in 1986, to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council of the United Nations (for the 1987-1988 term) with 143 of the 154 votes. Furthermore, in 1989, the UN Secretary General, Pérez de Cuéllar, keeping in mind Italy's deep commitment to cooperation to development, nominated Bettino Craxi its special representative for the debt problem faced by developing nations, charging him with contacting the governments of debtor and creditor nations and credit institutions to draw up an in depth analytical report and offer recommendations. Craxi presented his report to the 1990 General Assembly, which gave it its unanimous approval¹⁸⁴.

Perhaps Italy's politics towards developing nations within the UN, and its specialised agencies, was the terrain in which the country worked its hardest for collective security through UN institutions, at the same time also favouring a closer consensus regarding foreign policy between the majority and the opposition parties within the government.

With the economic and political crises of the 70s behind it, and in the presence of an international situation that was in constant, if somewhat slow, evolution, in which the marginal quality of the UN was evident, Italy, in the 1980s, moved with increasing autonomy when it came to international crises, and not just within the framework of the United Nations. While still siding with its Western allies, it sought to identify a more independent road to follow in safeguarding collective security and its own interests. In the first half of the decade, the remaining mentality of the Cold War together with the structural limits of the country, considerably conditioned its actions. The successive changes in the international situation increasingly forced Italy to redefine its foreign policies in a world which was headed towards overcoming the bipolar system as it opened up to new protagonists and new problems.

5. Epilogue

After the end of the Cold War, the presence of the United Nations increased together with its role on the international scene. Peacekeeping operations grew in frequency, although, for

¹⁸⁴ Iai (1991): *L'Italia nella politica internazionale, 1989-1990*, Milano, Angeli, pp. 243-247 and Gozzano, Francesco: "Il piano Craxi per il Terzo mondo", *Mondoperaio*, vo. 43, no. 12 (1990), pp. 24-26. Cf. also Angeli, Andrea (2005): *Professione peacekeeper: da Sarajevo a Nassiriyah, storie in prima linea*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, pp. 31- 61.



many reasons among which was the relative lack of experience of the organisation and an increasing opposition to the missions by several UN member states, not always with the desired success. With increasing frequency, countries showed a preference for peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organisations or groups of countries, with or without UN authorisation, taking advantage of the power vacuums that came into being after the fall of the Soviet empire.

In Italy, the end of the bipolar system contributed to the end of the “first republic” and opened new doors to Italy’s diplomacy, which was redefining its own role on the international stage and its foreign policy objectives, in a difficult domestic political scenario. Its status as a medium-sized power was something which needed to be kept in mind and the justification/legitimization of various foreign policy choices, like its rapport with NATO and its traditional role as mediator between East and West, waned. Italy also lost its position as eastern frontier of the Western Bloc and consequently the profitability of its strategic position, even though it gained more freedom of movement as nuclear risks also diminished. The country found itself, at this point, on the border between the stable area and the unstable area and this circumstance re-valued its geopolitical and geostrategic position, becoming a western advance outpost towards the Balkans, the Middle East and the Gulf.

In the wake of the preceding decade, Italy concentrated itself on strengthening its role in the world and pursuing objectives of economic and commercial nature through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy or through multinational military operations conducted with its Western allies. Its affinity with the United Nations, after the end of the bipolar system, lost some of its original motivations: it was no longer needed as a forum for mediation among the various petitions of the political parties in foreign policy, while the changes in the international scenario seemed to offer new and greater opportunities. Italy, therefore, committed itself to safeguarding international stability and security and its interests within the UN framework, but also alongside its Western allies outside of the organisation. The role of the Italian armed forces, consequently, also increased in importance in the country’s foreign policy.

Italy’s desire to have a greater role in international relations was also reflected in the UN framework, where, in the 1990s, its commitment grew accompanied by a pressing and constant request to be given more importance in the organisation itself, but also to make it more respondent to the new international reality. During the international crisis caused by Iraq’s invasion of neighbouring Kuwait, Italy supported the Security Council condemnation of the aggression and then participated, with its military bases and troops, in the UN intervention against Iraq. It was the first time since the end of the Second World War that Italian troops had been involved in an armed conflict and the experience, although it took place under the aegis of the United Nations, was traumatic for the country and resulted in profound divisions in domestic politics, public opinion and inside party politics between the supporters and those opposing the armed intervention. The lay parties were in favour of Italy’s participation, the PCI/PDS and a united pacifist front that included parts of the DC and the Catholic world, were against it. The government, faced with this situation, kept a low profile regarding the Italian participation, also because the country was in the throes of redefining its foreign policy.

After the war in the Gulf, Italy took part in the United Nations operation in Somalia, a country racked by anarchy, showing once again the difficult period Italian foreign policy was undergoing. The mission ended without a positive outcome in early 1994 and was marked by contrasts between the Italian leaders on one side and America and the UN on the other. Italy



had championed keeping the various Somali factions at bay from one another, while the other side favoured action against only one faction, that of warlord Aidid.

After some hesitation, Italy also participated in a UN operation during the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, first making air bases available to UN forces, and then, as the conflict neared an end, with its own air force. Once again the country was racked by intense debate about whether or not to participate in the operation and the positions that emerged were even more distant from one another than those during the Gulf war, especially where the leftist parties, the Church and Catholics were concerned. In the end a commonly agreed upon national position prevailed that justified the participation for reasons of Italy's interest in the area. The choice, which blended collective security with national interests, was further strengthened by participation in the multinational forces put together by the UN Security Council sent to stabilise Bosnia Herzegovina, followed by other missions in the Balkans.

Over the years Italy's commitment to the United Nations remained a priority, in keeping with the international choices it had made after the end of the Second World War, Article 11 of the Constitution and the constant desire for peace on the part of public opinion, which demanded a political framework in which ethics also played a part. Another objective was that of increasing Italy's status within the UN and, more generally speaking, in the world at large. Financial contributions to the organisation increased to such a point that in 1995 Italy counted as the UN's seventh largest contributor, fourth where troops for peace missions were concerned. The country's dedication to multilateral development, although diminishing, was also generous. Its massive commitment was highly appreciated by the international community and in 1994 Italy was elected for a fifth time to the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member. By now, however, Italy had other ambitions and aimed at a more stable presence in the Council to increase its political weight in the decision making processes of the organisation. It increased its activities to promote the reform of the organisation's organism through the constitution of a new category of membership, a semi-permanent membership, which would be present in the Council with greater frequency than non-permanent members. The struggle for this reform reached a peak in 1997-1998, when Italy and the United States were at odds over a procedural question. Italy won the scrimmage but left things as they were, and still are.

Italy, in the meantime, continued to participate in peacekeeping missions of a humanitarian nature. In 1997 the centre-left government guided by Romano Prodi organised and directed a mission in Albania under the aegis of the United Nations, in part to avoid a massive influx of Albanian refugees to Italy and in part to be able to take advantage of the economic and commercial opportunities Albania had to offer. The mission was a success. It prevented the outbreak of civil war in Albania, favoured free elections, stopped the influx of refugees and marked the beginning of a greater qualitative commitment on the part of Italy to the Land of the Eagles. After 1998, Italy's participation in international missions increased even further, with and without the UN, bearing further testimony to Italy's will to play an important role on the international scene, especially in the Balkans. By the end of 1999 there were some 10,000 Italian soldiers involved in overseas missions.

The most demanding operation, which was also the most emblematic one of the new line of Italian foreign politics at the close of the millennium, was, without a doubt, the one conducted in 1999 in Kosovo with NATO, an operation embarked upon without prior UN authorization. The centre-left government led by Massimo D'Alema tried to reconcile its choice of participation in the conflict with the need to keep the lack of UN consent in mind, with the country's powerful pacifist tendencies and with its own constitutional provisions. It



sought to keep a low military profile in the intervention and moved on the political-diplomatic front with energy and determination. The debate within the country of whether or not to participate in military operations outside of the UN aegis once again heated up, particularly regarding the need, or lack thereof, to intervene in the internal affairs of a country where the human rights of its citizens were being threatened. At the end of the war, in some way eventually sanctioned by the UN and on the basis of a Security Council resolution, a multinational peacekeeping force entered Kosovo, which included 5,000 Italian troops and which sought to bring back the rule of law and order to the Balkan nation.

In 1999 and 2000, Italy was the United Nations' fifth largest contributor and its third largest supplier of troops for peacekeeping operations. In 2000, however, its desire to sit on the Security Council had waned, the result of a sense of disappointment in the image of the UN, especially where its intervention in Kosovo was concerned. After the 11 September, 2001, attack on the USA, Italy, led by a centre-right government under the leadership of Silvio Berlusconi, sided with the United States and manifested less consideration for the United Nations. After some initial uncertainty, Italy took part in *Operation Enduring Freedom* against the Taliban forces in Afghanistan and later in the *International Security Assistance Force*, a NATO operation authorised by a resolution of the Security Council that aimed to guarantee a safe environment in which a new Afghan government could operate.

Italy's alignment with positions championed by the United States was once again evident in 2003, when the latter went to war against Iraq, once again without the approval of the UN and based on the doctrine of preventive war announced by then American president George W. Bush in 2002. It was a significant moment in the evolution which already for some time had marked Italian foreign policy that of an increasing will to act as a protagonist on the international scene, with and without the United Nations. Nonetheless, their response to the American unilateral operation notwithstanding, Italy's interest in the United Nations had never really been lacking. The country continued to work hard towards reforming the Security Council and to be elected to one of its non-permanent seats, which it was once again in 2006. Also in 2006, after the breakout of conflict between Israel and Lebanon, the new centre-left government under the leadership of Romano Prodi brought the country's foreign policy back onto the road of UN multilateralism and actively worked for the creation of a UN peacekeeping force in which Italy was – and still is – involved through operation LEONTE.

In Italy today, the traditional support for the United Nations and the desire to play a greater role in international politics, even outside of the realm of the UN, still appear to live together. This coexistence has its roots in its own history and in the evolution of the international body. The “constituent crisis” of the latter, perpetually divided between respecting the “old” rules of sovereignty and non-interference and the need to respect the “new” rules regarding human rights and interference, does not make it easier for Italy, a country in which the uncertainties, divisions and lacerations of the modern world are clearly reflected, to follow an unwavering line of foreign policy.





ITALY'S POLICY OF COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT: A "NATURAL VOCATION" FOR RHETORIC?¹

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Abstract:

After the second world war, the Italian economy was in poor conditions. During the 1950s, Italy received not only the Marshall Plan aid but also conspicuous loans from the World Bank. This situation and the scant attention paid by the public regarding issues of Third World development made the transition very difficult from the condition of recipient to that of a donor country. Moreover, Italy's attitude was influenced by the self-perception that Italian colonialism had provided many benefits to the colonies. It wasn't until the 1960s, to enhance her image, Italy approved a number of measures about technical assistance and better conditions for credit on exports, following the UN resolution on the "decade of development" and international pressures, particularly from the USA. In 1970 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created an office to coordinate the work of co-operators, while funds allotted to the Third World remained well below the target of 1% of GNP indicated by UNCTAD in 1964. Public aid for development was concentrated in the Mediterranean basin and in Africa, and to a lesser extent to Latin America. In the period 1965-65, 93% of funds went to 10 countries (Yugoslavia, United Arab Republic, Somalia, Greece, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Brazil, Panama and Mexico). Somalia, a former colony, was a special case. The years 1979-1990 saw a tremendous increase in the amount of funds for cooperation (165%) and a change in their composition. This change resulted in more public funds and less private ones, more loans at favourable conditions and less technical assistance. This phase ended when judiciary inquiries on corruption in the public administration involved also the cooperation sector, which was discredited. By the end of the 1990s, after a drastic reduction of funds, Italian policy of cooperation was broadly in line with international parameters, both in objectives and methods.

Keywords: Third World, Developing Countries, Cooperation to Development.

¹ In an interview with the journalist Mario Salvatorelli for *La Stampa* (6 December 1972), the Minister of Foreign Affairs Giuseppe Medici stated that Italy had "a natural vocation to cooperate with Latin America and North Africa. [...] Our people – he added – acquired a great experience from the important economic and social transformations of the Mezzogiorno, and it increased its sensitivity for the grave problems of development". Cit. in IAI (1973), *L'Italia nella politica internazionale, 1972-73*, Massimo Bonanni (ed.), Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, p. 49. For the text of the interview see *La Stampa* on-line archive, <http://www.archiviolaStampa.it>. This paper is based, primarily, on the few historical studies on Italian development cooperation, on published sources and on a few and incomplete archival documents. Such a choice could seem illogical and contradictory, if it was not forced by the almost complete inaccessibility of the bulk of the documents held at the Historical Archive of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So, some parts of this paper could prove incomplete, especially those relating to the decision making process that accompanied the action of the various Foreign Affairs Ministries.

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**Resumen:**

Tras la Guerra la economía italiana estaba en un pobre estado; durante los años 50 Italia recibió no solo la ayuda del Plan Marshall sino también significativos préstamos del Banco Mundial. Esta situación y la escasa atención prestada por la opinión pública al tema del desarrollo del Tercer Mundo hizo muy difícil la transición desde la condición de país recipiente a la de país donante. Además la actitud de Italia se veía influida por su auto-percepción de que el colonialismo italiano había traído numerosos beneficios a las colonias. Solo con el inicio de la década de los 60, con el fin de reforzar su propia imagen, Italia aprobó una serie de medidas relativas a asistencia técnica y mejora de las condiciones para el acceso a créditos para la exportación, siguiendo la resolución de la ONU sobre la “década de desarrollo” y debido igualmente a las presiones internacionales, especialmente de los EEUU. Pero no fue hasta los años 70 cuando el Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores creó una oficina para coordinar el trabajo de los cooperantes, si bien los fondos destinados al Tercer Mundo seguían manteniéndose muy por debajo del objetivo del 1 % del PIB indicado por el UNCTAD en 1964. La ayuda pública al desarrollo se concentraba en la Cuenca mediterránea y en África, y en menor medida en Latino-América: en el periodo 1965-69, el 93 % de los fondos se destinaron a 10 países (Yugoslavia, la República Árabe Unida, Somalia, Grecia, Túnez, Etiopía, Nigeria, Brasil, Panamá y México). Somalia, una antigua colonia, representaba un caso especial. Los años 1979-90 fueron testigos de un fenomenal incremento de los fondos para cooperación (165%) y un cambio en su composición: más fondos públicos y menos fondos privados, más préstamos en condiciones favorables y menor asistencia técnica. Esta fase finalizó con las investigaciones sobre corrupción, pues la ayuda a la cooperación se vio igualmente afectada, lo cual llevó a su descrédito. Tras una drástica reducción de los fondos, al final de los años 90, la política de cooperación se situaba en términos generales en línea con los parámetros internacionales, tanto en objetivos como en métodos.

Palabras clave: Tercer Mundo, Países en Desarrollo, Cooperación al Desarrollo.

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1. Introduction

The question of Third World economic development first emerged as an international issue after the Second World War and, later stood out as a fundamental issue in North-South relations, coinciding with the accelerating decolonization process³.

During the Sixties, pressed by the United States on one side, and by the Less Developed Countries (LDCs) quests for economic growth on the other, Western countries and the major international organizations were forced to cope with this problem⁴. After attaining political independence, the expectations for economic growth on the part of the emerging countries represented, for the international community, not only a political and ideological challenge in the cold war context, but also an economic one, as LDCs began to call into question the very distribution of wealth at the international level.

For political and strategic reasons, it was in the USA that the first deep reflection began on the need to intervene from abroad to stimulate the economic growth of the newly independent countries⁵. The major Western European countries as well couldn't avoid facing this matter, either because they needed to cope with the end of their empires and to adapt their foreign policy to a post-colonial international environment (as in the cases of France and Great Britain)⁶, or because of particular international and economic interests (as in the cases of the two German states)⁷, or for domestic reasons, as in the case, for example, of Norway. Different interests and aims combined in these first attempts to imagine and elaborate new development assistance policies: economic, strategic, political reasons or even "moral imperatives"⁸. Furthermore, the work initiated within the UNO at the beginning of the 1950s⁹, contributed to strengthen and spread the awareness of the need to help Third World countries and the idea that development cooperation policies had to become an integral part of the foreign policies of the Western governments.

³ On the emergence of the development question as an international issue see, among the others, Arndt, H.W. (1987): *Economic development. The History of an Idea*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press; Tarp, F. (ed.) (2000): *Foreign Aid and Development. Lessons Learnt and Directions for the Future*, London, Routledge; Jolly, R.; Emmerij, L.; Ghai, D.; Lapeyre, F. (2004): *UN Contribution to Development thinking and Practice*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press; Clark, R. F. (2005): *Victory Deferred. The War on Global Poverty, 1945-2003*, Lanham, University Press of America.

⁴ On Western European countries development policies see Tosi, L. and Tosone, L. (eds.) (2006): *Gli aiuti allo sviluppo nelle relazioni internazionali del secondo dopoguerra. Esperienze a confronto*, Padova, Cedam; Hoebink, P. and Stokke, O. (eds.) (2005): *Perspectives on European Development Co-operation. Policy and Performance of Individual Donor Countries and the EU*, London and New York, Routledge, and the monograph volume on development cooperation of the review *Contemporary European History*, vol. 12, no. 4 (2003).

⁵ On US foreign aid policy see Brissac-Féral, Claude (2001): *La politique américaine d'aide au développement: conflits entre le président et le congrès, 1947-1979*, Paris, L'Harmattan; Butterfield, S. H. (2004): *US Development Aid. An Historic First. Achievements and Failures in the XX Century*, Westport, Praeger; Tosone, Lorella (2008): *Aiuti allo sviluppo e guerra fredda. L'amministrazione Kenendy e l'Africa sub-sahariana*, Padova, Cedam.

⁶ Cumming, Gordon (2001): *Aid to Africa: French and British Policies from the Cold War to the New Millennium*, Aldershot, Ashgate; Morgan, D. J. (1980): *The Official History of Colonial Development*, 4 vol., London, Macmillan.

⁷ Schulz, Brigitte H. (1995): *Development Policy in the Cold War Era. The Two Germanies and Sub-Saharan Africa, 1960-1985*, Munster, Lit Verlag; Lorenzini, Sara (2003): *Due Germanie in Africa: la cooperazione allo sviluppo e la competizione per i mercati di materie prime e tecnologia*, Firenze, Polistampa.

⁸ Lumsdaine, David H. (1989): *Moral Vision in International Politics: the Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

⁹ See Emmerij et al., *op. cit.*; Toye, John and Toye, Richard (2003): *The UN and Global Political Economy, Trade, Finance and Development*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.



During the 1960s, development assistance policies went through a sort of institutionalization, both at the domestic level, with the establishment of foreign aid programs and agencies to manage them in many Western countries, and, at the international level, with the birth of various multilateral agencies and programs that dealt with economic development. In those years, new UN Specialized Agencies, programmes and funds were established as, for example, the World Food Programme (1963), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (1964), the UN Development Programme (1965), the UN Industrial Development Organization (1967), together with new regional financial institutes such as the African Development Bank (1964) and the Asian Development Bank (1966), two new branches of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (1956) and the International Development Association (1960), as soft-lending instruments; consortiums and coordinating groups were created, as the World Bank consortium for India and Pakistan and the OECD consortium for Turkey and Greece. The EEC development assistance programmes were extended and updated and the OECD Development Assistance Committee was established as a discussion forum and a coordination instrument of the foreign aid policies of the member states¹⁰.

2. Italian Development Policy in the 1950s and 1960s

Italy fit into that context, which undoubtedly unveiled an excessive optimism for the Western countries' ability to transfer to the LDCs their models for economic development, with a certain delay and reluctance, without having a clear idea of the role the foreign aid policy should play within its foreign policy, in general, and, in particular, within its relations with developing countries. In the post-war years, Italy had to face enormous economic problems, especially in its *Mezzogiorno*; during the 1950s, Rome was receiving not only Marshall Plan aid, but also substantial loans from the World Bank. So it accepted slowly and without conviction the need to become a donor country¹¹. The objective economic limits and the very low concern of the Italian public opinion for Third World development issues made it much more difficult for the political establishment, committed to post-war reconstruction, to imagine a foreign aid policy that would have meant a substantial drain of resources in favour of the developing world.

Thus, between the late 1950s and the early 1960s, while the development *discourse* was beginning to attract the attention of Western governments (also because of Moscow's new activism in the Third World and in favour of various national liberation movements¹²), a

¹⁰ See Shaw, J. D. (2001): *The UN World Food Programme and the Development of Food Aid*, New York, Palgrave; Holly, Daniel A. (1999): *L'ONUDI: l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour le Développement Industriel, 1967-1995*, Paris, L'Harmattan; United Nations (1985): *History of Unctad, 1964-1984*, New York, United Nations; Unctad (2004): *Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Development Policy: An Intellectual History of UNCTAD 1964-2004*, Geneva, United Nations; Staples, A.L.S. (2005): *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Have Saved the World, 1945-1965*, Kent, Kent State University Press; Kapur, D.; Lewis, J.P.; Webb, R. (1997): *The World Bank: Its First Half Century*, Washington, The Brookings Institution; Rubin, Seymour J. (1966): *The Conscience of the Rich Nations, The Development Assistance Committee and the Common Aid Effort*, New York, Harper and Row.

¹¹ Calandri, Elena, "The Last of the Donors: l'Italia e l'assistenza allo sviluppo", in Ballini, P. L.; Guerrieri, S. and Varsori, A. (eds.) (2006): *Le istituzioni repubblicane dal centrismo al centro-sinistra, 1953-1968*, Roma, Carocci, p. 227 and *Id.*, "Italy's Foreign Assistance Policy, 1959-1969", *Contemporary European History*, vol. 12, n. 4 (2003), pp. 513-514.

¹² Dannehl, C. R. (1995): *Politics, Trade and Development. Soviet Economic Aid to the Non-Communist Third World, 1955-1989*, Aldershot, Dartmouth; Rubinstein, Alvin Z. (1988): *Moscow's Third World Strategy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press; Fukuyama, Francis and Korbonski, Andrzej (eds.) (1987): *The Soviet Union and the Third World. The Last Three Decades*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.



development assistance policy did not actually exist in Italy. The sole referable activities were small programs of technical assistance and an export credit program; the latter represented the main item of the Italian economic activities abroad. Soft loans were actually nonexistent, while financial assistance in grant form was given only in exceptional cases and to countries with which Italy had strong historical ties, as Somalia and Libya. Rome included in its foreign aid budget even war reparations and debt rescheduling¹³. The legislation was inadequate, the appropriations were very low, Italian programs abroad responded to various demands and influences, and the various Ministries had different competences relative on them: the bulk of technical assistance programs was managed by various offices at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA); the Treasury controlled Italian contributions to international organizations; the Ministry of Education was responsible for the fellowships awarded to foreign students and for the contributions to the Universities of Asmara, Mogadishu and Nairobi¹⁴; the Ministry of Defense dealt with voluntary service in substitution of compulsory military service. Furthermore, the legislation distinguished very clearly technical assistance from financial assistance that was regulated by the laws relating to the export credits programs¹⁵.

Since the beginning of the 1960s, also urged by the passage of the UN General Assembly resolution on the Development Decade¹⁶, the Italian Parliament passed a series of laws on technical assistance activities abroad and to improve the export credit program, but they did not help to reduce the fragmentation of Italian foreign aid programs. In 1961, for example, the law 635 was passed, to extend to five years the state guarantees for the export of Italian goods and services¹⁷; in 1962, the first law was approved to allow bilateral technical cooperation with all Third World country (the preceding laws dealt only with Somalia); in 1967, the law 13 organically regulated financial cooperation; in 1966, the law 1033 allowed young men who wanted to serve as volunteers in Third World countries to delay or skip compulsory military service. But the law did not provide for the necessary funding or for the establishment of an agency to coordinate and train the volunteers; nothing comparable with the US Peace Corps or to the German volunteers programme (the MFA opened a volunteer office with some funding only in 1970)¹⁸.

Such unsuitability of the legislation on foreign aid obviously reflected a scarce commitment on the part of the political establishment over an issue which, during the 1960s, continued to remain substantially ignored also by domestic public opinion, and which found

¹³ Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, "Conclusioni del gruppo di lavoro sulle possibilità e modalità di assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo", 14 September 1961, *Archivio Centrale dello Stato [ACS], Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri – Comitato Interministeriale per la Ricostruzione [PCM-CIR]*, b. 148.

¹⁴ Isernia, Pierangelo (1995): *La cooperazione allo sviluppo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, p. 76.

¹⁵ The first law that regulated export credits, law n. 955, was passed in 1953 and it aimed to support and increase Italian exports, through the state guarantee to Italian firms, so that they could easily face foreigner competitors. MAE-DGAE, Uff. IV, *Telespresso* n. 44/17391, *Possibilità e limiti di una partecipazione dell'Italia ai piani multilaterali e bilaterali di cooperazione economica e tecnica in favore dei paesi sottosviluppati*, 02 October 1959, *ACS, PCM-CIR*, b. 148.

¹⁶ "A Programme for International Economic Cooperation", Resolution no.1710 (XVI), *United Nations Development Decade.*, (19 December 1961).

¹⁷ B. C., "L'assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo", *Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 25, n. 21 (1961), pp. 673-674.

¹⁸ Pedini, Mario: "L'assistenza italiana allo sviluppo", *Affari Esteri*, vol. 17, no. 68 (1985), pp. 512-513. During the Sixties, the Italian Parliament passed many other laws relating to development cooperation. Among them: law 157/61 on technical and financial assistance to Somalia for the years 1960 and 1961; law 1526/61 on multiyear technical assistance to Somalia; law 1376/67 on technical, cultural, economic and financial assistance to Somalia for the period 1967-1971; law 380/68 on technical cooperation; law 465/68 that regulated the activities of primary school teachers who served as volunteers in Third World countries, law 168/69, on international cooperation in the health field. Icepts (1989): *Guida all'aiuto pubblico italiano allo sviluppo*, Roma, Icepts, pp. 29-31.



its limits in the economic problems of the country. Moreover, the “strange Italian decolonization”¹⁹ has certainly contributed to stress and widen the limits of Italian development cooperation policy: the delay with which Italy confronted itself with its own colonial past, and the peculiar way in which the Italian political establishment portrayed the successes of its presence in Africa. Representing Italians as the only good colonialists²⁰ and so reiterating the myth of “*brava gente*” (good people) has certainly contributed to let the Italian governments and public opinion feel exempt from committing seriously to Third World economic development²¹.

All this caused the uncertainties of the Parliament, that worked “in an almost unknown field”²², and with a complete lack of a comprehensive political vision on aid. In fact, Italian development assistance policy till the 1980s did not find its role within the foreign policy of the country; it was not conceived as a real and useful foreign policy instrument and did not represent a sort of special channel through which Italy could build the so often recalled “mediation” between the North and the South of the world, an important aim of Italian foreign policy, at least in the statements of Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs or representatives to the major international organizations²³.

So, Italy long expressed a foreign aid policy characterized by some important differences if compared with the choices of the other Western countries and with what the USA was trying to make them accept with regard to the volume and forms of aid. First, the volume of the resources that Italy transferred to LDCs was always below the 1% GNP target, established in 1964 at the first Unctad meeting²⁴. Second, Italian fluxes were never steadfast,

¹⁹ “During the Fifties and Sixties a discussion on the national colonial past did not develop, because of that strange Italian decolonization. The Empire had been small, it was lost during the war, the interests in it were numerous but often limited [...] The lack of a wide public debate, that in other countries decolonization made urgent, did not allow the Italian public opinion to discuss its very involvement in the colonial past of the country. So it happened that, with the exception of a few experts and critics, Italian colonial past was not “researched” within the country. As a result, Italians cleared themselves, forgot their past, transfigured it or, however, still have a confused and weak knowledge about it”. Labanca, Nicola (2002): *Oltremare. Storia dell’espansione coloniale italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, p. 448.

²⁰ In 1966, Mario Pedini (then member of the House of Representatives Commission on Foreign Affairs) after returning from a mission in Ethiopia, stated: “We found Ethiopia in full development. The impetus and activism left by the Italian presence there – which, according to Ethiopians’ evaluations too, has liquidated a past in some respects medieval – has represented a useful foundation to lead the country to a deeper awareness, namely to prepare it for all the initiatives needed to pass from a subsistence economy to a development one”. “La missione di Pedini in Etiopia. Auspicabili serie iniziative per l’assistenza tecnica e finanziaria”, *Relazioni Internazionali*, vol. 30, no. 8 (1966), p. 194.

²¹ On Italian memory of colonialism see Del Boca, Angelo (2005): *Italiani, brava gente? Un mito duro a morire*, Vicenza, Neri Pozza; *Id.* (1992): *L’Africa nella coscienza degli italiani: miti, memorie, errori, sconfitte*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

²² D’Angelo, Massimo, “Il processo di maturazione dei concetti e dei principi guida della cooperazione bilaterale italiana negli anni Settanta”, in Alessandrini, Sergio (ed.) (1983), *La politica italiana di cooperazione allo sviluppo*, Milano, Giuffrè, p. 15.

²³ See, for example, the statements delivered by Italian politicians and representatives at the United Nations General Assembly, collected in Tosi, Luciano (ed.) (2010): *Sulla scena del mondo. L’Italia all’Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite, 1955-2009*, Napoli, Editoriale Scientifica.

²⁴ 1966 and 1969 were the sole years in which the total resources given to LDCs exceeded 1% of GNP. This result was “the effect of a series of occasional circumstances and not a target reached as the consequence of a planned and coordinated political action”. “Linee direttrici per una politica italiana di assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo”, *Ministero degli Affari Esteri [MAE], Direzione Generale Affari Economici [DGAE], Ufficio VIII*, (October 1970), p. 38. See also Monaldi, Virgilio: “The Italian Financial Contribution to LDC, 1958-68”, *Lo Spettatore Internazionale*, vol. 5, no. 3-4 (1970); “La Tavola rotonda della SIOI e dell’ISPI. La politica degli aiuti allo sviluppo”, *Relazioni internazionali*, vol. 30, n. 11 (1966), p. 279. In 1960, the UN General Assembly expressed the wish that “the flow of international assistance and capital should be increase substantially as to



but tended to increase or diminish abruptly and this further highlights the episodic dimension of Italian development cooperation policy. Other peculiarities regarded the form of Italian aid: Italian private flows always exceeded public aid, with percentages up to 70%, so relevant that they could determine substantial variations in the total fluxes²⁵. While in the decade 1956-1965 the growth of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for Dac countries was much higher than the growth of private flows, in the case of Italian aid this trend was reversed²⁶. Private aid was made up of direct investments and, 60% by export credits, that long represented the most important and dynamic part of this item²⁷. As far as Oda was concerned, till the end of the 1960s, three quarters of aid was bilateral and only 28% in grant form (technical assistance and war reparations); this percentage tended to diminish during the decade²⁸. The loans were given most of all for debt rescheduling operations (as in the cases of Yugoslavia, Egypt, Ghana and Tunisia), within the Dac consortium for Turkey or to carry out development programs or infrastructural works: in the latter case, it was most of all tied aid²⁹. So, the loans have long performed the same function as export credits, supporting Italian firms abroad and the exports demand³⁰. Especially in Latin America, public intervention often followed the initiative of private and state firms, that worked to search new markets and raw material sources (as in the cases of Eni and Iri).

As far as the geographical distribution of Italian aid was concerned, it had a strong concentration in a few countries, especially in the mediterranean basin, Africa and Latin America. For example, in the years 1965-1969 three countries (Yugoslavia, UAR and Somalia) absorbed 70% of the total bilateral fluxes; if the other seven countries are added (Greece, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Brazil, Panama and Mexico) the result is that 93% of the total aid was concentrated in ten countries. This data needs to be explained in light of the fact that the most important component of the bilateral aid was represented by debt reschedule operations: for these reasons, aid seemed to concentrate in areas in which difficulties for

reach, as soon as possible, approximately 1% of the combined national incomes of the economically advanced countries” (Resolution n. 1522 (15), 15 December 1960). In 1964, Unctad accepted this target, recommending that it should apply to individual donor countries, taking into account, however the “special position of certain countries which are net importers of capital” (Unctad Recommendation A/IV.2). On 1% target see “Development co-operation, 1999 Report”, *The DAC Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2000), pp. 45-46 and Clemens, Michael A.; Moss, Todd J.: “Ghost of 0.7%: Origins and Relevance of The International Aid Target”, Center for Global Development, *Working Paper*, no. 68 (September 2005), at www.cgdev.org/files/3822_file_WP68.pdf. *Is worth noting that, although this target was confirmed in subsequent Unctad and Dac recommendations, none of the Dac countries has never met it. It was, substantially, rather a moral obligation than a legal one, that however represented a sort of text of the political will of the donors.*

²⁵ In the period 1956-71, only in the years 1957, 1959 and 1967 the volume of public aid exceeded private fluxes. Isernia, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

²⁶ MAE, “Linee direttrici...”, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁷ Since the middle of the 1950s, export credits had a great expansion for various reasons, among them the LDCs need to import capital goods for their industrialization (they could be obtained more easily and rapidly than financial aid) and the exceeding production of capital goods in industrialized countries. Very soon Western government understood the importance of export credits as an instrument to increase their trade and for the geographical diversification of their investments. In Italy, the engineering industry absorbed about 90% of the export credits funds. Costa, Sergio: “Gli aiuti dell’Italia al Terzo Mondo”, *Problemi del socialismo*, vol. 15, no. 16-17 (1973), p. 633.

²⁸ This trend was caused by the progressive reduction of the volume of the war reparations to Ethiopia, Yugoslavia and Egypt. Reparations share on the total volume of grants accounted for 25% in the period 1966-1968. Once this item was eliminated, the percentage of the grants became almost irrelevant.

²⁹ Monaldi, *op.cit.* In the years 1954-71, untied loans represented only 0.3% of the total loans. Costa, *op. cit.*, p. 626.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 630; Monaldi, *op. cit.*



credit repayments had emerged³¹. Also the aid concentration was not the result of a choice to reach a specific aim, but the consequence of a policy that followed contingent needs. The concentration of private aid in the mediterranean basin and in a few Latin American and Asian countries can be explained by the fact that these kinds of fluxes tended to go to countries that promised greater development and greater productive investments.

In the general framework of Italian development cooperation, Somalia represented a special case, both for the continuity of historical relations and for the quality and volume of aid that Rome channelled to the country. Notwithstanding the divergent evaluations of Italian activities during the years of the Trusteeship Administration, Italy continued to be, after independence, one of the main donors of the country. In 1960, Somalia was one of the poorest countries in the world and, according to a 1957 World Bank report, it would have had to keep on receiving aid for at least twenty years³². Italy granted Somalia financial assistance, with substantial contributions to the Somali budget; technical assistance, with the participation to development plans and the dispatch of experts in the health, education, public administration and justice fields; with contributions to support the price of bananas (25 billion lire from 1961 to 1969)³³.

After independence, Italy signed a series of treaties with Somalia that regarded technical, financial and commercial cooperation³⁴. After the 1969 revolution, the new Somali government asked for the continuation of Italian aid and in the 1971 law for technical assistance special provisions for Somalia were included, that guaranteed interventions until 1974; after that date, the country remained one of the main recipients of Italian aid, if per-capita fluxes are counted³⁵.

Notwithstanding the fact that Italian efforts in Somalia were not greatly appreciated at the international level and that the US tried to urge Rome to increase its aid, from 1960 onwards Somalia long remained the main African recipient of Italian bilateral aid³⁶.

Except for Somalia, Italian development cooperation policy was rather a function of the Atlantic and neo-Atlantic policy of the country, than the result of a deep understanding of the need to respond to the requests of the newly independent countries. Italy began its foreign

³¹ MAE, "Linee direttrici...", *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

³² International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (1957): *The Economy of the Trust Territory of Somaliland*, Washington, DC, IBRD, cit. in Guelfi, Carlo (ed.) (1981): *La cooperazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo*, part 2: *La politica dell'Italia*, Roma, Senato della Repubblica, p. xi.

³³ During the 1950s and 1960s the export of Somali bananas to Italy represented 70% of the total Somali exports. "Nota sommaria sull'aiuto dell'Italia alla Somalia nel settore bananiero", s.d. (but 1961), *Ministero delle Finanze, Gabinetto del Ministro*, ACS, PCM-CIR, b. 148 and Ministero del Commercio con l'Estero – Ice (1967): *Somalia*, Roma, Ice, pp. 97-98. See also Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei Deputati, Relazione della III Commissione Permanente (Vedovato) on the bill "Assistenza tecnico-militare alla Somalia e al Ghana per l'organizzazione delle Forze Armate, della Polizia e della Guardia di Finanza", *IV Legislatura, Documenti, Disegni di legge e relazioni*, pp. 1-5.

³⁴ Guelfi, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. xiv-xv. See also Ercolessi, Maria Cristina, "L'amico della Somalia", *Politica ed economia*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1991), p. 53; Id., "Le strategie della cooperazione italiana in Africa dagli anni Sessanta a oggi", *Africa e Mediterraneo*, vol. 5., no. 1 (1996), pp. 27-29.

³⁶ It is worth noting that US disappointment with Italian efforts in Somalia was rather the result of Rome's reluctance to give aid in the forms and quantities demanded by Washington than of the real evaluation of the resources transferred to Mogadishu. Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations strategy regarding Somali aid was to leave to their allies, Italy and Great Britain, the task to respond to the Somali requests for economic and military aid. This choice pursued specific objectives: it allowed the Western bloc to continue to maintain a certain influence in the Horn of Africa, without jeopardizing Washington relations with its major ally in the area, Ethiopia. Tosone, "Aiuti allo sviluppo e guerra fredda...", *op. cit.*, pp. 199-224.



aid policy at the beginning of the 1960s, under international pressure, especially of the US, because it believed that aid could contribute to improve the Italian image and position within the Atlantic Alliance and to create a favourable environment for the birth of the first centre-left government³⁷. In the following period, Italian aid to Third World countries seemed to represent an effort by Italy to keep up with its allies' policies and to persuade them of the role that Italy could play on the international scene.

This attitude inevitably created many difficulties for Italy, both in its relations with the USA and within the various multilateral forums in which the problem was discussed and analyzed, especially within the OECD Development Assistance Committee (Dac). The Dac was established in 1960, on initiative of the US, aiming at directing their European allies towards real burden sharing in the foreign aid field: if the defense of the Free World had to win "the hearts and minds" of the third world people, and if the bipolar confrontation was becoming not only a military one, but a confrontation over two development models, the foreign aid issue did not concern only the US foreign economic policy, but also Atlantic Alliance defense problems. According to Washington, the Dac had to represent a discussion and coordination forum for the development assistance policies of the member states. Furthermore, the US intended to transfer to their allies, through the DAC, their foreign aid "philosophy", with a sort of internationalization of their own foreign assistance policy, which was being redefined in those years³⁸.

Since the end of the Fifties, actually, Washington had been putting pressure on Western European countries to make them commit more strongly in the foreign aid field. The pressures increased with the Kennedy Administration that considered development cooperation as a very important foreign policy instrument in the cold war: US quests to their allies multiplied, especially towards Germany and Italy that were experiencing a strong economic growth, with active balance of payments³⁹.

Since the early 1960s, at the DAC forum, Italy was forced to cope with the limits of its development assistance policy and with the pressures and the criticism of its allies. The discussions at the Dac, in the first years of its activity, focused on questions relating to the volume and the forms of aid the member states should deliver to the LDCs, and to the very definition of aid, namely what could be considered public development aid and which were the characteristics to make it effective⁴⁰. The question related to the quantity and quality of

³⁷ Calandri, Elena: "L'Italia e l'assistenza allo sviluppo dal neatlantismo alla Conferenza di Cancún", in Romero, Federico and Varsori, Antonio (eds.) (2005): *Nazione, interdipendenza, integrazione. Le relazioni internazionali dell'Italia (1917-1989)*, Roma, Carocci, p. 254. In a letter to Amintore Fanfani to urge a greater Italian commitment in foreign aid, Antonio Segni expressed arguments that followed US positions: "In general, there is the belief that an effective Atlantic policy of anti-communism defense cannot be implemented without developing, at the same time, a policy of assistance to that "Third World" that will shortly affect the delicate balance of the international relations. As much spread is the idea that our country has not yet contributed to this important sector of the Western policy with an effort adequate to its capabilities and traditions". "Letter, Segni to Fanfani", 23 March 1962, ACS, *Consigliere diplomatico*, b. 37, f. *assistenza ai paesi sottosviluppati*, p. 1.

³⁸ Tosone, "Aiuti allo sviluppo e guerra fredda...", *op. cit.*, pp. 120-135.

³⁹ The arguments were well-known: the Sino-Soviet economic offensive, that was threatening the Free World, had to be faced on the development field. US concern on this "offensive", considered in Paris and London not so dangerous, in Italy were received with scarce apprehension. "Telegramma n. 10-336, 5 luglio 1963, e telesspresso n. 10-14/315, 20 giugno 1963, entrambi in ACS, *Consigliere diplomatico*, b. 37, f. *paesi sottosviluppati*.

⁴⁰ See, for example, "Telesspresso 3953, Rappresentanza italiana presso l'Ocse", 22 December 1964, DAC – Gruppo di lavoro sul volume dell'assistenza.; Ocse-Dac, *Working Party on Assistance Requirements. Establishment of an Expert Group on the Uses of analytical Techniques*, Doc. DAC/BA (64)4, December 30 1964; USAID, "Conclusions of the AID Study of Development Policies and Assistance Requirements", s.d., all in MBPE-Gab., b. 32, f. 145.



aid, and was discussed on the basis of a series of American proposals that resulted in a definition of official development aid, which the European countries, especially Italy, found hard to accept⁴¹. In 1965, during the high level Dac meeting, the member states approved a recommendation in which they committed to reach, by 1968, the target of 70% of the volume of public aid in grants or to transfer 82% of their aid as grants or soft loans (with an interest rate not higher than 3%, for at least 25 years and with a grace period of at least 7 years)⁴². Such a strict definition of aid (that eliminated or cut down important items of Italian aid, as war reparations, export credits and debt rescheduling) was accepted by Rome with reserve, but urged the LDCs, within the second Unctad meeting in New Delhi in 1968, to ask for a further specification of the donors' policies: so some countries, including Italy⁴³, accepted to commit to transfer to the LDCs, in the framework of 1% of the GNP target, 0.75% in Official Development Assistance – 80% of which in grant form – by the year 1972.

As the concept of aid was being more and more specified, Rome found greater difficulty in defending its positions and in participating in a “developing policy coordinated with richer and more experienced partners”, with more resources to deliver and more interests to defend⁴⁴. During the high level Dac meetings and on the occasion of the annual review of the development policies of the member states, Rome, most of all, had to defend itself from criticism, instead of illustrating its foreign aid program. In fact, the Dac underlined the great limits of the Italian aid policy, not only as far as volume was concerned, but also in relation to the quality and the conditions of the assistance⁴⁵. The massive use of export credits was criticized (since they aimed at gaining commercial advantages, they could not be considered as a form of development aid)⁴⁶, as also the excessively strict conditions of the loans, the fact that Italian aid was most of all private aid, that it had a low percentage of liberality, that it was too tied to the purchase of Italian goods and services. Furthermore, the DAC urged Italy to organize its development policy in a more organic way, both through the creation of an agency to plan and implement the programs and through the planning of the allocations in the national budget⁴⁷. Italy responded to the criticism with arguments that long remained the

⁴¹ “United States Memorandum on Study of Experts on Terms of Development Assistance”, June 15, 1961 and “United States Memorandum on the Common Aid Effort”, June 16 1961, attached to: PCM – CIR, “Appunto per S.E. il ministro del Bilancio”, 3 July 1961, *Programmi per i paesi sottosviluppati. Prossima sessione del DAC*, ACS, PCM-CIR, b. 148.

⁴² MAE, “Linee direttrici...”, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁴³ By 1970, Italy did not comply with the recommendations regarding aid conditions approved by Dac in 1965. To do that would have meant for Rome to raise its aid from 100 to 500-600 billion lire, with an annual increase by 40 billion. “This amount is not so high – a MAE report commented– if we consider that in the last period the Defense budget [...] has increased by 50 billion per year”. MAE, DGAE – Uff. RSP (1970): *Per una politica economica nazionale verso i paesi in via di sviluppo*, Roma, MAE, 1970, p. ii.

⁴⁴ Calandri, “L’Italia e il Development Assistance Committee (1958-1968). Preistoria dell’aiuto pubblico allo sviluppo”, in Tosi et al. (eds.), “Gli aiuti allo sviluppo nelle relazioni internazionali...”, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Comité d’aide au développement (1965): *Examen annuel de l’aide*, Paris, 25 mai 1965, pp. 2-13, ACS, *Ministero del Bilancio e della Programmazione Economica, Gabinetto*, [MBPE-Gab.], b. 30, f. 137.

⁴⁶ Notwithstanding the fact that export credits were constantly criticized, it is worth noting that even in this field Italian programs were modest, well below those of its allies, even in the areas of historical interest for the country. As a supplier of capital goods with delayed payments, Italy ranked after not only the US, but also Great Britain and Germany and sometimes even France and Netherlands. The same applied in the field of private investments: Italy often ranked last. The worst performance was in Sub-Saharan Africa, where Italian presence was “far from corresponding to our possibilities and to the demands addressed to us”. “Letter, Segni to Fanfani”, 23 March 1962, ACS, *Consigliere diplomatico*, b. 37, f. *assistenza ai paesi sottosviluppati*, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁷ See, for example, “telegramma n. 209/205, Ortona to MAE”, 31 May 1965, MBPE-Gab, b. 41, f. 179; “Esame al Dac della politica italiana verso i paesi in via di sviluppo”, Appunto, 4 June 1964, MAE-DGAE, att. no. 2 to telesspresso n. 48/11661/C, MAE to PCM, *Esame annuale dell’Italia al DAC*, 12 June 1964, MBPE-Gab., b. 42, f. 182.



same⁴⁸: it was impossible to fix quotas for the contribution of every state on the basis of calculations that did not consider the structure of the economies of the different donor countries; the Dac had to consider the fact that the Italian economy was much weaker than others, that Italy had very serious underdevelopment problems in the South of the country, that the country needed resources for its own modernization, that the contribution owed by every member state should be calculated on the basis of the per-capita national income⁴⁹. Referring to the 1960 UN General Assembly Resolution n. 1522⁵⁰, Italy proposed that the 1% target had to refer to the cumulative GNP of the Dac members, and that each country's quota had to be fixed taking into account the particular structure of the Italian economy⁵¹. Moreover, Italian representatives suggested to consider not only the aid directly delivered, but also the trade policies implemented by industrialized states towards the LDCs that, favouring third World exports, could have a greater effect on their economic development⁵². Till the middle of the 1960s, what was submitted to the Dac for its annual review was actually "the result of an a posteriori patchwork of a series of activities implemented by different Ministries in their ordinary institutional activity"⁵³.

It is interesting to notice that, in the 1950s and 1960s, the most common argument used by Italian representatives to the UN General Assembly to strengthen the image of the country as a friend of the Third World was to represent Italy as a country that still had underdevelopment problems; for this reason Italy was perfectly able to understand, almost to feel emphatically, the difficulties and suffering of the emerging peoples. For example, Giuseppe Pella, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in 1957 declared:

Although my country has achieved a considerable degree of economic development and industrialization [...] it still has its own urgent development problems in the economically backward areas of the south. We have therefore learned by experience how necessary and urgent and also how difficult it is to break the vicious circle of

⁴⁸ "Assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo. Memorandum dell'Italia all'Ocse sugli aiuti concessi e sulla politica di assistenza ai Paesi in via di sviluppo", 15 March 1964, p. 9-14, ACS, MBPE-Gab., b. 30, f. 137; , Oecd – Dac, *Review of Italy*, (31 May 1965), pp. 4-5, MBPE-Gab., b. 41, f. 175; "Telespresso n. 3506, Rappresentanza italiana presso l'Ocse a MAE", 13 November 1965, *DAC: esame assistenza fornita dall'Italia*, , MBPE-Gab., b. 41, f. 179; "Memorandum dell'Italia all'Ocse sugli aiuti concessi e sulla politica di assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo nel 1966. Risposta italiana per l'esame annuale 1967", s.d., pp. 1-5, ACS, MBPE-Gab., b. 41, f. 179.

⁴⁹ See MAE, DGAE, "Politica di assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo" Documento di lavoro, 4 luglio 1961; MAE-DGAE, Uff. I, "Telespresso n. 13656, Riunione interministeriale in vista della V Sessione del DAG", 23 June 1961 both in ACS, PCM-CIR, b. 148.

⁵⁰ "Accelerated flow of capital and technical assistance to the developing countries", Resolution n. 1522 (XV), 15 December 1960

⁵¹ A Minister of Foreign Affairs working paper states: "The richer country should deliver aid respecting the principle of a progressive rate. Normally, in fact, a certain level of assistance as a percentage of GNP represents for a poorer country a greater onus than for a richer one. It is necessary to affirm strongly this principle in the international forums; furthermore, the thesis must be accepted that the 1% target should be referred to the cumulative income of the donor countries. [...] If the Dac review on the volume of assistance took into account the principle of a progressive rate, the result would be that Italy is unfulfilling, but in equal measure than richer countries". MAE, "Per una politica economica nazionale...", *op. cit.*, pp. ii-iii.

⁵² The 1964 report for the Dac annual review of Italian development policy, for example, states: "In 1963 Italy contributed to determine an improvement of the balances of payments of the developing countries [...]. The Italian trade deficit towards them increased from 250 million dollars in 1962 to 443 million dollars in 1963. Such a growing deficit, that provides the LDCs with a flow of convertible currency, without doubt represents a constructive form of aid to developing countries growth". "Assistenza ai paesi in via di sviluppo. Memorandum dell'Italia all'Ocse sugli aiuti concessi e sulla politica di assistenza ai Paesi in via di sviluppo", 15 March 1964, p. 9-14, ACS, MBPE-Gab., b. 30, f. 137.

⁵³ Ipalmo: "Un'Agenzia italiana per la cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo", Roma, Ipalmo, cit. in Guelfi, *op. cit.*, p. LVII.



stagnation and poverty in order to raise living standards and improve the lot of mankind⁵⁴.

Attilio Piccioni, in 1958:

In the same way as we now care for poverty and unemployment on the domestic level, we cannot remain indifferent to certain elementary needs on the international level. [...] Italy is certainly not a rich country and therefore, owing to the magnitude of similar problems with which we are coping in our own territory, our contribution will not reach exceptionally large figures. However, I can assure you that we shall accomplish a considerable effort and that our contribution to this cause, which we so fully understand, will not be a purely symbolic one⁵⁵.

Still Piccioni, in 1962, talking about underdevelopment and the low industrialization level of the emerging countries, stated that it was “an historical phase from which my own country has only recently emerged”⁵⁶. Such statements were so frequent to urge a *Herald Tribune* journalist, Claire Sterling, to coin the word “over-underdeveloped” to define the Italian society and economy, exactly because Italy often tended to represent itself, in the international forums, as the first of the least developed countries, and the last of the industrialized ones⁵⁷. This attitude had a twofold objective: on the one side, to show goodwill towards Third World countries and to establish a sort of ideal and rhetoric friendship with them; on the other, it was another means to remind the allies of the fact that Italy could not put great resources into its foreign aid policy, because it had to cope with its domestic economic problems. Such an attitude became more and more difficult to defend, as Italy was gradually joining the club of the most industrialized countries and especially when, not without some insistence, the country was admitted to the G7 in 1975.

Pressures for greater efforts in the foreign aid field came not only from the Dac, but also from other international organizations, such as the UN Specialized Agencies and Unctad. In 1971, also the Pearson report⁵⁸, commissioned by the World Bank, referred to Italy, maintaining that Rome had to strongly increase the public aid quota of its total aid, to eliminate the bureaucratic obstacles and delays in the appropriations, establish a better coordination mechanism of the actions of the various ministries that dealt with technical assistance and reduce the volume of the export credits and of tied aid. Rome reacted to the criticism expressing only general evaluations of the Pearson report, because these recommendations would have had serious economic implications: to comply with them would have meant, for Italy, an increase of the aid appropriations from 168 to 788 million lire (with a stable GNP)⁵⁹.

⁵⁴ Tosi, “Sulla scena del mondo...”, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁵⁷ Cit. in Costa, *op. cit.*, p. 622.

⁵⁸ Commission on International Development (1969): *Partnership in Development*, Lester B. Pearson (chairman), New York, Praeger.

⁵⁹ “La cooperazione economica multilaterale”, *L'Italia nella politica internazionale*, vol. 1, no. 4 (October-December 1969), p. 70.



So, it was in the multilateral forums that gradually the ambitions of Italian foreign aid policies emerged, which the weakness of the economy and the indifference of the establishment did not allow to be coherent with.

3. The Seventies

Since the second half of the Sixties gradually there began to emerge a growing attention to the issues of decolonization and Third World underdevelopment on the part of a few sectors of Italian public opinion. Catholic associations, for example, began to express third-world orientations, under the lead of the Council renewal and of the encyclicals *Mater et Magistra* (1961), *Pacem in Terris* (1963) and *Populorum Progressio* (1967) that focused on the international distribution of wealth and on the emergence of a North-South confrontation⁶⁰. Even the growing attention of the Italian Communist Party for the decolonization process and the support given by the PCI to some African national liberation movements⁶¹ contributed to the emergence of a greater understanding of the underdevelopment and cooperation issues that represented a further field of convergence of the Italian political forces interests during the 1970s.

Urged by these demands, and under the pressure of the activities of some research centres such as SIOI and ISPI, and aware of the fact that the country could not continue to ignore the requests of its allies, the Minister of Foreign Affairs began the first organic and deep discussion on the Italian development cooperation policy⁶². In November 1966, the Foreign Affairs undersecretary, Mario Zagari, illustrated at the Commission on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies the possible contribution that Italy could give to Western efforts in the Third World. His report⁶³ contained the first articulated analysis of the economic conditions of the emerging countries and dealt, though superficially, also with the problems of international trade and debt⁶⁴: for the first time, he talked about a “global and long-term vision both of the problem of economic development and of the therapies”⁶⁵.

Illustrating the reasons that had to convince Italy of greater commitment in the Third World, Zagari focused, on one side, on Italian interests in stimulating the expansion of international trade through foreign aid⁶⁶, and, on the other, on the strict relation between

⁶⁰ Borruso, Paolo: “L’Italia fra cooperazione e terzomondismo negli anni Sessanta e Settanta”, in Tosi et al. (eds.), “Gli aiuti allo sviluppo...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-214 e Tosi, Luciano, “La cooperazione allo sviluppo dalla *Pacem in Terris* alla *Populorum Progressio*”, in Giovagnoli, Agostino (ed.) (2003): *Pacem in Terris. Tra azione diplomatica e guerra fredda*, Milano, Guerini e Associati, pp. 147-167.

⁶¹ Borruso, Paolo (2009): *Il PCI e l’Africa indipendente. Apogeo e crisi di un’utopia socialista (1956-1989)*, Milano, Le Monnier.

⁶² Calandri, “The Last of the Donors...”, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

⁶³ Relazione del Sottosegretario Zagari alla Commissione Esteri della Camera dei Deputati, *Politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo*, 9 November 1966, ACS, Carte Moro, b. 92, f. “paesi sottosviluppati, aiuti, 1965-66”.

⁶⁴ “As a whole, less developed countries must set aside more than 10% of their export income for debt service and this is a very high percentage. If we consider the total amount of interests on debt, the amortization and the dividends, which amount to six billion dollars per year, the LDCs actually transfer abroad almost the half of the aid they receive. If the existing trend continues, it is possible to foresee that in 15 years the flux of the repayments will match the aid received by Third World countries”. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9

⁶⁶ “A redefinition of the LDCs export trade is in the interest of Italy, that can satisfy their demand competing with the other industrialized countries, while it cannot compete with them on the volume and conditions of aid”. *Ibid.*, p. 12.



economic development and strengthening of peace⁶⁷. At the centre of his analysis there was the idea that “ideological differences no longer represented the only line of division for the people, because the more recent international events had clearly and coherently shown that the most dangerous controversies could be referable, directly or indirectly, to the different level of economic development of their protagonists”⁶⁸.

Zagari’s proposals for a new Italian development cooperation policy called for an increase of multilateral contributions and the reorganization of the institutional structures that dealt with it, so that foreign aid policy could be included in a more comprehensive political and economic framework, under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To this end he proposed, on one hand, a better coordination of the technical assistance activities (in Italy they were carried out by only three officials at the Minister of Foreign Affairs, while Great Britain, for example, had established a Minister to this end in 1960)⁶⁹; on the other hand, he proposed an increase of allocations for technical assistance programs and their provision in the five-years national economic plan. Finally, taking into account also the criticism regarding Italian aid performance, Zagari proposed an improvement of the loans conditions⁷⁰.

In general, Zagari’s analysis drew attention to the delay in Italian consideration of development aid. The link between technical assistance, development and international stability had been illustrated at the beginning of the development assistance debate, in 1949, by the US President Harry Truman, but almost two decades of international efforts and disappointing results (especially as regards the distribution of wealth), had already disproved the validity of this approach. Furthermore, we must underline that in his voluminous report, together with innovative proposals and the request for greater appropriations, Zagari once again presented the issue of the “exceptionality” of the Italian position and the objective limits within which its action was compelled:

A worrying trend has recently emerged which tends to consider all industrialized countries on the same level, as if their contributive possibilities were the same. [...]. This is not true: even the industrialized countries club is a gathering of heterogeneous entities, with different financial potentialities and different economic and social structures. [...] The ability of each donor country to contribute to the common effort cannot be based on an only element, namely its national income, but on many other factors, first of all, the level of the per-capita income and, as far as long-term loans are concerned, the real availability of the single national capital markets⁷¹.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ “Discussione delle comunicazioni del Sottosegretario di Stato per gli Affari Esteri sulla politica di aiuto ai paesi in via di sviluppo”, 20 October 1966, *Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei Deputati, Bollettino delle giunte e delle commissioni parlamentari, Affari Esteri* (III), p. 5.

⁷⁰ In 1965, for example, the maturity period for the loans given by Dac members was, on average, 22.2 years, 28 years for the US, and 7.3 years for Italian loans; the interest rate applied to the loans by Dac member was, on average, 3.6%, while Italian interest rate was 4.2%. Zagari, “Politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo...”, *op. cit.*, p. 9, ACS, *Carte Moro*, b. 92, f. “Paesi sottosviluppati-aiuti, 1965-66”.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.



Together with general statements, echoing Kennedy⁷², on the need to improve the living standards of Third World people as the only way to pursue peace, Zagari highlighted the economic and commercial interests that Italy had in implementing a more effective and credible foreign aid policy.

Such proposals were undoubtedly too little for the LDCs, whose analysis on the causes and the cures of underdevelopment was more and more articulated and whose demands were becoming increasingly radical. However, it is important to underline that the debate that started in Italy from the second half of the 1960s onwards represented the first public debate on the foundations, the instruments and the aims of Italian development cooperation policy.

This debate was stimulated also by the discussions of the end of the 1960s, especially at the UN and at the Dac, on the occasion of the second Unctad meeting in New Delhi in 1968 and of the launch of the Second Development Decade. These discussions provided the Italian government with the opportunity to clarify, in Parliament, the country's positions on these issues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the Italian government was working to outline "a development strategy at world level", founded on a few fundamental elements: long-term policies, to cope with a problem that had to be faced "with a global vision of its economic, political, cultural, technical and scientific aspects"; common action by Western and Eastern bloc countries; trade expansion at the international level; the establishment of a generalized system of preferences for tropical goods; stabilization of raw materials prices; establishment of a system to finance development cooperation, that could take into account of the debt level of each recipient; strengthening of the multilateral channels⁷³.

These were very progressive positions, both because they met the requests that the G-77 had expressed in the Charter of Algiers regarding international trade rules, and because they gave indications pointing towards overcoming East-West confrontation even on the development cooperation issue, actually acknowledging the emergence at the international level of a different division, that could become as deep and dangerous as the cold war.

These positions would be confirmed and reinforced in the years when Aldo Moro became Minister of Foreign Affairs (1969-1974, with the brief intervals of Medici and Nenni). They were set in fact in the more comprehensive framework of Italian foreign policy between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s that tried to interpret *détente* as the opportunity to overcome the two bloc divisions and as the possibility to widen the occasions of multilateral cooperation. The focus on the latter was part of the so called "global strategy for peace", explained by Aldo Moro in his statement at the UN General Assembly of October 1969⁷⁴: to eliminate the deep roots of conflicts, disarmament was not enough. Governments had to focus on social and economic gaps that existed within the international community, giving the UN a central role and strengthening the Organization's activities⁷⁵. In this context, development cooperation could become also another field of cooperation between the two blocs, at the international level, and between the government and the Communist Party, at the domestic level.

⁷² The report actually concluded with a quotation from the inaugural address of President Kennedy: "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich", *Ivi*, p. 59. For the text of Kennedy's inaugural address see Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 20 January 1961, at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8032>.

⁷³ "Discussioni", 15 November 1967, *Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei Deputati, IV Legislatura*, pp. 40573-74.

⁷⁴ Tosi, "Sulla scena del mondo...", *op. cit.*, pp. 165-172.

⁷⁵ Tosi, Luciano, "Le Nazioni Unite nella politica estera di Aldo Moro", in Caviglia, Daniele and De Luca, Daniele (eds.) (forthcoming, 2011): *Aldo Moro nell'Italia contemporanea*, Firenze, Le Lettere.



In 1970, a Ministry of Foreign Affairs report discussed the state of the art of Italian foreign aid policy and presented proposals that acknowledged the most important conclusions of the international debate on the strategies for the Second Development Decade⁷⁶; those proposals “aimed at substantially reducing the gap that divide us in this field, especially on the qualitative level, from most of the industrialized countries”. The report admitted:

Italy does not yet have a real development assistance policy. There is a policy of support of the action of our industries abroad, especially on the markets of the less developed countries. Export credits and the investments of our industries in the emerging countries, integrated with limited allocations of the public sector [...] and contributions to international organizations on the basis of commitments taken in the various forums are presented by us as the result of our foreign aid policy. [...] We have long adopted various justifications for our impossibility to elaborate an assistance policy coherent with international indications and requests, highlighting some particular aspects of our economic system, [...] but our position is becoming actually more and more difficult to justify and sustain⁷⁷.

And it concluded:

Our repeated statements, in various multilateral and bilateral forums, that expressed solidarity towards Third World countries, comprehension for their problems and the will to contribute to solving them have raised expectations to which we must give a concrete answer, if we do not want to risk losing, not only our prestige in the Third World, but also our credibility, with consequences that could be very negative for our political and economic relations with those countries⁷⁸.

Another document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs defined with greater precision and with a more comprehensive and forward-looking perspective the reasons why Italy had to contribute more and better to the international effort for development:

Development cooperation binds together economy, strategy and politics; it has to do with the idea that each nation has of its own participation in the community of states and of the task that derives from it. [...] The reason must be searched for in non-economic considerations that can be summed up in the defense and promotion of peace. [...] The division line between states today also (and perhaps especially) separates developed countries (Western and Eastern) and underdeveloped countries. The division that could become deeper is not the East-West one, but the North-South gap. Of course, it is a process in its initial phase, it is a story not yet written, but that could be written in a short time. [...] The division of the world between developed and underdeveloped countries is made more serious by the fact that, Japan excluded, it opposes white and coloured people, thus risking of paving the way for racial confrontations. As the exploitation of man by man causes social conflict, the same happens when relations between states are concerned. [...] If we follow this analysis and if we believe that

⁷⁶ “Resolution n. 2626 (XXV)”, 24 October 1970, *International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade*.

⁷⁷ MAE, “Linee direttrici...”, *op. cit.*, citations pp. ii e 50-51.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. ii.



Italian foreign policy must have as its priority to build continuously functional obstacles to wars and to constantly support the forces of peace, we must convene that the means to use are two: to promote initiatives capable of leading to the systematic weakening of the decision power at the national level and [...] to implement an effective aid policy to the LDCs⁷⁹.

These diagnosis and the proposals that followed (along the direction expressed by the undersecretary Zagari in his various statements) could seem the premises to free Italian development cooperation from the episodic dimension that had characterized it till then. The parliamentary debate that developed between 1968 and 1971, on the occasion of the passing of the law n. 1222, marked a new step forward. The law was considered the real beginning of Italian cooperation, but actually disciplined more organically only technical assistance activities, unifying all the preceding laws and innovating on some points, but it did not deal with multilateral assistance and, most of all, with the soft-loans instrument.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding a greater consciousness of the need to reform aid policy, during the 1970s Italy did not improve its performance as a donor country. The new attitude towards foreign aid was forced to collide with the deep economic crisis of the 1970s, opened by Nixon in 1971 and worsened by the consequences of the 1973 first oil shock. The appropriations for the law 1222 were largely insufficient and the law itself remained unenforced in many parts.

The 1972 Dac review, once more, highlighted the scarcity of Italian flows to LDCs, the too low percentage of Official Development Aid and the too severe conditions of the loans⁸⁰. Moreover, according to Dac, Rome did not work for a real change, as Italy was the only member state that did not accept the recommendation adopted at the high level DAC meeting of October 1971 on the financial conditions of public aid that called for a liberality element of 84-86% for every financial operation⁸¹.

At the beginning of the 1970s and during the whole decade, Italian development cooperation continued to be marked by the well-known problems of coordination and planning of the activities⁸², and to be characterized by a scarce volume of bilateral aid, 60% of which was represented by technical cooperation, that continued to be the preferred instrument of Italian development aid. In the second half of the 1970s there was a strong decrease of the aid volume that reached the minimum threshold of 0.08% of GNP⁸³. The only new element, with respect to the previous decade was that multilateral cooperation represented on average 80% of the total aid volume, and the percentage of aid channelled by Italy through

⁷⁹ MAE, "Per una politica economica nazionale...", *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

⁸⁰ In 1972, the volume of aid decreased by 81 million dollars. Isernia, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁸¹ "La cooperazione economica multilaterale", *L'Italia nella politica internazionale*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Sept.-Dec. 1971), p. 139.

⁸² Notwithstanding the choice to channel the bulk of economic assistance through multilateral organizations, Italy was in general the last country to subscribe capital increases of the World Bank, and it was well-know for the extreme delays of the appropriation process. In January 1977, the Parliament approved the fourth IDA replenishment, for the period 1974-1976, but Italy still had to pay the amounts of the previous period. In 1976, for six months, Italian firms were even excluded from participating in international competitive tenders for projects financed by the Asian Development Bank, as Rome hadn't complied with its commitments toward it. Similar delays there were for the other regional development banks and for UN agencies and funds. Barattieri, Vittorio: "La cooperazione economica: un punto di vista diverso", *Affari Esteri*, vol. 10, no. 38 (1978). p. 336.

⁸³ Alessandrini, Sergio: "La politica di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'Italia", in Alessandrini, *op. cit.*, p. 266.



multilateral agencies remained constantly higher than the DAC average (about 28%)⁸⁴. This choice was made for various reasons. First, multilateral aid allowed Italy, that could find scarce resources for development aims, to maximize the political utility of its contributions; in fact, working through international agencies, Rome could take part in more activities and meet the demands of the LDCs, that preferred multilateral aid because it was untied and because they could accept it without suspects of neo-colonialist intents. Finally, multilateral aid also gave Italy important economic advantages, because Italian firms had been able to obtain many international orders⁸⁵.

4. The 1980s and Beyond: a New Development Assistance Policy?

The limits of the law 1222 soon emerged and lead to a new debate that began in 1976 and ended in 1979 with the passing of law n. 38 that opened the most important phase of Italian development cooperation policy. The law regulated both technical and financial cooperation and, from the institutional point of view, it reinforced the centrality of the Ministry of Foreign affairs in the planning and management of the aid policy, linking it to the general foreign policy of the country and establishing a Department for Development Cooperation and coordination and planning committee, the CIPES⁸⁶. Since then, Italian development policy began to be conceived as an integral part of the country's foreign policy. In its first report, the Cipes indicated, among Italian priorities, the commitment to raising the flow of public aid to reach, in a few years, the Dac average (about 0.34%); the need to concentrate aid resources to establish more effective relations with some LDCs countries; the need to determine some key sectors to channel the bulk of the resources, such as agriculture, energy, health services; the need to raise bilateral aid percentage on the total aid. It was the first time that the Italian government, tough with some uncertainties, was taking a specific position on such issues⁸⁷.

At the beginnings of the 1980s the political parties and the domestic public opinion raised their attention on development cooperation issues. A decisive role, in this sense, was played by the Radical Party that, in 1979 started an awareness campaign, both in Italy and at the European Parliament, on the problem of hunger in the less developed countries. The Radical Party asked for and obtained the convening of a special session of the Italian Parliament that lead, in September 1979, to the first Italian parliamentary debate on the issue of malnutrition in the Third World⁸⁸. Also thanks to this campaign, that overlapped parliament discussion on law 38, during the 1980s aid appropriations increased by 165%. In the framework of a general increase of foreign aid resources, also its form improved: the percentage of ODA increased, technical assistance dropped and the quota of soft loans increased⁸⁹.

⁸⁴ Isernia, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

⁸⁵ Till 1966, Italy paid 53 billion lire to IDA and the World Bank as participation quotas, but received 250 billion lire from the latter in favor of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*, and more than 150 billion lire in the form of goods and services exported by Italian firms on the basis of international competitive tenders held by the World Bank. Zagari, "Politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo...", *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁸⁶ Alessandrini, *op. cit.*, p. 267; Calchi Novati, Giampaolo, "La sfida della cooperazione per lo sviluppo", *Politica Internazionale*, vol. 10, no. 2, (February 1982), pp. 68-70.

⁸⁷ Guelfi, *op. cit.*, pp. ii-iii and attachment no. 3; Calchi Novati, Giampaolo, "Rassegna commentata dei documenti sulla cooperazione italiana allo sviluppo", in Alessandrini, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-81.

⁸⁸ On the Radical Party campaign see Isernia, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-108.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp 143-144.



Once again, Italian activities were in countertrend with respect to what was happening in other donor countries. The 1980s, that were successively defined “lost decade” for development, were marked in fact by a growing distrust towards development cooperation and the very idea of foreign aid, challenged by neoliberal economic theories. During the decade, the international resources for development dropped drastically. This strong reduction, together with the new consciousness of the Italian governments, led Italy to become one of the major international donors.

This was a phase when Italian development cooperation reached its historical peaks; but it was abruptly interrupted at the beginnings of the 1990s, when the judicial inquiries of public administration corruption in Italy involved the development cooperation administration, casting discredit on it in the eyes of domestic public opinion⁹⁰.

The second half of the 1990s actually saw a new wave of aid resources reduction, which is still the main feature of Italian development cooperation. The complete loss of credibility, budget problems and the new Italian international role after the end of the cold war lead to new changes. The reduction in the appropriations was accompanied both by a growing public opinion interest in some particular aspects of development cooperation, as for example the debt question, and by the choice to concentrate the bulk of the resources in a few areas that represented great economic and strategic interests for Italy. This clearly indicates a better understanding of the national interest that cooperation had to pursue, especially in the Mediterranean and in the Balkan region⁹¹.

In 2000 an extensive international campaign in favour of debt relief lead to the passing of a specific law, law n. 209, that lead to an increase in aid allocations. The debt relief issue had wide political and social support, both from the Catholic Church and from personalities of the mass media world. It is worth noting that the focus on this specific aspect of development policy is a further indication of the growing distrust in the traditional mechanisms of cooperation policies, not efficient enough and with scarce resources. The most important new element in Italian cooperation policy during the 1990s was the active participation of local authorities to various development programs (the so called decentralized cooperation)⁹².

At the end of the 1990s, it seemed that Italian development cooperation was gradually aligning itself with other Western countries’ policies. However, many problems and limits of Italian aid activities of the previous decades seem to be present nowadays.

The 2009 peer review recalls, in many parts, the past evaluations. For example, on the question of program management and coordination, the Dac still highlights the need for a legislative reform that could allow a greater effectiveness of development policy:

Italian Co-operation needs a new, simplified and clearly-targeted legislative framework. Italy has made a number of attempts to reform its aid system. [...] The incoming (2008) foreign affairs minister, who took full responsibility for the development co-operation portfolio, indicated that the summary text on the reform debate would be the basis for restarting a parliamentary discussion. He also stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

⁹⁰ Luis Rhi-Sausi, José and Zupi, Marco, “Trends in the Debate on Italian Aid”, in Hoebink et al., *op. cit.*, p. 338; Pennisi, Giuseppe: “La cooperazione allo sviluppo dell’Italia”, in IAI (1994): *L’Italia nella politica internazionale*, Roma, SIPI, pp. 157-162.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 342; Zupi, Marco: “Evoluzione nella politica italiana di cooperazione allo sviluppo”, in IAI-ISPI (2001): *L’Italia e la politica internazionale*, (F. Bruni and N. Ronzitti eds.), Bologna, Il Mulino, pp. 251-254.



would undertake to submit a new proposal for legislative reform. However, the government has not yet indicated when such a proposal will be submitted to the Council of Ministers and parliament⁹³.

The same applies to the problems relating to the volume and forms of Italian aid. In 2008, Italy was the eighth Dac donor, if the volume of aid is considered, but only the nineteenth (of 23 countries) if the percentage of aid to the GNP is considered. As an EU member, in 2005 Italy committed to allocate the half of its Oda increase to poverty reduction programs in Sub-Saharan Africa. But data show that Rome is not working towards that direction: in 2008, in fact, only 30% of Italian bilateral aid (debt relief program excluded) went to Sub-Saharan Africa, about half of the resources allocated in that area in 2001.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the still very high percentage of multilateral aid (59% of the total volume in 2008) cannot be considered only the result of a strategic choice to strengthen international aid agencies: this percentage, in fact, is also the consequence of the fact that the appropriations to international agencies must be considered fixed expenses on the budget, stemmed from international accords, and cannot be cut down even in a period of economic crisis, as happens to bilateral aid resources⁹⁴. Finally, in 2009 the Dac underlined that the budget cuts contemplated till 2011 cast doubts on Italian ability to comply with its international commitments on the raising of aid by 2010 and 2015. The confirmation of this prediction has come a few weeks ago when the Italian government announced its will to cut the aid allocations by 45%, for budget difficulties. If this trend continues, the resources given by Italy to the LDCs could be more properly compared with the budget of a big international NGO than with the aid budget of the major donor countries⁹⁵.

⁹³ OECD, Development Assistance Committee, Peer Review: *Italy*, 2009, p. 11, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/54/59/44403908.pdf>.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁹⁵ Di Blasi, Giulio: "Finanziaria 2011, cooperazione addio", *La Repubblica*, 19 October 2010.



DEFENCE POLICY IN THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC: FRAMES AND ISSUES

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Abstract:

The article focuses on the civil-military relations in Republican Italy. The new democratic model of relations between the political authorities and the military had a strong continuity in the past. Also, in the new Republic the Armed Forces enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. Different phases can be identified in the history of Italian defence policy. In the reconstruction phase (1945-48), the General Staff decided to have again a big Army, based more on quantity than quality. The membership of NATO and the hardest period of the Cold War (1949-53) greatly accelerated the transformation of Italian Armed Forces. Some scepticism against limitations that NATO posed to national autonomy were overcome by the consciousness that the Alliance provided conspicuous means and allowed to abolish the military limitations of the 1947 Peace Treaty. In the years 1954-62, the Armed Forces had to scale down previous expectations, but at the same time, modernized quickly thanks to US aid. The Army was the first beneficiary, then the Air Force and finally (in 1958) the Navy. This was for two reasons: the Navy was the service in best conditions at the end of the war, while Soviet threat in the Mediterranean was at a low level. However, the Army still relied mainly on numbers, with a low number of armoured and motorized units. In these years, Italy also inaugurated its nuclear military policy. From the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s, the Armed Forces started a “ristrutturazione” (“restructuration”) required by the new NATO strategy of flexible response, which accelerated in the years 1975-78. The end of the Cold War imposed more drastic changes. In 1997, the organization and the powers of the General Staff (inter-services) were strengthened, in 2000, women were admitted in the Armed Forces, and in 2005, conscription was totally abolished. The Armed Forces were greatly reduced in numbers, and were deployed in many long distance operations. The impression however is that the Armed Forces, due to a poor budget, suffer from overstretching and are faced with difficulties in addressing the tasks they are assigned.

Keywords: Italian Republic’s Military History, Cold War, Post bipolar Age, NATO.

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**Resumen:**

El artículo se centra en las relaciones cívico-militares en la República Italiana. El nuevo modelo democrático de relaciones entre las autoridades políticas y el ejército tenía una marcada continuidad con el pasado, al mismo tiempo que en la nueva república las Fuerzas Armadas gozaban de una notable autonomía. Se pueden distinguir diferentes fases en la política de defensa italiana. En la fase de reconstrucción (1945-48), el Estado Mayor decidió tener de nuevo un ejército numeroso donde primase la cantidad sobre los elementos cualitativos. La pertenencia a la OTAN y el más duro periodo de la Guerra Fría (1949-53) aceleraron la transformación de las Fuerzas Armadas italianas. Reticencias al papel limitado que imponía la OTAN a la autonomía nacional fueron superadas gracias a la conciencia de que la Alianza proporcionaba importantes medios y posibilitaba la abolición de las limitaciones militares del tratado de paz de 1947. En los años 1954-62, las Fuerzas Armadas se vieron obligadas a reducir muchas de sus expectativas, pero al mismo tiempo avanzaron notablemente en la modernización, en gran parte gracias a las ayudas de los EEUU. El Ejército de Tierra fue el primer beneficiario, a la que le siguieron las Fuerzas Aéreas y finalmente (1958), la Armada. Ello fue así por dos razones: La Armada era el servicio que a finales de la guerra se encontraba en la mejor situación, al mismo tiempo que era en el Mediterráneo precisamente donde la amenaza soviética se hacía menos sentir. Sin embargo el Ejército de Tierra se centraba todavía en el número de tropas, con un bajo número de unidades acorazadas o motorizadas. En esos años Italia igualmente inauguró su política nuclear. Desde mediados de los años 60 hasta mediados de los 70 las Fuerzas Armadas iniciaron la "ristrutturazione" (reforma de "reestructuración") requerida por la nueva estrategia de respuesta flexible de la OTAN que se aceleró en los años 1975-78. El final de la Guerra Fría impuso cambios drásticos: en 1997 la organización y los poderes del Estado Mayor (inter-servicios) fueron reforzados, en el año 2000 las mujeres fueron admitidas en las Fuerzas Armadas y en el 2005 el servicio militar fue totalmente abolido. Las Fuerzas Armadas fueron notablemente reducidas y empezaron a ser desplegadas en muchas operaciones a larga distancia. La impresión general es sin embargo que las Fuerzas Armadas, debido a un bajo presupuesto, sufren de sobre-extensión y se enfrentan a diversas dificultades, dadas las misiones que les son asignadas.

Palabras clave: *Historia militar de la República Italiana, Guerra Fría, Era post-bipolar, OTAN.*

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1. The Historiography on the Military History of the Italian Republic

The historical and scholarly study of Defence policy of the Italian Republic has just started². Many sources are still unavailable, or not available to historians: this clearly influences studies and scholars. In any case, to understand, historians need to divide into periods, establishing chronologies, phases etc.: they can have it from a thorough examination of the main frames and issues of the topic. A fundamental element of this dividing into periods our subject can be found in the civil-military relations, that is – in other words – the political and civilian control of the military.

United Italy knew a first long phase, roughly corresponding to the Liberal Age, wherein the political class left a full and wide autonomy to the military for several basic decisions, besides most of the smaller ones³. In a second, shorter but more dramatic phase, under the Fascist regime, the military and the fascist reached a compromise which guaranteed Mussolini the formal support of the Armed Forces and, in turn, assured these latter a continuation, as long as possible, of their old autonomy⁴. This compromise lasted for the whole Fascist *Ventennio*, up to the moment wherein – humiliated by the defeat because of their lack of preparation in a feared, but not contrasted or hindered war, – on July 25, 1943 the Armed Forces had again obeyed the King only, and through Marshal Badoglio dismissed the Duce. Which model of civil-military relations would have replaced these two previous Liberal and Fascist ones, when the Republic was established? Or, even, would a specific Republican model, different from the Liberal and the Fascist ones, exist?

The impression here is that – between the government and the military, between these latter's external and internal functions, between attempted discontinuity and strong continuities – the democratic model was in the end more subdivided but not disconnected from the past. It thus developed a configuration with the chiefs of the military involved in the Republic political system but left again with a large autonomy to the Armed Forces. In Republican Italy the military have been not only scarcely controlled, but even scarcely known by the political class and, more in general, by civilians. This gap, which was not new to democracies⁵, knows a peculiar intensity and feature in Italy.

² See Rochat, Giorgio: "Gli studi storico-militari", in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), *Le armi della Repubblica...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 601-618. The only serious comprehensive work is the one by Ilari, Virgilio (1994a): *Storia militare della prima repubblica*, Ancona, Nuove ricerche. See also the brief de Leonardis, Massimo (2005): *L'Italia e il suo esercito. Una storia di soldati dal Risorgimento ad oggi*, Roma, Rai-Eri. A bibliography, now rather old, Nuti, Leopoldo (1997): "La storiografia sulle forze armate dell'Italia repubblicana", in Del Negro, Piero (a cura di) (1997), *Guida alla storia militare italiana*. Napoli, Edizioni scientifiche italiane.

³ See Rochat, Giorgio; Massobrio, Giulio (1977): *Breve storia dell'esercito italiano dal 1861 al 1943*, Torino, Einaudi; Gooch, John (1994): *Esercito, stato, società in Italia (1870-1915)*, Milano, Angeli; Ceva, Lucio (1981): *Le forze armate*, Torino, Utet. For a monography see Labanca, Nicola (1986): *Il generale Cesare Ricotti e la politica militare italiana (1884-1887)*, Roma, Stato maggiore dell'esercito. Ufficio storico.

⁴ See Rochat, Giorgio (1967): *L'esercito italiano da Vittorio Veneto a Mussolini (1919-1925)*, Bari, Laterza; *Id.* (2005): *Le guerre italiane 1935-1943*, Torino, Einaudi; Gooch, John (2007): *Mussolini and his generals. The armed forces and fascist foreign policy, 1922-1940*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Knox, MacGregor (2007): *To the threshold of power, 1922/33: Origins and dynamics of the Fascist and national socialist dictatorships*, vol. I, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁵ See Battistelli, Fabrizio; Ammendola, Teresa; Greco, Lorenzo (2008): *Manuale di sociologia militare. Con elementi di psicologia sociale*, Milano, Angeli; Caforio, Giuseppe (ed.) (2003): *Handbook of the sociology of the military*, New York, Kluwer Academic/Plenum; *Id.* (ed.) (2007): *Social science and the military. An interdisciplinary overview*, London, Routledge; *Id.* (ed.) (1998): *The sociology of the military*, Cheltenham, Elgar.



This is only a general impression, as we have to admit that studies on the Defence policy of the Italian Republic have just started, and remain strongly influenced by the lack of available sources. Also relevant institutional changes recently experienced by the Italian military (reform of military top management, passage to a professional model, strong shift of the overall military orientation from a ‘barracks army’ to more expeditionary forces, etc.) have some influence in our today perception of the military history of Italian Republic.

Having a story divided into smaller periods, for a historian, is a requirement necessary to understand. We choose these periods also because of available sources and chosen perspective – and because of interpretation, of course.

Unfortunately, up to now there have been not many other valid attempts on our topic. Some scholars completely skipped the point, for instance substantially reducing their narratives to points and anecdotes: possibly very informed and learned, but not able to explicitly provide for a comprehensive image⁶. The problem was also avoided by other scholars who just segmented Italian Defence policy in decades⁷: this being more a chronologic than a historical measure, which gives the sense of the progression of events but which does not highlight historical process and its actors. In the end some scholars simply did not seem interested in establishing chronologies and periods, offering a simplistic and crude division of the history of Republican Italy, a rather complex and tormented history lasted up to now more than sixty years, in just two phases – Cold War and post-bipolarism: it is clear that they do not consider necessary a division in periods⁸. Others scholars offer a reasonable division into periods, but only limited to the very particular subject of their interest. Even in historical studies valuable, documented, critical and full of ideas, such a partial chronology and division into periods looks partial. For instance periods in the history of regulations and doctrines, or of weapons and weapon systems, can be reasonable in themselves but are difficult to apply to a more general history of national Defence policy, thus losing their possible more general value. For all these reasons, maybe the best work in this field – although it suffers more than others the passing of time and its old-fashioned ideological language (his author was a Communist Party MP) – is still the one which considered (with a respect mixed to critical suspicion) the history of the Republic Armed Forces like a series of successive steps of rearmament⁹.

As it can be clearly seen, in all the above mentioned cases (included the latter one, which did not hide its supporting ideology) interpretation and chronology are strictly twisted.

2. Six plus Two

We suggest to divide Italian Defence policy in eight periods, six in the bipolar age (or Cold war) and two in the post-bipolar. We cadence these periods by Italian events.

Other scholars could prefer to divide the history of Defence policy according to external, international events: this or that alliance, this or that war, this or that supranational

⁶ See Ilari, Virgilio, “Storia militare della prima repubblica...”, *op. cit.*

⁷ See Nuti, Leopoldo: “Linee generali della politica di difesa italiana (1945-1989)”, in Goglia, Luigi; Moro, Renato; Nuti, Leopoldo (ed.) (2006): *Guerra e pace nell’Italia del Novecento. Politica estera, cultura politica e correnti dell’opinione pubblica*, Bologna, il Mulino.

⁸ See Paoletti, Ciro (2008): *A Military History of Italy*, London, Praeger Security International.

⁹ See Cerquetti, Enea (1975): *Le forze armate italiane dal 1945 al 1975. Strutture e dottrine*, Milano, Feltrinelli.



military doctrine (*Mutual Assured Destruction, Flexible Response, etc.*). Of course, as always and inevitably even more during the Cold War, evolution of military institutions and relating policies have been strictly influenced by the international situation. And national actors had to take into account this broader context, both in peace and in war. But there is a risk in this procedure, that makes external factors more important than internal ones.

On the contrary we aim at maintaining a connection between military/defence history and Italian history at large, also because we are convinced of the relevance of the military dimension in the history of the Republic.

In any case, chronology and periods must be considered not a goal but a tool, a tool for understanding history and not an ontologically autonomous object. Even our suggested eight periods, defined to better clarify the changes sometimes quite abruptly occurring in Italian Defence policy, from a mixture of external, internal, technological, cultural, etc. perspectives, obviously do not want to explain everything. Other relevant aspects of Italian military history – such as change of generations in the military and in social composition of the officer corps, rotation of recruitment models, changing of military cultures, etc. – had different times and longer scansions.

Finally, even beyond periods, sometimes continuities and inheritance of the past heaped upon everything. For instance we will see how, with regard to the systems of civil and political control of the military – an already mentioned subject –, the Liberal model of autonomy and the Fascist model of compromise kept burdening the Republican model, influencing it.

We will consider in the following pages some of the most relevant frames, and issues, of these periods.

3. Reconstruction (1945-48)

3. 1. Frame

The first years following the end of the war were the most difficult period for the Italian Armed Forces. It was not a moment of apnoea or suspension. While in Europe Western and Eastern spheres of influence were evolving into blocs of alliances, although in a dissimulated or implicit way, some basic choices were made in those years. Military Italy was taking her position in a nuclear era which was also witnessing the birth of the Cold War¹⁰. The choices made in Defence policy in those years were at the same time a cause and an effect of this positioning, even if at the time they could seem just a recovery of autonomy and of national independence.

Civilians-politicians¹¹, like Alcide De Gasperi e Carlo Sforza, can be mentioned among the actors of this policy (but Anglo-American allied authorities kept a background inspiration, for instance formulating a first project of military reform for Italy). In any case their influence was obviously only general. Among Italian actors, the Ministry of War (since

¹⁰ See Romero, Federico: “L’Italia nella guerra fredda”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-57.

¹¹ Take note that in Italian language we may use both terms, in civil-military relations theory, almost without differences.



1947, Ministry of Defence) and the General Staffs were more relevant than Prime Ministers or the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Some Ministers, sometimes in rapid sequence, were relevant, such as old politicians like Luigi Gasparotto or Stefano Jacini, or minor figures like Mario Cingolani or Cipriano Facchinetti. But all of them had (with the exception of Gasparotto) a scarce experience in this field. Therefore, it is not a surprise that, in these first years of foundation of the Republic and of its defence policy, so much power was retained by the uniformed men. Some of them were prominent personalities such as Raffaele Cadorna, Raffaele de Courten and Claudio Trezzani. They were all men who, in spite of their different roles and feelings, had passed through the end of the Fascist regime and its war as protagonists.

3. 2. Issues

In those first years the Armed Forces were mostly an element of control of internal public order. But they soon became a tool of the Italian foreign policy thanks to NATO.

The Army was restructuring itself, the number and the efficiency of its divisions¹², while the available sea and air units were not sufficient for the international role of the new State. The Air force had been nearly completely destroyed: it had been beaten in 1943 and then, from 1943 to 1945, further reduced and divided. The Navy was in better conditions from a quantitative point of view, but was anxiously waiting for the decisions deriving from the Peace Treaty. And, in fact, it was not by chance that this latter obliged Italy to consign some of its ships to the winners (URSS and Greece took advantage from this opportunity, whereas the Western countries substantially renounced). Because of the general economic difficulties, no Italian service had enough resources to repair and maintain the arsenals or to provide for sufficient training.

On the other hand, the Armed Forces were considered fundamental for the guarantee of the public and institutional order, which, according to the governments, was endangered by political menaces, social agitations and secessionist claims¹³. To guarantee public order both the Army, reconstituted and rearmed, and the *Carabinieri* were considered essential. This 'Carabineer force' received special attention, and their number was specifically highlighted in the main reorganization tables of those years. The attention of the Anglo-American allies focused on these internal tasks, since they wanted to remove as soon as possible their troops from Italian territory.

But, beyond these immediate tasks, Italian military planned something more. In the Army, which was still the main national military tool, the debate was: which force should be created? The possible choice was between a small, but well equipped and trained, Army, and a larger one, according to Italian previous traditions – probably less prepared and equipped, but able to carry out several internal and external tasks, and even providing employment for a conspicuous number of officers. Some right considerations about the defeats suffered in the previous war would have suggested not following the second, traditional way. Also a reflection on the modern military profile needed by the new atomic age, reflection which was high time to do, should have led to the same conclusion. The General Staff, on the contrary, decided to recreate a large Army, with several and large ternary divisions (three infantry regiments and one artillery regiment). This planned institutional "frame" obviously was not so

¹² See Nuti, Leopoldo (1989): *L'esercito italiano nel secondo dopoguerra 1946-1950. La sua ricostruzione e l'assistenza militare alleata*, Roma, Ussme.

¹³ See Cappellano, Filippo (2008): "Esercito e ordine pubblico nell'immediato secondo dopoguerra", *Italia Contemporanea*, no. 250 (2008).



large as the one fighting in the Second world war nor formally consistent like the one of the last Fascism, although weakened by the binary structure of the divisions (only two infantry regiments), but was however huge if compared to the resources that the country could provide in the foreseeable future, and if compared to Armed Forces of other European nations. The General Staff was certainly aware that there were no immediate resources for compacting that frame, and therefore units were often just sketched as “cadres”, or were kept at a “minimum force” of soldiers; but in a few years, in spite of lacking an armament adequate to the size acquired in the meanwhile, the Italian army could formally draw up a theoretically considerable force. For all these reasons, although it had been broken by the war, Italy was once again provided with a large Army, at least from a quantitative (not a qualitative) point of view.

Other scholars think that for the military this was a “low profile” period¹⁴. Maybe this can be true with regard to military satisfaction, or to their public appearances, but certainly not with regard to their aspirations and to the substance of Italian defence policy. The Italian military, more than other European military, had to tolerate a downsizing in terms of political role: but it was natural, due to the defeat in Fascist wars, and to the limited space occupied by defence policy in the general context of Italian post-war priorities. Also the fierce defence of the services against the hypothesis that civilians could led or even take part in the process of purge and de-fascistization of the military administration, namely a retrospective civil control of the military, was important. Indeed in this case, on the contrary, the profile was high, and continuity prevailed.

In any case, the very first period of Republican and democratic life actually saw fundamental choices for Italy, leading to a large Army in spite of a general lack of resources. It is clear that in those first few years Italian Armed Forces had the little strength they could afford, but they already thought about a great future.

4. Cold War Ambitions (1949-53)

4.1. Frame

The years 1948 and 1949 saw the beginning of the coldest years of the Cold War, and not only for Italy. For the Italian Armed Forces it was a moment of decisive choices, rapid growth and illusions – in fact, not all those choices were well meditated and needed.

In those years the rapid recovery of the Italian armed forces was well integrated in the Western policy, chosen by the Italian government. It was no longer the time of national union and recovered freedom, as in 1945, but of a clear Atlantic choice in view of a recovery of national strength. It created a larger action space for the military, whose role, with Italy now a “protected” democracy part a strong military alliance, was no longer limited as in the previous period to the tasks of recovering national autonomy. It should be reminded that, generally speaking, the Cold War saw a remarkable mixture of levels: diplomatic choices involved ideological ones, whereas military decisions were intertwined to economic ones, with an extreme integration of all these levels.

¹⁴ See Nuti, Leopoldo, “Linee generali della politica di difesa...”, *op. cit.*



This policy has various actors. Defence policy could not be without links with the policies followed by Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi, by Ministers of Foreign Affairs such as Carlo Sforza and Ministers of the Treasury as Giuseppe Pella. The decisive role was played by the Minister of Defence Randolfo Pacciardi, who was uninterruptedly in charge from 1949 to 1953¹⁵, together with some military leaders among whom the Chief of the Defence Staff (inter-services) Luigi Efasio Marras, in charge for a long time and whose relevant role in the Italian adhesion to the Atlantic Alliance is well known. It was under the guide of these strong men, and in difficult times, that the Armed Forces of the new Italian Republic reached a theoretically relevant status.

4. 2. The Issues

In this second period the Armed Forces, reconstructed and on the way to their modernization, became again a tool of foreign policy¹⁶. But the illusion that the Korean rearmament was a permanent condition of the Cold War, and that Italy could bear more sacrifices for its military assets led the General staff and the government to some excesses.

The inclusion of Italy in NATO represented, from many points of view, an extraordinary acceleration and a remarkable experience for Italian Armed Forces. Many military, used to the strictly nationalist policy of the Fascist regime and shocked by the new peculiarities of the Western alliance compared to the tradition of Liberal Italy, had some suspicions with regard to NATO: cooperation with allies had never been so close, in the Triple Alliance of 1882 or in the Pact of Steel of 1939. And this was not only a military mood: in the Parliament and in the public opinion, from the left and from the right, NATO was accused of attempting to national independence and autonomy. But all these military doubts were silenced by the awareness that the Italian Armed Forces would have never found the resources for their renewal inside the country, without an external intervention. Therefore, NATO was for the military both a means and an end. In fact, it was only thanks to external aid that the Army could receive new weapons, the Navy could have fuel to leave the harbours and above all the Air force could fly again, at first with old second-hand planes, then with licensed aircrafts and jets.

It could be stated that Italian membership in NATO and above all American policy of aids and military supplies¹⁷ really had strong effects on Italy, although not always of the kind denounced by the opposition. However, the responsibility of these distortions was only partially external and political, since it actually derived also from expectations and plans which were Italian and military, sometimes even previous to entering the Alliance. It has already been mentioned the tendency of Italian military leadership, above all but not only that of the Army, to create a number of units and divisions hardly sustainable by the effectively available national resources. This tendency was strengthened by the flow of auxiliary resources activated by the Italian membership of NATO and by the Korean rearmament. An example of this policy was Minister Pacciardi's decision to have an Army of 12 divisions, as well as remarkable Navy and Air force. Divisions increased and, formally, Italian Armed Forces in the first half of the Fifties reached a remarkable size. Number and size of the units contrasted with their tasks: besides from the defence of the fatherland and, as far as possible, of the NATO Southern (Yugoslavian) front, Italy had no colonial empire to administer or to

¹⁵ See Argenio, Andrea: "Un ministro di ferro? Randolfo Pacciardi", in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), "Le armi della Repubblica...", *op. cit.*, pp. 619-625.

¹⁶ See Cerquetti, Enea, "Le forze armate italiane dal 1945 al 1975...", *op. cit.*

¹⁷ See Sebasta, Lorenza (1991): *L'Europa indifesa. Sistema di sicurezza atlantico e caso italiano 1948-1955*, Firenze, Ponte alle grazie.



protect against anti-colonial movements, no wars to plan. So the entrance into NATO, together with the aforementioned scarce control by the civilians, allowed the military to cultivate their traditional ambitions for large Armed Forces, more suitable to a great power. This was in the military's interest, even if during those years, as a matter of fact, it was a civilian like Minister Pacciardi who encouraged this policy of military ambitions¹⁸.

Then, Italian Armed Forces were fully involved in the Cold War. Some dark sides involving unbalances and reduced efficiency remained, even if are too often forgotten or hidden both by the official military history and by rather indulgent historians. In the middle of the Fifties the Italian military started to think that the infamous images of dishonour for the defeat in the Fascist war and of chaos for what happened after 8th September 1943 could be finally left behind. As a matter of fact, at least, Italian Armed Forces were now remarkable in size, by that time quite different from the previous small "transition army". The political situation and NATO membership had allowed them to overcome the limitations imposed by the Peace Treaty of 1947, thus creating a robust, if not well armed body.

Centre political coalitions, Korean rearmament and too ambitious programs such as Pacciardi's plan and NATO's plan in Lisbon (1952) had left Italy with the heritage of a larger military tool, too large for the country, above all unbalanced. And this, once again, with reduced or no parliamentary control. Parliament had renounced a closer control by accepting the budget consolidation¹⁹.

This period, full of so many ambitions in a country which had not been modernized and enriched by the "economic miracle", would end soon.

5. Downsizing and Transformation (1954-62)

5. 1. Frame

The second half of the Fifties, after the end of the Korean War and the recovery of Trieste to Italy²⁰, was a contradictory period for the Armed Forces. While at the economic-social level the country was pervaded by an intense "economic miracle" and at the political level a trend toward new political balances, from centre towards centre-left, was finally coming (in spite of many resistances), these were the last years of a possible consolidation for Italian military institution thanks to American aids.

The progressive breakdown of the policy of the previous decade also explains Italian political decision of accepting American nuclear missiles on the national territory²¹. This choice strongly confirmed the close and subordinate relationship with the hegemonic superpower.

¹⁸ See Nuti, Leopoldo (1994): "U.S. Forces in Italy, 1945-1963", in Duke, S. W.; Krieger, W. (ed.) (1994): *U.S. Military Forces in Europe. The Early Years. 1945-1970*, Boulder, Westview. See also Pignato, Nicola; Cappellano, Filippo (2007): *Gli autoveicoli da combattimento dell'esercito italiano*, vol. III, 1945-1955, Roma, Ufficio storico Stato maggiore dell'esercito.

¹⁹ See Nascia, Leopoldo; Pianta, Mario (2009): "La spesa militare in Italia, 1948-2008", in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), "Le armi della Repubblica...", *op. cit.*, pp. 177-208.

²⁰ See Cappellano, Filippo: "Trieste 1953-54" in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), "Le armi della Repubblica...", *op. cit.*, pp. 705-723.

²¹ See Nuti, Leopoldo (2007): *La sfida nucleare. La politica estera italiana e le armi atomiche 1945-1991*, Bologna, il Mulino.



But all this did not save Italy from facing eventually the consequences deriving from the excessive ambitions of the previous period: at the middle of the Fifties Italian Armed Forces started a downsizing of their expectations and an amendment of their programs. Number and size of divisions faced severe cuts. In short, and not without alternating different trends, as it happened on a more general level, this was a period of dramatic changes and of uncertainties concentrated in a few years.

In the meanwhile – as long as the country evolved towards the centre-left and the reforms – defence policy was charged with a more general task of guarantee with regard to milieus and classes fearing those political evolutions and those reforms.

The major actors of this period were still, as part of the tradition of the Cold War, Premiers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the like. After the age of De Gasperi and Sforza, it was the time of minor figures, like Giuseppe Pella e Mario Scelba, Gaetano Martino and Antonio Segni. In contrast, great relevance was acquired by two Defence Ministers who, because of their personality and their long-lasting presence, left their mark on this period: Paolo Emilio Taviani (1953-1958) and Giulio Andreotti (who remained a Defence Minister for a longer period, 1959-1966 and 1974²²). The two ministers had different attitudes and ideas, and somehow antithetical personalities: all this gave, also visually, a sense of complexity to this period, wherein partially contrasting lines followed and alternated according to the events. Succession and changes can be even better understood by reading the names of the chiefs of General Staff of this period. Then we meet name and personalities such as General Giorgio Liuzzi, who was ending his period of leadership, Aldo Rossi, and Giuseppe Aloia, whose name like Andreotti's one is so linked to the following period. These changes suggest that the military too felt some kind of incertitude about the way to follow.

5. 2. The Issues

Defence policy in this period had the same contradictory and transitory character experienced by the country on a more general level²³.

See, for an exemplary case, what happened to the equipment. On the one hand, Italian Armed Forces realized a real modernization in weapon systems. As already mentioned, in these years Italy direct USA aids were coming to an end. At first the Army had been perhaps the major beneficiary. Now it was the turn of the Air force, whose configuration was actually quite scarce. Also the Navy tried to take advantage of this, and if it had to wait till 1958 it was only because it had ended the war in better conditions than the Air force. Moreover, the approximately twenty-year long life of the fleet had not ended yet, and menaces coming from the Mediterranean Sea against the national defence system and the Atlantic Alliance were rather scarce, whereas the SACEUR considered a first-class priority to control Italian “house door” of Gorizia²⁴ and protect the Southern air flank of a possible Central European general war. Then, the Air Force was able to modernise its equipment and procedures (many Italian

²² See D'Angelo, Augusto: “Un democristiano alla Difesa. Giulio Andreotti”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 626-638.

²³ See Stefani, Filippo (1987-1989): *La storia della dottrina e degli ordinamenti dell'esercito italiano*, vol. III, tomo I, *Dalla Guerra di liberazione all'arma atomica tattica*, and tomo II, *Dagli anni cinquanta alla ristrutturazione*, Roma, Ussme.

²⁴ See Ceschin, Daniele: “La soglia di Gorizia. I «paesi-caserma» del Friuli ai tempi della naia”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 758-770.



pilots spent long training periods in the USA)²⁵. But, in spite of this modernization, the Italian military, and in particular the Army, still based their strength on the number of men: its percentage of armoured or even only motorized infantry was one of the lowest in Western Europe.

If the means were not sufficient for the men, this was perhaps partially due to the fact that there were too many men, and not only to the disastrous starting conditions of post-war Italy. This explains why, as far as the Army was concerned, the most relevant force of the national military system, severe cuts were necessary (in spite of foreign aids). With the Korean War over, the end of the governments led by De Gasperi and Pacciardi's tenure of the Defence Ministry, there was necessarily a first change of mind. Someone began thinking that the policy of a quantitatively "large Army" pursued up to that moment had to end. In the following years a drastic downsizing of the units, many of which were reduced from divisions to brigades, followed. Eventually it had been realized that expenses for the personnel were much too higher than those for investments and equipment: an Army made of bayonets, even if they were millions, was no longer acceptable in times of atomic war and technological changes.

Even if Pacciardi himself had come to terms with this change of policy in the very last period of his ministry, it was Minister Taviani who promoted this downsizing. His style was different from Pacciardi's extremism and Andreotti's 'acrobatics'. Taviani liked to show a technocratic approach, even if without any exaggeration. It was difficult for everyone this policy of cuts, which were after all admissions of failure and critics to the previous regulations. On the contrary, Taviani liked to stress his "successes", e.g. his decision to accept the American nuclear SETAF on Italian soil.

While the military was to change, Italy was changing more than the military could think and accept: "centrosinistra" (centre-left), "miracolo economico" (economic miracle), and some years after "contestazione giovanile" (students' protest) would have been the names of that time. It is difficult to think of a broader gap between the military and the civilians.

6. Rearmament, Doubts and Inefficiency (1963-68)

6.1. Frame

At the end of 1963, the creation of the first "organic" centre-left government, under Prime Minister Aldo Moro represented for Italy, and for her Armed Forces, a historic date.

Moro came after a transition government led by Amintore Fanfani, with "external" socialist support, in the previous year, but represented a true discontinuity. Not so much because of the new political majority or because his government introduced the radical revolution feared by its adversaries (in the end, continuity prevailed on change once again), but because the new government somehow changed the external context of Italian policy. This was well demonstrated by the fact that, on the occasion of the first crisis of that government, in the summer 1964, actually after less than one year of rule, right because of

²⁵ See de Leonardis, Massimo: "L'Aeronautica Militare Italiana dalla ricostituzione postbellica alla fine della guerra fredda", in *Id.* (2003): *Ultima ratio regum. Forza militare e relazioni internazionali*, Bologna, Monduzzi, pp. 147-166.



that change many feared a “rattling of sabres” (what in Italy is called “Piano Solo-SIFAR”²⁶). Underestimating the event-*affaire* “Piano Solo”, or the spreading of worried political perceptions following it, would lead to a misunderstanding of the fact that even a simple “*intentona*” [an attempted coup d’état] could stop political change in Italy and damage her such young and weak Republican democracy²⁷. On the contrary, we think that those events and those perceptions had a remarkable political weight, influencing for a long time and in many different ways both Italian history in general and in particular defence policy.

The major actors of this period are well-known and all had a remarkable political standing: from Fanfani, who had prepared the way to the centre-left, to Moro, who led the first centre-left governments, from Taviani, who was Minister of the Interior for a long time, to Segni and then Saragat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The defence Minister was once again Andreotti, whose defence policy changed with the advent of the centre-left, although he always declared that he knew nothing about the specific facts of that summer 1964. He was later replaced by Tremelloni, whose role at the defence Ministry should now be reread and re-evaluated. The Chiefs of the Army Staff were at first Aldo Rossi and then Giovanni De Lorenzo²⁸, whereas the Chiefs of the Defence Staff were Aldo Rossi and then a promoted Aloia. Above all of them, with a role which has been increasingly emphasized by historians, was the President of the Republic, Antonio Segni. Such relevant actors were well aware of the complex tangle of matters that, in those years, involved and influenced both the role of Italy in a new international context and that of the Armed Forces in Italian politics.

6.2. Issues

In fact, it should be remarked that events and perceptions about “Piano Solo” represent just *one*, although the most dramatic, of the links of a longer chain of facts occurred in the years between 1963 and 1968 in the realm of military policy. We could mention the overcoming of the Cuban crisis, international agreements on non-proliferation, the blooming of Italian centre-left and its rapid withering, up to preparations and ultimate birth of a “strategy of tension”²⁹ in Italy. All these events influenced, on a national and international level, the relationship between Italy and her Armed Forces. In other words, with regard to defence policy, the problem of Italian Armed Forces in those years does not seem to be simply their fidelity to republican constitution, as it has been thought for a long time, and then their positioning with regard to the “double State”, as it has been more recently suggested, or even the “double loyalty” of some of their leaders³⁰, but also their efficiency and congruity with the country’s foreign policy³¹.

In very brief words, we could say that the centre-left governments, with their insufficient and weak reforms, even in the military field bore some responsibilities.

²⁶ See De Lutiis, Giuseppe: “Segreti servizi”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-265.

²⁷ See Franzinelli, Mimmo (2010): *Il Piano Solo. I servizi segreti, il centro-sinistra e il "golpe" del 1964*, Milan, Mondadori.

²⁸ See Ilari, Virgilio (1994b): *Il generale col monocolo. Giovanni de Lorenzo (1907-1973)*, Nuove ricerche, Ancona.

²⁹ This expression is used by some historians and commentators to describe a number of bloody events the origin of which has never been fully clarified. The expression implies that some sectors of the political class or of the State’s bodies were involved in them (Editor’s note).

³⁰ See De Felice, Franco (1999): *La questione della nazione repubblicana*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

³¹ See Bovio, Oreste (1996): *Storia dell’esercito italiano, 1861-1990*, Roma, Ussme.



7. Need of Reform: the ‘Restructuring’ (1969-75)

7.1. Frame

The end of the Sixties and the first half of the Seventies coincided, for Italian Armed Forces, with the complex gestation of further severe cuts in military institutions, a kind of reform called in Italian “ristrutturazione” (restructuring).

While in the Seventies Italy went through tumultuous transformations, her Armed Forces came to this appointment in bad conditions. Change and improvements continually postponed in the previous year and decades had to be faced, at last: a strong change was necessary. It was based upon the mature conviction that inefficiency and disloyalty had to be overcome, and that Armed Forces should be put in the condition of operating with some effectiveness and should cease to feel as an element detached from the republican democracy.

The actors of the ‘restructuring’, namely of this turning point in defence policy, were various and for the first time of different relevance.

The major political protagonists had a diversified but relevant role. Among them, we must remember Prime Ministers, from Giovanni Leone to Mariano Rumor, from Emilio Colombo to Andreotti; Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Moro for a long time); and, obviously, Defence Ministers, namely Luigi Gui and Mario Tanassi, who were both in charge for a relatively long period. The previously mentioned crisis concerned Tanassi, who was the first Defence Minister serving a prison sentence because a court judged him guilty of corruption. In the political realm, for this period, some further actors of defence policy were, and this was quite new, the left parties. Among them, close to the Socialist party (in most of those years in the government together with Christian-Democrats), a little but cultivated network of civilian experts in strategic/military affairs grew. And, more important, a mention goes to the Communist party. Through the interventions of their leaders and thanks to the constant attention of their (few) experts, the communists ‘opened’ their party’s defence policy, as well as the foreign one: for the first time in the history of the Italian Republic they brought with them a popular consensus to defence policy broader than the one the government and the centre-left majority could provide.

But, as usual, an important role was played by the military – and in this period this happened with some innovations. Among the uniformed men who left a new mark on defence policy of those years a mention deserves Admiral Eugenio Henke, the first Chief of Defence Staff not belonging to the Army. Among the men in uniform, others should be mentioned – not anymore individuals, but this time groups, still without a name for lack of researches. Among these collective actors, on the one hand, there was the generation of younger staff officers subordinate to the afore mentioned chiefs, whose stimulating, renewing work and whose constant pressure on bureaucracy and in military press were essential for the change. On the other hand, for the first time in the history of the Italian Republic (but the phenomenon was general, not strictly Italian), a relevant role was played by those lower rank officers, and above all non-commissioned officers, as well as by many privates who, challenging rigid disciplinarian regulations, had the personal courage and the political wisdom necessary for denouncing backwardness, dysfunctions and injustice existing (just like, or even more than in other places of Italian society) inside the barracks³². The engagement of these last collective

³² See Francescangeli, Eros: “Il proletario in divisa”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 395-401.



actors was diversified and motivated by very different reasons: sometimes institutional-technocratic, sometimes renewing, sometimes radical if not even revolutionary. But in the end their action was more convergent than they thought, and the modernization of Italian Armed Forces in the Seventies, a period of Italian history generally defined the “season of movements”, was in not a little part due to their collective protest and action.

7.2. Issues

In this period the fundamental decision was, as already stated, ‘restructuring’³³.

It meant at the same time two aspects: a reorganization of the Armed Forces, with the axing of dead branches – no longer adequate to the new requests dictated by the NATO doctrine of *Flexible Response*, the military growth of the Soviet Bloc and the crisis of the US hegemony in an increasingly multi-polar world – and a modernization of armaments. The first aspect was particularly important: the acknowledgement of the need for reform meant that the military organization, actually the same derived from the downsizing in the Fifties and from the following consolidation in the Sixties, was now inadequate, excessive, and ‘wrong’. The three services came to this conclusion through different, although converging, paths.

The first to be aware of the problem was the Navy³⁴, resenting the obsolescence of some of its ships and the general inadequateness of a tool which more or less remained the same as it had been immediately after the war and in the first NATO years, designed to fight some minor opponent in the Adriatic Sea and to guarantee some escort to allied convoys in case of general war. Such a Navy was scarcely useful against new dangers, namely a large Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean with possible bases provided by Arabian coastal countries. The Air force, whose fleet was on the average newer, was suffering under the evident USA and NATO requests, complaining about Italian insufficient support to protection of the Southern flank in the central zone. Eventually, among the three services the Army was in the most critical situation. The growth of the officer corps and the large mass of the conscripts had created an excessively wide organism, provided with obsolete weapons, hardly able to satisfy the requests of the Alliance.

Therefore, all the three services shared a problem of efficiency/effectiveness, even if in different degrees and forms, most dramatically for the Army. It was not only a matter of having newer weapons, or in greater numbers.

After having cared only for *quantity* for years, now the request dictated by the *Flexible Response* was *quality*. The policy of numbers, from Pacciardi to Andreotti, was no longer sufficient. It was now considered one of the elements that, by expanding the military, had also amplified its inefficiency.

³³ See Jean, Carlo (ed.) (1989): *Storia delle Forze armate*, 2 vol., *Aspetti internazionali, giuridico- istituzionali, economico-finanziari e strategico-operativi*, Giuffrè, Milano, and Jean, Carlo (ed.) (1994): *Aspetti ordinativi e sociologici*, Milano, Angeli.

³⁴ See Patalano, Alessio: “Dal Garibaldi al Cavour. Il potere marittimo italiano”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-246; de Leonardis, Massimo (2003): “La Marina Militare nell’Alleanza Atlantica”, in “Ultima ratio regum...”, *op.cit.*, pp. 123-146; and, for some documents, Sorrenti, Deborah (2008): *La guerra fredda nel Mediterraneo : la politica estera italiana dal compromesso storico agli euromissili*, Roma, Edizioni associate.



8. Put to the Test, toward the End of an Age (1976-89)

8.1. Frame

The period between the mid-Seventies and the end of the Eighties was quite dense.

It was slightly more than a dozen years, from about the end of the Vietnam War and the final USA departure, which had already militarily left the country in 1973, and the end of bipolarism, the termination of the Soviet bloc (1989) and the implosion of URSS. But it was a period that changed the history of the world. Because of its density, in general history it is usually divided in sub-periods, or separated in different periods.

As far as the Italian Armed Forces are concerned, that period meant moving from the already mentioned, and decisive, ‘restructuring’ (1975-78) to a reform imposed by the end of the Cold War (1989-91). In other words, for the Italian military this was the period when the results of the reform started in the mid-Seventies were put to test. This means that these years put to test how structural, lasting, efficacious the changes introduced in 1975-78 had been, and obviously how insufficient and unsuitable they were with regard to the new problems arisen with the passing of time. We can anticipate here that the changes introduced at the different levels of modernization and democratization took place at different speeds and had different outcomes. For a better understanding, this period could be divided in further sub-periods. In any case and at both levels the result was a missed achievement of the more advanced objectives that the Armed Forces had given themselves. A relevant part of the patrimony constituted by the broader political consensus born around the mid-Seventies went lost, even if a new image of the Italian military was in those years emerging.

Among the protagonists of this period, maybe the politicians were brighter stars than the military, as far as it can be understood now from the available sources. Among the Prime Ministers, the familiarity with the military dimension of Andreotti or Francesco Cossiga, and above all the long government of Bettino Craxi, gave them a relevant role in the elaboration of defence policy. An even more marked position was obviously the one of the Defence Ministers, each of them having his own vision. This was perhaps less defined in Vito Lattanzio or Attilio Ruffini or Valerio Zanone, but certainly stronger in Lelio Lagorio, Giovanni Spadolini and Beniamino Andreatta, three among the most important key-figures (with Pacciardi, Taviani, Andreotti e Tremelloni) in our story.

If compared to these politicians, the military seemed to have less charismatic figures, maybe compensated by a good bureaucratic paper-work behind them. This does not mean that admirals like Giovanni Torrisi, or generals coming from the Air force like Lamberto Bartolucci and from the Army like Vittorio Santini or Riccardo Bisogniero did not leave their mark as chiefs of the Defence Staff. Some of these military chiefs were actually incisive, like Andrea Cucino, Eugenio Rambaldi, Umberto Cappuzzo and Luigi Poli for the Army, Torrisi for the Navy and Bartolucci, Basilio Cottone and Franco Pisano for the Air force. But all of them seemed to be simple supporters of ideas shared and formulated by offices and bureaucracies, rather than personal and original thinkers. That being said, compared with their predecessors, they were however not simply younger officers, but also different military men, belonging to a truly new generation.

Besides the top chiefs, other uniformed men must be taken into account for this period, even if unfortunately they can be only shortly mentioned here: we refer to the Italian “rappresentanza militare”. Among difficulties, bureaucracy from the top and pulls from the



bottom, these “uniformed trade unionists” moved their first steps in this period. The system was rather complex, divided into COCER (Central Council of Representation), COIR (Intermediate Councils of Representation) and COBAR (Base Councils of Representation)³⁵.

After the politicians, even if very different from each other, other collective subjects should be mentioned here. Among them we think of the (few) parliamentary experts in defence affairs and their closest collaborators in the respective political parties, the movement of conscientious objectors, non-violent groups, pacifists of any kind, critics of military expenses and of a possible nuclear war, but even supporters of female soldiers. All of them, from different postures, felt themselves as stakeholders of the national defence policy. It was the first time that this happened, and became institutionalized, in Italy.

8. 2. Issues

The period following 1975 is today understandably one of the most neglected by historians, for the general shortage of sources, and then of studies and publications, in the history of the Armed Forces of the Italian Republic³⁶. In any case, it seems that for these years the history of defence policy can be divided in sub-periods.

A first sub-period could start from the passing of the “leggi promozionali” (promotional laws, bills of rearmament) and of the “leggi sui principi” (laws on principles, concerning the reform of military justice and codes), dated 1975-1978, to the acceptance of euro-missiles and, more or less in the same years, to the start of two peacekeeping operations in Lebanon (1979-1982). The promotional laws contributed to enlarge the military budget and the Armed Forces were modernized, qualifying their potential as tools of foreign policy. The two operations in Lebanon (1982 and 1982-84) had also a symbolic value for the Italians: in fact, it was the first time that strong units of land troops went outside the national territory. As a matter of fact they were conscripts, whose training certainly had not taken into account a preparation to the new necessities of peace-keeping. In any case everything went quite well, and Italy did not suffer the high number of victims that, in the same operation, obliged the US and French troops to leave Lebanon.

A second sub-period could cover the years between the departure of a small Italian fleet for clearing of mines the Suez Channel and the Red Sea (1984) and the more demanding Italian naval presence with the operation “Golfo Uno” in the Persian Gulf (1987). These were not NATO or UNO operations, and Italy participated together with other important nations, first of all the USA, in the second case in a veritable war area. Some national pride claims, exemplified by the Sigonella episode in 1985 (the only remarkable episode mentioned in general histories of this period), grew up from these experiences. But it was something more complex than Sigonella alone. In fact, it should be noted that in these years Italy repeatedly showed, even if with difficulties and risks, an unprecedented military activism, integrated and subordinated to the USA (both in 1984 and in 1987). Her readiness and availability to “out of area” operations began to amaze external analysts, even if it gave rise to some strong doubts and perplexities at internal political level (it is not by chance that these operations were much

³⁵ See Caforio, Giuseppe; Nuciari, Marina (1990): *La rappresentanza militare in Italia*, Roma, Rivista militare-Cemiss; and Olivetta, Eraldo (2008): *Forze armate e tutela degli interessi del personale*, Roma, Aracne.

³⁶ See Cremasco, Maurizio (ed.) (1986): *Lo strumento militare italiano. Problemi e prospettive*, Milano, Angeli.



less popular than the Lebanese one, and are therefore more neglected). All this explains how Italy and her military were changing, if not had already changed³⁷.

The third and last sub-period goes from these operations until the end of bipolarism. Like and even more than other countries, Italian Armed Forces came to that point being definitely not so well prepared with regard to efficiency and readiness and had to face the new challenges imposed by post-bipolarism being scarcely provided with new material and new ideas. Military Italy of the years following the “restructuring” had just become lighter and more ready to an expeditionary war (but only for some units). But generally speaking the “modello di difesa” (Defence model, or system) in the Eighties was the same of once upon a time: the bulk of the military was still concentrated on the threshold of Gorizia, although slightly less than in the recent past, units had limited armament and scarce effectiveness, in short its functions seemed to critics more social and political than operative.

In conclusion, at the end of the bipolar system, Italy and her Armed Forces could claim to have contributed *pro quota* to the safeguarding of freedom in their own country and of peace in the West. But, at the end of the Cold War and after nearly half a century of military expenses, Italian military could not praise a peculiar great result.

10. Post-Bipolar Adjustments (1989/91-99/01)

10.1. Frame

If studying Italian Defence policy during the Cold War presents many difficulties in terms of availability and access to the sources, unfortunately much more in Italy than in other homologous countries, for the post-bipolar age problems are inevitably far huger. The only available documentation is now the press, from Parliamentary Papers and debates to military periodical press.

But some notes are not only possible but even necessary, although of a shorter and more provisional character.

Much but not everything was new for Italian Armed Forces in the first post-bipolar decade. The international political context had radically changed with the end of the Cold War and, with it, the main mission of Italian military. The national political system has also entered, between 1992 and 1994, a period of deep change: old and traditional political actors (parties) were exhausted or transformed, some had been literally put on trial, and not only by history. In such a changed background the new task of Italian Armed Forces was not clear.

In the meanwhile, the military were however requested to carry out many duties. Old tasks were performed with changing means; new tasks were performed by men who were often old, or grown up in a previous, bipolar age. Then risks were frequent. In this evolving situation a military reform was desirable: a new “modello di difesa” was thought necessary, and in fact it arrived at last, and was quite important. But, as we will see, change was late and partial.

³⁷ See Desiderio, Alfonso: “Le logiche delle operazioni «fuori area»”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 473-511.



On the basis of our present knowledge, it is difficult to say who were the main propellers, or the actors, of this military reform. Outside the political arena, just like any other developed country of the period, Italian society and peace movements asked for a substantial reduction of the military, namely of the Armed Forces and of the military expenses. We do not know who made the first move for military reform and another “Nuovo modello di difesa”, whether the military or the politicians, or probably both. In this decade ministers like Virginio Rognoni, Salvo Andò or Fabio Fabbri had but a short time to act, and even less time had the minister of the first centre-right government led by Silvio Berlusconi, Cesare Previti, or successively, in a “technical” (i. e., at least in its intentions, bipartisan) government, General Domenico Corcione, a former Chief of the Defence Staff. By the way Corcione was the only military in the history of the Italian Republic appointed Defence Minister. Other Ministers like Beniamino Andreatta or Sergio Mattarella, or Carlo Scognamiglio had more time to carry out their policies, in a period when the new post-bipolar international political system and the role Italy could play in it were better understood. But it is likely that the most relevant stimulus was given by the chiefs of the Defence Staff, such as Corcione or Admiral Guido Venturoni, as well as – or even moreover – by their staffs.

The final impression is that during the first post-bipolar decade Italian defence policy showed a general inadequacy to solve old and new problems, even if – it must be said – in a period of extraordinary changes³⁸.

11. Results and Worries at the Time of the Endless War ... (2001-...)

11. 1. Frame

Coming closer to present times, and trying to penetrate the true essence of reality, historians have the same difficulties of an observer or a contemporary analyst trying to disperse the fog of propaganda, with the only additional benefit of an intensive training to deep insight.

Generally speaking, the last decade for the Italian Armed Forces was very difficult under many respects. The impression is that governments and military chiefs asked too much (and couldn't avoid to ask, because of the policies they represent) from such a troubled institution. We do not forget (contented) statements about new results and new successes: but they, for all their truth, cannot hide to the historian's eye the never ending problems produced by sixty years of Republican life, if not by the nearly one century and half since Italian Unification. In spite of so much emphasis on the new, the historian observes that the long heritages are still there, entangled with more recent features, although in unforeseen contexts. For instance, those who think that in Italy in 1992-94 a second Republic was born will certainly agree that – with the reform of military leadership (1997), the opening the armed forces to women (2000)³⁹ and, above all, the end of the conscription and the passage to a professional system of all volunteers force (between 2000 and 2005) – basically new Armed Forces were born. Undoubtedly, the aforesaid innovations were radical, and deeply transformed, and will keep transforming with the passing of time, the substance and the image of the military institution in Italy. But some deeper line of continuity is still there. Old

³⁸ See Ilari, Virgilio (1992): *Storia del servizio militare in Italia*, vol. V, *La difesa della patria (1945-1991)*, t. I, *Pianificazione operativa e sistema di reclutamento*, e t. II, *Servizio militare e servizio civile legislazione e statistiche*, Roma, Centro Militare di Studi Strategici/Rivista Militare.

³⁹ See Nuciari, Marina: “Una lunga storia. Donne e Forze armate”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica...”, *op. cit.*, pp. 401-406.



problems still exist, although in new contexts. Also in this field, the “end of history” has not come.

The traditional actors of Italian defence policy benefited from internal conditions, complex but not free of new and positive sides. In the present decade, which will be remembered as the Italian centre-right decade (with a short centre-left break in 2006-2008), the defence ministers Antonio Martino and Ignazio La Russa of the Berlusconi governments, respectively in 2001-2006 and in 2008 up to-day, have had parliamentary majorities much larger than those available to any other of their predecessors in the recent Italian history. Also the chiefs of Defence Staff (the 1997 reform had reduced the relevance of the Chiefs of staff of the single Services) have been in charge for a relatively long period, from Rolando Mosca Moschini to Giampaolo Di Paola and Vincenzo Camporini. In the light of the aforesaid, and in spite of the difficulties which should have been confronted with radical choices, still no one could courageously realize them⁴⁰.

Despite all this, problems of effectiveness, difficulties in budgets, overstretching due to the number of external operations in which Italian military have been involved, have remained. Today Italian Armed Forces seem, in the opinion of many independent analysts, «in affanno» (breathless). The seriousness of these signals must not be underestimated. They emerge even in titles of the commentaries signed by competent and usually moderate analysts, working for research institutes (close to the government, and not to the political opposition): «Nuovo modello di difesa: urge una riforma» [*A new model of defence: a reform is urgently needed*] and, against the insufficiency of the Defence budget, «Una scure che taglia le gambe alla riforma» [literally: *An axe cutting the reform's legs*, whose meaning is: *A rope tying the reform's hands*] or «La tela di Penelope» [*Penelope's cloth*]. The 2009 budget, according to the same analysts, would be «in a serious state, liable to further worsening»: «Without a decisive change related to a global and rapid adjustment of the new Model of Defence, there is a concrete danger of definitively compromising the short-, middle- and long-term budget of the Armed Forces starting from next year»⁴¹.

The impression is that these are not the usual alarm cries emitted by the defence analysts (and by the military) for getting some more crumbs from the cake of Government spending. The impression is that most of what has changed from the “restructuring” of the middle of the Seventies up to the reforms carried out along these post-bipolar decades is to be brought up for discussion again.

It has never been easy for the Italian governments imposing to the military the alternative of maintaining either some of their acknowledged peaks of excellence – a value for the country and not only for the services – or a structure too large if compared to the resources that Italy can devote to the Armed Forces. If the military do not decide, if they do not choose, the effectiveness of the whole system will be worn out and even the peaks of excellence will be blunted. The impression of the historian is that in the post-bipolar age the choice has not

⁴⁰ See Mini, Fabio (2008): *Soldati*, Torino, Einaudi.

⁴¹ Quoting from Gasparini, Giovanni: “Nuovo modello di difesa: urge una rivoluzione”, *Affari Internazionali* (22 January 2008), at <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=717> ; *Id.*: “Una scure che taglia le gambe alla riforma”, *Affari Internazionali* (17 July 2008), at <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=896>; Nones, Michele: “La tela di Penelope” (17 July 2008), at <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=897>; Gasparini, Giovanni: “Il vero bilancio italiano della difesa” (17 March 2008), at <http://www.affarinternazionali.it/articolo.asp?ID=1089>. Recently see also, from the same source, Di Camillo, Federica; Marta, Lucia (2009): *National Security Strategies: The Italian Case* (WP) Roma, Iai, *Working Paper* no. (2009), and more in general Nones, Michele; Silvestri, Stefano (2009): *European security and the role of Italy*, Milano, Iai (Documenti Iai 921).



been made yet. But having everything is a cost that the country cannot – and maybe does not even want to – afford.

Defence assertive policies unable to choose seem guarantee functions at the international and national level (it does not matter if towards the hegemonic superpower, the allies, the internal political forces or even the officer corps) but they only made things worse and prepare delusions, cutbacks and problems. The risk, already run several times during the Republic, of having too large a structure if compared to the available resources, should have taught that this inevitably leads to successive reductions, “restructurings”, cuts.

12. A Few Sketchy Conclusions

The availability of documentary sources and therefore the knowledge of the history of the Italian Republic’s defence policy are still too scarce for allowing definite conclusions⁴². But what we know about the afore mentioned periods and sub-periods can give at least a general impression.

Of course the history of the military dimension of Italian democracy is the story of an exceptional transformation, from the poor conditions in the first post-war period to nowadays, when the size and the relevance of the national Armed Forces rightly count them among those of the main world powers. Of course Italian Armed Forces have nowadays several peaks of excellence, as more generally happens to the whole country.

But this satisfied analysis must not be considered sufficient. The matter is the relationship between those peaks and the rest. From this point of view it is clear that some continuity emerges, not only in the long winters of the Cold War, but even between bipolarism and post-bipolarism, thus reaching the present days⁴³. Military history of the Republic rather surprisingly proposes again elements of histories already heard in one century and half of united Italy, from the liberal age to Fascism, from the First to the Second World War. These long-standing elements speak of inter-services rivalries, un-coordinated planning, scarce efficiency, and also vain ambitions and parochial illusions of national autonomy, oscillations between reduced national resources⁴⁴ and diversified and irreconcilable requests from the services. And all these elements can be also found in the Republican age.

Of course, Italian military has enormously changed too. They entered the Republic coming from the defeat of the Fascist war, the tragedy of September 8, 1943 and the division of the civil war. On the contrary nowadays Italian officers are now some of the most internationalized and modernized public servants. Obviously a military sub-culture and a military-civilian gap resist, like in any other country. But the integration with society is deeper than it used to be in Italy, where the Army was locked in its barracks and the military-

⁴² We pointed it out several times. See, inter alia, Labanca, Nicola (2005): “Note sui bilanci della Repubblica. Una fonte trascurata”, in Rainero, Romain H.; Alberini, Paolo (ed.) (2005): *Le forze armate e la nazione italiana (1944-1989)*, Roma, Commissione italiana di storia militare (Cism), and Labanca, Nicola (2006): “Musei militari, società nazionale, ricerca scientifica”, in Giannone, Giuliano (ed.) (2006): *Archivi, biblioteche, musei militari. lo stato attuale, le funzioni sociali, gli sviluppi*, Roma, Cism.

⁴³ See Battistelli, Fabrizio (1996): *Soldati. Sociologia dei militari italiani nell'era del peace-keeping*, Milano, Angeli.

⁴⁴ For all see Mayer, Giuseppe (1994): “Una serie storica della spesa della Difesa in Italia (1945/46-1993)”, *Quaderno 1993* (Società di storia militare), vol. 1994, and already *Id.* (1992): *L'evoluzione del bilancio della Difesa dal 1975 ai primi anni '90*, Sma, Roma.



civilians gap often coincided with right-left political cleavages. Even the Cold War atmosphere is now over, when being a military man and not being a supporter of the government was inconceivable, because this meant that you were considered and persecuted as an internal “fifth column” of the international “red” adversary. Now, at least, it is not anymore necessarily so. There are no longer conscripts. Non-commissioned officers and professional soldiers tend to mix. But old prejudices remain and give a measure of the still insufficient Italian social and cultural modernization.

We have already mentioned that several studies are still to be carried out. However, what surely emerges from this review is that the military dimension of the history of Italian Republic is not anymore negligible. It is relevant both in itself and with regard to the resources of the country. Above all, researching and writing military history of the Italian Republic is neither a technical history nor a minor one. In the end, when the necessary documents will be available, it will be more clear the central relevance for the post-bipolar Italy, definitely not a low-profile one, of political decisions like the Italian participation to the two Gulf wars, in 1991 and in 2003, to operations in Somalia⁴⁵ and former Yugoslavia, in Kosovo and Afghanistan⁴⁶ and so on.

In short, the history of the military dimension of the Italian Republic is not a minor history. Continuity and discontinuity are intertwined in it, going beyond the traditional division between bipolar age and post-bipolarism, reproducing the whole profile of one of the biggest, most complex and articulate questions of national history, whose study has been unfortunately undervalued and neglected up to now.

⁴⁵ See Del Boca, Angelo (2009): “Somalia 1992-94 e 1997. A volte tornano”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica:...” , *op. cit.*, pp. 771-786.

⁴⁶ See Mini, Fabio (2009): “Afghanistan 2001... Sulle montagne di Bin Laden”, in Labanca, Nicola (ed.), “Le armi della Repubblica:...” , *op. cit.*, pp. 787-808.





ITALY'S NUCLEAR CHOICES

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Abstract:

Italy's military nuclear policy throughout the Cold War was an attempt to foster the country's aspirations to a position of parity among the other European powers. The issue of its own rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers had been central in its foreign policy since the birth of the country, and the new generation of politicians that shaped Italian foreign policy after the Second World War was no less aware of this critical factor than their predecessors. The nuclearization of NATO made it inevitable that only those countries which had access to nuclear weapons would ultimately make the crucial decisions for the future of the alliance. The Italian government reached the conclusion that its only way to a nuclear status of some sorts would be through a close cooperation with NATO and the USA. Between 1955 and 1959, the acceptance of US nuclear weapons on Italian soil eventually evolved into a pattern that formed the basis for Italian nuclear policies for the next 10 years or so. Italy was very reluctant to ratify the NPT and this led to a strong behind the scenes alliance with the other main Western European opponents, the Federal Republic of Germany and a wide ranging series of contacts with all the other possible opponents to the treaty, from Japan to India. In 1979, Italy accepted the new Euromissiles on its territory. Again, Italy considered nuclear weapons as its winning card and the tool has to be used to shorten the gap with the other major European partners. The crucial relationship with the USA goes a long way in explaining the rationale of Italy's nuclear policies. Since the USA had become the key pillar of its international orientation, it was clear that hosting US nuclear devices was also seen as a way of forging a closer partnership. The ultimate goal of Italian foreign policy, equality of status among the Western Europeans, remained a mirage all along. Yet at the same time the fact that Italy was willing to shoulder some of the risks and burdens of the nuclear deployments were regarded by the other West European governments, and above all by the USA, as a sign of growing Italian responsibility.

Keywords: Nuclear Weapons, Armed Forces, NATO, US-Italian Relations.

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**Resumen:**

La política militar y nuclear italiana a lo largo de la Guerra Fría intentó promover las aspiraciones del país de conseguir una posición de paridad con otras potencias europeas. El tema de su propio rango y posición en la jerarquía internacional de potencias fue central en su política exterior desde el nacimiento mismo del país, y la nueva generación de políticos que dieron forma a la política exterior italiana tras la Segunda Guerra Mundial no eran menos conscientes de tan crítico factor que sus predecesores. La nuclearización de la OTAN hizo inevitable que solo aquellos países que tuvieran acceso a las bombas nucleares acabasen tomando las decisiones más cruciales en el futuro de la alianza. El gobierno italiano llegó a la conclusión de que la única manera de alcanzar el estatus nuclear era a través de una estrecha colaboración con la OTAN y los EEUU. Entre 1955 y 1959 la aceptación de bombas nucleares en territorio italiano acabó evolucionando hacia un patrón que formó la base de las políticas nucleares italianas en los 10 años siguientes. Italia era muy reticente a la firma del NPT y ello llevó a establecer una alianza con los principales oponentes europeos, la República Federal Alemana entre ellos, y a establecer una larga serie de contactos con otros posibles opositores al tratado, desde Japón a la India. En 1979 Italia aceptó la presencia de los nuevos Euromisiles en su territorio, considerando de nuevo a los Euromisiles como carta ganadora, un instrumento a usar para reducir las diferencias con otros socios europeos. La relación crucial con los EEUU explica en gran parte las razones de Italia para construir su política nuclear. Desde que los EEUU se convirtiesen en el pilar principal de su orientación internacional, estaba claro que albergar armas nucleares americanas era considerado como un medio para reforzar la asociación. El fin último de la política exterior italiana, la igualdad de estatus con sus socios europeos, no dejó de ser una mera ilusión a lo largo de esos años. Sin embargo, el hecho de que Italia estuviese dispuesta a soportar el peso de los despliegues nucleares fue visto por parte de otros gobiernos de Europa Occidental, y sobre todo por los EEUU, como un signo de responsabilidad italiana.

Palabras clave: Armas nucleares, Fuerzas Armadas, OTAN, relaciones EEUU-Italia.

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1. Introduction

From the mid-fifties to the early 1990s Italy saw the deployment of several hundred US nuclear warheads and delivery systems, ranging from the thermonuclear warheads of the IRBM *Jupiter* and of the Cruise missiles *Gryphon*, to the smaller tactical ones installed on short range missiles such as the *Corporal*, the *Honest John*, the *Sergeant* and the *Lance* (not to mention some of the other devices such as gravitational bombs, land mines or dual-use artillery). Throughout the Cold War, in other words, Italy had an important military nuclear policy and it was one of the most important nuclear bases of Western Europe – together with Great Britain, France and West Germany. And yet, while there is a significant scholarly literature about the historical relevance of the nuclear choices of the other Western European countries, the Italian decisions have not attracted much attention from historians or political scientists – be they scholars of Italian foreign policy, of NATO, or more in general of nuclear proliferation². In my own book on this topic, therefore, I have tried to fill this gap by looking at some of the key nuclear decisions the Italian government made from the mid-fifties up to the early 1980s, stressing the remarkable continuity in the Italian attitude towards nuclear deployments and sketching out a possible interpretative paradigm³. In this essay, I will try to sum up the key findings of this research as well as my main interpretative theses. The key question which the paper addresses is that Italy was clearly a state which had the technical, scientific, and economic potential to go nuclear at the national level, and which clearly attached a lot of importance to all matters related to status and prestige. And yet, after it flirted with the idea of going nuclear and tried out a number of alternative solutions to a national option, it grunted and complained at the perspective of signing the NPT but eventually abode by the rules and decided to accept a permanent non-nuclear status. Why? What were the key variables that explained this outcome? I think that answering these questions might prove a useful exercise not only for the rather limited field of the history of Italian foreign policy, but also for those interested in non-proliferation as a broader topic.

² Kohl, Wilfred L. (1971): *French Nuclear Diplomacy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press; Mongin, Dominique (1997): *La bombe atomique française, 1945-1958*, Bruxelles, Bruylant; Pô, Jean-Damien (2001): *Les moyens de la puissance: les activités militaires du Cea, 1945-2000*, Paris, Ellipses - Fondation pour la recherche stratégique; Pagedas, Constantine A. (2000): *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem, 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership*, London and Portland, Frank Cass; Regnault, Jean-Marc (1993): *La bombe française dans le Pacifique: l'implantation, 1957-1964*, Tahiti, Scoop Editions; Vaïsse, Maurice and Barbier, Colette (eds.) (1994): *La France et l'atome: études d'histoire nucléaire*, Bruxelles, Bruylant; Yost, David S. (1985): *France's deterrent posture and security in Europe*, 2 vols., Adelphi Papers Nos. 194-195, London, International Institute for Strategic Studies. On Great Britain, see among many, Baylis, John and Macmillan, Alan (eds.) (1992): *The foundations of British nuclear strategy, 1945-1960*, Aberystwyth, Dept. of International Politics University College of Wales; Beach, Hugh and Gurr, Nadine (1999): *Flattering the Passions, Or, the Bomb and Britain's Bid for a World Role*, London, I.B. Tauris; Clark, Ian (1994): *Nuclear Diplomacy and the Special Relationship: Britain's Deterrent and America, 1957-1962*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; Holdstock, Douglas and Barnaby, Frank (eds.) (2003): *The British nuclear weapons programme, 1952-2002*, London, Frank Cass; Navias, Martin S. (1991): *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning, 1955-1958*, Oxford and New York, Clarendon Press. On the Federal Republic of Germany, Bald, Detlef (1994): *Die Atombewaffnung der Bundeswehr: Militaer, Öffentlichkeit und Politik in der Ära Adenauer*, Bremen, Temmen - Schriftenreihe des Wissenschaftlichen Forums für internationale Sicherheit E.V.; Buchholz, Frank (1991): *Strategische und Militaerpolitische Diskussionen in der Gründungsphase der Bundeswehr 1949-1960*, Frankfurt am Main and New York, Peter Lang; McArdle Kelleher, Catherine (1975): *Germany & the politics of nuclear weapons*, New York, Columbia University Press; Kuentzel, Matthias (1995): *Bonn & the Bomb: German Politics and the Nuclear Option*, London, Boulder and Amsterdam, Pluto Press with Transnational Institute (TNI); Tuschhoff, Christian (2003): *Deutschland, Kernwaffen und die NATO 1949-1967: zum Zusammenhalt von und friedlichem Wandel in Bündnissen*, Baden-Baden, Nomos.

³ Nuti, Leopoldo, “‘Me too, please’: Italy and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons, 1945-1975”, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1993), pp. 114-148.



2. The Aftermath of the Second World War

For Italy, the early aftermath of the Second World War was clearly dominated by some key priorities, such as avoiding a punitive peace treaty and implementing the economic and political reconstruction of the country. Yet it is interesting to note how even in those early days, at a stage when the country was completely in ruins and shattered by the war, the Italian military were already taking stock of the impact of the new weapons for the future of warfare. In the early months after the end of the Second World War there are already a few, scant traces of the first reflections about the impact of the nuclear explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and both the military and the scientists seem to share the conclusion that the bomb had ushered in a new era in the International system. The most widespread impression was that the new dramatic changes would definitely have a negative implication for Italy's international standing, somehow confirming the disastrous impact of the Second World War and further marginalizing Italy in the International context. The history of the military nuclear policy followed by Italy throughout the Cold War is therefore the history of an attempt to minimize this initial handicap or at least to minimize its consequences for the country's aspirations to a position of parity among the other European powers.

The Italian armed forces, in particular, showed a strong interest for the new weapons and the new technology, which is clearly testified by a relevant number of articles in the military journals of the time and, above all, by the participation of the Ministry of Defence and by the Foreign Ministry in a prolonged debate with the National Research Centre and other public institutions about the creation of a joint commission that would study all possible applications of nuclear energy – civilian and military. The documentary record shows a long, protracted debate about who should control this new body and what exactly its role should be. It is at this time – 1950-1951 – that a fracture became evident between the military and the civilians, a break which eventually led to the creation of two entirely separated research structures, the CNRN (*Comitato Nazionale per le Ricerche Nucleari*, National Commission for Nuclear Research) in 1952 and the CAMEN (*Centro Applicazioni Militari Energia Nucleare*, Center for the Military Applications of Nuclear Energy) in 1955.

The reasons for the fracture must be found in the animosity, resentment and lack of mutual trust between the two groups, and perhaps in the armed forces' attraction for possible bizarre shortcuts to nuclear technology. In 1952, the Italian military went as far as allowing a real crank, an amateurish scientist by the unlikely name of Ubaldo Loschi (*Loschi* in Italian means shady, devious) to use an Army facility on the beach at Nettuno – not far from Rome – and run an experiment on how to produce a thermonuclear explosion by exploiting electromagnetic waves (an alternative route, it was somewhat apologetically explained later on, to the more expensive approach of using a nuclear bomb as a detonator). Fortunately the test failed and the eternal city was spared from its consequences. While the whole episode is quite farcical and rich in amusing details, it had quite an impact on the Italian media and for a while the national press published several articles on the possible implications of an unlikely success.

The search for alternative shortcuts to the new technologies was clearly influenced by the attitude of the scientific community. The story of Italian nuclear physics rotates around the crucial figure of Edoardo Amaldi, one of Enrico Fermi's best students and key collaborators, who had taken over the leadership of Fermi's group after the departure of the mentor and of some of the other key members. Amaldi was such an important personality that at one time during the war the American OSS developed a plan for persuading him to escape from Rome lest he contributed to the Nazi war effort. Yet there was no need to mount such a daredevil



operation: sometime in 1941, for fear of being asked to work at possible military applications of nuclear energy, Amaldi and the rest of Fermi's group decided to switch their research interests in a totally different direction and dropped nuclear research altogether.

The consequences of these decisions were quite significant. The main Italian school of nuclear physics, the one which had produced world-class results in the 1930s, had taken a hostile attitude towards military applications of nuclear research at a very early stage⁴. This attitude will remain consistent for all of the Cold War: from his personal records, it clearly comes out that Amaldi was willing to pledge some minimal collaboration to the defence ministry, but only in terms of assisting the Italian armed forces in studying and developing possible forms of defence against nuclear weapons. In the long run, Amaldi became one of the leading personalities of the Pugwash movement and remained in its Council from 1958 until 1973. In short, this entailed that any possible scientific inquiry in the military applications of nuclear energy would have to be carried out by second rate scientists and against the opposition of the country's leading physicists.

3. The Nuclear Sharing Debate, 1955-1968

What had been an already significant interest for the military applications of nuclear energy was strengthened by the 1951 agreement between Italy and the NATO Allies to cancel the military clauses of the peace treaty and, above all, by the nuclear revolution introduced by the Eisenhower administration in NATO strategy. The former implied that there were no formal restrictions on whatever rearmament Italy now intended to implement and therefore opened up a number of possibilities, but it was the latter event that had a profound consequence on the Italian attitude towards nuclear weapons. By making them the central pillar of NATO's security, the Eisenhower administration clearly enhanced the interest of the Western Europeans in their control – even before the Russian technological breakthroughs of 1957 reinforced the European concern and turned the issue of *nuclear sharing* into the most critical dilemma of Transatlantic relations for the next 8-10 years.

Italy was no exception to the growth of European interest for the political implications of the nuclearization of the Atlantic alliance. One may even argue that Italy was more sensitive to this issue than some of the other European countries: the issue of its own rank and collocation in the international hierarchy of powers had been central in its foreign policy since the birth of the country, and the new generation of politicians that shaped Italian foreign policy after the Second World War was no less aware of this critical factor than their predecessors – if anything, the attention to all matters of status and prestige was reinforced by the consequences of the peace treaty. This was a group of diplomats and politicians which had grown up in a cultural milieu attaching the greatest importance to the attainment of a status of parity in the European context, and to them this goal remained crucial even in the new international environment of the post-war years. As one of the country's leading diplomats, Massimo Magistrati, remarked in 1953, the nuclearization of NATO made it inevitable that only those countries which had access to nuclear weapons would ultimately make the crucial decisions for the future of the alliance⁵. Other ones would also repeatedly argue that parity among the Western Europeans was indispensable to facilitate the development of European

⁴ Amaldi, Edoardo (1997): *Da via Panisperna all'America. I fisici italiani e la seconda guerra mondiale*, a cura di G. Battimelli and M. De Maria, Roma, Editori Riuniti.

⁵ "M. Magistrati a P. Quaroni", 18 December 1953, *ASMAE, Ambasciata di Parigi*, b. 18, fasc. PA.



integration, and that it was important to avoid any discrimination of ranking among the European powers. Hence the importance attached to any factor that could modify the country's status in a direction or the other.

The peculiar feature of the Italian reaction to the nuclear revolution of the 1950s was its reliance on a strategy of cooperation, particularly with the United States: Italy did take some steps at a national level, such as the establishment of the CAMEN, but above all it displayed from very early on a strong interest in developing an Atlantic framework to solve the problem of access to the new technology. This approach would remain consistent for the whole period in which nuclear sharing remained at the centre of the Transatlantic security debate.

The pattern was already established by the end of 1955. In the book I discuss at length the creation of the Southern European Task Force (SETAF), the American unit which was established in Northern Italy by October 1955 and which was later to be equipped with tactical nuclear weapons such as the *Honest Johns* and the *Corporal* rockets. The deployment of SETAF proved to be a formative experience for both sides, and its negotiations offer an important precedent which would be repeated in many of the subsequent cases. From the Italian perspective, it is important to note the emphasis that the agreement be presented as a *multilateral NATO* initiative, rather than an Italian-American one, in order to minimize possible hostile repercussions. It is also interesting to note how Italy tried to drive a hard bargain in the sense of minimizing the economic costs and of reaping some additional military advantage: not only the government tried to eschew the implicit economic costs of the deployment (such as housing of the US troops) by asking that they be taken up by the US; but it also tried to obtain from NATO a package deal which would reward Italy for hosting the new American forces by supporting a plan for strengthening the Italian ones as well. Finally, it's important to note that the Italian government was fully aware that the new SETAF unit might already be (and would certainly be in the future) equipped with tactical nuclear weapons, and that it agreed that the matter should be handled as routine, without any particular emphasis, in order to reduce any possible political backlash:

General Michaelis inferentially inquired whether Ambassador Rossi Longhi perceived any difficulty involved in such routine introduction of weapons possessing atomic capability. Amb. Rossi Longhi responded immediately [...] that this was *of course* [author's emphasis] the way the matter should be handled – without any special announcement or fanfare and treating the introduction of such weapons as the normal procedure that it is, while at the same time underscoring that it is a question of potential capability rather than of a present stockpile in Italy of atomic warheads⁶.

This would become the standard way of handling the issue through most of the subsequent negotiations whenever a new US weapon system had to be introduced. In the case of the negotiations for the *Jupiter* missiles, for instance, prime minister Fanfani used almost the same words: when he met with President Eisenhower to discuss the issue of a possible deployment of the *Jupiters* in Italy, the Italian PM said that the best way to handle the deployment was not to emphasize it at all, and “work it out as routine by the military” an

⁶ “Foreign Service Despatch 499 from Rome to the Dept. of State”, 12 September 1955, *NAW, RG 59, CDF, 740.5 Nato Affairs / US Europe Defense*.



approach that Eisenhower fully shared⁷. Quite similarly, the Fanfani government drove a very hard bargain from an economic point of view, succeeding in having the US paying a large part of the expenses for the *Jupiter* deployment.

By the late Fifties, therefore, the Italian government had become quite active in a range of initiatives related to military applications of nuclear power, all of which were based on a close cooperation with the US, and in late 1960 had followed the example of other NATO countries and concluded an agreement with the US on the uses of atomic energy for mutual defense⁸. The only exception to this pattern was the well-known short-lived experiment of a Franco-Italo-German consortium to produce nuclear weapons, which can be safely assumed to have been conceived – at least as far as Italy was concerned – as just one more way to put pressure on the US to be more forthcoming in its approach to nuclear sharing⁹.

The tip of the iceberg, obviously, was the *Jupiter* deal which led to the deployment of 30 US IRBM missiles in Italy from 1960 to 1963, under a dual key formula. But other contemporary arrangements involved the January 13, 1962, exchange of notes between the two governments, regulating the presence of US nuclear stockpiles in Italy; the deployment of some 90 anti-aircraft nuclear-tipped *Nike-Hercules* missiles in 1960; the probable deployment of an uncertain number of so-called ADMs (Atomic Demolition Munitions), or atomic land mines, along the border with Yugoslavia and Austria; and the arrival in the early 1960s of a number of dual-use weapons, such as the *Starfighter* fighter-bombers or the 8inch self-propelled howitzers. In short, at the time when nuclear sharing was fast becoming the central theme of Atlantic relations, the Italian government reached the conclusion that its only way to a nuclear status of some sorts would be through a close cooperation with NATO and the US – a strategy which was for quite some time fully compatible with the nuclear-sharing schemes put forward by the late Eisenhower administration, as well as with the more general US interest in strengthening the Western military posture. As Marc Trachtenberg has noted, moreover, all these nuclear sharing schemes developed in the late Eisenhower years had a rather ambiguous meaning, since they could “function as a bridge to the acquisition by the Europeans of nuclear capabilities under their own control”¹⁰: such an ambiguity probably explains the Italian interest in a NATO solution for joint control of atomic weapons which in time might give Italy a stronger voice in the decision to use the Alliance's nuclear arsenal.

The rationale of the Italian approach is clearly spelled out in some of the documents of the Italian foreign ministry. Here is an example of the motivation for the Italian decision to accept the *Jupiter*, as stated in a letter to the Foreign Minister by the Italian representative at the NATO Council, ambassador Alessandrini:

⁷ For the talk with Eisenhower, see “State (Dulles) to Paris, tel. 413” 30 July 1958, *NAW*, RG 59, 711.56365/7-3058, b. 2906. See also “State Memorandum on IRBM agreement with Italy”, from “EUR/RA Robert H. McBride to L/SFP Mr. Yingling”, 07 August 1958, *NAW*, RG 59, 765.5611/8-758, b. 3622.

⁸ The Italian Defence Staff was particularly interested in avoiding a wording of the agreement that might prevent any future provision of nuclear weapons and special nuclear materials, and it tried in vain to obtain at least a new definition of the scope of the treaty which would leave the door open to the release of such materials. A final text was therefore postponed until late 1960, and the agreement was signed on December 3, 1960. “Agreement for cooperation on the uses of atomic energy for mutual defense purposes”, in Turco, Emanuele (ed.) (1975): *The Bilateral Treaties in Force between the U.S.A. and Italy = I trattati bilaterali in vigore tra l'Italia e gli S.U.A.*, 2 vols., Roma, International Publishing Enterprises, T 82. The position of the Defence Staff in “Attività del 3 Reparto durante il mese di gennaio 1960”, *AUSSME*, DS SMD.

⁹ For an analysis of the attempt at Franco-Italo-German cooperation, see the articles by Barbier, Colette; Conze, Eckart and Nuti, Leopoldo in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* no. 1-2 (1990).

¹⁰ Trachtenberg, Marc (1991): *History and Strategy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, p. 188.



At this time the interest of the United States for the Alliance is perhaps at its climax. The alliance does not provide the US with much assistance, but it does offer a primary help ... the use of its bases as launching pads. When the US will have its ICBMs, this interest is bound to decrease and perhaps by then a direct negotiation between Moscow and Washington will develop into a concrete possibility. But for the time being Italy's position in NATO is at its zenith for Washington [...] because of the importance that the intermediate missiles still enjoy, and because we have accepted them in Italy. This clearly marks an increase in the help we offer to the US and it marks an increase in the risks which our country will run into, in case of war. We may even say that for the time being we are closer to the nuclear club than France is, not because we produce the warheads but because we host them on our territory. This I believe is a very strong argument both for thwarting the attempt to build a [tripartite] directorate in NATO and for demanding a more active Italian participation to the shaping of the Alliance's common policy¹¹.

And then Ambassador Pietromarchi, from Russia:

Italy is the only country in continental Europe who has deployed some missile ramps which can directly hit in depth the Soviet Union. England aside, it's the only European country which can respond to the Soviet nuclear threat blow by blow. This clearly strengthens the effectiveness of our armed forces¹².

And again, in a succinct yet remarkably explicit way, ambassador Rossi Longhi, in December 1958: "the missiles are the strongest political card Italy has in its hands today, and our relationship with the United States will be positively influenced by them"¹³. In short, between 1955 and 1959 the acceptance of US nuclear weapons on Italian soil eventually evolved into a pattern that formed the basis for Italian nuclear policies for the next 10 years or so.

4. Changing Course

All this came to a halt as a consequence of the Kennedy administration's gradual implementation of its change of strategy. As the US slowly backed away from Eisenhower's nuclear sharing approaches, Italy found itself fighting a rearguard battle to try to keep alive a number of schemes that would keep open at least the virtual option, if not the material possibility, of a multilateral access to a joint nuclear arsenal. The list is long – from the many efforts to make the MLF work, to the attempts to create an inner control group in NATO which would have the ultimate power to decide the use of the Alliance's nuclear weapons, to

¹¹ "A. Alessandrini al presidente del Consiglio", 24 November 1958, *ASMAE, Amb. Parigi. 1951-1955*, b. 80.

¹² "Appunto dated 8 aprile 1959", in B. Bagnato (ed.) (2002): *I diari di Luca Pietromarchi ambasciatore italiano a Mosca (1958-1961)*, Firenze, Olschki, p. 182.

¹³ "A. Rossi Longhi al presidente del Consiglio", 19 December 1958, *ASMAE, Amb. Parigi 1951-1955*, b. 81, f. R.



the interest in joining the Nuclear Planning Group as a permanent member. But the motivation did not change, as the Vice Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Roberto Ducci, made clear to the US ambassador, Frederick Reinhardt, in early 1964: all these initiatives, explained Ducci, were meant to achieve “a first class status” in NATO strategic planning, a status which Italy could acquire only either through a multilateral approach or through a national choice along the French or British pattern¹⁴.

This persistent hope that only through NATO and US help could Italy reach this most cherished goal goes a long way in explaining the anger and frustration that were generated by the revelation that Washington would eventually abandon all the previous nuclear sharing schemes in favour of a non-proliferation agreement with the Soviet Union. This was a shattering blow for Italy’s nuclear policy, as it clearly spelled the end of all its ambitions unless the country was willing to adopt a national option. Some of the most interesting evidence that I have collected for my book is related to the protracted struggle against the non-proliferation treaty. Here we basically have three new sets of sources, namely the German documents on German-Italian relations, a collection of Ministry of foreign affairs documents from its Arms Control and Disarmament office, and the newly declassified Fanfani diaries. The last is perhaps the most interesting, as some of its entries offer an entirely new perspective on the sharpness of the internal debate generated by the US decision to conclude a NPT with the Soviet Union. The evidence is still limited, but revealing: Fanfani’s journal is the first source that explicitly mentions a meeting of the Supreme Defence Council on February 20, 1967, summoned to discuss the joint US-Soviet NPT draft presented to the NATO allies in December 1966. At the meeting, Fanfani noticed a radical and widespread hostility against the NPT among almost all the members of the government, particularly against “the unlimited discrimination between nuclear and non-nuclear states proposed by the draft treaty”. President of the Republic Giuseppe Saragat, in particular, seemed to Fanfani to have adopted a strongly nationalist attitude and to be ready to sponsor a national nuclear option. This was contested by some of the more moderate figures such as the Minister of Interior, Paolo Emilio Taviani, and Finance Minister Emilio Colombo, and eventually a national option was discarded. Yet the Council approved a policy of sharp criticism of the treaty, and it called for a substantial revision of its clauses¹⁵.

This in turn led to a strong behind the scenes alliance with the other main Western European opponent of the NPT, the Federal Republic of Germany. Prime Minister Moro and German Chancellor Kurt-Georg Kiesinger repeatedly shared their criticisms of the NPT and discussed how best to coordinate their countries’ campaign against the treaty without giving the appearance of ganging up – an appearance to be avoided at all costs given the strong resemblance with their unfortunate military alliance of the Second World War. Both favoured enforcing a limited duration of the treaty, resented its discriminations, doubted the motivations of the US in concluding an agreement with the USSR, and agreed that a treaty that would forever freeze the differences among the Western European states by dividing them in nuclear and non-nuclear ones would be a most severe obstacle for the future of European integration – possibly dealing it a fatal blow in terms of an evolution towards a Federal solution¹⁶. Finally, the documents from the Disarmament Bureau of the Foreign

¹⁴ “Tel. 2219 from Embassy Rome (Reinhardt) to secretary of State”, 18 February 1964, *NARA, RG, 59, Lot file assistant secretary for the MLF, b. 7, f. European clause*.

¹⁵ 20 February 1967, *Archivio Storico Senato, Diario Fanfani, Carte Fanfani*.

¹⁶ „Anlage zu Abschluss eines Non-Proliferations-Vertrages“, 12 January 1967, *PAAB, B. 150*; “Appunto, Memorandum tedesco sul Trattato di non proliferazione”, 13 April 1967, *ASMAE, Fondo Bettini, b. 1*; Grewe, Wilhelm (1979): *Ruckblenden*, Berlin, Propyläen, p. 699; Masala, Carlo (1998): *Italia und Germania. Die*



Ministry show a wide ranging series of contacts with all the other possible opponents to the treaty, from Japan to India, and a consistent, protracted effort to introduce into its text a number of revisions which would attenuate its impact on Italy's non-nuclear status and reduce what were perceived as its negative and most discriminating consequences. Altogether, these sources confirm the profound disappointment with a treaty that amounted to a basic denial of the logic that Italy had followed until then and that forced it to reverse its attitude towards nuclear weapons – and even to rethink its relationship with then United States. Here is an excellent example that reveals the depth of the resentment:

The Russians and the Americans behave as if in this negotiation they were debating their own mutual obligations and as if they were protecting their own direct and immediate interests. Actually the negotiation is dealing exclusively with the obligations and the duties of third parties, namely the non-nuclear countries, and with the limitations to the interests of the latter. The behaviour and the expectations of both the Russians and the Americans, therefore [...] are inconceivable: they can be understood only if we were in a situation where the two superpowers had the right, and the power, to impose a “diktat” upon the non-nuclear countries¹⁷.

And yet, after all the resentments had been expressed, and after a long and harsh domestic debate that prevented Italy from ratifying for 6 long years (1969 to 1975), eventually Italy did ratify the treaty and joined the NPT regime. This is a period which deserves further investigation in order to clarify what were the crucial variables that tilted the balance in favour of this choice. As things stand now, since many of the necessary Italian sources are not yet fully available, it is only possible to advance some very tentative hypotheses, which I will do in the second part of the paper.

5. The Last Battle

The hostility towards the NPT clearly affected Italy's attitude during the long Transatlantic debate on the possible deployment of a new generation of American intermediate nuclear forces in Europe (Long Range Theatre Nuclear Forces, or LRTNF). It is important to stress that some Italian diplomats expressed their strong interest in the deployment of the new weapons even *before* the Italian government felt the sting of its exclusion from the famous Guadeloupe meeting of January 1979 where the crucial decisions were taken – and which is usually considered as the main catalyst for the enthusiasm displayed by the Italian government towards the Euromissiles in late 1979. During the meetings of the NATO High Level Group, in 1978, the members of the Italian delegation had already expressed their favour for the modernization of NATO's nuclear forces and had already taken up the issue with their government. Surprisingly, it was the Italian military who seemed to have been more sceptical about the possible advantages of a new deployment, as they (correctly, one should say in retrospective) doubted the possibility that the US would allow the Italian armed forces to share in the control of the new weapons by re-introducing a real dual-key system. Then

deutsche-italienische Beziehungen 1963-1969, Köln, SH-Verlag, p. 212. Above all, see „Aufzeichnung“, 28 April 1967, *PAAA*, B. 150; and „Aufzeichnung“, 05 Juni 1967, *PAAA*, B. 150.

¹⁷ “Appunto. Posizione sovietica sul trattato di non-diffusione delle armi nucleari”, 17 May 1967, *ASMAE, Fondo Bettini*, b. 2.



there is no doubt that the Guadeloupe meeting cut this Gordian knot of indecisions and spurred the government to demonstrate its willingness: in an exchange of letters between the ministries of defense and foreign affairs in early 1979, the latter clearly expressed the linkage between Italy's exclusion by the summit and its willingness to play an active role in the rearmament process¹⁸. And the words of the doyen of Italian diplomacy, former Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry Roberto Ducci, clearly reveal how deep was the bruise caused by the exclusion at Guadeloupe: "The photographs of the four big ones in colourful shirts and the glass of Players' Punch in their hands were spread cross the globe", he wrote in 1980, adding with an ill-disguised *schadenfreude*, "even if they didn't bring much luck to them, particularly to Carter and Callaghan"¹⁹.

What is even more interesting is the long-term continuity between the attitude displayed towards the Euromissiles and the previous choices of the 1950s. Here is Ducci again, this time in a confidential letter to the Minister of foreign affairs, written a few weeks before his retirement:

Thanks to its participation to the modernization program of the Atlantic nuclear arsenal, as well as to the *de facto* downgrading of the smaller allies, Italy now has the chance *for the first time since the end of the war* (Author's emphasis) to become a member of the Western negotiating group that will *de facto* conduct the global negotiations with the Soviet Union – a negotiation which will take place in different ways, at different times, and whose existence will often be denied. I do not doubt that this chance, which for the time being is mostly theoretical, may become a concrete one – as long as our government has the political willingness, and our diplomacy succeeds, in what will be their greatest mission in the second half of the century. Namely, to find a place, in a position of parity with the big ones and therefore of full dignity, in the negotiations for a truce first, and for a peace settlement later²⁰.

Even in this case, therefore, the new documentation shows the perception of nuclear weapons as Italy's winning card, the tool to be used to shorten the gap with the other major European partners. The language is almost the same as the one used at the time of the *Jupiters*, more than twenty years before: the obsessive impression of an all-powerful ruling circle of the international system from which Italy is excluded, the need to find a way to reverse this situation and the search for a gambit that would allow Italy to be finally counted in. And the impression of continuity with the previous policies of the 1950s and the 1970s is strengthened by the fact that Italian diplomats emphasized the importance of the new weapons even *before* Italy's powerlessness had been rubbed in by the Guadeloupe meeting. From there to the conclusion that the deployment of the new missiles could offer an opportunity to reopen the debate sealed by the ratification of the NPT, it was a very short step indeed. It should come as no surprise, then, that at the time of the deployment of the new weapons someone among the military and the diplomats actually suggested that Italy should reconsider its status as a non-

¹⁸ Ciarrapico, Antonio: "Rapporti Est-Ovest 1977-79. La vicenda degli Euromissili", *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, vol. 69, no. 3(2002), pp. 363-380, esp. pp. 375-376.

¹⁹ Ducci, Roberto: "L'Italia e il direttorio occidentale", *Il Tempo*, 26 December 1980. I am greatly indebted to Amb. Guido Lenzi for sharing with me his collection of Ducci's writings.

²⁰ "TE Ris. dall'Ambasciata di Londra al Ministro degli Esteri, "Il posto dell'Italia nel mondo", 12 December 1979, *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* (n. d.), *Roberto Ducci*, Collana di testi diplomatici, vol. 13, Roma: Servizio Storico e documentazione MAE, p. 225.



nuclear country. Nor should it be much of a surprise the fact that Italy seems to have been the only Western European country to insist with the US that a real dual key arrangement be worked out for control of the missiles.

6. Some Possible Interpretations

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this story. The first one is that the nuclear choices made by Italy during the whole length of the Cold War were the almost exclusive property of a rather small elite of politicians, diplomats and military officers, strictly Atlanticist in their political orientation and professional upbringing, who kept the technical and political debate within some very narrow limits. Only rarely were some of these decisions debated in front of Italian public opinion. This was a very deliberate choice: in almost all the cases, the members of the Italian government openly told their American counterparts that Italy was fully willing to deploy the new delivery systems that the US was presenting to its European allies, but at the same time they almost always stressed that it was important that this be done as quietly as possible, *sottovoce*, in order not to arouse the wrath of the Communist opposition – at least in the early stages of the decision-making process. In a sharply polarized political system such as the Italian one, this approach should not come as a surprise and can clearly be seen as a consequence of the Cold war fractures that split asunder Italian politics and society for almost fifty years.

Given this persistency in sheltering the decision-making process from the possible intrusions of public opinion, one might be tempted to draw the conclusion that the substance of Italian nuclear policy was therefore shaped and conditioned by the presence on the Italian political scene of a strong leftist opposition, pro-Soviet and anti-American, which would have clearly opposed a national choice of the French or British kind and which forced the government to cover its tracks and act behind the scenes – eventually selecting those options which would elicit the weakest possible resistance. Yet I believe that this is just one part of the explanation, and probably not even the most important. The strength of the PCI and of the pro-Soviet left explains *how* Italian nuclear policies were conducted, but does not explain their nature. If one looks at the choices made during almost the whole period from the 1950s to the early 1980s, in other words, the role of the leftist opposition should not be overrated. Anytime the government was asked by the US to accept the deployment of a new nuclear weapon system on Italian territory, the leftist forces never succeeded in mobilizing public opinion to the extent required for seriously hampering the decision making process. Nor were any more effective, from this point of view, those peace movements that in the 1950s blatantly revealed their pro-Soviet orientation. As Lawrence Wittner has suggested, the Communist Party's monopoly on anti-nuclear protest in Italy might have actually inhibited the growth of a genuine, mass movement comparable to the ones that flourished in Northern Europe. True, the development of a national nuclear programme would have been different from the deployment of American missiles and warheads, and it might have elicited a stronger response. And yet it must be stressed that even in the 1980s, at a time when the Left was stronger in its anti-nuclear pronouncements, when masses of Italians stormed the streets of the country in huge demonstrations and vocally called for the total denuclearization of Italian territory, the government could basically do whatever it wanted and have its nuclear choices smoothly implemented. Paradoxically, one could even go as far as arguing that the strident, and not very credible, anti-nuclear protests sponsored by the Italian communists almost compelled the Centrist, western-oriented governments to adopt a nuclear stance even when they were sceptical about its usefulness: even when many among the Christian Democrats



doubted the wisdom of installing yet another nuclear delivery system in Italy, the fact that the Communists opposed it forced the government to stress its pro-Western orientation and support what ultimately came to be regarded as a choice between East and West.

This same consideration applies, in my opinion, to the role of Italian public opinion in general, as I do not think it can be regarded as a crucial variable to explain Italy's final renunciation of a nuclear option. Undoubtedly post-war Italian public opinion was largely hostile to anything even vaguely resembling the virulent militarism of the Fascist era, its bombastic nationalism and the crass ostentation of military might which was typical of its propaganda. Clearly the impact of a disastrous defeat and of a war fought on Italian soil for almost two years left a bitter legacy of resentment against anything that smacked of nationalism and of the previous Fascist rhetoric. Yet even in this case it is necessary to introduce some qualifications. First of all, as we have seen, the public was often left unaware of the major decisions, particularly in the early stages of the Cold War. The influence of public opinion, as a matter of fact, probably became relevant and influenced the policy formulation only by the time when the crucial choices about a possible national nuclear programme had already been made. In other words, the importance of public opinion was much stronger in the 1970s and in the 1980s than in the 1950s, which were a time when the Italian governments enjoyed a remarkable freedom of manoeuvre.

We are left therefore with basically two variables to be assessed. If choices were made inside a rather small elite and neither the leftist opposition nor public opinion in general counted for much in defining their content, it is necessary to look at the mentality of a ruling class which was mostly Catholic, moderate, Atlanticist, Europeanist, and which had shaped its identity against the obsessive nationalism of the Fascist era. This ruling group would have probably been embarrassed by having to select a national nuclear option, which would have clearly featured a strong national overtone and would at the same time had a negative impact on the plans for economic recovery, a priority which enjoyed the highest degree of consensus. That same elite, however, was also critically aware of the international implications of access to nuclear weapons – implications which made it very unlikely, if not impossible, to stake out a clear policy of refusing any nuclear deployment. A non-nuclear choice would inevitably affect the country's ambitions to a peer status in Western Europe, and it would also imply a certain degree of detachment and criticism from the Atlantic Alliance and its decisions – a solution which Italy's delicate domestic political balance made almost intolerable. Only a less ambitious foreign policy, and a more cohesive domestic political scene, would allow Italy to select a clear-cut non-nuclear policy of the kind that Norway or Denmark implemented.

Faced with the challenges created by the spreading of nuclear weapons and by their central importance in Western defense strategy, therefore, the Italian foreign-policy elite reached the conclusion that a multilateral solution was clearly the best available option. It would not appear unduly nationalistic, it would prevent any major diversion of domestic resources from the social and economic sectors to the defense budget, and finally it would probably reinforce the crucial relationship with the United States. This last factor, in particular, goes a long way in explaining the rationale of the Italian nuclear policies. Since the United States had become the critical variable of Italian foreign policy, the key pillar of its international orientation, it was clear that hosting US nuclear devices was also seen as a way of forging a closer partnership. This may indeed have been the crucial factor that tilted the balance in favour of non-proliferation during the long debate between 1969 and 1975: the serious chance of an estrangement with the US because of the Italian perplexities towards the NPT became a dangerous predicament for Italian foreign policy. Eventually, Italy could not afford the luxury of concretely alienating Washington for the sake of a national nuclear option



which might as well have remained only a theoretical possibility. If we carry this interpretation to its logical conclusion, we end up with the implication that the lesser power enjoyed, after all, a rather limited freedom of manoeuvre in the Transatlantic relationship. Italy could try to exploit its nuclear relations with the US to try and bolster its status within the Western alliance; it was even successful in driving some very profitable bargains when negotiating about the deployment of the weapons; but eventually it had to cope with a set of rules which she could not define and which she could only accept: when the US decided to rein in its previous policies of nuclear sharing, Italy had to accept the new reality and was able to influence it only to a very limited extent (basically by suggesting some modification to the NPT clauses and not much more).

Another critical variable to explain the Italian decision might have been the anti-nuclear posture of a large majority of Italian physicists. The main Italian nuclear scientists not only refused to have anything to do with the hypothesis of a possible national nuclear weapon, but they steadfastly opposed it at several critical junctures. From 1967 to 1975 the Italian relationship to the non-proliferation treaty really hang in the balance, as we have seen: at this stage Amaldi was quite influential in shaping the consensus of the scholarly community in favour of ratifying the treaty, exactly at the time when the National Defense council was weighing the pros and cons of a possible national option. Again, in the Fall of 1974, when the debate about the Italian ratification had reached a climax as a consequence of the Indian nuclear explosion in the Rajahstan desert early on during that year, Amaldi, Francesco Calogero and Carlo Schaerf sponsored a letter that was eventually signed by 142 scientists and which asked the Foreign Ministry to support the ratification of the treaty without any further delay. Finally, at the height of the last nuclear debate over the Euromissiles, Amaldi led a delegation of Italian physicists which, on November 27, 1982 handed to the President of the Republic a remarkably well-balanced document which spelled out the risks involved in going ahead with the development of the missiles. Clearly these initiatives weren't always successful – particularly in the last case. Yet they confirm the constant opposition of a critical component of Italian society towards the development of a national option.

A second set of concluding remarks are related to the effectiveness of the nuclear policy Italy followed for most of the Cold war. Did all the efforts of Italian diplomacy achieve any of the results conceived by the diplomats? As far as reaching that ultimate goal of Italian foreign policy, namely equality of status among the Western Europeans, it is safe to conclude that it remained a mirage all along. In spite of all the initiatives, of all the proposals for multilateral solutions, and of all the attempts to modify the nature of the NPT, the protracted Italian commitment to achieve an Atlantic or European solution to the problem of access and control to nuclear weapons always fell short off the mark. The objective limits of Italy's status could not be short-circuited by the formulas devised by Italian diplomacy, no matter how imaginative or clever – unless the other partners, and particularly the US, were willing to play the same game.

A slightly different conclusion can be reached for the attempt to use the nuclear gambits in order to restore some credibility and visibility to Italian foreign policy, as in this case the final judgement should not perhaps be as critical. True, the most ambitious goals were never achieved, yet at the same time the fact that Italy was willing to shoulder some of the risks and of the burdens of the nuclear deployments were regarded by the other West European governments, and above all by the United States, as a sign of growing Italian responsibility.



It is much more difficult to establish whether the readiness to accept the installation of new US delivery systems on its territory eventually allowed the Italian government to gain any access to the ultimate decision of *actually using* them. In other words, were these deployments successful in giving Italy any effective capacity to influence the decision to use or not to use the weapons deployed in its territory? The Italian government repeatedly tried to make sure that whatever nuclear systems were being deployed in the country, they would not be used without Italy's own approval; and at the same time it insisted that the presence of so many weapons in Italy had earned the country the right to be listened to whenever the crucial decision to go nuclear had to be adopted by the alliance. By January 1962, this led to the formal agreement between the US and Italy that clearly stated that the US nuclear weapons deployed in Italy could be used only under the authorization of both countries. Nevertheless, it was NATO policy that in case of nuclear war these arrangements could be implemented only if time permitted it – a rather vague definition given that by the 1960s the warning time for a nuclear attack was reduced to 15 minutes or less. As the scholarly literature on the implementation of these NATO formulas is still rather vague on the specifics of the command and control of the Alliance's nuclear systems²¹, it seems plausible to conclude that there was only one concrete and realistic way in which Italy could affect the use of the American weapons deployed on its own soil: namely, when there was a physical, rather than a virtual, dual key. And that case seems to have been only limited to the Jupiter missiles, as in all the other circumstances the fact that the warheads were *always* already mated to the delivery systems and kept under strict US control. Other than in the case of the *Jupiters*, therefore, the chance for Italy to affect the decision to use the weapons basically depended on the US good will and on its intentions to honour its commitments to consult with the host country – a rather flimsy and not very reassuring perspective.

²¹ Gregory, Shaun R. (1996): *Nuclear command and control in NATO. Nuclear weapons operations and the strategy of flexible response*, Basingstoke, Macmillan.





SHAPING NATIONAL ROLE ABROAD: ITALIAN MILITARY MISSIONS SINCE THE EIGHTIES

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Abstract:

Since late Seventies/early Eighties, military missions abroad have been a key element in Italian foreign and security policy. Traditionally discharged in a more or less tight multinational framework, they have been the instrument that the country has adopted to assert its international role and pursue – in the different geopolitical contexts – what it perceived to be its core national interests. After the Cold War, this instrument underwent some dramatic changes, due to both domestic and international factors. In recent years, military missions abroad in some instances (as Iraq) have become a deeply divisive element in the domestic political debate, but in most cases have been supported by large majorities in Parliament, albeit with differences on the tactics employed. However, even in the new strategic environment they seem to have maintained their role. This provides the country with good international visibility, due to a good degree of operational excellence.

Keywords: Italian Armed Forces, NATO, Military Missions Abroad

Resumen:

Desde finales de los años 70 principio de los 80, las misiones militares al extranjero han sido vistas como un elemento clave en la política exterior italiana y en su política de seguridad. Tradicionalmente imbricadas en un marco institucional más o menos firme de carácter multinacional, han sido el instrumento que este país ha elegido para imponer su papel internacional y conseguir (en diferentes contextos internacionales) lo que se ha percibido como sus intereses nacionales más vitales. Con el fin de la Guerra Fría, este instrumento ha sufrido enormes cambios, debido tanto a factores domésticos como internacionales. En años recientes las, misiones militares en el extranjero se han convertido en algunos casos (como en Irak) en un elemento de división en el debate político interno, pero en la mayoría de los casos han recibido el apoyo por parte de amplias mayorías en el parlamento, por muy diferentes que fuesen las tácticas empleadas. Sin embargo, incluso en el nuevo escenario estratégico, parecen haber mantenido su papel, aportando al país una buena visibilidad internacional, debido también a la adquisición de un buen grado de excelencia operacional.

Palabras clave: Fuerzas Armadas italianas, OTAN, misiones en el extranjero.

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1. Introduction: a Tradition of International Activism

Italian armed forces have a strong tradition of international activism, dating back to the last decades of the Nineteenth century. From the first, small presence in the International Military Commission established to provide good offices to Serbia and Bulgaria in 1885, to the far greater contingent operating in Crete between 1896 and 1906, they have supported, since the beginning, the national diplomacy in promoting its aims and providing the country with the due role and visibility². After the end of the Second World War and the admission of Italy to the main international organizations, the practice revived within the framework of an overall preference for multilateralism but with the limits stemming from a strong identification with the Western alliance and a geopolitical scope limited to Europe and its immediate neighbourhood. Between 1950 and 1989, Italian armed forces contributed to twelve UN peacekeeping missions in Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe, some of them – such as UNTSO, UNMOGIP, UNIFICYP, and UNIFIL – still active in the field³. In the following years, this commitment significantly increased, while OSCE, EU and NATO gradually joined the UN as the country's main international points of reference. Qualitative changes accompanied quantitative ones. On one hand, missions escalated from standard post-conflict interventions to more complex (and riskier) peace-enforcing operations; on the other, the operative framework evolved from a more or less loosely coordinated multinational setting, towards a “joint and combined” model implying greater integration among national contingents, the development of shared procedures and the establishment of common chains of command.

It took almost thirty years to follow this path, from the first tentative steps between late Seventies and early Eighties to the contested missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, in mid-2000s. In this period, national armed forces underwent a dramatic change, from a Cold War, large-scale compulsory draft system to a professional military instrument, smaller but more deeply integrated within the NATO structure and routinely involved in operational activity. However, quite paradoxically, international activism and the transition to professional Armed Forces seem to have weakened the consensus existing around Italian involvement in armed missions abroad. With the crisis of the Cold War system, more complex cleavages have replaced the pre-existing, clear-cut, and often artificial left/right contraposition, in which the formal guarantee of the *conventio ad excludendum* allowed for a foreign action largely sensitive to the instances of the Communist Party. In the new context, while centre-right and centre-left moderate forces still agree on the broader meaning of the Italian activism, at the

² A detailed list of the main missions that the Italian army has discharged between its establishment and the early Nineties is in Magnani, Enrico (ed.) (1992): *Oltremare. Le missioni dell'Esercito Italiano all'estero*, Roma, Stato Maggiore Esercito; a typological taxonomy of the missions discharged to promote peace and international security between the end of the Second World War and the same period is in Santoro, Carlo M. (ed.) (1992): *L'elmo di Scipio. Studi sul modello di difesa italiano*, Bologna, il Mulino, pp. 8-9; a sketchy (and largely institutional) record of the Italian military involvement, both at home and abroad, can be found at <http://www.difesa.it/Operazioni+Militari/>.

³ An updated list of the Italian peace operations is in Attinà, Fulvio (2009): *La scelta del multilateralismo. L'Italia e le operazioni di pace*, Milano, Giuffrè; an historical account of some selected missions is in the two volumes: Rainero, Romain H. and Alberini, Paolo (eds.) (2001): *Missioni militari italiane all'estero in tempo di pace (1861-1939)*. *Atti del Convegno di studi tenuto a Milano presso la Scuola Militare dell'Esercito nei giorni 25-26 ottobre 2000*, Roma, Commissione Italiana di Storia Militare, and Pizzigallo, Matteo and Alberini, Paolo (eds.) (2002): *Missioni militari italiane all'estero in tempo di pace (1946-1989)*. *Atti del Convegno di studi tenuto a Napoli presso l'Università "Federico II" e l'Accademia Aeronautica il 27-28 novembre 2001*, Roma, Commissione Italiana di Storia Militare.



wings of the political spectrum a vociferous opposition has emerged, channelling a strong although sometimes uncertain social discontent. The same attitude of the public opinion has grown increasingly fluctuating, due also to the long-term emotional impact of the events of 9/11 and to the ups and downs of the missions undergoing⁴. The polarization of the domestic political struggle, coupled with a (perceived) increase in the number of options that the country faces in the international realm, has fuelled this process. At the same time (and on the other hand) increasing Italian participation to multinational mission has proved a key element behind the modernization of the national military instrument. From Somalia to the former Yugoslavia, the need to fit into wide multinational coalitions and to cope with an even wider set of situations has helped Italian armed forces to adopt new practices and develop new skills. It has been an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process, unfolding on a long span of time, with its contradictions shortcomings. In the background, the domestic and the international environment underwent a string of dramatic changes that forced the country not only to redefine its international position, but also to elaborate a new attitude towards its domestic and regional security needs.

2. The Formative Period and the Lebanese Experience

Between August 26 and 27, 1982, the main batch of an Italian military contingent (about 520 men under Lt. Col. Bruno Tosetti) landed in Beirut as part of a broader international mission (MNF – Multinational Force in Lebanon) also including US and French troops. Mission's task was providing physical security to the OLP personnel leaving the town, protecting the civilian population in Beirut region and supporting the Lebanese government in affirming its sovereignty and authority over the war-torn country. The bulk of the Italian contingent came from "Governolo" 2nd *Bersaglieri* [lit.: Marksmen; Italian light infantry] battalion, 3rd Italian Army Corps, LANDSOUTH reserve great unit, with platoon-level *Carabinieri* and Engineers integrations. Hastily arranged in about one month amid heavy logistic difficulties, the mission ("Libano 1") ended without any mayor incident when, on September 11, *Bersaglieri* left Beirut after having relieved the US forces securing the harbour area. On August 31, last day of the evacuation of the PLO militias, Italian presence in Beirut and in the adjoining territorial water was 1,217 men from Army (479), Navy (708), and *Carabinieri* (40)⁵. Worth noting, large part was draftees, volunteering for serving abroad, according to a model repeatedly employed in the following years.

⁴ On the evolution of the Italian attitude towards multilateralism between late Eighties and 2000s, see Attinà, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-81; on the role on "humanitarian interventionism" in national foreign policy, see Rusconi, Gian Enrico: "Guerra e intervento umanitario. L'Italia alla ricerca di una nuova affidabilità internazionale", in Barberis, Walter (2002): *Storia d'Italia. Annali*, vol. 18, *Guerra e pace*, Torino, Einaudi, pp. 797-838; on the changes affecting Italian foreign policy in the passage from the Cold War to the post-bipolar order, see, among many, Santoro, Carlo Maria (1991): *La politica estera di una media potenza. L'Italia dall'Unità ad oggi*, Bologna, il Mulino, and Coralluzzo, Valter (2000): *La politica estera dell'Italia repubblicana (1946-1992). Modello di analisi e studio di casi*, Milano, Franco Angeli; on their impacts on military policy, see D'Amore, Ciro (2001): *Governare la difesa. Parlamento e politica militare nell'Italia repubblicana*, Milano, Franco Angeli, and Ilari, Virgilio (2009): *Storia militare della prima repubblica. 1943-1993*, Repr., Inverio, Widerholdt Frères (First ed., Ancona, Nuove Ricerche, s.d. [1994]); on the attitude of the public opinion towards Italian military activism, see Battistelli, Fabrizio (2003): *Gli italiani e la guerra. Tra senso di insicurezza e terrorismo internazionale*, Roma, Carocci; on the polarization of the Italian society after the events of 9/11, see *Ibid.*, pp. 43 ff.; for a useful comparison, see Bellucci, Paolo (1998): *Difesa, politica e società. La politica militare italiana tra obiezione di coscienza e professionalizzazione delle Forze Armate*, Milano, Franco Angeli.

⁵ At that date, MNF also included some 800 men from the 32nd USMC Amphibious Unit (MAU), operating in Beirut from August 24, and some 400 men from French 2^{ème} *Régiment Etranger de Parachutistes* [2nd Foreign Parachute Regiment], operating in Beirut since August 21.



Public opinion received the mission quite well. Its peculiar nature was fit to appease both the Catholic forces (which formed the bulk of the Christian Democrat constituency and found palatable the support provided to the Lebanese “Christian” government) and the more left-hand oriented supporters of the Palestinian cause, which found the mission an effort to oppose Israel’s aggressive policy in a country that was the main PLO’s stronghold. The limited scope, the emphasis placed on humanitarian aspects, the short duration and the lack of casualties all conjured in making “Libano 1” a boost to national pride and a turning point in national foreign policy⁶. At the end of the Eighties, when talks started about military missions abroad as the new operative perspective for the Italian Armed Forces, «the memory of the two Lebanese missions ... was still alive. The ‘Lebanon effect’ still operated in the public opinion and had positive effects on the enlistment of officers and the few specialized volunteers that the law allowed»⁷. Its political and symbolic impact was equally deep. Quite significantly, Socialist MP Lelio Lagorio – who was Minister of Defence between 1980 and 1983 and the first Socialist to serve in that role – repeatedly styled the Italian presence in Lebanon as the product of a «new Crimean attitude», and of decisions «taken in the sign of a revival of Risorgimento of Cavourian stamp»⁸. While the country was recovering from the social, economic and political malaise that affected it since the late Sixties, the Lebanese experience gained, thus, a special significance, marking on one hand the closing of a difficult period, on the other the opening of a new and more active phase in its international action.

On September 23, 1982, “Libano 1” revived on a far greater scale under the new label of “Italcon-Libano 2”. The mission started on the emotional wave of the killing of the Lebanese President-elect, the Maronite Christian Phalange party leader Bechir Gemayel (September 14), and of the ensuing massacre of Palestinian civilians in Sabra and Chatila refugee camps by hand of Phalangist militiamen (September 16-18). The omissive attitude of the Israeli armed forces (later blamed of «indirect responsibility» in the massacre by a national commission of inquiry⁹) that neither prevented nor interfered with the Phalangists’ action helped in make political situation extremely sensitive. For these reasons too, “Italcon-Libano 2” struck a more ambitious record and set the standard of Italian international involvement for a long time. Lasting until March 6, 1984, the mission mobilized some 8,350

⁶ On the pivotal character of the two Lebanese missions”, see Nuti, Leopoldo: “Linee generali della politica di difesa italiana (1945-1989)”, in Goglia, Luigi; Moro, Renato and Nuti, Leopoldo (eds.) (2006): *Guerra e pace nell’Italia del Novecento. Politica estera, cultura politica e correnti dell’opinione pubblica*, Bologna, il Mulino, pp. 463-503.

⁷ Mini, Fabio, “A che (chi) servono le missioni”, *Limes. Rivista Italiana di Geopolitica*, no. 2 (2007), pp. 25-43.

⁸ Lagorio, Lelio: “Gli italiani ancora in Libano”, *Il governo delle cose. Mensile di politica, cultura, economia* (Sept.-Oct. 2006). See also the opinion of the Republican Party’s Secretary Giovanni Spadolini, President of the Council of the Ministers between 1981 and 1982 and Minister of Defence between 1983 and 1987, quoted in Lagorio, Lelio: “La spedizione militare in Libano 1982-1984. Considerazioni sui successi e le difficoltà delle operazioni. Il contributo e gli obiettivi della Marina”, *Rivista Marittima*, vol. 136, no. 10 (2003), pp. 13-23. An almost similar quotation is in Lagorio, Lelio (2007): “Un Ministro della Difesa negli anni Ottanta”, in *Repubblica e Forze Armate. Linee interpretative e di ricerca. Acta del Convegno di Studi tenutosi a Roma il 25 e 26 ottobre 2006 presso il Centro Alti Studi per la Difesa*, Roma, Commissione Italiana di Storia Militare, pp. 49-55; Lagorio’s souvenirs as Minister of Defence are in Lagorio, Lelio (2005): *L’ora di Austerlitz. 1980: la svolta che mutò l’Italia*, Firenze, Polistampa.

⁹ “Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the events at the refugee camps in Beirut, 8 February 1983”, in Medzini, Meron (ed.) (2000): *Israel’s Foreign Relations. Selected Documents*, vol. 8, 1982-84, Jerusalem, [Israel] Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Doc. No. 104, now at

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Foreign%20Relations/Israels%20Foreign%20Relations%20since%201947/1982-1984/104%20Report%20of%20the%20Commission%20of%20Inquiry%20into%20the%20e;>

see also the report of the independent international commission chaired by the former Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sean MacBride: MacBride, Seán; Asmal, Kader; Bercusson, Brian; *et al.* (1983): *Israel in Lebanon: The Report of International Commission to enquire into reported violations of International Law by Israel during its invasion of the Lebanon: 28 August 1982-29 November 1982*, London, Ithaca Press.



men under Brigadier General Franco Angioni; the mean strength of the deployed force was about 2,300 men, about 70% of them assigned to operative roles, and in this case too draftees represented a fair share of the troops. The contingent was shaped as a light infantry brigade on HQ, three operative battalions, one logistic battalion; one cavalry troop (with armoured cars); one SF (“Incursori”) company; one signal company; one field hospital; one *Carabinieri* (paratroopers) platoon (with MP duties); and one engineers platoon. Rotation – carried out every four months – involved 1st (“Tuscania”), 2nd (“Tarquinia”), and 5th (“El Alamein”) parachute battalions; 2nd (“Governolo”), 3rd (“Cernaia”), and 10th (“Bezzecca”) Bersaglieri battalions; 67th (“Montelungo”) mechanized infantry battalion; and “San Marco” marine infantry battalion, the latter rotating at company level along the whole mission length. The maritime component included two cruisers (*Vittorio Veneto* and *Doria*), three destroyers (*Ardito*, *Audace*, and *Intrepido*), four frigates (*Perseo*, *Lupo*, *Orsa*, and *Sagittario*), two amphibious units (*Grado e Carole*), and one support unit (*Stromboli*). Air Force, finally, flew 1,184 transport missions, moving personnel and materials back and forth the operative area, with planes drawn from the 46th AF brigade and the 31st AF squadron, respectively located in Pisa and Rome¹⁰. Such a relevant and protracted effort was widely supported among the political forces, confirming the trend expressed in “Libano 1” and the existence of a (although ambiguous) consensus, providing military intervention with a new legitimization. In the eyes of the moderate, centre-to-left five-party government (Pentapartito), military presence increasingly evolved in a tool to assert Italian international role, especially in the wider Mediterranean basin. At the same time, the alleged peaceful character of this presence and the imprimatur provided by the UNSC appeased the internationalist ambition of the Communist Party, still trying to ride the difficult horse of a pacifism *à tous azimuts*¹¹.

Among public opinion, the new mission reinforced the trends emerged during “Libano 1”. Media gave wide coverage to the contingent’s everyday activities (especially to their humanitarian dimension), while popular magazines quite eagerly shed a critical light on some mockeries against Bersaglieri appeared on British press when the small, company-sized, contingent of the UK 1st The Queen’s Dragoon Guards joined the MNF in February 1983¹². Even among professional observers, references to the “special Italian way” in which the mission was discharged became common catchphrases, leaving a strong and long-lasting legacy in national military culture and national rhetoric. Impartiality, professionalism, a widespread but less invasive presence in the field, special attention to the needs of civilian

¹⁰ On “Libano 1” and “Libano 2”, see, from the Italian perspective, Tana, Fabio (ed.) (1985): *La lezione del Libano. La missione della forza multinazionale e la politica italiana*, Milano, Franco Angeli, and Lundari, Giuseppe (1986): *Gli Italiani in Libano, 1979-85*, Milano, EMI - Editrice Militare Italiana; a journalistic account is in Nebiolo, Gino (1984): *Gli Italiani a Beirut. Storia e cronaca della missione di pace in Libano*, Milano, Bompiani; General Angioni souvenirs are in Angioni, Franco (1984): *Un soldato italiano in Libano*, Milano, Rizzoli; two more institutional accounts are *I giorni di Beirut*, Roma, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri. Direzione generale delle informazioni, dell’editoria e della proprietà letteraria artistica e scientifica, s.d. [1986], and “Libano: Missione compiuta”, *Rivista Militare*, no. 5 (1984), pp. 164 ff.; a well balanced survey is in McDermott, Anthony and Skjelsbaek, Kjell (eds.) (1991): *The Multinational Force in Beirut, 1982-1984*, Gainesville, FL, Florida International University Press.

¹¹ On Italian pacifism during the Eighties, see Battistelli, Fabrizio *et al.* (1990): *Rapporto di ricerca su: I movimenti pacifisti e antinucleari in Italia 1980-1988*, Roma, CeMiSS – Centro Militare di Studi Strategici and Rivista Militare, esp. Appendix A, “Breve storia del movimento per la pace in Italia, 1980-1988”; on the background of the movement, see Ilari, Virgilio: “Storia politica del movimento pacifista in Italia (1949-1985)”, in Jean, Carlo (ed.) (1986): *Sicurezza e difesa. Fattori interni e internazionali*, Milano, Franco Angeli, pp. 231-89; its international position is briefly exposed in Rossi, Sergio A. and Ilari, Virgilio: “The Peace Movement in Italy”, in Klatfleiter, Werner and Pflatzgraff, Robert L. (eds.) (1985): *The Peace Movements in Europe & the United States*, Beckenham, Kent, Croom Helm, pp. 140-61.

¹² The British contingent remained in Beirut until February 1984, with QDG C and A squadrons rotating with a squadron of the 16th/5th The Queen’s Royal Lancers and the support of a batch of the 30th Signal Regiment.



population, and a sympathetic eye towards the aspects of the humanitarian relief soon became the (often stereotypically emphasized) trademark of the Italian engagement. Such an attitude strengthened when political situation increasingly deteriorated, leading to the suicide attacks against the US and French barracks of October 23, 1983 and the ensuing escalation of violence¹³. While Lebanon spiralled in a new outburst of civil war, the Italian presence in Beirut ended on February 19-20, 1984, following the withdrawal of the MNF. Since September 1982, the Italian death toll was just one killed and about 75 wounded. This appeared a great success and, despite triggering some polemics¹⁴, became the proof of the soundness of the Italian engagement in Lebanon and of the way in which the country had discharged its international obligations. Moreover, following the attacks to the multinational contingent, Italian political dynamism increased, leading to a drift with its partners, especially with France, which had been the main supporter of the MNF. During the meeting held in Venice in November 1983, tensions reached their climax, with Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti outspokenly criticizing the “retaliation bombings” carried out by French air force in the Beqaa valley.

The main point of disagreement was the role that Italy aimed at playing in the Mediterranean theatre and – more broadly – what it perceived as a subordinate position within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance. In the following years, this issue would have led to tensions also with the US. Since late Seventies, the Southern front had grown a key element in the elaboration of the national foreign and security policy, while the definition of a national dimensions for the Italian security needs had gained a new (and sometimes polemic) light. Quoting Lagorio:

Italy, due to what it objectively is (i.e. the sixth industrial power in the world, a power with a high technical and economic level but without the burdens and the encumbrances of a great or an hegemonic power), has a more evident and important role to play in the world, and primarily in the wider area adjoining it ... Within the framework of our international policy, we have to think more

¹³ The death toll of the attack on the Marines barracks was 241 men killed and sixty injured. It represented the deadliest single-day death toll for the USMC since the battle of Iwo Jima, the deadliest single-day death toll for the US military since the first day of the Tet offensive, and the deadliest single attack on Americans overseas since the Second World War. In the attack on the French barracks, 58 paratroopers from the 1st Parachute Chasseur Regiment were killed and 15 injured in the single worst military loss for France since the end of the Algerian War. In retaliation for the attacks, France launched an airstrike in the Beqaa Valley against alleged Islamic Revolutionary Guards positions, while US planned to target positions in Baalbek, which housed Iranian Revolutionary Guards believed to be training Hezbollah militants. US President Ronald Reagan and French President François Mitterrand also approved a joint air strike on the camp where the bombing had been supposedly planned, but the attack was never carried out. De facto, there was no serious retaliation for the Beirut bombing from the US, although the attack led to a general review of the American strategy in Lebanon, as detailed in the report of the Department of Defence commission on Beirut terrorist attack issued in December 1983 (http://www.dod.gov/pubs/foi/reading_room/142.pdf).

¹⁴ Foreign media (partly quoted in the domestic press) repeatedly stressed an alleged pro-Palestinian (i.e. anti-Israeli) bias in the attitude of the Italian troops, even suggesting the existence of some sort of “gentlemen’s agreement” with the warring factions to avoid potentially troublesome incidents. Although officially denied, both at political and military level, the point periodically emerged in the parliamentary debate, especially when, in late summer/early autumn 1983, the drift with the French and US partners started to deepen around the stance to assume towards the different Lebanese actors. A partially connected – and equally thorny – issue proved the death of marine Filippo Montesi (a draftee), shoot while on patrol near the Palestinian camp of Bourj el-Barajneh, on March 15, 1983, which give strength to the social and political forces opposing the mission. In the following years, a more balanced judgement has emerged on the overall fairness of the Italian position and on the soundness of the national approach the complex Lebanese reality; in this sense, see, among the others, McDermott and Skjelsbaek, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-58, and, from a journalistic perspective, Fisk, Robert (2001): *Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War*, Third ed., Oxford *et al.*, Oxford University Press.



than what we did in the past to the interest of Italy as a nation ... If it [Italy] wants to contribute to their security and be seen from them as a point of reference for a policy of peace, friendship and cooperation, it has to be credible, and to be seen as a stabilizing element from both the states that share our geographic location, our problems and our common historical experiences, and from the others ... The [Atlantic] Alliance no more offers a total guarantee for our country's defence¹⁵.

“Libano 1” and “Libano 2” were part of this ambitious strategy, aimed at enhancing and promoting the Italian role within the wider Mediterranean basin. In this perspective, they were just two steps in a longer path. Earlier in the same 1982, Italian forces had deployed in the Sinai Peninsula, within the framework of the newly established Multinational Force and Observer (MFO), to supervise the implementation of the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt signed in 1979, following the Camp David accords¹⁶. In August 1984, another naval force reached Suez to carry out a large-scale minesweeping mission in coordination with French and British units. Finally, in October 1987, the units of 18th Italian naval group deployed in the Persian Gulf to monitor local maritime activity, protect the mercantile traffic, and perform another massive minesweeping operation during the final months of the Iran-Iraq war. This mission too fit within a wide international framework (operation “Cleansweep”) including British, French, Belgian, and Netherlands’ units under WEU coordination, and paralleled a similar US operation (“Earnest Will”) started earlier in July¹⁷.

However, a constant tension seems to mark (retrospectively) the Italian action. On one hand, the new national foreign and security policy stressed the country's ambitions for greater autonomy, also as a way to assert the international status that Italy was (re-)gaining after the social, political and economic crisis of the Seventies. On the other, it needed to dilute these instances within the wider context provided either by coalitions or supranational institutions, both to share the technical, operational and financial burdens that the missions entailed and to offer them a surplus of legitimization, especially in front of potentially divisive issues. Divisions within the government coalitions too help to explain this apparently erratic policy. Giovanni Spadolini, for example, who succeeded Lagorio as Minister of Defence in August

¹⁵ Lagorio, Lelio (1980): *Indirizzi di politica militare*, Roma, Ministero della Difesa, pp. 4 ff.

¹⁶ A sketchy (and largely apologetic) history of the MFO is in *Servants of Peace*, Rome, Office of Personnel and Publications, Multinational Force and Observers, 1999. Annual reports for the later period are at <http://www.mfo.org/documents.html>, together with the constitutive protocol, dated August 3, 1981; an analysis of the events leading to the establishment of the force, together with an evaluation of its legal status is in Milone, Monica: “La Forza multinazionale e gli Osservatori nel Sinai. Circostanze che hanno portato alla creazione della Forza multinazionale e di osservatori nel Sinai”, in Migliazza, Alessandro (ed.) (1988): *Le forze multinazionali in Libano e nel Sinai*, Milano, Giuffrè, pp. 267-99; see *Ibid.*, pp. 385-388, for the text of the agreement regulating the Italian participation.

¹⁷ On the Italian naval missions in the Eighties, see Ramoino, Pier Paolo (2008): “La Marina Militare e le P.S.O. Da Tiran a Sharp Guard”, paper presented to the seminar *L'Italia, la NATO e le Peace Support Operations: storia e problemi*, Department of Political Science, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano, 8-9 May, now at http://dipartimenti.unicatt.it/scienze_politiche/Ramoino_PSO_Marittime.pdf, date accessed 10 December 2010; a record of the US military engagement in the Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war is in Wise, Harold (2007): *Inside the Danger Zone. The U.S. Military in the Persian Gulf. 1987-1988*, Annapolis, MD, Naval Institute Press; a detailed (and rather critical) analysis of the political impact of operation “Earnest Will” is in Kelley, Stephen Andrew (2007): *More Lucky Than Good: Operation Earnest Will as Gunboat Diplomacy*, Monterey, CA, Naval Postgraduate Institute; a reconstruction of the “tanker phase” in the Iran-Iraq war is in Navias, Martin S. and Hooton, Edward R. (1996): *Tanker Wars: The Assault on Merchant Shipping during the Iran-Iraq Crisis, 1980-1988*, New York, I.B. Tauris.



1983, duly highlighted the «revolutionary» aspects of the Lebanese experience but at the same time pointed out its «exceptional» nature. While supporting the need for a greater presence and deeper Italian initiative in the Mediterranean region, he remarked that: «there is no room for the spontaneous actions of middle power like our country ... Italy can provide its contribution to international security and stability only in strict coherence with a Western strategic design, a design that she must help to formulate, politically, day by day»¹⁸. It seems, thus, that no room existed for an independent Italian role beyond the mere territorial defence and the integration of the national military instrument within the broader European (i.e. Western) collective security system, provided by the Atlantic Alliance and the inevitable reference to the US ally. Nonetheless, there was a lively perception that Italy – due to its peculiar geographic location and its equally peculiar historical experience – had to assume commitments that other countries, in a different geographic position and with different historical experiences, could avoid. In other words, Italy had always to keep a watchful eye on the emergence of new potential crisis spots in the Mediterranean basin, due both to domestic instability in the riparian countries and still open territorial quarrels. At the same time, it had to be ready to intervene, either to defend and promote its national interests or to avoid potentially dangerous spill over of local instability.

3. From Bosnia to Kosovo: Ten Years of Transition

The diplomatic and geopolitical turmoil started by collapse of the Berlin wall caught Italian foreign and security policy in the middle of this difficult transformative process. In this period, strong and different forces were pulling the country in different directions. Domestically, the political experience of the “Pentapartito” had definitively lost its propulsive power. In the second half of the Eighties, coalition governments grew weaker, quarrelsome, and increasingly focused on the internal dimension, often seen as a mere day-by-day political appropriation. At the same time, mounting public awareness of grass rooted and long-entrenched corruptive practices was paving the way to the “clean sweep” of 1992-93, with “Mani pulite” judicial investigation leading to the demise of the so-called “First Republic” and of a large share of its political class. In the international realm too, room was becoming tighter for the pursuit of too much openly unprejudiced actions. These changes affected both Italy’s Mediterranean priorities and the ways in which the country could pursue them. After the “Achille Lauro” crisis, culminating in the Sigonella incident (October 1985) and after the American bombing of Tripoli (April 1986), relations with the US had gradually normalized and the evolution of the regional framework had forced the country to move away from some of its previous (and more “unorthodox”) positions¹⁹. Mikhail Gorbachev’s election as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1985) and his new approach to Moscow’s foreign relations had favoured a shift in national attention towards Europe, supported by the speeding of up the integration process envisaged in the Single European Act (1986) and by the first tensions in post-Tito Yugoslavia. The decline of Bettino Craxi’s Socialist Party as driving force of the government coalition, coupled with the revival of the

¹⁸ Spadolini, Giovanni (1983): *Indirizzi di politica militare*, Roma, Ministro della Difesa, p. 7.

¹⁹ On the changes affecting Italy’s Mediterranean perception during the final years of the Cold War, see Colombo, Alessandro: “La percezione italiana dei “rischi da sud” tra l’ultima fase della guerra fredda e il mondo post-bipolare”, in de Leonardis, Massimo (ed.) (2003): *Il Mediterraneo nella politica estera italiana del secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, il Mulino, pp. 107-34; a more detailed analysis is in Santoro, Carlo Maria (ed.) (1996): *Rischio da sud. Geopolitica delle crisi nel bacino mediterraneo*, Second ed., Milano, Franco Angeli; from a US point of view, see Lesser, Ian O. (1992): *Mediterranean Security. New Perspectives and Implications for U.S. Policy*, Santa Monica, CA, RAND.



Christian Democrat instances in the following string of Presidents of the Council of the Ministers, also fuelled these changes. Facing an increasingly dynamic international environment, domestic considerations and the preservation of the domestic political balance became pivotal in shaping Italy's overall posture²⁰.

Within this framework, the UN "revival" of early Nineties strengthened Italian general preference for multilateralism, seen also as a way to overcome domestic resistances to a more active and "visible" foreign policy. In 1990, Italian air and maritime forces joined the multinational coalition raised to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. However, although undertaken under the aegis of the UN Security Council (Resolutions No. 660, 661, 665, and 678), the mission radically differed from the ones discharged until then, especially due to its openly combat nature. The difference was quite striking, in the eyes both of the public opinion and the country's political leadership. The loss in action of one *Tornado* fighter, with the crew taken prisoner by the Iraqi security forces, raised deep concern and an even deeper emotional wave, fostered by its extensive media coverage. Both during and after the military campaign, rumours spread about alleged war crimes committed by the international forces, while, in the following months, similar rumours started circulating about health issues affecting war veterans and the local civilian populations²¹. Finally, direct contact with foreign troops, in an operative context that radically differed from the traditional "peacekeeping-style" setting, emphasized the organizational and technological gap afflicting the Italian armed forces. From this point of view the Iraqi experience played an important role in promoting a wider reflection on the international relevance of the Italian military instrument, and on its technological and organizational needs in an increasingly turbulent geopolitical environment.

The Yugoslav crisis and its fallouts speeded up this process. Geographic proximity and a broader interest in the stability of the Balkan area made Italy a first line country in the management of the crisis. The Italian Navy was involved in a heavy coastal patrolling and embargo enforcement activity since July 1992, under WEU (operations "Maritime Monitor" and "Maritime Guard"), NATO (operations "Sharp Vigilance" and "Sharp Fence") and NATO-WEU aegis (Operation "Sharp Guard"). Operational activity lasted until October 1996 and during this period Italy also provided logistic support to the multinational units operating

²⁰ On the Italian domestic policy between Eighties and Nineties, see Colarizi, Simona (1996): *Storia dei partiti nell'Italia repubblicana*, Roma and Bari, Laterza, esp. pp. 627 ff.; more critically, see Santarelli, Enzo (1996): *Storia critica della repubblica. L'Italia dal 1945 al 1994*, Milano, Feltrinelli, esp. pp. 284 ff.; on Craxi's domestic and foreign policy, see Colarizi, Simona and Gervasoni, Marco (2005): *La cruna dell'ago. Craxi, il partito socialista e la crisi della Repubblica*, Roma and Bari, Laterza; on the "Achille Lauro" issue and its domestic and international consequences, see Primiceri, Emanuela (2005): *Il sequestro della "Achille Lauro" e il governo Craxi. Relazioni internazionali e dibattito politico in Italia*, Manduria, Roma and Bari, Pietro Lacaita Editore; on "Mani pulite" and on its juridical and political meanings, see Nelken, David: *Il significato di Tangentopoli: la risposta giudiziaria alla corruzione e i suoi limiti*, in Violante, Luciano (ed.) (1998): *Storia d'Italia. Annali*, vol. 14, *Leggi, diritto e giustizia*, Torino, Einaudi, pp. 597-627.

²¹ An assessment of these rumours is still problematic, especially with reference to the so-called "Gulf war syndrome" affecting US veterans during the Nineties; nonetheless, they were quite widespread, both in Italy and on abroad. Similar rumours also circulated during the missions in the former Yugoslav, about the possible effects of the troops' long-term permanence in a depleted uranium contaminated environment. In all occasions, media provided evidence of supposedly war-related health problems among both military personnel and the civilian population, although their impact on the general perception of the missions among domestic public opinion was slight. Similar considerations apply to the "war crimes" issues. Tales about the killing of unarmed or retreating Iraqi soldiers were common in the aftermath of the Gulf War, while bombing of civilian population and infrastructures rose widespread criticisms of the US posture towards the war. During the Somali mission too, national press referred of violence committed by Italian soldiers on the civilian population; successive judicial enquiries rejected the most part of (and, in some, cases all) the charges.



in the Adriatic Sea. The global effort was relevant. During “Sharp Guard” only, Italy constantly deployed between two and three surface units plus one submarine and two patrolling airplanes, discharging about 20-25% of the whole activity, compared to about 10% of the other partners. In the same time, the country was involved in other national and multinational missions, from Iraqi Kurdistan (operation “Airone”, May-August 1991), to Albania (operation “Pellicano”, September 1991-December 1993), to Somalia²².

The Somali mission (operation “Ibis”) was maybe the most contested among the ones that Italian armed forces have discharged since the end of the Second World War. Hastily started in December 1992 under heavy emotional pressure both at home and abroad, it pivoted on a mixed contingent with “Folgore” parachute brigade as its backbone, although the prolonged effort – which lasted until March 1994 – led to the deployment of a total 15,000 men along the entire operational life. Part of a wide multinational action (at the beginning the US-led operation “Restore Hope”, in its turn part of the UN UNITAF mission, then, since May 1993, the UN-led UNOSOM II mission) it repeatedly clashed against the weakness of this cumbersome structure and its multiple (and often overlapping) responsibilities. Both UNITAF and UNOSOM II involved a high number of national contingents, although the bulk came from the United States, with some 25,000 men out of total 37,000. Other UNITAF contributing countries were Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Republic of Ireland, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. The “dual hat” mechanism favoured the emergence of coordination problems, while the creeping character of the mission, quickly turning from a humanitarian assistance effort to a peace enforcement mission under the provision of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, led to cleavages among contributing countries. The degradation of the security environment heavily affected the Italian contingent, which was repeatedly involved in violent fire fighting. Death toll was heavy both for the time and for a country still imbued of the “Lebanese” rhetoric²³. During the mission twelve men died (eight in action), including one female member of the Military Red Cross, and more than thirty were blessed during the incidents of July 2, 1993 (the so-called “Battaglia del pastificio”)²⁴. Moreover, hard criticisms hit the contingent, putting under heavy scrutiny the consolidated image of the “good Italian soldier”. Another element negatively affecting the Somali experience was the comparison with the almost contemporary mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ “Albatros” operation, March 1993-April 1994). Despite the differences between the two missions (ONUMOZ was, in its essence, a conventional peacekeeping mission, aimed

²² While involved in Adriatic patrolling and discharging the legacy missions then undergoing, between July 1992 and October 1996 Italy joined UN UNTAC mission in Cambodia (October 1992), ONUMOZ in Mozambique (December 1992), UNOSOM II in Somalia (March 1993), and UNMIBH in Bosnia-Herzegovina (December 1995), together with NATO IFOR (December 1995), the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje (September 1993) and the OSCE LTM to Moldova (April 1993), Bosnia and Herzegovina (December 1995) and Croatia (July 1996).

²³ On the Italian mission in Somalia, see Agnetti, Pino (1995): *Mogadiscio-Italia: storie incredibili (ma vere) dalla Somalia*, Bergamo, Larus; for an inside view of mission, see Loi, Bruno (2004): *Peace-keeping: pace o guerra? Una risposta italiana: l'operazione Ibis in Somalia*, Firenze, Vallecchi; see also *Id.* (2008): “L'operazione IBIS in Somalia”, paper presented to the seminar *L'Italia, la NATO e le Peace Support Operations: storia e problemi*, Department of Political Science, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano, 8-9 May, now at http://dipartimenti.unicatt.it/scienze_politiche_Loi_Operazione_Ibis.pps; General Loi was CO of the Italian contingent between May and September 1993, when relinquished the command to General Carmine Fiore.

²⁴ On the “Battaglia del pastificio”, see Alberizzi, Massimo A.: “Mogadiscio, ore 7. Scatta l'inferno”, *Corriere della Sera*, 3 July 1993. A more detailed account is in Loi, *op. cit.*, pp. 111 ff. The battle was the main military involvement of Italian armed forces since the end of World War Two.



at supervising the truce agreement reached between the two main Mozambique political factions, the country's Government and RENAMO), its smoothness somehow enhanced the sense of failure surrounding the Somali experience. Moreover, death toll in Mozambique was lighter (two deaths from a plane crash) and none of the deaths stemmed from combat activity.

From many points of view, UNOSOM II gave a sever blow to the then widespread and predominant "Lebanese approach", and put an end to the illusion of a zero-death toll participation to this kind of activities. From this time on, Italian military involvement abroad started to follow a double track. On one hand conventional stabilizing, patrolling, and peacekeeping missions, low risk activities gathering a wide political consensus and carrying on the tradition of the "special Italian approach" to international missions; on the other more "robust" military operations, with high risk of involvement in combat actions. At the end of the Nineties and more clearly in the 2000s, this kind of operations became the "core business" of the Italian army. However, for large part of the decade they were still rather exceptional. More common was the experience in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the entry in force of the Dayton agreement between late 1995 and early 1996, and in Kosovo, after NATO intervention in 1999. In both cases, Italian action took the form of a "traditional" stabilizing mission (albeit in highly volatile environments), discharged within the framework of wider international NATO- or EU-led coalitions. Both for its length and its material implications, former Yugoslavia absorbed the bulk of the Italian military activity in the Nineties, culturally reinforcing the "Lebanese" model and, at the same time, fostering the process of transformation of the national military instrument, especially the army, which, since 1995, was charged with the main operational responsibilities. In this sense, the Yugoslav experience as central in the reorganization of the Italian armed forces, accompanying – and sometimes shaping – the debate that led in 2002 to the adoption of the so-called "Nuovo modello di Difesa" ("New Defence Model").

The first *Libro bianco della Difesa* ("Defence White Book") had been adopted in 1985. It largely elaborated on the Lebanese experience, articulating three pivotal points: the country's loyalty to the Atlantic Alliance and its political and strategic tenants; the perception of a growing threat coming from South; and the need to proceed to a quick modernization of the national military instrument in a fifteen years' time. To rationalize the different components of the national military instrument and to allocate efficiently the available financial resources, it also defined five "joint operative missions" and one "support mission" for whose accomplishment it established common programs and provided a financial contribution of about 4,000 billion liras per year to cover the investment expenses. The definition of a national "defence model" was one of the main positive aspects of the *Libro bianco* although, in many other sectors, its provisions have been often overlooked by the adoption of a lighter and more flexible tool such as the *Nota aggiuntiva al bilancio di previsione della Difesa*²⁵. Nonetheless, the need to reform the national military instrument continued to evolve, fostered also by the evolution that NATO's role and structures underwent in the same years. In this perspective, the evolution of the Italian military structure largely reflects the changing role of the country within the wider framework of the Atlantic Alliance and, at the same time, the changing role that NATO itself underwent within the international security system. The adoption of the so-called Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) during NATO Washington summit (1999) and of the Prague Commitment on Capabilities (PCC) during the following Prague summit (2003) was pivotal in forcing member countries to define their priorities. As to the Italian armed forces, it has led to an overall re-

²⁵ Ilari, Virgilio and Battistelli, Pierpaolo (2004): *Storia del servizio militare in Italia*, vol. VI, *Il terzo dopoguerra (1991-2001)*, Roma, Agenzia stampa della Difesa.



organization and modernization of the entire military structure, aimed at to enhancing its projection and interoperability skills²⁶.

4. Iraq, Afghanistan and Beyond: Shaping a New Role for the Italian Armed Forces?

At the turn between 1990s and the 2000s, the process of transformation of the Italian armed forces was still in progress. Despite the existing of a broad consensus about the need to modernize the national military instrument, divergences were great around key specific issues, while financial constrains negatively affected the whole process. A general opinion still considered peacekeeping the main task. Despite the Somali experience, the possibility that national forces were involved in combat operations was mostly perceived as a remote one. Yugoslavia, while stressing the logistic apparatus and exposing the limits of an Army still officially based on compulsory military service, did not really shake this opinion. Once again, the death toll of the missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo was relatively low – two deaths during the ten year long SFOR; four (five in 2009) during KFOR – and none of the casualties directly stem for combat activity. The Kosovo lesson – still in vogue, and embedded in 1999 NATO strategic concept – taught that stand off operations could have been the key of victory and that presence of land forces was a mere support, to consolidate the success and discharge the post-conflict normalization activity. Worth noting, in this same period, NATO doctrine progressively absorbed the concept of PSO, encompassing a large range of activities aimed a consolidating the political and military success gained with the major combat operation. The increasing attention devoted to the so-called “reinforced peacekeeping” led to the development of a full-fledged NATO doctrine in the filed of civil-military co-operation. The development of CIMIC is maybe the longest-lasting heritage of the Yugoslav experience and is – from different point of view – a direct product of the old Lebanese experience. In the following years, the CIMIC would have emerged as one of the most dynamic element in the NATO doctrine, gradually evolving in the following decade. Moreover, with its emphasis on the “winning the hearts and minds” of the enemy population, it imposed as one of the most palatable to national public opinion, traditionally sensitive to the representation of the “peace soldier”.

Broadly speaking, the Nineties proved a rather interlocutory decade. In this period, in an increasingly turbulent international realm, Italian involvement beyond national borders slowly but progressively changed, at the same time emphasizing the limits of a military instrument still largely shaped to bear the burden of an old-fashioned, conventional confrontation, within a static Cold War environment. In this perspective, it was the evolution of the country’s commitments to force it to elaborate some sort of way outs, working on its experience and adapting them to the new needs. This was also the driving force behind the new political approach to the international missions. Especially since the mid-Nineties, around Italian international involvement emerged a sort of bipartisan consensus, only excluding the most extreme right and left wings of the political spectrum. At the same time, a partially new and less emotional attitude spread among public opinion. Military missions became a common recurrence in national life while death of military personnel abroad became a rather “normal” occurrence. Media approach to the missions changed, with focus shifting partially away from their traditionally covered humanitarian and emotional aspects

²⁶ See *Libro bianco della Difesa 2002* at <http://www.difesa.it/Approfondimenti/ArchivioApprofondimenti/Libro+Bianco>, esp. part I.



and toward their professional dimension. Finally, a new balance emerged among the services, with the Army becoming increasingly involved, although in a more joint and combined fashion. The international dimension remained the (largely implicit) legal frame of reference. Excluding some (relatively) small and isolated experiences, in the Nineties too, Italian missions abroad still reflected a UN and/or a multinational decision. Worth noting, the only relevant exception to this rule – the Kosovo crisis, in which Italy provided a key logistic support to NATO air forces operating against Serbia – proved, from a political point of view, highly divisive, and led to a long string of polemics.

From an operative perspective, at the beginning of the new decade the Yugoslav experience had grown a model on its own. In Bosnia and Kosovo, Italian troops had developed a new corpus of best practices, reaching excellence in some specific sectors. At the same time, the long-term involvement and the great number of tasks entrusted to the contingent had allowed for a wide and extended turnover, providing an increasing number of troops with the opportunity of having a real contact with the operational reality. Even the transformation envisaged in the *Libro bianco* of 2002, although not fully completed, had started to reshape some aspects of the military instrument, moving from some core operative units. It had also started to affect the logistic and technical apparatus, paving the way to the radical shift towards a fully professional army started in 2005. However, greater efficiency and better deployability, although precondition for a more visible international presence, did not mean, on the political side, the acceptance of a more active role, especially an increased involvement of national armed forces in combat activities.

This largely explains the divisive effect that the two missions in Afghanistan (ISAF) and Iraq (operation “Antica Babilonia”), that Italian armed forces discharged respectively since 2003 and in 2003-2006, has had on the national public opinion²⁷. Both these missions marked a relevant departure from the previous Italian tradition. While on one hand they represented a “quantum leap” in the Italian military experience, on the other they seemed to break the political consensus of the previous decade. Their emotional impact has been much greater than that of the Yugoslav missions and in both occasions (but especially in the Iraqi case), difficulties has emerged in providing and circulating convincing reasons for the missions, so to aggregate consensus around them. Their (re-)financing generally proved a thorny issue, and often became occasion for political tensions. Both in Iraq and Afghanistan, fire incidents (such as the suicide attack against the Italian MP HQ in Nasiriyah on November 2003, or the so-called “Battaglia dei ponti”, in the same town, in the following April) and heavy death tolls raised widespread emotions. In some occasions, the same way in which operations were carried out ended in heated polemics, and in penal procedures involving some high rank officers. Finally, public scrutiny on missions was, generally, more stringent and more incisive than in the previous cases. The (perceived) lack of international legitimization often jeopardised the bipartisan consensus that the mission in former

²⁷ On the Afghan and Iraqi missions, see Nativi, Andrea (ed.) (2004): *Esercito italiano. Le nuove frontiere del peacekeeping*, Milano, Mondadori Electa, and, in more critical perspective, Gaiani, Gianandrea (2008): *Afghanistan-Iraq. Guerre di pace italiane*, Venezia, Studio LT2; on Iraq, see Angetti, Pino (2004), *Nassirya*, Milano, Boroli; on Afghanistan, among many, see *Id.* (2002), *Operazione Afghanistan*, 2 vols., Milano, Mondadori Electa, and Micalessin, Gian (2009): *Afghanistan: l'ultima trincea. La sfida che non possiamo perdere*, Milano, Boroli; a somehow different approach is in Marcucci, Arcangelo (2010): *Afgahnistan. Analisi di un conflitto troppo in fretta dato per vinto*, Varese, Arterigere; an international perspective is in O'Hanlon, Michael E. and Sherjan, Hassina (2010): *Toughing It Out in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, Defense Strategy, Foreign Policy*, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution; some personal souvenirs of the Afghan mission are in Battisti, Giorgio (2004): *Penne nere in Afghanistan. Cronache dalla missione «Nibbio I»*, Mantova, Sometti, and Crainz, Edoardo (2006): *Missione in Afghanistan. Diario di un medico paracadutista della Folgore*, Milano, Mursia.



Yugoslavia had enjoined. Increased political turbulence negatively reverberated on the mission's collective perception, while casualties have periodically triggered requests of disengagements from different quarters of the political spectrum. Moreover, Italian presence in Iraq faced recurrent charges of partisanship, due to the circumstances that have brought to the intervention of the US-led coalition in 2003. In the case of Afghanistan, mission's length has gradually eroded part of the support that the mission originally enjoined. A certain degree of confusion between ISAF and operation "Enduring Freedom" (OEF) has favoured this process. Finally, for ISAF too, it became increasingly difficult to explain the reasons of the mission, especially with the decline of the emotive impact of the events of 9/11 and the emergence of new and more stringent problems.

Iraq and Afghanistan requested radically different capabilities if compared to the previous experiences. At the same time (especially in Afghanistan) a strong continuity emerges, especially in post-conflict activity and in the field of civil-military cooperation. The risk of involvement in high intensity combat operations gave the final boost to the process of modernization and re-organization of the national military instrument. A professional military instrument allows better turnover, higher efficiency and enhanced interoperability. Worth noting, Italian armed forces shift definitively to a full professional setting in the middle of these missions. The scale of the missions changes too, in both length and size. Italian presence in Afghanistan dates back to 2003 and the size of contingent has significantly increased over time, reaching, by the end of 2010, about 3,800 men. The country assumed ISAF command in August 2005-May 2006 (ISAF VIII) and is in charge of the Regional Command West (RC-W), located in Herat, and of the Herat Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). In this perspective, the Afghan and the Iraqi experience have favoured integration in combined forces, as both leading and subordinate nation. This is a great change compared to the traditional multinational model, based on a loose coordination among the different national contingents. The Afghan experience has shown the high level of interoperability that Italian armed forces have reached during the years and the credit that they have gained in their international intercourses. On the other hand, the impact of the Iraqi and Afghan experience has grown so invasive to obscure the contribution of the other military operations that Italian armed forces have discharged during the decade. Since 2001, Italy's international commitments have grown with the activism of the international organizations to which the country belongs and with the emergence of the ambitions of the European Defence and Security Policy. Beyond ISAF, UN started, between 2001 and 2009, two new missions with Italian contribution (UNOWA in West Africa and UNIMIS in Sudan); NATO four (Task Force Harvest, Task Force Fox, and operation "Allied Harmony" in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the NATO Training Mission in Iraq); OSCE two (OSCE LTM to Serbia and Montenegro); and the EU seventeen²⁸. This additional burden has put national military instrument under further strain. At the same time, it has allowed to gather new experience and to consolidate the corpus of "best practices" acquired in the previous years.

²⁸ EU missions includes EUPM (European Police Mission, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, started in January 2003); EUPOL Concordia and EUPOL Proxima, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (started, respectively, in March and December 2003); AMISS II, in Darfour (started in January 2004); EUJUST Themis, in Georgia (started in July 2004); EUFOR ALTHEA, in Bosnia-Herzegovina (started in December 2004); EUPOL Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (started in March 2005); EUPAT (European Police Advisory Team in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, started in June 2005); EUSEC, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (started in June 2005); EU BAM Rafah, at the Rafah Crossing Point between Egypt and the Gaza Strip (started in November 2005); EU BAM Moldova-Ukraine, on the border between the two countries (started in December 2005); EUPOL-COPPS, in the Palestinian Territories (started in January 2006); EUPT (European Planning Team for Kosovo, started in April 2006), EUFOR RD Congo, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (started in April 2006); AMM – Aceh Monitoring Mission, in Aceh (started in September 2006), EUPOL Afghanistan and EUPOL RD Congo, started, respectively, in May and July 2007.



In this perspective, the emphasis placed on Iraq and Afghanistan within the framework of the Italian military experience could be somehow misleading. Their material dimensions, their human and financial costs, their new operational character, all conjure in making these missions a highly visible turning point. From a certain point of view, they push to the extremes the Somali experience, partially rejecting some key elements of the “Italian approach” to the international missions. On the other, they hardly epitomize the decade as a whole. In an increasingly fragmented international environment, the set of missions that the Italian armed forces have to discharge has grown exponentially, adding new dimensions to the “traditional” peacekeeping activity. The increasing number of international subjects operating in the field of collective security has fuelled this process, adding new logics and new aims to the “old” UN set of values and procedures. UN themselves are trying to elaborate a new approach to the problem of international peace, also to overcome the limits of the model exposed in the *Agenda for Peace* (1992) and in its *Supplement* of 1995²⁹. The same conceptual foundations of the *Agenda* were obsolete at that time. Peacekeeping endorsed definition (“The deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well”) was an heritage of the Cold War, of its “negotiated” logic, and of the role that states played in the international realm. The consensus that requested not only the deployment of the mission, but also the definition of the national contingents, together with the need of a preventive ceasefire (which configured UN presence as a mere interposition), implied the presence of well-defined state subjects, controlling their territories and acting as guarantors of the conditions according which the interposition troops were deployed. It is worth noting that, while recognizing that the age of the full and exclusive state sovereignty was definitively set, the *Agenda for Peace* explicitly stated that: “[t]he foundation-stone of this work is and must remain the State”; that: “[r]espect for its fundamental sovereignty and integrity are crucial to any common international progress”; and that: “if every ethnic, religious or linguistic group claimed statehood, there would be no limit to fragmentation, and peace, security and economic well-being for all would become ever more difficult to achieve”. Few years later, the *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace* reaffirmed these concepts, in a document that, despite the Somali experience and the UN failure in limiting the effects of interethnic violence in Rwanda, quite paradoxically highlighted “the importance of the consent of the parties to the presence and mandate of a mission as a prerequisite for its success – effectively [returning] to the more restricted, Cold War definition”³⁰.

5. Conclusion - Where Do We Go From Here?

The experience of the last fifteen years clearly shows that assuming the state as the key international actor as the traditional peacekeeping approach does, it is quite a problematic passage in both theory and practice. At the same time, the attention that PSOs place on state

²⁹ Boutros-Ghali, Boutros (1992): *An Agenda for Peace. Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992*, New York, UN, at <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>; *Id.* (1995): *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: Position paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations*, New York, UN, at <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agsupp.html>.

³⁰ United Nations Association of the United Kingdom: “An Agenda for Peace Ten Years On”, *Global Policy Forum*, 03 February 2002, at <http://www.globalpolicy.org/reform/initiatives/ghali/2002/0203ten.htm>.



building not only as mere rebuilding of the state's institutional and administrative machinery but also of its civil society and relational networks, proofs that the emphasis that the *Agenda for Peace* placed on the political dimension was more a simplifying effort than the description of a factual reality. PSOs' multidimensional character is also the recognition of the plural and multifaceted nature of contemporary security, a nature that the *Agenda for Peace* identified, although the model of conflict resolution that it envisaged was unable to gauge. In this perspective, the transition from peacekeeping to PSOs is linked to the recognition that the main problem of contemporary international system is not merely ending armed hostilities and normalizing the relations among states, but rather control the instability that the same states can project beyond their borders, both directly and indirectly. State's failure can assume different forms, thus enhancing the multidimensional character of a stabilizing mission. At the same time, the definition of what peace and security are becomes more and more subjective, and linked to what every single state perceives as its endangered interests. Quite paradoxically, in an increasingly interdependent world, national security policies seem facing a contradictory trend, moving on one side towards increasing collectivization, one the other sliding towards a more or less creeping re-nationalization.

The evolution of the Italian international posture in the last thirty years largely follows this path. The development of a wide set of best practices, coupled with the enhanced ability to discharge high intensity combat operations that national armed forces have gained since mid-Nineties, reflects the evolution and the growing diversification of the international environment and the nuanced nature of contemporary security picture. At the same time, the country's greater involvement in stabilization activities appears as a direct consequence of the re-nationalization of its security policy after the end of the "decade of the illusions" (1989-99). In this perspective, the national experience shows a remarkable continuity if compared to its early efforts. Military presence abroad remains one of the cornerstones of Italy's international activism as well as a proof of her loyalty to the Western and European alignment. On the other hand, it provides Italy with the room that it need to pursue its specific national interests, either unilaterally or within wider coalition settings. The main critical point is the country's ability to define its interests properly. Between late Seventies and early Eighties, this need has led to the redefinition of Italy's Mediterranean policy. In the turbulent post-Cold War world, it has promoted a gradual opening towards more remote strategic contexts and the elaboration of new geopolitical representations, normally pivoting around the concept of "Wider Mediterranean". In the present historical context, future developments are still difficult to assess. However, the strong relation traditionally existing between Italian multilateral activism (herewith included its international military presence) and the process of elaboration of the country foreign policy seems keen to remain a key element in its political landscape.



GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR AL QAEDA AND OSAMA BIN LADEN: AN INCREASE OR DECREASE?

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Abstract:

Operational terrorism is a vicious by-product of ideological terrorism. Numerous countries have mastered operational counter-terrorism but not strategic counter-terrorism. To be successful, the operational hunt for terrorists must be complemented with the correction of misled ideologies. Reducing support for terrorism is paramount to reduce and manage the threat of terrorism and its partner, ideological extremism. This paper describes the factors and drivers that are correlated to an increase or decrease in support for al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden.

Keywords: Operational Counter-Terrorism, Strategic Counter-Terrorism, Ideology, Al-Qaeda.

Resumen:

El terrorismo operacional es un deletéreo resultado del terrorismo ideológico. Numerosos países han logrado dominar el contra-terrorismo operacional, pero no el contra-terrorismo estratégico. Para ser efectivos, la persecución operacional de los terroristas ha de verse complementada con la corrección de las ideologías. Reducir el apoyo al extremismo es vital par aminorar y controlar la amenaza del terrorismo y su socio, el extremismo ideológico. Este artículo explica los factores que están correlacionados con un aumento o descenso del apoyo a al Qaeda o su líder, Osama Bin Laden.

Palabras clave: *Contra-terrorismo operacional, contra-terrorismo estratégico, ideología, Al-Qaeda.*

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1. Introduction

Operational terrorism is a vicious by-product of ideological terrorism. Numerous countries have mastered operational counter-terrorism but not strategic counter-terrorism. To be successful, operational hunt for terrorists must be complemented with the correction of the misled ideologies. Most individuals identify terrorism as a sadistic social phenomenon that has evolved considerably over the years however; to those who engage in it, terrorism is a continuously evolving political ‘weapon’ that is designed to obliterate while producing constant social and psychological warfare. In contrast to contemporary negative labels often used to characterize terrorists, countless violent political movements distinguish themselves in positive terms and use techniques of neutralization to justify violence in defense of Islam. “A terrorist group is only the apex of a much larger pyramid of sympathizers and supporters.”³ Radicalization of sympathizers and supporters promote extremist beliefs and ideologically based radical movements worldwide.

Reducing support for terrorism is paramount to reduce and manage the threat of terrorism and its parent, ideological extremism. Heightened extremism leads to advocacy, support and eventually participation in terrorism and other forms of political violence. Curbing individual and group support for extremist ideologies and the resultant terrorist activities determines public safety and state security. Individualistic and collectivistic views of the public auxiliary determines communal attitude toward terrorism. Reducing support for violence and violent ideologies is as important as countering such threats. We must reinforce the message of non-violence and take necessary steps to build strong and resilient communities to resist all forms of violent extremism. Further, implementation of policies that promote gender equality and elimination of gender discrimination can create an environment that leads to decrease in support for extremist ideologies.

“Public opinion plays in creating an environment in which terrorist groups can flourish, relatively few works have explored survey data to measure support for terrorism among general public.”⁴ Global attitudes about the United States, its foreign policies in dealing with the Middle East and the Iraq war are also prevailing aspects in seminal support for al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. This paper determines the factors and drivers that are correlated to an increase or decrease in support for al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden. Measures of different facets of al Qaeda and bin Laden are robustly correlated with attitudes toward the United States. “Support for terrorism is positively correlated with negative views of the U.S., a perception that the U.S. does not favor democracy in a respondent's country, and a belief that the Iraq war has made the world more dangerous.”⁵ Indifferences and growing concerns about al Qaeda and bin Laden has not necessarily resulted in a drastic improvement in terms of America’s image. Despite anti-American sentiments majorities demonstrate openness to improving their country’s relations with the U.S.

³ McCauley, Clark: “Terrorist Group Persistence and Dynamics”, Project, *START, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism*, at <http://www.start.umd.edu/start/research/#wg1>.

⁴ Wike, Richard and Samaranayake, Nilanthi: “Where Terrorism Finds Support in the Muslim World”, *Pew Research Center* (23 May 2006), at <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/26/where-terrorism-finds-support-in-the-muslim-world>.

⁵ *Ibid.*



Widespread Opposition to U.S.-led War on Terror

	---- Percent Oppose ----			
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
	%	%	%	%
Lebanon	56	67	--	65
Jordan	85	97	78	86
Morocco	--	84	66	56
Pakistan	45	74	60	52
Turkey	58	71	56	71

2. The Context

When al Qaeda attacked America's most iconic landmarks on September 11, 2001, the intention of al Qaeda was to build global support for a campaign against the U.S., its allies and friends. The larger Muslim world was shocked at the scale of horror unleashed by a Muslim terrorist group in the name of Islam. Many Muslim nations began to perceive Islamic terrorism as a threat to their countries and as a result, the public began expressing hostility toward violence in defense of Islam. However, with the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003, Muslims worldwide from Europe to Asia, Middle East to South America, and Africa expressed serious concerns about U.S. foreign policies. It was perceived as a serious threat to Islam.

Consistently Low Marks for the U.S.										
	1999/									
<u>2000</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	
View of U.S.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Favorable	23	10	13	21	23	27	15	19	16	17
Unfavorable	--	69	81	60	60	56	68	63	68	68
DK	--	20	6	18	18	17	16	17	16	16

1999/2000 survey trend provided by the Office of Research,
U.S. Department of State.
Pew Research Center Q7a.

In 2005, majority of people surveyed in Jordan and Lebanon cited U.S. policies as the most significant cause of Islamic extremism.⁶ During this time period, "in Muslim nations, the wars in Afghanistan and particularly Iraq have driven negative ratings nearly off the

⁶ Funk, Carolyn: "Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Public", *Pew Research Center* (14 July 2005), at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/248.pdf>.



charts.”⁷ American-led invasion of Iraq continues to motivate the operations of the Al Qaeda, its associated groups and affiliated cells. However, the Obama administration has taken efforts to change the rhetorical approach to the threat of terrorism by formally replacing the term “Islamic terrorism” with “violent extremism.” Hence, they have swiftly moved away from using the “war-on-terror” rhetoric that was criticized as the “with-us-or-against-us” philosophy which majority of Muslims perceived as an attack on Islam.⁸ Nine years after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Pew research polls demonstrate that support for Osama bin Laden has declined considerably among Muslim publics in recent years.⁹ Pew Research Center’s Global Attitudes Project demonstrates that from 2003-2010 there has been a significant decline in confidence for Al Qaeda and bin Laden. With the steadfast increase in violence by insurgent and terrorist groups against civilians, the perception of the predominantly Muslim communities worldwide towards the U.S. has slightly improved while al Qaeda and its leader bin Laden have grown less favorable among the solid majority of Muslims. However, according to latest polls conducted by the Pew Research, American’s image largely remains negative in Pakistan due to unfavorable views of American foreign policy. In addition, Americans in general also receive low rating in Pakistan.

3. Factors Correlated to an Increase in Support for al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden

3.1. Opposition to U.S.-led War on Terror

In May 2003, the Muslim population worldwide perceived U.S. efforts against combating terrorism and democratization in the Islamic world as a definite threat. Following U.S. engagement in “global war on terrorism” many Muslims were outraged and displeased by the US-led occupation of Iraq. The widespread oppositions drew predominantly from Arab and Muslim countries—Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan and Turkey. Although many Muslims do not support Islamic extremism, Osama Bin Laden’s anti-U.S. sentiments may have been perceived favorable during this time period.

In 2004, majority of Muslim countries surveyed demonstrated hostility toward U.S.-lead war on terrorism. Osama bin Laden was viewed “favorably by large percentages in Pakistan (65%), Jordan (55%) and Morocco (45%)... even in Turkey, where bin Laden is highly unpopular, as many as 31% say that suicide attacks against Americans and other Westerners in Iraq are justifiable.”¹⁰ Majorities in German, France and Russia also believed that they made the right decision by not getting involved in the war. Many Muslims are still uncertain about the war on terror because they believe that it was an effort to dominate the world and to control the significant oil reserves in the great Middle East. The perception of American antagonism may have been a result of western hostility to Islamic practices and beliefs.

⁷ Wike, Richard: “America’s Image; Muslims and Westerners”, (18 December 2008), at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=263>.

⁸ Boyle, Jon: “Obama Team Drops “war on terror” rhetoric”, *Reuters*, 30 March 2009, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSTRE52T7MH20090330>.

⁹ Horowitz, Juliana: “Declining Support for bin Laden and Suicide Bombing”, *Pew Research Center* (10 September 2009), at <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1338/declining-muslim-support-for-bin-laden-suicide-bombing>.

¹⁰ Kohut, Andrew: “Mistrust of America in Europe Ever Higher, Muslim Anger Persists”, *Pew Research Center* (16 March 2004), at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/text/pew_031604.pdf.



The percentage of individuals who oppose the U.S.-led war on terror may have been the reason for wide-spread opposition in the Islamic community. “Overwhelming opposition to American military action against Al Qaeda and the Taliban inside Pakistan is accompanied by universal disdain for the U.S. led war on terror.”¹¹ Thus, majorities of Muslims feels that U.S. foreign policies as hostile.

3.2. Invasion and Occupation of Iraq

Invasion and Occupation of Iraq is positively correlated with hostility toward the U.S. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, there has been a large number of public opinion polls designed to measure people’s opinion on bin Laden and al Qaeda— The Pew Global Attitudes Project, Terror Free Tomorrow and World Public Opinion. “In 2002, just months after the September 11 attacks, one-third in Pakistan said suicide bombing was often or sometimes justified in order to defend Islam.”¹²

	<i>A lot or some</i>		
	2003	2005	<i>Diff.</i>
	%	%	
Jordan	55	60	+5
Pakistan	45	51	+6
Indonesia	58	35	-23
Morocco	49	26	-23
Turkey	15	7	-8
Lebanon	14	2	-12

Many believed that it is not justifiable to bomb al Qaeda training camps. According to survey results, 81 percent of Pakistanis rejected U.S. bombing of al Qaeda camps in Pakistan. WPO’s 2007 poll results demonstrate that 80 percent of Pakistanis believed that “the Pakistan government should not allow American or other foreign troops to enter Pakistan to pursue and capture al Qaeda fighters, only 5 percent thought their government should permit it...”¹³

¹¹ “Pakistanis Reject U.S. Military Action against Al Qaeda”, *Terror Free Tomorrow* (2007), at [www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimages/tft/Pakistan Poll Report.pdf](http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimages/tft/Pakistan%20Poll%20Report.pdf).

¹² Horowitz, *Ibid.*

¹³ “Less than Half Pakistani Public Support Attacking Al Qaeda Cracking Down on Fundamentalists”, *Worldpublicopinion.org*, 31 October 2007, at <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brasiapacificra/424.php?nid=&id=&pnt=42> (October 2009).



Foreign Troops Pursuing al-Qaeda

Do you think the Pakistan government should or should not allow American or other foreign troops to enter Pakistan to pursue and capture al Qaeda fighters?

Favor

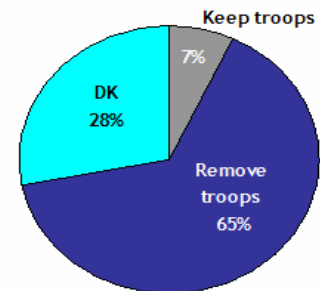


Oppose



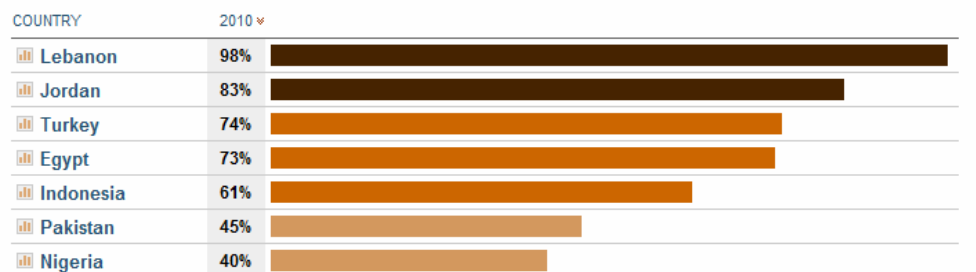
WPD 9/07

Should the U.S. and NATO Keep Troops in Afghanistan?



Pew Research Center Q49.

Percent of Muslims responding No confidence (2010)

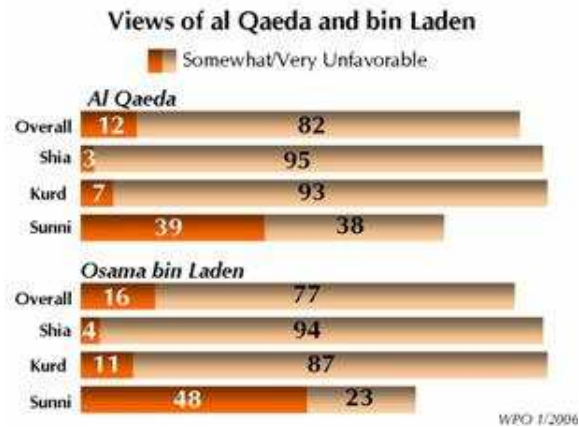


The global attitude survey released by the Pew Research Center in 2005 documents that support for bin Laden in Jordan and Pakistan has slightly increased since post-9/11 and the U.S. invasion of Iraq. For instance, the number of Jordanians having a lot/some confidence in bin Laden increased from 55 percent in May, 2003 to 60 percent in 2005. In Pakistan, 51 percent placed a lot/some confidence in bin Laden, a slight increase from 45 percent in May, 2003. Also, the poll results demonstrate that among Pakistanis, “gender is a significant dividing line with nearly two-in-three men (65%) reporting a lot or some confidence in bin Laden, compared with 36% of women.”¹⁴ Additionally, there are significant demographic variations in both Indonesia and Jordan. For instance, in Indonesia, confidence in bin Laden is higher among the more affluent than older citizens.

Whereas, in Jordan there is a reversible pattern: Confidence in the al Qaeda leader was much more apparent (56 percent) among Jordanians who are under age 35 when compared to 64 percent of their older citizens. Pew Research Center’s Global Attitudes Project also demonstrates that “public around the world reacted negatively to the Iraq war... key elements of American foreign policy have been overwhelmingly unpopular there in recent years...”¹⁵ As of 2010, 65 percent of Afghans support the idea of U.S. and NATO military efforts in fighting extremist groups. In addition, the ongoing presence of U.S. troops in Iraq cities and towns may have been resulted in lack of support for U.S. troops.

¹⁴ “Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics”, Pew Research Center (2009), at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?PageID=814>.

¹⁵ Horowitz, Juliana (2009): “Growing Concerns about Extremism, Continuing Discontent with U.S.”, at www.pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/265.pdf.



Percent of Muslims responding **Confidence** (2010)

COUNTRY	2010
Nigeria	48%
Indonesia	25%
Egypt	19%
Pakistan	18%
Jordan	14%
Turkey	3%
Lebanon	0%

4. Factors Correlated to Decrease in Support for al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden

4.1. Attacks Against Civilians by Extremist Groups

Pew research center poll released in 2009 received world-wide attention. It documents that there have been substantial declines in the percentage of support for al Qaeda and bin Laden since 2003. The drop in confidence is most apparent among Indonesia, Pakistan and Jordan. In Indonesia, confidence in bin Laden declined from 59 percent in 2003 to 25 percent in 2009. However, as of 2010 the percent of Muslims responding confidence in Indonesia still remains constant since 2009. Also, in Pakistan, the confidence has plummeted from 46 percent to 18 percent in 2009. Among Jordanians the confidence has significantly declined from 56 percent to 28 percent in 2009 to 14 percent in 2010.¹⁶ In Lebanon the confidence in bin Laden has decreased to 4 percent. However, in comparison to earlier decades the confidence in the al Qaeda leader has significantly increased in Nigeria—44 percent in 2003 to 54 percent in 2009 with a significant difference of +10. According to latest Pew Research polls released in 2010, Nigerian Muslims still express the most confidence in bin Laden. However, their overall

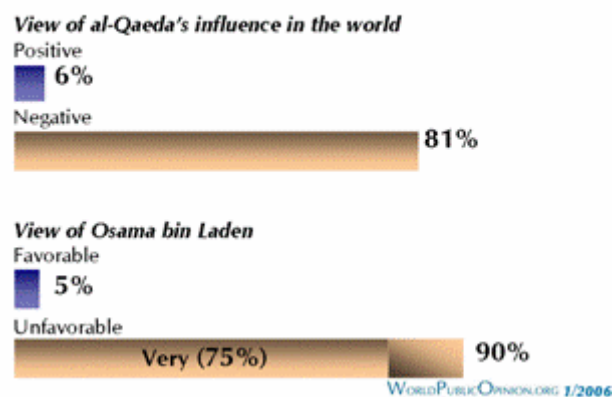
¹⁶ “2 Mixed Views of Hamas and Hezbollah in Largely Muslim Nation”, *The Pew Research Center* (04 February 2010), at <http://pewglobal.org/2010/02/04/mixed-views-of-hamas-and-hezbollah-in-largely-muslim-nations/>.



confidence has decreased from 54 percent in 2009 to 48 percent in 2010. Overall percentages have fluctuated over the years but the numbers still remain high in Nigeria.

The overall findings of this poll conclude that fewer respondents in Muslim countries show confidence in bin Laden today when compared to earlier years. As of 2010, 98 percent of Muslims in Lebanon express no confidence in bin Laden. One of the underlying reasons for decline may be due to awareness of political conditions; attacks against civilians by extremist groups and support for educational development. Increased awareness of political conditions has led many Muslims to change their perspective on terrorism. Many are convinced that “there is a struggle in their country between groups who want to modernize the nation and Islamic fundamentalists.” According to latest data, more individuals are “convinced of the existence of such a struggle in Lebanon (55%), Turkey (54%) and the Palestinian territories (53%) than elsewhere.” Many predominantly Muslim countries have come to support increased aid and educational assistance to end terrorism because educational attainment can meaningfully reduce support and participation in terrorism. For instance, “Lebanon (96%), Israel (93%), Indonesia (93%), Turkey (89%), Pakistan (87%) and the Palestinian territories (85%) say that it is equally important to educate girls and boys.”¹⁷

Negative Views of Al-Qaeda



According to *Terror Free Tomorrow*, a growing number of Shias and Kurds express unfavorable views toward both al Qaeda and bin Laden. The data demonstrates that 95 percent of Shias and 93 percent of Kurds express very unfavorable views toward Al Qaeda. Also, 94 percent of Shias and 87 percent of Kurds express very unfavorable views toward Bin Laden. While Shias and Kurd express quite negative feelings: 38 percent and 23 percent of Sunnis having very unfavorable views of both al Qaeda and bin Laden. Overall data demonstrate that overwhelming majority of Shias, Kurds and Sunnis have lost confidence in al Qaeda and bin Laden. It is reasonable to say that although the support for the al Qaeda leader increased after U.S. invasion of Iraq, it has progressively declined in the recent years.

A declining sense of confidence in al Qaeda and bin Laden was also apparent in the results of World Public Opinion survey conducted in 2006. The data illustrates that 81 percent of Afghan people had unfavorable views of al Qaeda. Trend analysis also documents that 75

¹⁷ “Confidence in Osama bin Laden”, *The Pew Research Center* (2010), at <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=20&survey=12&response=Confidence&mode=char>.



percent of the Afghan population has a very unfavorable view of bin Laden. Overall data concludes that Afghans have a remarkable negative view of both al Qaeda and bin Laden. As of 2010, Overall conclusion of the polls illustrate that most Muslim population is definitely expressing less support for al Qaeda and extremism in their countries.

Confidence in bin Laden has also declined noticeably in some countries, and less Muslims believe suicide bombings that are initially aimed at civilians are justifiable in defense of Islam. Most recent data illustrate that only a 9 percent of Pakistanis surveyed have favorable view of al Qaeda and 79 percent is concerned about extremism in their country. In fact, assassinations, bombings and attacks on civilians may have been a factor in the decline in confidence of bin Laden.

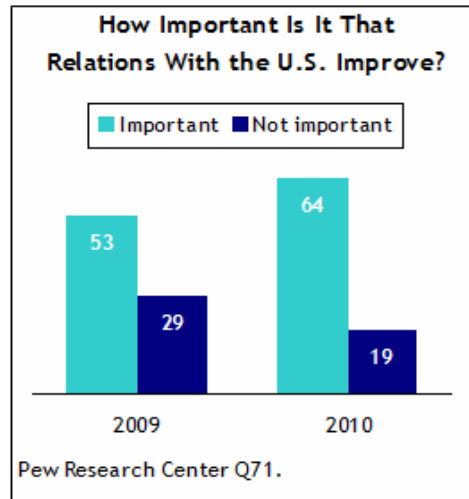
4.2. U.S. Humanitarian Aid

The rise of anti-Americanism in the 21st century has greatly influence how America is perceived by rest of the world, especially among predominantly Muslim countries. Many express interests in improving relations with the U.S. “Moreover, many endorse U.S. assistance for the Pakistani government in its fight with extremist groups. Nearly three-fourths of those interviewed (72%) would support U.S. financial and humanitarian aid to areas where extremist groups operate.”¹⁸ Majorities of Muslims also favor the idea of the U.S. supplying logistical and intelligence support to combat extremists groups. An interesting pattern that was documented in the data is that declining public support for bin Laden and al Qaeda doesn’t necessarily connote that the public support U.S. war on terror. For instance, Pakistanis still have unfavorable views on U.S. itself however, if Americans were to change their foreign policies it may be possible to reverse people’s resentment toward the U.S. According to the findings of the Pew Global Attitude Research Project (2007);

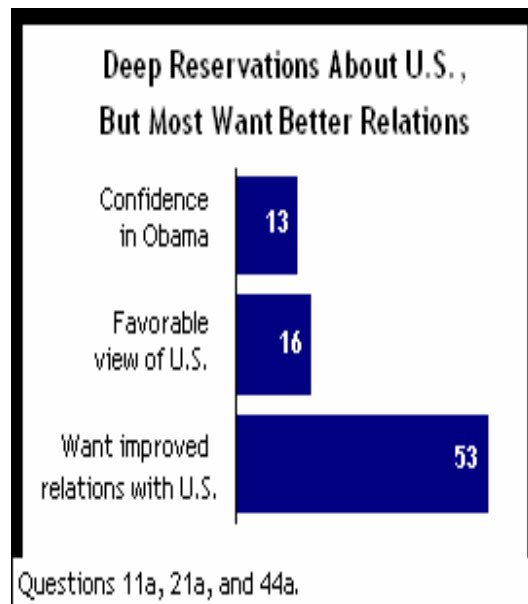
- “December 2002 - America's image slips, although goodwill towards the U.S. remains
- June 2003 - U.S. image plunges in the wake of the Iraq war
- March 2004 - No improvement in U.S. image, some worsening in Europe
- June 2005 - U.S. image improves slightly, although still negative in most places; and anti-Americanism is becoming increasingly entrenched
- June 2006 - Show little further progress - in fact some back sliding. Even as the publics of the world concurred with the Americans on many global problems.”¹⁹

¹⁸ Horowitz, “Growing Concerns...”, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ “America’s Image in the World”, *Pew Research Center* (14 March 2007), at <http://pewglobal.org/commentary/display.php?AnalysisID=1019> .



Improvement of America’s image worldwide is critical to decrease in support for al Qaeda and bin Laden. It was documented that a greater majority of supporters of bin Laden and al Qaeda (eight in ten) consider improving country’s economy, independent judiciary and free press. Civilian death caused by terrorist attacks and U.S. humanitarian aid following natural disasters such as tsunamis and earthquakes also increased participation in democratization in predominantly Muslim countries like Indonesia and Pakistan.





For instance, “In the first poll in Pakistan since the earthquake of October 8, 2005, Pakistanis now hold a more favorable opinion of the United States than at any time since 9/11, while support for Al Qaeda in its home base has dropped to its lowest level since then.”²⁰ It is extremely important for policy makers to note that U.S. should maintain international stability through communication. “Instead of simply turning up the volume of its message, United States should provide mechanisms for Americans and the world’s Muslims to talk to one another”²¹. U.S. humanitarian interventions can result in favorable views. Legitimacy of the U.S. can be restored and public support for al Qaeda and bin Laden can be decreased by the implementation of following recommendations. Despite giving America constantly low ratings, 65 percent of Pakistanis believe that it is important to improve relations between Pakistan and U.S.

5. Policy Implications

Violence against civilians and terrorist attacks in countries such as Indonesia, Morocco, Lebanon and Turkey result in strong opposition to both al Qaeda and bin Laden. However, there are still sympathizers and supporters who have confidence in bin Laden. According to Ulil Abshor Abdala, chairman of the Islamic Liberal Network, "For some youth Usama Bin Laden is like Che Guevera, it does not matter what you say, he is a hero to them. Our challenge is how to limit the extent of this heroic admiration among the youth."²² In other words, the key is to find measures to limit the number of sympathizers and supporters of bin Laden and al Qaeda. First, policy makers should consider that there is still strong opposition to U.S-led efforts to combat terrorism. Utilization of military forces can result in new resentments and grievances therefore, it is extremely important for western countries to rebuild a good relationship with Muslim nations. This will lessen the chances of terrorist exploiting resentments and grievances to spread their radical ideologies. Second, the U.S. should attempt to be more culturally sensitive toward Muslims. We must take necessary measure to create an atmosphere of cultural understanding, promote inter-faith understanding and endorse a culture of peace, tolerance and hope among various ethnic groups. A range of policy instruments that do not interfere with cultural norms should be initiated to counter the propaganda of al Qaeda and bin Laden. According to the World Public Opinion Poll (2006), “Overwhelming majorities in predominantly Muslim countries say the controversy over the publication of cartoons depicting Muhammad was the result of “Western nations’ disrespect for the Islamic religion.”²³ Decision-makers should strongly consider on finding ways to reduce western hostility and antagonism toward Islam. This may not help in reducing antipathy toward the United States and the Western nations but also reduce the number of supporters and sympathizers extremist groups. Third, it is vital for U.S. policy makers to educate the general public that undermining Islam is not a key objective for U.S. foreign policy. In other words, we must send a clear message that we are not engaged in a war against

²⁰: “Dramatic Change of Public Opinion in the Muslim World”, *Terror Free Tomorrow* (2005), at <http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/article.php?id=71>.

²¹ Krause, Peter and Van Evera, Stephen: “Public Diplomacy: Ideas for the War of Ideas”, Harvard Belfer Center, *Discussion Paper, 09-10* (September 2009), at http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/19550/public_diplomacy.html.

²² “Muslim Support for bin Laden Falls”, *Fox News*, 14 July 2005, at www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,162563,00.html.

²³ “Large and Growing Numbers of Muslims Reject Terrorism”, *Worldpublicopinion.org*, 30 June 2006, at http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/international_security_bt/221.php?nid=&id=&pnt=221&lb=brme.



Islam. “At the heart of Arab attitudes are resentment of US policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and deep mistrust of America's intentions in Iraq. The views expressed by the Arabs polled underline how urgent it is for US policymakers to try to counter the negative views of America in the region”²⁴ It is critical to increase awareness of the fact that the U.S. is not at war with Islam. U.S. should also attempt to gradually eradicate its forces from Islamic countries. Civilians should be educated that long-term U.S. military forces in Iraq are not there to destabilize the region and their culture. This may facilitate in promoting globalization and democracy among Muslim nations. These regimes should promote tolerance and reverence to the Islamic culture and its people. Reshaping U.S. foreign policy may also result in improving the image of U.S. and greater decline in support for bin Laden and al Qaeda.

Use the Pakistani Army to Fight Extremist Groups?			
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Support	53	49	-4
Oppose	24	20	-4
DK	22	30	+8

Pew Research Center Q109.

Fourth, the image of the U.S. is tremendously negative among predominantly Muslim countries such as Pakistan. For instance, latest poll results released in 2010 demonstrate that 49 percent of Pakistanis still believe that they should use their country’s army to fight extremist groups. Therefore, U.S. counterterrorism strategies should adopt appropriate measure to incorporate both hard and soft policies that will improve the outlook of America while diminishing the appeal of al Qaeda and bin Laden. “Although the U.S. cannot change its foreign policies solely on the basis of public attitudes abroad, the costs of actions must be understood and factored into the policy assessment.”²⁵ In other words, the U.S. policymakers should alternative measures to counter the negative images associated with its foreign policies. Measures should be taken to strengthen cooperation and to improve cultural and trade exchanges between the West and Islamic countries.

These are range of policy instruments that may improve relations between the U.S. and predominantly Muslim countries,

International humanitarian agencies should also provide more support in reconstructing nations affected by terrorism. We must create a partnership between practitioners of de-radicalization, Islamic theologians and academic researchers with theoretical and methodological background. U.S. efforts against combating terrorism should

²⁴ Telhami, Shibley: “Arab Public Opinion on the United States and Iraq”, *The Brookings Institution* (Summer 2003), at http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2003/summer_forceandlegitimacy_telhami.aspx.

²⁵ Shibley Telhami: “U.S. Policy and the Arab and Muslim World”, (Summer 2002), at http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2002/summer_middleeast_telhami.aspx.



not be to dominate Islamic nations, undermine Islam and to gain control over their oil resources. U.S. should take a fair position when dealing with Muslim-majority countries and consider the interests of those nations when reshaping U.S. foreign policy. Nevertheless, cultural sensitivity and sovereignty should be taken into consideration when pursuing these approaches.

6. Discussion

Al Qaeda and its radical ideology of global jihad may be plummeting. This may be a result of “its central leadership thrown off balance as operatives are increasingly picked off by missiles and manhunts and, more important, with its tactics discredited in public opinion across the Muslim world”²⁶ Emile Nakhleh, the former Head of the CIA believes that al Qaeda is having a difficult time recruiting new members, raising terrorist funds but most importantly, they are having difficulty justifying the killings of innocent civilians. Audrey Kurth Cronin, a professor at the National War College also argues that al Qaeda “is in the process of imploding... this is not necessarily the end... but the trends are in a good direction... whether it should change the American counterterrorism policy, remains wide open...”²⁷ Furthermore, some specialists also believe that the organization is on a “downhill slope” and this may be a result of military operations of killing terrorist leaders such as Al Shabab, a leader of a Somali organization associated with al Qaeda and Noordin Top, Indonesia's most wanted Islamist militant. However, drone attacks by the C.I.A could lead to more Anti-American sentiments among the Muslim population. These attacks might threaten terrorist operations and possible new recruits however, threat of air attacks can create constant psychological fear among the general public.

The data from the Pew Global Attitudes Project which demonstrates that positive ratings for bin Laden has plummeted when large numbers of innocent civilians became the victims of terrorist attacks and al Qaeda-style violence. For instance, the slaughter of civilians by a group called *al Qaeda in Mesopotamia* and bombing of hotels in Jordan may have motivated the general public to support American forces. In addition, al Qaeda has been unable to provide any realistic resolution to local issues such as “unemployment, poverty, official corruption and poor education... people realized Bin Laden has nothing to offer...”—Peter Mandaville, a professor of government and Islamic Studies at George Mason University.²⁸

²⁶ Shane, Scott: “Rethinking Our Terrorist Fears”, *New York Times*, 26 September 2009, at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/27/weekinreview/27shane.html?_r=1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*



Despite these arguments, al Qaeda still appeals to its sympathizers and supporters. However, as of 2010, fewer Pakistanis are concerned about extremist groups taking over their country. Although al Qaeda may be losing their popular support in majority of countries, terrorism will not go away any time soon. As counterterrorism expert, Bruce Hoffman notes “Al Qaeda’s core demographic is young hotheads aged 16-28, and I still don’t think it had lost its appeal to that demographic...terrorism ends, sure but with Al Qaeda it may be 50 years, and we are only eight years away from 9/11....”²⁹

U.S. military operations against al Qaeda may keep terrorist operatives from coming up with an attack similar to or larger than 9/11 however, this does not mean that its allies will discontinue imitating bin Laden’s radical ideology.

“The lack of a successful spectacular attack from AQ in the last few years means they become yesterday’s news - they need to keep a high profile and being on the run makes that harder and harder - hence they lose the public over time. Of course the government’s actions against them helps, but perhaps this is another way to understand what is happening and it means that if so their profile could rise again if they pull off another 9/11 style attack....”³⁰

Despite the decentralization of the Jihad movement we can argue that it has shifted to the internet. According to data, the overall support for bin Laden has declined however, more than half (54%) of Nigerian Muslims still have confidence in bin Laden. In addition, “Lebanese Shias are about twice as likely as Sunnis to endorse suicide bombing (51% vs. 25%)”³¹ and the public support for Suicide Bombings is still high among the Lebanese Muslims.

In addition, although the physical center of the Jihadi movement has weakened over the years, it has shifted to the virtual world with increasing number of female users. “Bin Laden has given others a narrative, a grand struggle, and he is given them tactics as well...”³² said Mandaville. Prime examples of this are the South Asian websites and forums that imitate

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Ballard, James, Personal Communication, 12 October 2009.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*



Arab websites in their quest for a virtual *ummah* (community). Al Qaeda literature has also expanded into different languages such as English, German and French and has created a virtual *ummah*. Websites that promotes extremist ideology can turn passive supporters into active supports.

This process is very similar to any other social organization. For example, a religious organization, an honor society, a human rights group or any other social organization that fosters an environment and develops social attachments to the other members of the group can function in a similar way. Some members join but after some time they may drop out from the group. However, others join and over time perhaps become less active participants. Nevertheless, there may be a handful of members who become extremely dedicated to the organization as “active participants.” There is something that is unique about these members, making them stand out from the rest of the group. This same notion can be applied to a terrorist organization. A terrorist organization is very similar to the nature of the exchange relation that occurs in a primary group where the members share close, personal relations during a long period of time.

This transformation process is critical because individuals are exposed to the Islamic caliphate, distortion of doctrines can be motivated to internalize the radical ideology. As a result, these individuals can be transformed from sympathizers to more committed supporters into active participants. While counterterrorism is succeeding, we must also pay attention to the next generation of supporters because we still have many potential converts and the key is to counter the communication process in its tracks. Although al Qaeda may remain out of the spotlight, more new groups are finding their way into the spotlight. As we rethink our terrorist fears we must also consider that “At some time the beards grow gray and the AQ of yesterday is replaced by newer generations of AQ II (version two)...”³³

Scott Atran (2004) finds that there is “no evidence that most people who support suicide actions hate Americans’ internal cultural freedoms, but rather every indication that they oppose U.S. foreign policies, particularly regarding the Middle East.”³⁴ Nevertheless, according to the former President, Jimmy Carter, President Obama’s victory in winning the Nobel Peace prize determines that “It is a bold statement of international support for his vision and commitment to peace and harmony in international relations. It shows the hope his administration represents not only to our nation but to people around the world.”³⁵

7. Conclusion

There are two causal reasons that may contribute to the decrease in support for al Qaeda and bin Laden. First, violence against civilians by extremist groups has led to a considerable decline in support for suicide bombings among many individuals. Majority of the Muslim publics surveyed express strong rejections toward suicide bombings and believe that it is never justified in defense of Islam. Second, U.S. humanitarian, intelligence, logistical and financial support to where al Qaeda operates is significantly correlated to decline in support for extremist groups and bin Laden. Majority of the public surveyed believe that it is critical to improve relations between their countries and the U.S. For instance, some Pakistanis

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Atran, Scott (2004): *Trends in Suicide Terrorism*, at www.sitemaker.umich.edu/satran/files/atran-trends.pdf

³⁵ Associated Press: “Political Figures React to Obama’s Nobel Prize Win”, at <http://cbs4.com/politics/obama.peace.prize.2.1238115.html>.



endorse U.S. aid for their government in its fight against extremist groups and believe that they would favor drone attacks against extremist leaders.

There are two fundamental reasons correlated to increase in support for al Qaeda and bin Laden. First, opposition to U.S.-led war on terror has dramatically increased since 2003. Many Muslim individuals surveyed believe that U.S.-led war on terror has contributed to their deteriorating economy. In addition, there is little enthusiasm for drone attacks targeting extremist leaders mainly because many civilians believe that these attacks are conducted without the approval of their governments. Many Pakistanis believe that U.S. and NATO should withdraw their troops from their country, thus support the idea of using their country's army to fight terrorism.

Secondly, lack of awareness about political conditions that give rise to terrorism and increase support for extremist ideologies have lead to the rise of extremisms around the world. Though there is a long-standing concern about extremism, many are concerned about U.S.-led efforts to combat terrorism, both globally and in Pakistan particularly. When people are stripped of their human rights, alienated and are subjugated by various negative social circumstances, they are more likely to become vulnerable candidates for radicalization and recruitment to participate in terrorism. To tip the scales in favor of counter-terrorism efforts, there is still much to be done through a global integrated approach to minimize supporters and sympathizers. Partnership should be built between governments, academia and the Muslim communities. We must think beyond security measures, understand why individuals become radicalized, and address social conditions favorable to the increase in support for extremist leaders and groups. As a global community, we must learn from one another and identify global best practices in order to maximize success and minimize failure.



LA DIMENSIÓN POLÍTICA EN LAS RELACIONES UNIÓN EUROPEA-ARGELIA: CRISIS Y NORMALIZACIÓN

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Resumen:

El desarrollo de las relaciones entre la Unión Europea y Argelia ha tenido como trasfondo una situación interna extremadamente complicada que, a lo largo de una década, ha provocado más de 100.000 víctimas. La respuesta política de la Unión Europea ante los acontecimientos en Argelia ha puesto de manifiesto las dificultades inherentes para armonizar los intereses económicos de los Estados miembros con los principios de la Política Exterior de la Unión. Los éxitos militares del Gobierno de Buteflika y la plena integración de Argelia en la Asociación Mediterránea, tras la entrada en vigor del Acuerdo de Asociación, ha permitido una normalización en las relaciones políticas bilaterales. Este contexto parece conducir a las autoridades argelinas a replantearse los términos de sus relaciones con la Unión Europea, con la finalidad de alcanzar un estatuto representativo del carácter estratégico de Argelia como uno de los principales suministradores de energía de la Unión Europea.

Palabras clave: Argelia, Unión Europea, relaciones exteriores, diálogo político, energía.

Title in English: “*The Political Dimension in EU-Algeria Relations: Crisis and Normalization*”.

Abstract:

The development of relations between the European Union and Algeria was extremely complicated. The decade-long civil war resulted in more than 100,000 victims. The political response by the European Union to these events in Algeria has highlighted the underlying difficulties to harmonize economic interests of any member state with the principles enshrined in the Union's External Policy. The military successes of Buteflika's government and the full integration of Algeria into the Mediterranean Association once the Partnership Agreement came into force, have enabled a process of normalization of bilateral relations. This context seems to be leading the Algerian authorities to redefine their relation to the European Union in an attempt to reach a status of strategic partnership. Algeria is one of the main providers of energy to the European Union.

Keywords: Algeria, European Union, Foreign Relations, Political Dialogue, Energy.

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1. Introducción

Durante los últimos años, coincidiendo con eventos como el décimo aniversario del lanzamiento del Proceso de Barcelona o con la creación de nuevos marcos regionales en el Mediterráneo, como la Política Europea de Vecindad o la Unión para el Mediterráneo, se ha desarrollado un vivo debate a diversos niveles, centrado en el balance y las perspectivas de desarrollo de las relaciones de la Unión Europea con sus vecinos del Sur y del Este del Mediterráneo. Son muchas, en este contexto, las voces que han coincidido en señalar como la política comunitaria en el Mediterráneo no ha respondido a las altas expectativas con las que partía a la hora de su diseño. Asimismo, son muchas también, las voces que achacan este incumplimiento de expectativas a un excesivo interés por parte europea en los aspectos económicos de la cooperación con los Países Terceros Mediterráneos, relegando para un lugar secundario los aspectos políticos referidos a las reformas democráticas y al Estado de Derecho. Si bien, en cierta medida, es defendible esta opinión, ampliamente extendida, entendemos que sería un error aplicarla de un modo uniforme a las relaciones mantenidas por la UE con cada uno de los países mediterráneos. Como no podría ser de otro modo, la gran diversidad de situaciones económicas políticas y sociales que han vivido en los tiempos recientes cada uno de aquellos países ha provocado un enfoque diferenciado por parte de la UE. Un enfoque que demuestra que, a pesar de la importancia de los aspectos económicos, la situación política en estos países ha jugado un papel relevante en las relaciones con la UE.

Tal vez, el caso de Argelia sea uno de los más evidentes en los que la dimensión política resulta un factor determinante para entender el conjunto de relaciones bilaterales y multilaterales emprendidas entre aquel país y la UE, especialmente desde el inicio de la década de los años 90. El análisis del peso específico de las cuestiones políticas en el conjunto de relaciones UE-Argelia resulta, en todo caso una labor compleja en la que concurren diversos factores, básicos para entender el desarrollo de dichas relaciones, como son, por una parte, la gravedad de la situación interna vivida en el país magrebí a lo largo de la década de los años 90 y, por otra parte, las dinámicas y contradicciones propias de la Política Exterior de la UE. Estas dinámicas y contradicciones se derivan, en parte del complejo equilibrio de poderes que la organización institucional de la Unión trata de preservar. Este equilibrio se refleja en el propio procedimiento de decisión política de la UE, en el que participan, en diferente medida, tres instituciones comunitarias, como son el Consejo de Ministros, la Comisión y el Parlamento Europeo, representando, respectivamente a los Gobiernos de los Estados miembros, al interés comunitario y al mandato de los electores europeos.

Asimismo, las relaciones con Argelia son representativas de las contradicciones que, a veces, se producen entre las disposiciones y competencias del pilar comercial de la UE, la Comunidad Europea (CE), y los pilares de cooperación intergubernamental, como la Política Exterior y de Seguridad Común (PESC), cuando entran en juego las cuestiones referidas a la democracia y a los derechos humanos. En este sentido, algunos autores señalan como, frecuentemente, cuando se alcanza una voluntad política en la UE para actuar en los campos de la democracia y de los derechos humanos en sus relaciones exteriores, esta voluntad choca con intereses económicos globales y consideraciones geoestratégicas de los Estados miembros.²

²Morisse-Schilbach, Melanie: “Democratization “By Design” Versus Democratization “By Default”: The Case of Algeria”, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego, California, USA, (Marzo 2006), en http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/9/9/6/1/p99617_index.html.



Finalmente, las particulares condiciones económicas y políticas de Argelia, dentro del contexto geográfico del Magreb, resultan fundamentales a la hora de interpretar la actuación política del sistema regional europeo en el desarrollo de sus relaciones con este país. Realmente, hasta la primera mitad de los años 80 la cooperación entre las Comunidades Europeas y Argelia había quedado relegada a los aspectos financieros y técnicos, establecidos en el Acuerdo de Asociación de 1978 y a los sucesivos Protocolos financieros que desarrollaban aquel texto. Realmente, la relativa prosperidad de Argelia a principios de los años 80, derivada del alto precio de los hidrocarburos, la propia orientación política del Gobierno argelino y que se refleja en un cierto aislacionismo con respecto al exterior, así como una ayuda financiera comunitaria cuya cuantía se considera mínima, son algunas de las causas que, durante este período, motivan un cierto desinterés de las autoridades argelinas por la cooperación bilateral con la Comunidad. Asimismo, la aparente estabilidad política y económica del país durante aquel periodo apartaba la posibilidad de introducir tanto cuestiones políticas como cláusulas de condicionalidad en los marcos de cooperación bilateral.

Partiendo de estas premisas, es nuestro objetivo en este artículo el de analizar los efectos que la compleja situación política, económica y social vivida en Argelia a partir del Golpe de Estado de 1992, ha tenido en la composición del cuadro de relaciones entre la UE y este país magrebí. Para ello describiremos, en primer lugar, el contexto económico y político interno vivido en Argelia durante los años anteriores al Golpe, y en el que, en gran medida, se sitúan los orígenes de la profunda crisis argelina de la década de los años 90. Igualmente analizaremos la respuesta de la UE al Golpe de Estado del 11 de enero de 1992, así como la política de condicionalidad en la ayuda económica que se seguirá durante los dos siguientes años. A continuación, nos centraremos en los efectos de la implantación de un diálogo político informal o *ad hoc*, sobre la situación de aislamiento que Argelia vivía en relación con los procesos de integración regional que, a partir de mediados de los años 90, la UE promoverá con otros países del Mediterráneo. Finalmente concluiremos con una reflexión sobre el efecto de las cuestiones políticas en el desarrollo y en las perspectivas de las relaciones Unión Europea-Argelia en el seno de los nuevos marcos de cooperación en el Mediterráneo.

2. Argelia 1986-1992. De la crisis económica al Golpe de Estado

De un modo general, la mayoría de los estudios realizados sobre la crisis vivida en Argelia a finales de los ochenta coinciden en establecer sus orígenes en el deterioro progresivo del propio modelo económico centralizado adoptado por el país tras su independencia. En este sentido, durante la segunda mitad de los años 60 y a lo largo de toda la década siguiente Argelia vivirá un proceso de industrialización acelerada, basada en sus notables recursos de hidrocarburos, que llevará a privilegiar la industria de base frente al sector de los bienes de consumo³. Este proceso, unido a un fuerte crecimiento demográfico, conducirá al país a una fuerte dependencia alimentaria del exterior, habida cuenta del escaso desarrollo y potencial de la producción agrícola nacional. Asimismo esta rápida industrialización del país solo pudo ser realizada a través de un fuerte endeudamiento público con instituciones públicas y privadas en

³ Tal y como refiere Naïr, estableciendo una comparación entre los modelos económicos soviético y argelino, “la idea era crear una industria pesada que pudiera generar industrias intermedias y permitir con ello el desarrollo de la sociedad soviética. Los argelinos copiaron más o menos este modelo, pero el hecho de poseer la renta energética no hizo necesario un proceso previo de obtención de capital mediante los beneficios de la agricultura”. Naïr, Sami (1995): *En el nombre de Dios*, Icaria, Barcelona, p. 30.



el exterior. Sin embargo, este modelo económico, basado en una elevada tasa de inversión pública, sostenida, casi exclusivamente, por las divisas obtenidas por el Estado por medio de la exportación de hidrocarburos, permitió un considerable crecimiento económico sostenido, con una tasa media del 7 % durante el periodo comprendido entre 1967 y 1979⁴.

Sin embargo, esta aparente estabilidad comenzará a desmoronarse a partir del año 1986 tras la concurrencia de dos factores; por una parte una brusca caída del precio de los hidrocarburos en los mercados mundiales y por otra una devaluación del Dólar estadounidense, la moneda de cotización de aquellos productos. Estos factores tuvieron unos efectos inmediatos en la economía argelina, teniendo en cuenta que los hidrocarburos constituían más del 95 % del total de las exportaciones argelinas. Esto provocaría entre 1986 y 1988 una subida de la inflación hasta el 8'5 % y un rápido aumento del crónico desempleo del 18 % hasta el 22%. Asimismo la escasez de divisas del Estado provocaría un recorte drástico de las importaciones de materias primas y de bienes de capital, lo que repercutió de un modo directo sobre la industria nacional. Ante el deterioro de la situación el Gobierno hubo de recurrir al crédito exterior y, al mismo tiempo, a un reajuste de su economía dirigido a introducir disciplina en la política de créditos y de subvenciones a las empresas, disolver las explotaciones agrícolas colectivas, restringir las importaciones de bienes alimentares y de equipamientos, reducir los gastos de protección social y, en general, la inversión pública en la economía.

La gravedad de la situación obligaba a adoptar unas medidas que suponían “el inicio de un declive gradual del Estado-providencia, de un pacto implícito entre la población y sus dirigentes”⁵. Así, los sucesivos recortes en el gasto público, el crecimiento del desempleo y la brusca subida de los artículos de primera necesidad provocarán en octubre de aquel año violentas protestas que paralizarán las principales ciudades del país durante varios días y que serán duramente reprimidas por los cuerpos de seguridad, provocando más de 500 muertos⁶. Estos acontecimientos, no solo marcará el inicio de la emergencia del Frente Islámico de Salvación (FIS) como la principal fuerza política opositora, sino que, en términos más generales, supondrán “el primer gran pulso entre el ejército y la burocracia del Estado por un lado, que veían cuestionado sus privilegios y prácticas más usuales (corrupción, redes ilegales de distribución, contrabando, etc.) y una mayoría de población desencantada y desesperada, por otro”⁷.

Como consecuencia de estos acontecimientos el poder monolítico estructurado en torno al FLN comienza a fracturarse y para evitar su desaparición comienza a abrirse a la sociedad. Efectivamente, el poder político en Argelia se hará “democrático” no por convicción sino por obligación.⁸ Así, a partir de aquellos acontecimientos importantes cambios políticos se sucederán consecutivamente. La reelección presidencial de Benyedid, en diciembre de 1988, será seguida de la aprobación en referéndum de una nueva constitución en febrero de 1989, que incluía el derecho a la creación de asociaciones de tipo político⁹, y la

⁴ Benissad, Hocine : “Le plan d’ajustement structurel”, *Confluences-Méditerranée*, nº 23 (Automne 1997), p. 107.

⁵ Benissad, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁶ Gómez, Ricardo (2003): *Negotiating the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Strategic Action in EU foreign Policy?*, Hampshire, Ashgate Publishing Ltd., p. 148.

⁷ Segura, Antoni (1999) “La crisis de Argelia” en Aubarell, Gemma (ed.): *Las políticas mediterráneas -nuevos escenarios de cooperación*. Barcelona, Icaria - Antrazyt / ICM (Institut Català de la Mediterrània), p. 181.

⁸ El-Kenz, Ali: “Algérie: les enjeux d’une crise”, *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée*, vol. 65, nº 1 (1992), p. 23.

⁹ Art. 40, Constitución de 23 de febrero de 1989 desarrollado por la Ley 89/11 de 5 de julio de 1989 relativa a las asociaciones de carácter político, *al-Yarida al-Rasmiyya* r. 27. p. 713.



legalización, en septiembre de aquel año, del Frente Islámico de Salvación (FIS). La puerta estaba abierta para la realización de elecciones multipartidistas. Realmente, esta decisión, que abría un proceso sin precedentes en el Magreb y en todo el Mundo Árabe, obedecía más a las divisiones internas en el FLN que a la voluntad de instaurar un verdadero sistema democrático en el país.

Ante la sorpresa generalizada, estas elecciones, municipales y regionales, celebradas el 12 de junio de 1990, fueron ampliamente ganadas por el FIS, consiguiendo el 54'25 % de los votos en las municipales y el 57'44% en las regionales. Estos resultados reflejaban un considerable alejamiento entre el Gobierno la mayoría del electorado. Un divorcio que se confirmaría definitivamente en la primera vuelta de las elecciones legislativas celebradas el 26 de diciembre de 1991, que cambiaría definitivamente el mapa político del país. El FIS obtendrá una victoria arrolladora con 188 escaños en la Asamblea, sobre el antiguo partido único, el FLN, que apenas obtendrá 16 escaños y 15 el Frente de Fuerzas Socialistas. A pesar de una cierta reducción en el número de votos con respecto a las elecciones municipales de 1990¹⁰, el partido islamista había conseguido nuevamente canalizar el descontento de grandes masas de población, principalmente urbana, que entendiendo poco o nada sobre la deuda externa del país, el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) o la reestructuración del modelo económico del país, veía como los precios de los bienes de primera necesidad subían hasta cotas inimaginables y como su poder de compra descendía a una velocidad equivalente mientras que el partido del Gobierno, el FLN, se situaba en unos niveles de representatividad parlamentaria mínimos¹¹.

La situación post-electoral dejaba pocas alternativas al Gobierno que, básicamente se reducían a dos: bien aceptar el resultado de las elecciones y desarrollar una experiencia de cohabitación en el poder con el FIS, al menos durante los casi dos años que aún restaban a Benyedid en la presidencia de la República, o bien declarar las elecciones nulas y repetir la situación vivida en 1965¹², es decir, el golpe de Estado. Como ya sabemos hoy día, esta segunda opción, que marcaba el final de la primera experiencia democrática de Argelia, sería la que acabaría por imponerse pocos días antes de la prevista celebración de la segunda vuelta de las elecciones legislativas.

El 11 de enero de 1992, la cúpula mayor del ejército, encabezada por el Ministro de Defensa, General Jalid Nizar provoca la dimisión o destitución, según se quiera ver, del Presidente Benyedid acabando con la corta experiencia multipartidista en Argelia. Aquellos acontecimientos respondían de modo claro a los elementos característicos de un Golpe de Estado militar, a pesar de que esta acción intentó ser presentada públicamente por el ejército como una situación de excepción dentro de la legalidad constitucional.

Inevitablemente, se iniciaba una espiral de manifestaciones masivas y de disturbios, movilizadas por el FIS, seguidos de una represión por parte del ejército y los cuerpos de seguridad que situaba al borde del caos al que había sido uno de los países más estables de África durante las anteriores décadas. El siguiente paso sería dado en febrero de 1992 con la

¹⁰ Frente Islámico de Salvación. Votos Elecciones 1990: 4.331.472. Votos elecciones 1991: 3.260.222. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹¹ Realmente, tal y como indica Naïr, estas elecciones son la muestra de un enorme error de cálculo por parte del Gobierno. El sistema electoral a dos vueltas había diseñado por las autoridades, con la intención de favorecer a dos o tres grandes partidos en detrimento de los demás. De este modo, según los cálculos del Gobierno, el FLN ganaría las elecciones de 1991-1992 y volvería a ocupar el centro político apoyándose en los islamistas o en los demócratas modernizados. Naïr, *op.cit.*, pp. 66-67.

¹² Naïr, *op. cit.*, p. 67.



ilegalización del FIS, el mayor partido político del país que en las elecciones había obtenido más de 3 millones de votos, representando casi a la mitad de los electores.

No solo se estaba enterrando un proceso político de democratización pionero en el Magreb sino que se estaba abriendo la puerta para una confrontación civil que, a lo largo de casi una década y sin un final definido, provocará más de cien mil muertos. El país entraría irremediabilmente en una espiral de violencia en el que las silenciosas violaciones de los derechos humanos alcanzarán cotas comparables a las de otros conflictos armados, mucho más mediáticos y que en aquellos años suscitaban las mayores preocupaciones en Europa, como los vividos en la antigua Yugoslavia. Una situación bélica que se mantendrá durante toda la década de los 90, a pesar del intento de regreso a la legalidad constitucional tras la elección de Liamin Zeroual como Presidente, en 1995, y que sólo comenzará a perder intensidad durante el Gobierno de Bouteflika, a partir del año 2000.

3. La Unión Europea ante la crisis argelina

3.1. Las reacciones de la Comunidad Europea ante el Golpe de Estado de 11 de enero de 1992

Una cuestión sobre la que discurren diferentes teorías es la que se refiere a la posición europea ante el Golpe de Estado del 11 de enero de 1992. Mientras para algunos, se trataba de un acontecimiento previsible, e incluso deseado, por la mayoría de los Estados europeos que consideraban la interrupción del proceso electoral como un mal menor ante la previsible victoria del FIS, para otros, la acción del ejército cogió totalmente desprevenidos a los Estados miembros de la Comunidad.

Realmente, la primera respuesta de las instituciones comunitarias al Golpe de Estado no procedió de los Ministros de la Cooperación Política Europea, tal y como cabría esperarse, sino del Parlamento Europeo, a través de una Resolución aprobada el 15 de enero de 1992. La Eurocámara había preparado durante los últimos meses de 1991 un texto en el que apostaba claramente por el ejercicio de la condicionalidad política en las relaciones de la Comunidad con los países mediterráneos a través de la inclusión de cláusulas relativas a la democracia y al respeto a los derechos humanos en los protocolos de los acuerdos de cooperación, en aplicación de los principios de la Política Mediterránea Renovada. Como consecuencia de este nuevo enfoque, el Parlamento, emitía en dicha Resolución su Dictamen de conformidad con los nuevos Protocolos Financieros de la Comunidad con Argelia, Egipto, Jordania, Líbano e Israel, a la vez que se oponía a la ejecución de los Protocolos firmados con Marruecos y Siria “señalando que en alguno de estos países, en especial en Siria y en Marruecos, no se cumplen estos criterios y que las violaciones de los derechos humanos son allí particularmente graves”¹³. La coherencia con lo dispuesto en dicho texto y los acontecimientos vividos en Argelia apenas cuatro días antes, llevaron a incluir en dicha Resolución una petición a la Comisión “para que no inicie la aplicación del Cuarto Protocolo con Argelia hasta que no esté clara la situación política en dicho país”.¹⁴

¹³ Parlamento Europeo, Resolución sobre los Protocolos financieros con Siria, Marruecos, Argelia, Egipto, Túnez, Jordania, el Líbano, e Israel, y el respeto de los derechos humanos y de los acuerdos internacionales por parte de estos países. Estrasburgo, 15 de enero de 1992, *Diario Oficial* Nº C 39/50-52, 17.2.1992.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*



Esta postura del Parlamento que establecía un claro vínculo entre la situación de los derechos humanos y libertades públicas, por un lado, y la continuación de la cooperación económica de la Comunidad, por otro lado, colocaba al Consejo de Ministros en una difícil posición ante la perspectiva de adoptar una postura común ante el Golpe del 11 de enero.

Esta dificultad radicaba, por una parte, en la necesidad de mantener una cierta coherencia en la postura de las distintas instituciones comunitarias, por una parte, y en la diferencia de posturas entre los Estados miembros en el Consejo, por otra parte. De hecho, tal y como reconocería el Ministro español de Asuntos Exteriores, Fernández Ordóñez, durante los siguientes días al Golpe, algunos países de la Comunidad, refiriéndose implícitamente al Reino Unido, abogarían por suspender la ayuda comunitaria tal y como demandaba el Parlamento, ante lo cual Francia, España e Italia, los países comunitarios con una mayor implicación económica con Argelia, hubieron de aliarse para bloquear esta posibilidad.¹⁵

A través de las declaraciones de los diferentes responsables políticos europeos en aquel tiempo se pueden apreciar un conjunto de razones que motivarían la posición de los países mediterráneos de la Comunidad. En este sentido, los Ministros de la Comunidad tenían tres razones fundamentales para no desear implicarse en la situación política argelina¹⁶. Por una parte, distaba de estar claro el tipo de Gobierno que se podría instalar en el país tras una eventual victoria del FIS ni si los cambios que pudieran ser decretados por aquel Gobierno gozarían del apoyo de una opinión pública argelina muy fragmentada desde el punto de vista político. Por otro lado, las nuevas autoridades argelinas adoptarían, desde los primeros días posteriores al Golpe, una actitud extremadamente defensiva ante cualquier atisbo de injerencia exterior dentro de lo que consideraba ser una situación puramente interna, lo que se reforzaba por la propia aprobación realizada por los líderes del FIS de la decisión francesa de no implicarse en la crisis. Finalmente, el advenimiento de un Gobierno islamista era visto como una amenaza para las crecientes inversiones de los Estados miembros y de la Comunidad en el sector energético argelino, ante las declaraciones hostiles sobre el proceso de liberalización de este sector que habían realizado destacados líderes islamistas como Abdelkader Hashani.¹⁷

Esta dificultad para conciliar, por una parte, la coherencia de la política mediterránea de la Comunidad y, por otra parte, los intereses de los Estados miembros con mayor vinculación económica y social con Argelia pudo ser superada a través de una postura común plasmada en una Declaración del Consejo de 24 de enero de 1992¹⁸ en la que los Doce expresaban su esperanza de un “retorno a una vía institucional normal” para que se pudiera realizar “un diálogo pacífico entre los partidos implicados”. Pero al mismo tiempo, los Ministros parecían, en cierta medida, adherirse a la postura defendida pocos días antes por el Parlamento Europeo de vincular la cooperación económica de la Comunidad al respeto de los derechos humanos y de las libertades fundamentales, expresando que “la Comunidad y los

¹⁵ En aquella comparecencia ante la Comisión de Exteriores del Congreso de los Diputados, el Ministro español, a pesar de referirse por vez primera a los acontecimientos de Argelia como un “Golpe de Estado”, tomaría una clara postura, defendiendo el apoyo al incremento del diálogo y de la cooperación con las autoridades del país magrebí, asegurando que la actitud de Europa y Estados Unidos era la de esperar a ver cómo evolucionaba la situación en Argelia. Vid. *El País*, 29 de enero de 1992.

¹⁶ Gómez, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-154.

¹⁷ Dada su condición de ingeniero de la compañía nacional de hidrocarburos Sonatrach, este líder islamista se centraría sus ataques durante la campaña electoral de 1991, particularmente en la política energética del Gobierno.

¹⁸ Cooperación Política Europea, “Statement on Algeria”, *European Political Cooperation Bulletin*. 1992 Doc. 92/024, 17 de febrero de 1992, p. 91.



Estados miembros seguirán muy atentamente la evolución de la situación en Argelia y como estos principios son puestos en práctica”.

Esta postura del Consejo, en la práctica, dejaba en el aire la ejecución de los instrumentos de cooperación financiera de la comunidad firmados en 1991. Por ello, a partir de aquí comenzará una intensa actividad diplomática por parte de Francia, el país comunitario que desde los primeros días tras el Golpe se había opuesto de un modo más claro a vincular la ayuda económica de la Comunidad con la situación política vivida en Argelia, dirigida a flexibilizar la postura de los miembros del Consejo ante esta cuestión.¹⁹ A esta actividad francesa se sumará el trabajo realizado por la diplomacia argelina ante las autoridades de los Estados miembros. Así coincidiendo con una reunión de los Ministros de Exteriores de la Comunidad celebrada en Lisboa el 17 de febrero de 1992, el Ministro de Exteriores argelino al-Ajdar al-Ibrahimi celebraría un encuentro con João de Deus Pinheiro, su homólogo de Portugal, país que en aquel momento ejercía la presidencia de la Comunidad, al término del cual este último mostraría una postura cada vez más evidente al declarar que, “el porvenir que la primera vuelta de las elecciones legislativas permitía vaticinar para Argelia no era, desde luego, democrático”.²⁰

En este contexto, el Consejo de Ministros de la Comunidad aprobaría en aquella reunión de Lisboa una nueva declaración conjunta sobre los acontecimientos vividos en Argelia a partir del 11 de enero. En esta Declaración²¹ se resaltaba la voluntad de la Comunidad de proseguir la cooperación con las autoridades argelinas en su recuperación económica al tiempo que, en sintonía con lo expresado por el Parlamento Europeo, se pedía a al Gobierno que durante este periodo de transición velara por el "respeto a los derechos humanos, la tolerancia y el pluralismo".

Realmente, a pesar del hermetismo propio del lenguaje político, se puede apreciar como esta declaración zanjaba un asunto fundamental como era la posibilidad de suspender formalmente la ayuda económica a Argelia. Sin embargo, a pesar de expresar la disposición a seguir cooperando, tampoco desvelaba un compromiso para su inmediata ejecución. Es difícil poder interpretar esta ambigua postura de la Comunidad como un ejercicio de condicionalidad política por el hecho de incluir una referencia a los derechos humanos. En realidad, la posición del Consejo de Ministros fue mucho más flexible que la del Parlamento Europeo sobre la cuestión de los derechos humanos. Así, el hecho de que el respeto de los derechos humanos fuera enunciado, más como una esperanza que como una condición mostraba que el centro de la condicionalidad de la ayuda Comunitaria continuaría ciñéndose a “las necesarias reformas económicas estructurales que las Autoridades argelinas han de llevar a cabo”²².

3.2. El bloqueo y desbloqueo de la cooperación por parte de la UE

Tras la declaración del Estado de emergencia por parte del nuevo Gobierno argelino, el 9 de febrero de 1992, y la creciente escalada de detenciones y de asesinatos, la Comunidad Europea decidió mantener su posición de “esperar y ver” ante el desarrollo de los

¹⁹ Morisse-Schilbach, Mélanie (1999): *L'Europe et la Question Algérienne*, París, Presses Universitaires de France, p. 70.

²⁰ Agencias, “El país magrebí evitó “un mal seguro”, según Fernández Ordóñez”. *El País*, 18 de febrero 1992.

²¹ Cooperación Política Europea, Statement on Algeria. 17.2.1992. *European Political Cooperation Bulletin*. 1992 Doc. 92/065, p. 123.

²² Morisse-Schilbach, *op. cit.*, p. 71.



acontecimientos, sin adoptar ninguna actitud definida. A pesar de la solidaridad política con el Gobierno argelino mostrada por el Consejo de Ministros en la referida reunión de Lisboa, y de los diferentes llamamientos de personalidades políticas francesas para ejecutar cuanto antes los instrumentos de cooperación económica firmados con Argelia en 1991²³, durante los meses siguientes al golpe, estas ayudas permanecieron congeladas, estableciéndose una sintonía *de hecho*, del Consejo con la posición que había expresado el Parlamento Europeo en Enero.

Los primeros pasos para el levantamiento de este bloqueo tácito fueron dados por el Consejo Europeo de Lisboa celebrado del 26 al 29 de junio de 1992, en el que se aprobaron las líneas maestras de la política exterior de la Comunidad, ante la entrada en vigor del Tratado de la UE. Esta reunión coincidirá con un hecho trascendental en el agravamiento de la crisis argelina, como fue el asesinato, el 29 de junio de aquel año y ante las cámaras de televisión, del Presidente del Alto Consejo de Estado, Muhammad Boudiaf, por parte de un suboficial de las fuerzas especiales del ejército. Se tratará de un hecho trascendental ya que este asesinato “privará al régimen del único candidato que sería capaz de ganar un mandato popular en unas elecciones libres y genuinamente democráticas”.²⁴ Asimismo, a pesar de que el autor de este crimen confesara repetidas veces que actuó por cuenta propia, el hecho de que la mayoría de la opinión pública atribuyera su instigación a diversas facciones del régimen deshacía gran parte del trabajo realizado para restaurar la legitimidad del Estado.

Ante la gravedad de los acontecimientos la Comunidad Europea decidió dar muestras de querer desbloquear su cooperación con Argelia, enviando pocos días después del Consejo Europeo de Lisboa una misión técnica con el objetivo de estudiar las condiciones para la aplicación de los instrumentos de cooperación bilateral firmados con Argelia en 1991, esto es, el Cuarto Protocolo Financiero y la segunda entrega del préstamo de emergencia. Sin embargo, a pesar de estos contactos, la ejecución de aquellos instrumentos continuó bloqueada hasta 1994. Aunque en un principio pudiera considerarse que las razones de este bloqueo, que suponía una incoherencia con la postura comunitaria de velado apoyo al Gobierno argelino, podrían encontrarse en el deterioro de la situación política y de respeto por los derechos humanos, diversos investigadores han situado la clave de la postura comunitaria en un campo externo como son las relaciones de Argelia con el FMI.

Efectivamente, tras la conclusión del préstamo *stand-by* que aquella institución concedió en 1991, el Gobierno argelino trató de negociar un nuevo acuerdo a medio plazo que permitiera realizar una planificación económica para los siguientes años. Sin embargo el FMI negará esta posibilidad, ofreciendo en cambio la celebración de un nuevo Acuerdo de *stand-by* a un plazo reducido de un año, a causa de la inestabilidad política del país. Pero incluso esta posibilidad quedaría descartada tras el asesinato del Presidente Boudiaf y el nombramiento como Primer Ministro de Abdessalam, un firme defensor de la gestión estatal de la economía. Tras este nombramiento, el Gobierno argelino romperá toda negociación con el FMI, lo que coincidirá con el comienzo del bloqueo en la ejecución de los instrumentos financieros de cooperación con Argelia. El plan económico del Gobierno de Abdessalam consistía en aplicar la llamada “economía de guerra”, es decir, una política económica basada en la contención de las importaciones y en una reducción del gasto público con el objetivo de convencer a los acreedores internacionales a convertir la deuda a corto plazo, que absorbía casi el total de los beneficios por exportación, en deuda a medio o largo plazo. De este modo,

²³ Roberts, Hugh: “Dancing in the Dark: The European Union and the Algerian Drama”, *Democratization*, vol. 9, nº 1 (Spring 2002), p. 110.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.



el objetivo perseguido era el de aliviar el servicio de la deuda externa sin tener que acudir a un “humillante” acuerdo con el FMI para el reescalamiento de la deuda y tener, por consiguiente, que pactar la política económica nacional con organismos extranjeros. A pesar de traslucir un cierto nacionalismo anacrónico con la evolución de la economía regional en aquellos años, lo cierto es el plan del Gobierno de Abdessalam partía de premisas razonables. Realmente, tal y como reconocería posteriormente la Comisión, la principal amenaza que se cernía sobre la economía argelina era el pago de la deuda externa a corto plazo, lo que, en el caso de que los acreedores internacionales accedieran a dicha conversión de deuda y basándose en una previsible recuperación de los precios de los hidrocarburos en los mercados internacionales, el plan de la “economía de guerra” ofrecía cierta credibilidad.²⁵ Sin embargo, el plan fallaría a los pocos meses ya que no obtendría el apoyo de los acreedores internacionales ni el de la UE. La falta de crédito internacional y un repunte de la violencia, durante el primer semestre de 1993 llevarán a la destitución de Abdessalam y su sustitución, en agosto de aquel año, por Redha Malek, un político de corte más liberal. Tras nuevas caídas en los precios de los hidrocarburos y la publicación de unas previsiones que situaban para el año 1994 el servicio de la deuda externa en un 92%, es decir, casi el total de los beneficios por exportaciones, el nuevo Gobierno no tuvo otra salida que la de negociar con sus acreedores bajo las condiciones impuestas por el FMI²⁶.

Esta negociación conduciría en abril de 1994 a un nuevo Acuerdo por el que Argelia accedía a un nuevo préstamo stand-by y a un apoyo consistente en una “facilidad alargada” a un plazo medio de tres años. A cambio de estos compromisos, que permitían el reescalamiento de su deuda externa ante los acreedores, reunidos en el “Club de París” y el “Club de Londres”, el Gobierno de Argelia aceptaba el difícil compromiso de pactar con aquel organismo un amplio plan de reestructuración de su economía, incluyendo aspectos claves como la plena liberalización del comercio exterior, nuevas devaluaciones del Dinar, la desregulación de los precios junto con la congelación de los salarios, la privatización de amplios sectores del sector público y la apertura del mercado argelino a las inversiones extranjeras, exceptuando ciertos sectores estratégicos.²⁷

Es precisamente en este contexto cuando el Redha Malek dirigirá una carta a la Comisión solicitando una ampliación de la asistencia financiera de la Comunidad así como el desbloqueo de la segunda entrega del préstamo de emergencia de 1991, a lo que accedería esta Institución, presentando, en octubre de aquel año, una propuesta al Consejo, en este sentido, y que sería aprobada a final de año.²⁸ Tal y como reconoce el ejecutivo comunitario en aquel documento, “el Consejo del FMI aprobó el nuevo programa el 27 de mayo de 1994, el tramo restante de 150 millones de ECU fue desembolsado en agosto de 1994 y la presente propuesta se realiza en concepto de seguimiento de la decisión original del Consejo”.²⁹ Esto suponía el restablecimiento pleno de la cooperación económica entre la UE y Argelia y al mismo tiempo confirmaba que, a pesar de existir un ejercicio de condicionalidad política en la cooperación de la UE durante el periodo inmediatamente posterior al Golpe de Estado de 1991, esta no se debió a los retrocesos en el proceso de democratización del país ni a las crecientes denuncias de violaciones de los derechos humanos por parte del ejército y de los cuerpos de seguridad. Por el contrario, y al igual que había sucedido en 1991, la UE sumó su

²⁵ Cfr. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

²⁶ Bouyacoub, Ahmed: “L’économie algérienne et le programme d’ajustement structurel”, *Confluences-Méditerranée*, nº 21, (Printemps 1997), p. 77.

²⁷ Benissad, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁹ Comisión Europea, “Proposal for a Council Decision to providing further macro-financial assistance for Algeria”, COM(94) 409 final. 94/218 (CNS), 4 de octubre de 1994.



estrategia a la de los acreedores internacionales de Argelia, a través del FMI para apoyar a la financieramente a Argelia bajo unas condiciones, impuestas desde el exterior, y que situaban al sistema económico argelino en una posición más acorde con la estrategia que la UE planeaba desarrollar, durante los años siguientes, en el Mediterráneo.

Sin embargo, sería, a nuestro juicio, una visión limitada si se restringieran las claves de política exterior de la Comunidad hacia Argelia a una cuestión meramente relacionada con el sistema económico del país. A pesar de no estar reconocido en los documentos oficiales de la Comunidad, la postura adoptada por las instituciones comunitarias durante el periodo posterior al Golpe revela una preferencia clara por la manutención del status quo político frente a la eventualidad de un Gobierno dirigido por los islamistas. Se culminaba de este modo una ambigua etapa en las relaciones UE-Argelia que, en la que, en opinión de Youngs, “la falta de implicación crítica durante el comienzo de lo 90 fue ampliamente interpretada como el caso que más dramáticamente demostraba la inclinación de los Gobiernos europeos a apoyar el autoritarismo como medio de contener el Islam político”.³⁰

4. El inicio del diálogo político

A pesar de la gravedad de los acontecimientos que se desarrollarán en Argelia a partir del golpe de Estado de 1992 se puede apreciar cómo la postura adoptada por la UE durante los meses posteriores hacia el país magrebí se caracteriza por su timidez y su escaso grado de implicación. Esta postura resulta, en gran medida, achacable a las propias sedes y mecanismos de la política exterior europea, es decir, la Cooperación Política Europea y, a partir de 1993, el Consejo de la PESC. En ambas sedes en Consejo adoptaba sus decisiones bajo el mecanismo de la unanimidad, lo que supeditaba su operatividad a una postura común entre los Estados miembros. Por ello, en buena medida, la posición de la UE durante este periodo debe ser puesta en relación con la disparidad de posturas existente entre los Estados de la Unión sobre la actitud a seguir frente a la crisis argelina.

A pesar de existir entre los Estados europeos un sentimiento común de rechazo ante la posibilidad de una Argelia dirigida por un Gobierno islamista que pudiera suponer una recreación de la revolución iraní en el sur del Mediterráneo, lo cierto es que dichos Estados presentaban un grado de implicación muy diferente con Argelia en términos económicos, sociales y de seguridad. Por una parte, Estados Mediterráneos como España, Portugal, Italia e incluso Francia, se encontraban desde la década de los años ochenta implicados en ambiciosos proyectos de construcción de gasoductos, que a partir de Argelia permitiría garantizar, en condiciones competitivas, el suministro de gas natural de estos países. Unas infraestructuras, cuyo desarrollo y conclusión serían inmediatamente garantizados por las autoridades argelinas surgidas del golpe de Estado.

Por otra parte, los Estados del Centro y Norte de la UE carecían de aquellos vínculos, al suministrarse de gas natural fundamentalmente desde Noruega y Rusia, por lo que veían en la situación vivida en Argelia una ocasión propicia para poner a prueba los principios en materia de derechos humanos de la recién creada Política Exterior y de Seguridad Común de la UE y responder, de esta manera, a las crecientes demandas de intervención de sus opiniones públicas.

³⁰ Youngs, Richard (2002): *The European Union and the Promotion of Democracy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 96.



Pero quizá fuera Francia el país que, en una primera fase, presentó mayores obstáculos para una implicación efectiva de la UE en el desarrollo del conflicto argelino. Aparte de sus vínculos históricos como antigua metrópoli, Francia era, con diferencia, el país de la UE con una mayor implicación, en términos políticos, económicos y sociales, con Argelia. Así, a principios de los años noventa residían legalmente en Francia cerca de medio millón de personas, constituyendo la comunidad extranjera más numerosa en aquel país, a los que habría que sumar otro millón de ciudadanos de origen argelino con doble nacionalidad o nacionalizados franceses. Por su parte, la comunidad francesa residente en Argelia se aproximaba a las 25.000 personas, vinculadas, en su mayoría, al tejido empresarial francés implantado en el país magrebí. Desde el plano de vista económico, Francia era el mayor exportador de bienes a Argelia, así como su tercer mayor importador.

Estos vínculos hacían de Francia el país potencialmente más vulnerable, en términos de seguridad o de emigración masiva de personas, en el caso del estallido de una guerra civil abierta en su antigua colonia. En este sentido, el asesinato de Boudiaf en 1992 hizo que la clase política francesa evaluara aquella eventualidad como una posibilidad real. Estas circunstancias dificultaron desde un primer momento la adopción de una línea política definida por parte del gobierno francés hacia el conflicto argelino. Asimismo, tras las elecciones legislativas de 1993, con la designación como Primer Ministro de Balladour y el inicio de la cohabitación política con el Presidente Mitterrand, se agudizará en la política exterior de Francia hacia Argelia un fenómeno que Daguzan denomina el “esparcimiento de la toma de decisiones”³¹. Así, mientras el Gobierno de Balladour mantiene una postura oficial de apoyo de facto al Gobierno argelino, el Presidente Mitterrand conservará una fuerte influencia sobre la política francesa en esta cuestión, defendiendo mantener una postura de bajo nivel de intervención. Por su parte, los propios Ministros del Gobierno mantenían posturas contradictorias. Así mientras el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Juppé, defendía la “línea dura” y el apoyo al gobierno argelino “dentro de su lucha contra el terrorismo”, el Ministro de Defensa, Léotard se preguntaba sobre la necesidad de un verdadero diálogo con los islamistas.³² En este contexto, hay que hacer una mención especial al papel desempeñado por el entonces Ministro del Interior, Charles Pasqua, para algunos, el verdadero diseñador de la política francesa hacia Argelia. Pasqua disponía de sus propios contactos y redes con algunos de los sectores más duros de la Junta Militar argelina, los conocidos como “erradicadores”. Su cargo, como responsable de la seguridad interna de Francia y su papel como árbitro político entre Chirac y Balladour le situaban en una posición idónea para hacer valer su influencia ante el gobierno francés, lo que se traducirá en un importante apoyo de este país a las autoridades argelinas en lo que se refiere a inteligencia y suministros de armamento sofisticado³³.

A estas divergencias en el plano interno se sumará una estrategia practicada por Francia tras el golpe de 1992 para situar a la UE al margen del conflicto argelino, con el objetivo de mantener un mayor control de las iniciativas internacionales sobre esta cuestión. Así, Mitterrand declaraba tras el Consejo Europeo de 27 de octubre e 1993: “nosotros no hemos hablado ante el Consejo Europeo (...) Yo no creo que el drama actual de Argelia sea

³¹ Daguzan, Jean-François : “Les relations franco-algériennes ou la poursuite des amicales incompréhensions” . *Annuaire Français de Relations Internationales*, vol. 2 (enero 2001), p. 442.

³² *Ibid.*, pp.443-444.

³³ Lamine, Hamid: “La France et la politique d'éradication algérienne (1991-2001)”, en <http://www.algeria-watch.org>.



actualmente competencia de la UE. En lo que le concierne, Francia ha actuado como debía a propósito de este país vecino”.³⁴

Sin embargo, a partir de otoño de 1993 se sucederán una serie de acontecimientos que mostrarán la urgencia en desarrollar vías para establecer un diálogo político que contribuyera a sacar al país magrebí de la situación bélica en la que se encontraba. Por una parte, a partir del otoño de 1993, y coincidiendo con la intensificación de la represión de la insurgencia islamista por parte del ejército, entre numerosas denuncias de abusos de los derechos humanos, ciudadanos occidentales que trabajaban en Argelia comenzarán a ser víctimas de atentados terroristas. Estas situaciones serán objeto de la máxima atención por parte de las instituciones europeas y llevarán al Parlamento Europeo a denunciar “los miles de detenciones y de internamientos en campos de detención, la práctica de la tortura, el recurso a la pena de muerte y la imposición del toque de queda en las principales ciudades del país” y a reclamar con mayor vehemencia al Consejo su intervención a favor del respeto de los derechos humanos a la hora de negociar los acuerdos de cooperación con Argelia.³⁵ Pero al mismo tiempo, el avance de los asesinatos de occidentales, llevará a la Eurocámara a mostrar su solidaridad con el Gobierno argelino alentando el inicio de un diálogo político interno dirigido a sacar al país de la grave crisis que la que se encontraba³⁶

Al mismo tiempo, en Argelia, tras la disolución del Alto Consejo de Estado y la designación del antiguo Ministro de Defensa, Liamin Zeroual como “Presidente de Estado”, comenzará un lento proceso de “reinstitutionalización” política del Estado³⁷ que trataba, al menos formalmente, de establecer una continuidad con el proceso de democratización emprendido antes del Golpe de 1992. Este proceso de transición, inicialmente previsto para un periodo de tres años y que debería concluir con la celebración de elecciones Presidenciales, legislativas y municipales, surgirá en un difícil contexto para el régimen argelino en el que confluye, por una parte la aplicación de las medidas de liberalización económica pactadas con el FMI, lo que hacía presagiar un aumento de la agitación entre las capas más desfavorecidas de la sociedad, así como el rápido aumento de las víctimas entre civiles y fuerzas de seguridad.

Ante estas circunstancias, y en medio de un fuerte debate dentro de los círculos de poder entre los partidarios de la línea militar y los partidarios del diálogo político con el FIS, la figura de Zeroual será presentada como la solución de consenso entre ambas corrientes. Este antiguo General explorará la posibilidad de iniciar un diálogo nacional que incluyera a los sectores moderados del FIS.³⁸ Tras unos primeros contactos celebrados en agosto de 1994 con otras fuerzas políticas, Zeroual tuvo la impresión de existir una opinión mayoritaria entre la mayoría de los partidos favorable a la celebración de contactos con el FIS dirigidos a preparar el proceso de reinstitutionalización del Estado a través de la celebración de elecciones. Para este fin, el 13 de septiembre de aquel año, dos de los principales líderes del FIS, Abassi Madani y Ali Balhadj, fueron transferidos desde la prisión, en la que se que se

³⁴ Morisse-Schilbach, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

³⁵ Parlamento Europeo, Resolución sobre la situación en Argelia, *Diario Oficial* nº C 268/202, 4 de octubre de 1993.

³⁶ Parlamento Europeo, Resolución sobre la situación y los asesinatos de los extranjeros en Argelia, *Diario Oficial* nº C 20/167, 16 de diciembre de 1993.

³⁷ Bustos, Rafael: “Economic Liberalization and Political Change in Algeria: Theory and Practice (1988-92 and 1994-99)”, *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 8, nº 1, (Spring 2003), p. 12.

³⁸ Con este objetivo liberará a dos destacados dirigentes del FIS, Ali Yaddi y Abdelkader Bujamjam, encarcelados desde 1991, con los que Zeroual consideraba posible entablar un diálogo político. En Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 114.



encontraban desde 1991 y colocados bajo prisión domiciliaria, en la capital con el objetivo de iniciar conversaciones con el Gobierno, en medio de una fuerte oposición por parte de los sectores “erradicadores” del régimen³⁹. Sin embargo, y de un modo inmediato, la situación interna se agravará, con una serie de atentados y de ejecuciones judiciales y extrajudiciales⁴⁰, hasta el punto de hacer prácticamente imposible para Madani y Balhadj establecer cualquier tipo de contacto con otros sectores más radicales de la insurrección.

Esta iniciativa de Zeroual fue recibida con una Declaración de la presidencia de la UE en la que los Doce daban “la bienvenida a los renovados esfuerzos para promover el diálogo político en Argelia” y apelaban “a todas las partes a un cesar inmediato de todos los actos de violencia para permitir un diálogo pacífico”.⁴¹ A pesar de que el contenido de esta declaración parece suponer un claro apoyo por parte de la UE a un diálogo nacional que incluyera a los islamistas, algunos autores destacan el hecho de que este valioso apoyo internacional, en medio de una situación muy frágil, sólo se hiciera efectivo cinco semanas después de haberse iniciado la iniciativa de Zeroual y cuando el agravamiento de la situación la hacía prácticamente inviable, lo que lleva al autor a cuestionar si realmente la UE estaba interesada en una solución negociada que incluyera a los islamistas⁴².

Efectivamente, el 31 de octubre, el propio Zeroual declaraba, a través de un comunicado, el fracaso de aquella iniciativa a la vez que anunciaba el adelantamiento del fin del periodo de transición con la celebración de elecciones presidenciales antes del final de 1995. Este hecho ha sido relacionado por diversos investigadores con el inicio de movimientos en el ámbito internacional dirigidos a presionar al Gobierno para la rápida vuelta a la legalidad constitucional.

Pocas semanas después de aquel anuncio comenzará la primera mediación internacional entre los principales grupos políticos argelinos para lograr una solución dialogada al conflicto interno. Este diálogo se producirá en Roma, durante el final de 1994 y los inicios de 1995, bajo los auspicios de la comunidad católica de Sant’Egidio que invitará a todos los grupos políticos implicados en la crisis, incluyendo a los islamistas, así como al Gobierno argelino. Esta invitación fue aceptada por los principales partidos del arco político argelino como el FLN, el Frente de Fuerzas Socialistas (FFS), o el FIS, mientras que el Gobierno argelino no enviará ningún representante. Fruto de aquellas conversaciones fue aprobado un documento titulado “Plataforma para una solución pacífica de la crisis argelina”. Este documento fue aprobado y firmado por representantes de los principales partidos que concurren a las elecciones de 1991. En este texto, los firmantes, partiendo de su oposición a cualquier solución impuesta desde el exterior de Argelia, contrarrestando así un previsible argumento de rechazo por parte del Gobierno, apelaba, tanto al rechazo de la violencia como a la reanudación del proceso electoral interrumpido en 1992 en un marco general de respeto de los derechos humanos.

³⁹ Dentro de este grupo se situaban destacado miembros del régimen tales como el Primer Ministro Redha Malek o el Ministro del Interior Salim Saadi, quienes mostraron a través de diversas declaraciones su firme oposición a entablar un diálogo político con el FIS. En, Roberts, Hugh, (2003) *The battlefield Algeria, 1988-2002: studies in a broken polity*, Londres, Verso, p. 169.

⁴⁰ Sobre la cronología de estos acontecimientos Vid. Sidhoum, Salaheddine: “Chronologie d’une tragédie cachée (11 enero 1992 – 11 enero 2002)”, en <http://www.algeria-wacht.org>.

⁴¹ Consejo de Ministros PESC, “Declaración sobre Argelia”, Bruselas, 26 de septiembre de 1994. Citado por Roberts, “Dancing...”, *op.cit.*, p. 115.

⁴² En este sentido, ante el retraso de la respuesta comunitaria el autor plantea una inquietante cuestión cuando señala que: “If this had truly been its purpose, why did it wait five weeks after the talks began on 21 August before “support” them?”, *Ibid.*, p. 116.



La iniciativa de Roma situó al Gobierno argelino ante una posibilidad que, hasta el momento había tratado de evitar a toda costa, como era la irrupción de una mediación internacional en el conflicto interno. Por ello la única respuesta que pudo ofrecer en aquel momento fue el anuncio de la reanudación del proceso electoral en a lo largo de ese mismo año de 1995. Realmente la iniciativa de Sant'Egidio situaba al Gobierno argelino ante una disyuntiva. Bien se sumaba a un proceso de diálogo en el que consensuado con la mayoría de los actores políticos de la elecciones de 1991, lo que suponía retomar el proceso democrático conforme a las reglas vigentes en aquel año, o bien se aventuraba en un proceso de transición acelerada y con unas reglas aún sin definir pero que sería controlado por el propio Gobierno. Ante esta coyuntura, el 18 de enero el Gobierno argelino, rechazará de un modo tajante a través de un comunicado, el resultado de estas conversaciones, bajo la invocación de que constituían una injerencia inadmisibles en sus asuntos internos⁴³. Realmente era difícil esperar otra respuesta del Gobierno argelino teniendo en cuenta el reducido margen de maniobra de Zeroual tras el fracaso del diálogo nacional desarrollado a lo largo de 1994; un fracaso motivado, entre otros aspectos, por la división de opiniones en el Gobierno sobre la inclusión de los principales grupos islamistas en aquel diálogo.

Fue precisamente tras aquel comunicado del Gobierno cuando las instituciones comunitarias y algunos Estados miembros comenzaron a expresar su postura ante las conversaciones de Roma. Hasta entonces habían guardado un prudente silencio evitando cualquier acusación de injerencia interna del Gobierno argelino que hubiera hecho fracasar de antemano aquella iniciativa. Concretamente, al día siguiente de producirse el rechazo oficial argelino a la Plataforma de Sant'Egidio, el Parlamento Europeo aprobará una Resolución en la que expresamente “alienta toda tentativa de alcanzar una solución política y democrática que permita al pueblo argelino recuperar su dignidad y reconstruir el Estado de derecho y la sociedad civil” y celebra los resultados de las negociaciones de Roma, considerando que en ellas “participaron representantes de las principales fuerzas de oposición argelina”, en una clara referencia al FIS. Por ello, tras casi tres años de indefinición tras la ilegalización del FIS, el Parlamento adoptará una postura clara invitando al Gobierno argelino “a entablar un diálogo con las fuerzas democráticas de oposición con el fin de alcanzar un proceso electoral general y democrático”.⁴⁴

Al mismo tiempo, resulta destacable que la Eurocámara no realice ninguna referencia al proceso electoral anunciado, semanas antes por Zerual. El momento escogido por el Parlamento Europeo para aprobar esta Resolución no fue casual, ya que surgía cuatro días antes de una reunión del Consejo de Ministros de la PESC en la que se debería adoptar una postura ante la evolución de los acontecimientos en Argelia. Los Ministros de la UE, sin poder ignorar la postura de la Eurocámara no llegarán a sumarse a su entusiasta apoyo a la Plataforma de Roma, limitándose a expresar su apoyo “a todas las iniciativas dirigidas a promover el diálogo entre los que rechazan el terrorismo y la violencia”, así como su “interés en los recientes acontecimientos que han permitido reunir a un número de personalidades para reflexionar sobre el porvenir de su país”.⁴⁵ Al mismo tiempo evitaban apoyar expresamente el proceso electoral anunciado por Zerual, lo que suponía, en la práctica una absoluta falta de

⁴³ Tal y como indica Zoubir, realmente existía un sentimiento extendido entre amplios sectores de la población y del Gobierno de que el proceso que condujo a la aprobación de la Plataforma de Sant'Egidio no era más que una conspiración del Gobierno estadounidense para imponer el diálogo político de Argelia con el FIS. Zoubir, Yahia, “Dialectics of Algeria's Foreign Relations, 1992 to the present”, en Aghrout, et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158.

⁴⁴ Parlamento Europeo, “Resolución sobre la situación en Argelia”, *Diario Oficial*, nº C 43, 20 de febrero 1995, p. 82- 83.

⁴⁵ Consejo de Ministros PESC, “Declaración de la Unión Europea sobre Argelia”, *Comunicado de prensa nº 4382/95*, en <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>, visitado el 20 de enero 2010.



definición política en un momento en la que se vislumbraban nuevas vías para la salida de la crisis argelina. Unas vías, ya fuera la gubernamental o la iniciada en Roma que, precisamente nacían muy necesitadas de apoyo internacional. Sin embargo, parecía claro que en aquel momento, la UE no parecía dispuesta a implicarse directamente en la resolución del conflicto interno de Argelia. En este sentido, tras el Consejo Europeo de Cannes de junio de 1995 el Presidente Chirac dejaba bien clara esta cuestión al declarar que “nosotros no hemos tratado los problemas argelinos, esto no está en el orden del día y no tenemos intención de hacer injerencia dentro de los asuntos argelinos”.⁴⁶

Realmente, en aquel momento la UE pareció querer situar el diálogo político con Argelia dentro de un contexto más amplio, el de la Asociación Euromediterránea que habría de ser creada en la Conferencia de Ministros de Asuntos Exteriores de los países mediterráneos celebrada en Barcelona el 27 y 28 de noviembre de 1995, pocos días antes de la celebración de las elecciones presidenciales argelinas que marcaban la vuelta de este país al proceso electoral y otorgaban la victoria a Liamin Zeroual. Este texto, a pesar de suponer un compromiso por parte de los países firmantes de establecer un diálogo que incluyera cuestiones tales como la democracia y el respeto de los derechos humanos⁴⁷, apenas tiene la condición de una declaración política, sin carácter jurídico, por lo tanto. Sin embargo permitía situar a Argelia dentro de un marco multilateral que incluía el establecimiento de un diálogo político que habría de ser desarrollado bilateralmente a través de Acuerdos de Asociación, estos sí, con contenido jurídicamente vinculante. Por lo tanto la apuesta comunitaria suponía un atractivo proyecto para el futuro pero aportaba pocos avances ante la difícil situación que se vivía en aquel momento en Argelia.

El desarrollo de las negociaciones para un Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Argelia coincidió con una política de máxima prudencia por parte de las instituciones comunitarias hacia los importantes acontecimientos políticos que se estaban produciendo en aquel país. En este sentido, en diciembre de 1996 se producirá una visita a Argel del Vicepresidente de la Comisión, Manuel Marín con el objetivo de impulsar estas negociaciones. Durante aquella visita Marín expresó su satisfacción por los avances democráticos realizados por el Gobierno y anunció una nueva ayuda económica de 125 millones de ECU, que doblaba la concedida en el marco del anterior Protocolo Financiero de 1991 y que permitiría elevar el grado de implicación de la diplomacia comunitaria ante las autoridades argelinas⁴⁸. Sin embargo, a lo largo de aquella visita, Marín rechazará celebrar encuentros con representantes de la oposición, así como con representantes de Amnistía Internacional que previamente le habían remitido una carta en aquel sentido.

En aquel momento solamente el Parlamento Europeo expresó sus objeciones a propósito del referéndum constitucional celebrado el 28 de noviembre de 1996 que reforzaba los poderes del Presidente, prohibía los partidos de carácter religioso o regional y consagraba el árabe como única lengua oficial y nacional, y que había discurrido entre numerosas acusaciones de irregularidades. Ante esta situación la Eurocámara se saldrá de la tónica general mantenida por la UE tras las elecciones presidenciales de 1995 y se referirá claramente al proceso de “reinstitutionalización” emprendido por el Gobierno de Zeroual: “Lamentando la ausencia de un verdadero proceso de diálogo democrático en Argelia que

⁴⁶ Conferencia de prensa conjunta Chirac-Santer tras el Consejo Europeo de Cannes de 27 de junio de 1995. Citado por Morisse-Schilbach, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁴⁷ “Declaración de Barcelona”, adoptada en la Conferencia Euromediterránea de Barcelona de 27-28 de Noviembre de 1995.

⁴⁸ Daguzan, Jean-François: “France, Democratization and North Africa”, *Democratization*, vol. 9, nº 1, (Spring 2002), p. 143.



permita encontrar una solución pacífica y política a la crisis del país”.⁴⁹ Una postura que tuvo una enérgica respuesta por parte del Gobierno argelino a través de su Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, quien considerará que la Resolución del parlamento Europeo constituía una injerencia “grave” y “sin precedentes” en los asuntos internos argelinos.⁵⁰

A pesar de la postura expresada por el Parlamento Europeo, las elecciones legislativas de 1997, celebradas en ausencia del FIS y consideradas por algunos como “estrictamente antidemocráticas”⁵¹ comparadas a las de 1991, fueron presentadas por el Consejo de Ministros como “un paso adelante en el proceso de reformas políticas”⁵². Parecía evidente que el desarrollo de un verdadero diálogo político UE-Argelia ya no se condicionaba solamente a las políticas bilaterales de algunos Estados miembros, especialmente de Francia, sino que también pasaba a inscribirse dentro de un ambicioso proyecto regional de la UE, la Asociación Euromediterránea.

5. El relanzamiento del diálogo político

Tal y como hemos podido ver anteriormente, hasta 1997 la posición política de la UE se había caracterizado por una extraordinaria prudencia, de modo a otorgar un velado apoyo al proceso de transición política conducido por el Gobierno argelino. Incluso, a partir de la adhesión de Argelia a la Asociación Euromediterránea, en 1995, y la celebración de elecciones presidenciales, municipales y legislativas, la condicionalidad de la cooperación de la Comunidad con Argelia, parece desentenderse de las cuestiones políticas y centrarse en las reformas económicas.

Sin embargo, a partir del final de 1997 y el principio de 1998, y como reacción a un proceso de “reinstitutionalización” que había dejado fuera a los islamistas del FIS, la violencia experimentará un drástico aumento de intensidad hasta alcanzar cotas nunca vistas con anterioridad, provocando más de 1500 muertos durante el mes de Ramadán. Estos sucesos, ampliamente cubiertos por los medios de comunicación europeos y con una notable repercusión en la opinión pública, llevarán a los responsables comunitarios a plantearse nuevas iniciativas para intervenir en la situación interna argelina. En esta nueva senda, los países del centro y del norte de Europa, menos comprometidos económica y políticamente con el Gobierno argelino, tomarán la iniciativa. Así, el Reino Unido, país que ejercía en aquel momento la presidencia de la UE, va a ser presionado desde diversos flancos para adoptar una actitud más activa hacia Argelia. Por una parte, esta presión procedía del Gobierno de Alemania, un país sin especial dependencia energética con respecto a Argelia y cuya opinión pública ejercía una notable presión sobre la actuación de su Gobierno en este ámbito.

Por otra parte, el Parlamento Europeo, ante aquellos acontecimientos, comenzará a adoptar una política mucho más activa hacia Argelia, promoviendo una serie de iniciativas centradas directamente en la cuestión del respeto de los derechos humanos y las libertades

⁴⁹ Parlamento Europeo, “Resolución sobre la situación en Argelia”, *Diario Oficial* nº C 020 de 20 de enero de 1997 p. 145.

⁵⁰ Citado por Pinto, María do Céu: “European and American responses to the algerian crisis”, *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 3, nº 3 (Winter 1998), p. 71.

⁵¹ Gillespie, Richard, y Whitehead, Laurence: “European Democracy Promotion in North Africa: Limits and Prospects”, *Democratization*, vol. 9, nº 1 (Spring 2002), p. 193.

⁵² Consejo Ministros PESC, “Declaración sobre las elecciones legislativas en Argelia”, *Comunicado de Prensa* nº 61/97 PESC, Bruselas, 10 de junio de 1997, en <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.



públicas en aquel país, celebrando en noviembre de 1997 un encuentro con el Ministro argelino de Asuntos Exteriores, Ahmad Attaf sobre esta cuestión, lo que vendrá seguido de un acto que simbolizaba el deseo del Parlamento de implicarse en la situación política argelina, como era la concesión del premio Sajarov a la periodista argelina Salima Gazali, por su labor a favor de la libertad de prensa en su país.

Finalmente, el deterioro de la situación en Argelia había provocado que la diplomacia francesa, que hasta entonces se había opuesto firmemente a cualquier intervención internacional en el conflicto argelino, se encontrara sin argumentos para impedir la implicación comunitaria en el conflicto, por lo que pasará a adoptar una estrategia de “neutralidad motivada, un escepticismo oficial bilateral ante la internacionalización de la cuestión argelina pero sin impedir a sus socios comunitarios hacerlo”.⁵³

Ante esta situación, el Consejo de Ministros llegará al acuerdo de enviar una terna de representantes de la presidencia británica, de la anterior presidencia luxemburguesa y de la siguiente, de Austria para celebrar una serie de encuentros políticos en Argelia, lo que suponía la primera tentativa de una mediación internacional desde el fracaso de la iniciativa de Sant'Egidio, en 1995. Sin embargo, el acuerdo que debía de ser alcanzado con el Gobierno argelino sobre la propia representación de la terna y sobre los asuntos que debería tratar en su visita, ponía de manifiesto las dificultades a las que se enfrentaba una hipotética intervención política de la UE en Argelia, ante la resistencia de su Gobierno a cualquier injerencia exterior. Esta terna fue sucesivamente invitada, *desinvitada* y vuelta a invitar por el Gobierno de Argelia tras pactar con la UE que tendría un grado de representación de Secretarios de Estado, superior al inicialmente previsto y, sobre todo que se incluiría la cuestión del terrorismo dentro de los asuntos a tratar por la terna, tal y como exigía el Gobierno de Argelia, como medio de “diluir” y, en cierto modo compensar, las discusiones sobre derechos humanos y libertades fundamentales.

Tras superarse estos obstáculos, la terna europea pudo desplazarse en enero de 1998 a Argelia para una breve visita de 24 horas que inauguraba una nueva fase en el diálogo político bilateral, la fase denominada en los documentos oficiales comunitarios del Diálogo *ad hoc*. Realmente los resultados de aquel encuentro no alcanzaron todos los objetivos previstos, ante las expectativas creadas. Por una parte sirvió para iniciar un diálogo político regular, habiendo aceptado el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores argelino una invitación para proseguir aquel diálogo en Londres durante la presidencia británica. Asimismo, este diálogo se vería reforzado con el anuncio por parte europea de reabrir la delegación de la Comisión, cerrada desde 1994. Sin embargo, en lo que se refiere a la cuestión de la inclusión de los derechos humanos en dicho diálogo, la terna comunitaria no pudo conseguir uno de sus objetivos fundamentales como era el de obtener el acuerdo del Gobierno argelino para invitar a un enviado especial de la Comisión de los Derechos Humanos de la ONU a realizar un informe sobre el terreno, lo que suponía, en la práctica una mayor internacionalización de la mediación en el conflicto argelino.⁵⁴ A su vez, el Gobierno argelino pudo aprovechar la ocasión para pedir a los representantes comunitarios una mayor implicación en la represión de las redes de apoyo a los islamistas que estaban presentes en algunos países europeos, lo que

⁵³ Morisse-Schilbach, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁵⁴ Ante esta negativa y ante las sospechas extendidas de la implicación de las autoridades argelinas en las matanzas que se estaban produciendo en aquellos días el Comisario Manuel Marín declaraba: «Creemos que es falso, por eso lamentamos que Argel rechace la llegada de un relator especial de Naciones Unidas. El Gobierno tiene que hacer un esfuerzo para demostrar que es así». En Álvaro, Carlos: “La UE critica que Argel no acepte las investigaciones de la ONU”, *El Mundo*, 21 de enero de 1998.



hasta entonces había constituido una de las principales reivindicaciones argelinas ante los Estados miembros.

Por su parte, el inicio de este diálogo, provocará con un cambio en la posición de los representantes del FIS en el exterior, inicialmente opuesta a cualquier intervención europea en el conflicto argelino, dirigiendo, pocos días después de aquella misión y coincidiendo con el Consejo Europeo de 26 de enero de 1998, una carta al Ministro británico de Asuntos Exteriores, Robin Cook, en la que solicitaban la implicación europea en el conflicto adoptando una serie de medidas entre las que se encontraba la suspensión de cualquier ayuda financiera o militar al Gobierno argelino. Esta petición del FIS a las autoridades comunitarias surgía en un momento en el que las sospechas de la implicación de elementos del régimen en las masacres perpetradas contra la población civil eran más evidentes, y se sumaba a otra carta enviada el 1 de noviembre de 1997 al Secretario General de Naciones Unidas⁵⁵ para el envío de una misión de investigación a Argelia. Este cambio de estrategia de los islamistas y la nueva postura de “neutralidad motivada” por parte de Francia dejaba prácticamente solo al Gobierno argelino en su oposición a una investigación internacional de las masacres. Ante esta situación el Gobierno argelino tuvo que pactar con el Secretario General de Naciones Unidas la visita de una “Comisión de eminentes personalidades” encabezada por el ex - Presidente portugués Mario Soares.

Esta Comisión tuvo un mandato limitado para investigar las violaciones de los derechos humanos no pudiendo ni entrevistarse con representantes del FIS ni con representantes de asociaciones bereberes de la Kabilia. Por ello el informe final⁵⁶, publicado el 10 de septiembre de 1998, tuvo un carácter más declarativo de las situaciones conocidas de antemano, que inquisitivo, denunciando vehementemente los actos de terrorismo y sin dirigir acusaciones sobre la implicación de las autoridades en las masacres de civiles.

Realmente, el informe de la misión de Naciones Unidas supuso una decepción para aquellos que entendían que podría aportar nueva información sobre la autoría de las masacres cometidas en Argelia contra civiles. Sin embargo, su propósito real fue el de confirmar la versión oficial sobre los acontecimientos proporcionada por las autoridades argelinas siempre que aquello fue posible.⁵⁷

Si bien, las investigaciones llevadas a cabo sucesivamente por las misiones del Consejo, del Parlamento Europeo y de Naciones Unidas en Argelia durante los primeros meses de 1998 poco hicieron para descubrir las paradojas de la violencia, lo cierto es que, a pesar de la continuación de la violencia a unos niveles difíciles de explicar, aquellas misiones, de contenido limitado sirvieron para apaciguar el interés de la Comunidad internacional tan rápido como había surgido.

En lo que se refiere a la UE el efecto de aquellas misiones fue inmediato. Así, el acuerdo del Gobierno argelino para recibir a la misión de Naciones Unidas fue acogido con entusiasmo por el Consejo, que expresaba en un comunicado: “la Unión Europea se

⁵⁵ Frente Islámico de Salvación, Information Bureau Parliamentary Delegation Abroad: “Carta abierta al Secretario General de Naciones Unidas”, 1 de noviembre de 1997, en Bendriss, M: “Responses of Islamic political parties and insurgent groups”, en <http://www.hoggar.org>.

⁵⁶ Naciones Unidas, “Report of the panel appointed by the secretary-general of the United Nations to gather information on the situation in algeria in order to provide the international community with greater clarity on that situation”, 10 de septiembre de 1998, en <http://www.un.org>.

⁵⁷ Spencer, Claire: “The end of international enquiries? The UN eminent persons' mission to Algeria July-August 1998”, *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 3, nº 3 (Winter 1998), p. 130.



congratula por esta iniciativa y por la disposición así como el espíritu de apertura del Gobierno argelino para brindar su total apoyo a los trabajos de esta misión de alto nivel. Nos encontramos ante un importante avance para la democracia argelina; una mayor transparencia forma parte del proceso democrático que Argelia ya ha iniciado”.⁵⁸

A este encendido apoyo del Consejo se sumaba, pocos días después, la Comisión, firmando una convención-marco para la aplicación en Argelia de fondos del Programa MEDA de la Asociación Euromediterránea, a pesar de que las negociaciones con Argelia para la celebración de un Acuerdo de Asociación se encontraban bloqueadas desde junio de 1997. Sin embargo, estas actuaciones de la UE ponían de manifiesto que, una vez superada la etapa de intervención bilateral en materia de derechos humanos, las cuestiones políticas en las relaciones UE-Argelia pasarían a integrarse en el contexto multilateral de la Asociación Euromediterránea. Así, a raíz de aquella convención-marco, Argelia fue incluida dentro del Programa MEDA para la Democracia, lo que supuso la atribución de fondos para una serie de proyectos, a pequeña escala, de apoyo a la mujer y a la prensa, reflejando las preocupaciones del parlamento Europeo, así como un programa de formación dirigido a la policía argelina, en materia de derechos humanos.⁵⁹

Esta nueva aproximación se traducirá en una menor implicación directa de las instituciones comunitarias en el desarrollo de los acontecimientos políticos internos de Argelia. Un ejemplo de esta estrategia se puede encontrar tras la retirada de la campaña para las elecciones presidenciales argelinas de 1999 de seis candidatos, bajo acusaciones de fraude y de parcialidad del régimen en favor del antiguo Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, finalmente elegido con un holgado margen del 73,79 % de los votos emitidos. En aquella ocasión el Consejo emitió un breve comunicado en el que se limitaba a expresar que “la Unión Europea ha seguido con atención las elecciones presidenciales de Argelia”, y que “ha tomado nota de la decisión de seis candidatos -sobre un total de siete- de retirarse de las elecciones, así como de los motivos que han invocado en apoyo de su decisión”.⁶⁰

A pesar de la cierta falta de legitimidad con la que este antiguo Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores iniciaba su andadura presidencial, los Estados miembros de la UE fueron convencidos de las posibilidades de éxito de los planes del nuevo Presidente para pacificar el país. Para ello, Bouteflika adoptaría importantes medidas como fueron la de reconocer que el número de víctimas producidas a partir de 1992 superaba las 100.000 personas, frente a las 26.000 que hasta entonces reconocían las estadísticas oficiales, así como que la anulación del proceso electoral de 1991 había sido un acto ilegal y, fundamentalmente, la decisión de someter a Referéndum un proyecto de ley sobre concordia civil que otorgaba un plazo de 6 meses a los grupos armados para acogerse a una amnistía parcial o total, según los casos⁶¹. Esta consulta, apoyada por una amplia mayoría de los votantes fue calurosamente acogida por el Consejo de Ministros que, a la vez que declaraba su satisfacción por el resultado obtenido, expresaba que la UE “está dispuesta a apoyar y alentar el proceso de reformas en Argelia, en particular por medio de la cooperación euromediterránea, lo que incluye la rápida reanudación

⁵⁸ Consejo de Ministros PESC, “Algeria: Panel of eminent persons”, *Comunicado de prensa n° 9929/98*, 08 de julio de 1998., en <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.

⁵⁹ Sobre estos proyectos Vid. Comisión Europea, “Evaluation of the MEDA Democracy programme 1996-1998. Final Report”, Brussels, April 1999, en <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid>.

⁶⁰ Consejo de Ministros PESC, “Declaración de la presidencia en nombre de la Unión Europea sobre las elecciones en Argelia”, *Comunicado de prensa n° 7399/99*, 21 de abril de 1999, en <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.

⁶¹ Boukraa, Farida, Terki-Hassaine, Ismet, y Jiménez, Toni, (2009): *La concordia civil argelina a través de la prensa española*, Barcelona, Fundació Solidaritat UB de la Universitat de Barcelona, p. 36.



de las negociaciones sobre la celebración del Acuerdo de Asociación euromediterráneo. La UE considera muy importante la continuidad del diálogo político iniciado con Argelia y espera con interés la reunión a nivel ministerial con la terna de la UE prevista para el 3 de noviembre de este año en Argel”.⁶² Obsérvese como esta declaración vuelve a incidir en la Asociación Euromediterránea como marco para el desarrollo futuro del diálogo político, abriendo la puerta para la reanudación de las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación que habrían de iniciarse pocos meses después y en las que la UE esperaba incluir cláusulas de condicionalidad política relacionadas con la democracia y los derechos humanos.

6. La Asociación Euromediterránea y la normalización de las relaciones políticas

A pesar de que los acontecimientos en Argelia continuaron desarrollándose de un modo preocupante, con la continuación de la violencia, la negativa del Gobierno de legalizar el FIS y el asesinato, el 22 de noviembre de 1998, de uno de sus principales líderes, Abdelkader Hashani⁶³, se puede apreciar como las instituciones comunitarias evitaron durante los años 2000 y 2001 volver a pronunciarse sobre la situación política en Argelia. Apenas, tras los graves acontecimientos registrados en la región de Kabília en abril de 2001, en los que más de 60 personas murieron a manos de las fuerzas de seguridad, el Parlamento Europeo volvió a referirse a la situación interna de Argelia a través de una Resolución en la que la Eurocámara cambia notablemente el lenguaje de sus reivindicaciones anteriores hacia las autoridades argelinas abandonando su antiguo lenguaje crítico para colocar su plena confianza en el anuncio de Bouteflika de establecer comisiones de investigación sobre el origen de los enfrentamientos violentos, a la vez que solicitaba a la Comisión “que prosiga las negociaciones del nuevo acuerdo UE-Argelia para subrayar la importancia que tiene una mejora eficaz de la situación de los derechos humanos y de las reformas sociales y económicas”.⁶⁴

Esta circunstancia es representativa del nivel de convergencia de estrategias hacia Argelia que se había producido entre el Parlamento Europeo, la Comisión y el Consejo durante la negociación del Acuerdo de Asociación. Una convergencia que se centraba en un principio básico como era el de no interferir en el desarrollo de aquellas negociaciones con cuestiones relativas al respeto de los derechos humanos y libertades públicas por parte argelina. Al menos, no hasta que existiera un marco jurídico de asociación global establecido entre ambas partes. Entretanto, las cuestiones políticas se mantuvieron circunscritas al mero diálogo *ad hoc* establecido entre representantes del Consejo y del Gobierno argelino y se mantenía alejado de cualquier mecanismo de condicionalidad.

Asimismo es de reseñar como esta actitud de la UE coincide con una sustancial mejora de las complejas relaciones entre Francia y Argelia, experimentada tras la elección de Buteflika como Presidente, en 1999. Esta mejora, motivada por el apoyo que el Gobierno francés prestó a los planes de concordia civil de Bouteflika, así como por las crecientes

⁶² Consejo de Ministros PESC, “Declaración de la presidencia en nombre de la Unión Europea sobre el resultado del referéndum sobre la concordia civil y la paz en Argelia”, *Comunicado de prensa nº 11125/99*, 21 de septiembre de 1999, en <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.

⁶³ Aunque el asesinato se atribuyó al grupo más radical GIA, los islamistas no ocultaron sus sospechas sobre la implicación de los militares en este crimen. Boukraa, Farida, et al., *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁶⁴ Parlamento Europeo, “Resolución sobre la represión en Kabília”, Estrasburgo, 17 de mayo de 2001, en <http://www.europarl.europa.eu>.



relaciones económicas que Argelia comenzaba a desarrollar con otros países comunitarios como España o Italia, quedará plasmada en la visita que el Presidente argelino realizará a Francia en junio de 2000; la primera visita oficial de este tipo desde 1983, en la que Bouteflika abogó por el papel mediador de Francia entre Argelia y la UE, así como la que realizará Jacques Chirac a Argelia en diciembre de 2001. Estas visitas representaban la normalización plena de unas relaciones bilaterales que el Gobierno argelino sabía que constituían una condición *sine qua non* para el establecimiento de relaciones plenas con el conjunto de la UE y la restitución de la legitimidad internacional del país.⁶⁵

Finalmente, tal y como referíamos anteriormente, tras 18 rondas de negociaciones, Bouteflika y José María Aznar, al ser España el país que ejercía la presidencia de la UE, firmaron en la Cumbre Euromediterránea de Valencia de 22 de abril de 2002 el Acuerdo Euromediterráneo de Asociación UE-Argelia. Dicho texto, más allá de las implicaciones económicas que establecía entre ambas partes, incluye un artículo en virtud del cual el respeto de los principios democráticos y los derechos humanos pasan a constituir un “elemento esencial” en la relación bilateral. Este carácter de esencialidad supone en la práctica una cláusula de condicionalidad política ya que permite unilateralmente suspender la aplicación de este Acuerdo en el caso en el que una parte entienda que la otra no ha respetado aquellas cuestiones. Sin embargo, el propio carácter multilateral de los Acuerdos Euromediterráneos de Asociación que lleva a incluir la misma cláusula en otros Acuerdos como los celebrados con Israel o con la Autoridad Palestina, llevan a que, tal y como ha sucedido hasta el momento, esta cláusula sea interpretada más como un último recurso que como una verdadera arma sustantiva en las negociaciones bilaterales.

Más allá de estos aspectos generales, las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación permitieron que aquel texto reflejara una de las principales reivindicaciones de Argelia hacia la UE, como era la de establecer un marco jurídico de cooperación en materia de terrorismo. Esta era una cuestión política esencial para Argelia por dos razones. Por una parte, la existencia de dicho marco jurídico podría suponer una herramienta para lograr la cooperación de los estados europeos en el desmantelamiento de las redes de apoyo a los grupos armados que se encontraban establecidas en sus territorios y que, en numerosas ocasiones, habían sido tratados como refugiados políticos. Por otra parte, el establecimiento de una cooperación internacional con Argelia en materia de terrorismo suponía implícitamente el apoyo europeo a las tesis del Gobierno sobre la raíz de los problemas internos en Argelia.

Realmente la cuestión del terrorismo no sería incluida hasta un estado tardío de las negociaciones, concretamente hasta su novena ronda. Hasta entonces, la UE se había opuesto a establecer una cooperación sobre esta materia que habría de conducir a un cambio en la política seguida implícitamente por los Estados miembros de no extraditar detenidos a Argelia por razones relacionadas con el respeto a los derechos humanos. Finalmente, tanto la necesidad de ofrecer algún tanto sustancioso para los intereses de Argelia así como el nuevo espíritu internacional de cooperación contra el terrorismo islamista, surgido tras los atentados del 11 de septiembre en Estados Unidos, motivaron que la UE se mostrara dispuesta a alcanzar algún tipo de compromiso sobre esta cuestión.

El resultado final quedaría plasmado en el Art. 90 del Acuerdo, en el que se establece un compromiso genérico por el que ambas partes acuerdan cooperar con objeto de prevenir y reprimir los actos de terrorismo “mediante el intercambio de información sobre los grupos

⁶⁵ Zoubir, Yahia: “The dialectics of Algeria’s foreign relations. 1996 to the present”, en Aghrout, Ahmed et al., *op. cit.*, p. 170.



terroristas y sus redes de apoyo”, y “a través del intercambio de experiencias sobre los medios y métodos de lucha contra el terrorismo, así como en los ámbitos técnicos y de formación”.⁶⁶

Más allá de la aplicación práctica de estas medidas, cuya operatividad real depende, en el fondo, más de la cooperación bilateral con los Estados miembros ante el incipiente nivel de integración alcanzado sobre estas cuestiones, su inclusión en el texto, después de una década de un conflicto interno que el Gobierno argelino siempre planteó internacionalmente como una mera cuestión de terrorismo, y la firma y posterior ratificación de este Acuerdo, en 2005, suponía el final de un largo camino de un cierto aislamiento internacional, que mantuvo a Argelia apartada de las dinámicas de integración regional en las que estaban plenamente implicados sus vecinos en el Magreb central, Marruecos y Túnez.

7. Desarrollo y perspectivas del diálogo político UE-Argelia

La entrada en vigor del Acuerdo de Asociación con Argelia, en 2005, supone el punto de partida de una nueva fase en las relaciones entre la UE y Argelia, en la que el diálogo político se va a desarrollar bajo nuevas circunstancias políticas y bajo nuevos marcos jurídicos.

Así, la puesta en práctica de este Acuerdo de Asociación va a provocar el traslado de los cauces de diálogo político desde el sistema de las “Troikas”, con un carácter informal, pero, a la vez, abierto a la discusión global de los desarrollos inmediatos en la situación política argelina, hasta nuevos cauces de carácter técnico, como son los comités y subcomités de asociación, creados para la aplicación dicho Acuerdo. Asimismo, la agenda de las materias que componen este diálogo político ha dejado de estar condicionadas por la evolución de los acontecimientos en Argelia, para pasar a ser definidas a priori en un Programa Indicativo Nacional dentro del marco de financiación del Instrumento Europeo de Vecindad y de Asociación. Este Programa bilateral, elaborado para el periodo 2007-2010 por la Comisión en coordinación con el Gobierno argelino, establece los ámbitos de intervención de la financiación comunitaria para Argelia a partir de tres ejes prioritarios, entre los que se encuentra, en primer lugar, el denominado “Reformas políticas y derechos humanos, Estado de Derecho y buena gobernanza”. Se trata de una línea ambiciosa de actuación, derivada de los principios aprobados en la Declaración “10 años de Barcelona” que, en principio, habilita a la Comisión a establecer, de común acuerdo con el Gobierno argelino proyectos susceptibles de abarcar los aspectos principales del diálogo político mantenido hasta la fecha.

Sin embargo, las nuevas condiciones sociales y políticas existentes sobre el terreno, con los sucesivos éxitos del Gobierno de Bouteflika en la lucha antiterrorista y sobre todo con el éxito de participación y de aprobación del referéndum de concordia civil de 2005, han permitido al Gobierno argelino transmitir a la UE el mensaje de que las circunstancias han cambiado con respecto a los años anteriores a la firma del Acuerdo de Asociación, recuperando, en cierta medida, su anterior actitud restrictiva ante la implicación comunitaria en la evolución de su sistema político. Esto se refleja en dos circunstancias básicas. Por una parte, el ámbito de intervención aprobado por Argelia, dentro de aquella línea de actuación ha alcanzado hasta ahora un mínimo desarrollo, limitándose poco más que a aspectos secundarios y de carácter técnico como es el programa “Justicia II”, dirigido a la modernización del sistema penitenciario nacional.

⁶⁶ Acuerdo Euromediterráneo por el que se establece una asociación entre la Comunidad Europea y sus Estados miembros, por una parte, y la República Argelina Democrática y Popular, por otra. Art. 90º, *Diario Oficial L 265/2*, 10 de octubre de 2005.



Por otra parte, el Gobierno Argelino, al contrario que sus vecinos magrebíes Marruecos y Túnez, ha renunciado, hasta la fecha, a elaborar un Plan de Acción en el marco de la Política Europea de Vecindad. Esto supone una ruptura importante en el ritmo de integración de los tres países del Magreb central con la UE. Mientras Marruecos y Túnez parecen aceptar una evolución de sus sistemas políticos orientada a la progresiva adaptación de las normas comunitarias y se adentran en nuevas vías de cooperación con la UE basadas en el principio de condicionalidad política, Argelia parece adoptar una senda independiente. La propia normalización política en las relaciones UE-Argelia parece situar a estas en el contexto que el país magrebí reclamaba desde hacía años, el de un país diferenciado de sus vecinos mediterráneos debido a sus particulares condiciones económicas derivadas de su condición de ser uno de los principales suministradores de energía de la UE, en un momento en el que ésta trata de asegurar la diversificación de sus importaciones en este ámbito.

Efectivamente, si atendemos a los efectos del Acuerdo de Asociación de 2002, parece que Argelia no obtiene especiales ventajas económicas en este marco de relaciones, dado que el principal, y casi exclusivo producto de exportación hacia Europa, los hidrocarburos se encuentran exentos de aranceles, y por tanto no son afectados por el establecimiento progresivo de una Zona de Libre Comercio contemplada en aquel texto. Asimismo, Por el contrario, Argelia ha tenido que realizar importantes concesiones, como son el desarme arancelario en una economía tradicionalmente proteccionista, y la reforma de su legislación de cara a facilitar la inversión de capital europeo en las empresas argelinas. Estas circunstancias, parecen haber jugado un papel fundamental en la reticencia de las autoridades argelinas en el avance de las reformas económicas que la UE ha demandado a este país desde la década de los años noventa. Efectivamente, la liberalización del mercado interno obliga a las empresas argelinas a competir, tras un plazo transitorio de 12 años, en igualdad de condiciones jurídicas con las empresas europeas, lo que genera un sentimiento de indefensión por parte de un tejido empresarial argelino que ha vivido durante décadas bajo un sistema económico marcadamente proteccionista. Al mismo tiempo la difusión, el pequeño volumen y la necesidad de modernización de la mayoría de las empresas argelinas dificultan de hecho la posibilidad de competir en los mercados europeos. Quizá la única excepción significativa se podría producir en el campo de la energía, tal y como veremos a continuación. Sin embargo, la falta de un mercado único de la energía así como el marcado proteccionismo que la mayoría de los Estados de la UE mantienen en este sector estratégico, dificulta que Argelia pueda, por el momento, competir en Europa en este ámbito.

Estas circunstancias, que ya quedaron patentes durante las difíciles negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación, parecen haber creado la sensación generalizada entre las autoridades argelinas de haber cedido el máximo posible ante las exigencias europeas. Esta falta de estímulos económicos claros parece haber pesado en la decisión actual de Argelia de no participar en un marco claramente basado en la condicionalidad política, como es la Política Europea de Vecindad, y de apostar por marcos de relaciones alternativos⁶⁷.

7.1. El Sector de la energía en el desarrollo de relaciones UE-Argelia

Como ya se dijo anteriormente, la exportación de hidrocarburos constituye la pieza esencial de la economía argelina, prácticamente desde su independencia. De hecho Argelia se sitúa actualmente en el sexto puesto mundial en lo que se refiere al volumen de reservas probadas de gas natural. Por su parte, los Estados de la UE han experimentado un aumento sostenido

⁶⁷ Escribano, Gonzalo: "La Unión Europea y la promoción de las reformas económicas en Argelia" *Información Comercial Española, ICE; Revista de Economía*, nº 846, (Enero-febrero 2009), p. 109.



del consumo de esta fuente de energía, poco contaminante y competitiva, tanto para el consumo industrial como doméstico. Esta convergencia de intereses, entre una Argelia que buscaba mercados para exportar sus enormes reservas energéticas y unos Estados europeos situados a pocos kilómetros, permitió un rápido desarrollo del comercio de gas entre ambas orillas del Mediterráneo; un comercio limitado, en una fase inicial al gas licuado pero que adquirirá una nueva dimensión tras la construcción de los primeros gaseoductos que unían Argelia con España e Italia y que, por extensión, abastecían también a Portugal y a Francia.

Esta situación ha generado a lo largo de las últimas décadas una interdependencia entre Europa y Argelia que ha trascendido el ámbito puramente comercial para extenderse a las relaciones políticas. Por parte Europea, el suministro de gas argelino resulta esencial para garantizar el suministro energético a precios competitivos de cuatro de sus Estados del arco Mediterráneo, alejados de los principales suministradores de gas de la UE, como son Rusia y Noruega. Esta cuestión parece haber tenido un papel esencial en el velado apoyo que estos países han prestado a las autoridades argelinas durante los difíciles años que Argelia experimentó tras el golpe de estado de 1992, frente a la actitud de los países nórdicos con los que no existían estos vínculos económicos. A su vez, por parte argelina se puede apreciar como las bruscas fluctuaciones del precio de los hidrocarburos en los mercados internacionales van a condicionar el desarrollo de su política interior y exterior. Si a finales de los ochenta la caída de estos precios tuvo un papel determinante en el inicio de la crisis que conducirá al sangriento conflicto de la década siguiente, la importante subida de estos precios que se experimentará tras la llegada al poder de Bouteflika será un factor clave en el inicio de la llamada “política exterior reforzada” del nuevo Presidente.

El alto precio de los hidrocarburos motivará que una de las prioridades del Gobierno de Bouteflika fuera la de aumentar la inversión externa en la producción y en la capacidad de exportación de gas natural, iniciando para ello una incipiente liberalización del sector que permitía la entrada de inversiones extranjeras y que se dirigía a consolidar a la compañía nacional de energía, Sonatrach, como un suministrador clave de energía a Europa, por medio de la extensión de su capacidad de exportación a través de los gasoductos y del transporte de gas líquido⁶⁸. El consiguiente aumento de las exportaciones de gas natural permitirá que el Gobierno de Bouteflika sitúe la energía en el centro, no sólo de su política interior tras la elevación del nivel de divisas del Estado, sino también de la política exterior y, especialmente, de sus relaciones con la UE. Así, tras una década de aislamiento internacional, Argelia tratará de reconfigurar sus relaciones con la UE basándose en la energía.

El momento idóneo para poner en práctica esta estrategia fue cuidadosamente elegido por el Gobierno argelino, coincidiendo con la irrupción de la llamada “crisis del gas” en la que el corte temporal de suministro de gas natural ruso hacia los gaseoductos que transitaban por Ucrania mostraría la vulnerabilidad energética de la UE ante su excesiva dependencia del gas ruso. Esta circunstancia puso de manifiesto la necesidad europea de potenciar, diversificar y garantizar sus fuentes de suministro exterior de energía. Es en este contexto cuando, en febrero de 2006, Argelia propondrá a la UE el establecimiento de “una asociación energética estratégica” como respuesta política a las aspiraciones de ambas partes en el sector. Esta propuesta tuvo una buena acogida entre las instituciones comunitarias y, en consecuencia, la Comisión, tomara la iniciativa en la concreción de esta propuesta presentando al Gobierno argelino un “Proyecto de memorándum de entendimiento” en el que identificaba como áreas

⁶⁸ En este contexto se pueden situar las nuevas infraestructuras, como el gasoducto que une Argelia con España (Medgaz), que se espera que esté operativo en 2011, y el que une Argelia con Italia (Galsi) y cuya construcción ha comenzado recientemente.



prioritarias de dicha Asociación, la convergencia de políticas energéticas UE-Argelia, el desarrollo de infraestructuras de interés común y la cooperación técnica⁶⁹.

Sin embargo desde un primer momento que para Argelia la cuestión energética no era un fin en sí misma sino un medio para impulsar una nueva lógica a sus relaciones con Europa. Así, mientras el Gobierno argelino mantenía paralizado el proyecto de memorándum permanecía presentado por la Comisión, transmitía a través de diversos encuentros bilaterales con responsables comunitarios su intención de vincular el acuerdo energético al desarrollo de otras cuestiones esbozadas en el Acuerdo de Asociación de 2002, tales como el apoyo de la UE al ingreso de Argelia en la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) o la facilitación de los visados Schengen para sus nacionales. Estas antiguas reivindicaciones argelinas acabaron siendo plasmadas de modo oficial en el tercer Consejo de Asociación UE-Argelia, celebrado en marzo de 2008, y en el que se establecieron los tres ejes sobre los que se deberá basarse el acuerdo energético: una Asociación energética incluyendo energías renovables que garantice precios y volumen de suministros, el apoyo europeo al ingreso de Argelia a la OMC, y el desarrollo de la dimensión humana del Acuerdo de Asociación, incluyendo transferencia de tecnología así como mayores facilidades en materia de visados.

A pesar del indudable interés de la UE por materializar este proyecto, el Gobierno argelino no ha dado aún luz verde para la celebración del Acuerdo estratégico energético. Algunos autores han interpretado esta postura argelina como una actitud de “esperar y ver” en la que el país magrebí parece querer esperar y ver los resultados de otras iniciativas comunitarias como la futura asociación estratégica UE-Rusia o el desarrollo del Estatuto Avanzado de Marruecos.⁷⁰ En cualquier caso, la estrategia argelina en sus relaciones futuras con la UE parece apuntar hacia un nuevo marco de relaciones que refleje la especificidad “estratégica” de Argelia como suministrador de energía, todo ello dentro de un contexto de normalización política, muy diferente de aquel en el que se desarrollaron las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación de 2002.

8. Conclusiones

Las relaciones con Argelia, tras el Golpe de Estado de 1992 han supuesto uno de los desafíos más complejos que ha tenido que encarar la política mediterránea de la UE. Esta complejidad se ha derivado no solo de la gravedad de unos acontecimientos que, durante una década provocarán más de 100.000 víctimas, sino también por la necesidad de armonizar los intereses de los Estados miembros con los principios en materia de derechos humanos y de democracia de una Política Exterior y de Seguridad Común que iniciaba su andadura de un modo simultáneo al agravamiento de la crisis Argelina.

Estas dificultades de los Estados miembros en la adopción de posiciones comunes hacia Argelia han limitado, durante los dos años posteriores al Golpe, el campo de intervención de la UE a un ámbito sobre el que sí existía consenso, como era el de la promoción de reformas económicas, a través de un velado ejercicio de la condicionalidad en la ayuda financiera europea. Sin embargo la implicación en la evolución política del país y en el respeto de los derechos humanos ha permanecido a un bajo nivel, al menos hasta bien

⁶⁹ Darbouche, Hakim: “Decoding Algeria’s ENP Policy: Differentiation by other means?”, *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 13, nº 3, (November), p. 382.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 385.



avanzada la década de los años 90 debido, en buena medida, a la especial dependencia energética del gas argelino por parte de algunos Estados de la UE, así como una marcada desconfianza por parte de las Autoridades de aquel país ante la implicación europea en su situación interna.

Sin embargo, el agravamiento de la situación interna en Argelia a partir de 1998, así como la perspectiva de la firma de un Acuerdo bilateral de Asociación ha permitido el inicio de un diálogo político *ad hoc* que ha permitido ir preparando el terreno para un nuevo marco en las relaciones políticas entre la UE y este país. Este nuevo marco jurídico ha permitido situar las cuestiones relacionadas con las reformas democráticas y el respeto por los derechos humanos dentro de un perfil técnico y alejado de la difusión mediática en el que las autoridades argelinas parecen sentirse cómodas. Asimismo, esta nueva fase ha coincidido con una notable mejora en la seguridad gracias a los éxitos del Gobierno argelino en la represión de la insurrección armada.

Esta nueva realidad ha llevado a una normalización política que ha permitido situar el centro de las relaciones bilaterales en las cuestiones económicas. Una consecuencia de la normalización política de estas relaciones, al abrigo del contexto Euromediterráneo, ha sido el inicio de una nueva estrategia por parte del Gobierno argelino, dirigida a situar las relaciones con la UE en el nivel que, a su juicio, le corresponde, habida cuenta de la importancia estratégica que este país ha adquirido, en un momento en el que la UE trata de garantizar y diversificar sus suministros energéticos. Por ello parece, por ahora, poco probable que Argelia profundice sus relaciones con la UE a través de nuevos marcos regionales como la Política Europea de Vecindad. Más bien parece más posible que ambas partes busquen un marco específico que refleje la realidad actual y las aspiraciones de Argelia en aspectos que no pudieron ser concretados en el Acuerdo de 2002, como es la libre circulación de personas o el acceso argelino al mercado europeo de la energía. Tal vez este sea el mejor camino para contribuir a afianzar las relaciones con un socio fundamental del Mediterráneo y para dar el cierre definitivo a una de las peores páginas de la historia contemporánea de Argelia.





LIBERTAD RELIGIOSA, CAMINO PARA LA PAZ

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Resumen:

La libertad religiosa es el núcleo del Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz que ha dirigido Benedicto XVI. Cuestión, sin duda, extraordinariamente delicada, pues comporta graves implicaciones en materia de seguridad principalmente por dos motivos: primero, porque su violación supone una injusticia difícil de compaginar con el respeto a los Derechos Humanos; segundo, porque dicha libertad no puede ser esgrimida como pretexto para atropellar los derechos de los demás conciudadanos o incluso socavar la propia seguridad del Estado. El Santo Padre denuncia, a su vez, los estragos del relativismo y de los fanatismos, tanto religioso como anti-religioso, y propone el ejercicio del diálogo basado en la razón para superar los obstáculos en la convivencia interpuestos por estas amenazas a la paz y la seguridad.

Palabras clave: Libertad religiosa, Ley Natural, Benedicto XVI, laicismo, fundamentalismo.

Title in English: "Religious Liberty, Path to Peace".

Abstract:

The advocacy of religious liberty represents the core of the Pope Benedict XVI Message for the XLIVth World Day of Peace that Benedict XVI conveyed. This is an extremely delicate matter, as it entails grave consequences in the field of security for two reasons: first, because its violation brings along injustices which hardly combine with the respect to Human Rights; second, this liberty cannot be brandished as a pretext to violate other's liberties or the State's security. His Holiness also decries the ravages of relativism and fanaticism, either religious or anti-religious, and puts forward the exercise of dialogue based on reason to overcome every obstacle that these threats to peace and security represent for coexistence.

Keywords: Religious liberty, Natural Law, Benedict XVI, Secularism, Fundamentalism.

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1. Introducción

Quien conozca el magisterio pontificio de Benedicto XVI verá que en el actual *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, en vez de acometer temas nuevos, profundiza en los temas de fondo permanentes, cuales son: el papel de la religión en la sociedad, la dimensión pública de la libertad religiosa, su contribución a la construcción identitaria y cultural de los pueblos, por una parte, y la fundamentación de los Derechos Humanos y la amenaza que para ellos supone el relativismo moral, por otra. Son cuestiones que por su hondura y permanencia ya sido tratadas de alguna manera en sus anteriores mensajes para la Jornada Mundial de la Paz —que desde 1977 se vienen celebrando cada 1 de enero—. Ecos de estos conceptos se hallan también en su alocución en el Westminster Hall durante su viaje al Reino Unido en 2010, en su tercera encíclica, *Caritas in veritate*, del año 2009, en el Discurso que pronunció ante la Asamblea General de la ONU en abril de 2008, y prácticamente en todos los discursos dirigidos a los diplomáticos o Jefes de Estado o Gobierno a quienes ha ido recibiendo en audiencia, sea en el Vaticano, sea en el extranjero por razón sus viajes apostólicos.

Por otro lado, la cuestión de la libertad religiosa ha recibido un amplio tratamiento a lo largo de los siglos en todo el Magisterio de la Iglesia católica². Centrándonos en el último siglo, el *Compendio de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia* recoge textos, entre otros, del Concilio Vaticano II, especialmente de su Declaración *Dignitatis humanae* sobre la libertad religiosa y su Constitución Pastoral *Gaudium et spes* sobre la Iglesia en el mundo actual. Del Papa Juan Pablo II debemos destacar dos textos capitales: la encíclica *Centesimus annus*, que conmemoró en 1991 la publicación de la encíclica *Rerum novarum*, de León XIII, que inaugura la contemporánea Doctrina Social de la Iglesia (DSI), y el discurso que pronunció ante la Asamblea OSCE en octubre de 2003.

Por otro lado, la libertad religiosa es una cuestión que no concierne sólo a la Iglesia católica ya que las demás religiones también han mostrado reiteradamente, al máximo nivel, su preocupación por el respeto violación de este derecho fundamental de la persona humana. Los encuentros de oración por la paz en Asís promovidos por el Papa Juan Pablo II son testigos de esta inquietud.

Pasando al plano político, también son testigos de tal solicitud lo sucesivos Congresos de las Religiones Mundiales y Tradicionales auspiciados por el Presidente de Kazajistán, Nursultán Nazarbáyev, desde el año 2003. El modelo de tolerancia religiosa de Kazajistán, donde conviven pacíficamente más de 40 confesiones religiosas, es digno de estudio porque sus frutos no son similares a los de su entorno más próximo, ese ambiente fanatizado (Afganistán, Pakistán, Irán) que supone una amenaza para la seguridad regional y mundial.

Siguiendo en este plano político, tanto la ONU como la OSCE han subrayado en reiteradas ocasiones la necesidad de respetar esta libertad religiosa con el fin de garantizar la estabilidad y la seguridad global. Sin la debida protección de este derecho fundamental, la paz está en serio peligro y, por ende, el desarrollo humano integral queda truncado, como vemos precisamente allí donde se viola continuamente.

Por su parte, los investigadores también han analizado el papel que juega la religión en la sociedad y han llegado a conclusiones bien distintas acerca de cómo deben ser las relaciones entre el Estado y las diversas confesiones religiosas. Unos han comenzado

² Ver Corral Salvador, Carlos: “La Santa Sede y la protección internacional de la libertad religiosa”, en Isidro Saucedo (ed) (1996): *La libertad religiosa: Memoria del IX Congreso Internacional de Derecho Canónico*. México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.



proponiendo una separación total de ambas esferas y han peregrinado hasta la meta del ateísmo impuesto por el Estado o, como se conoce en nuestros días, del laicismo absolutista. Otros han defendido una sana laicidad, la legítima autonomía de ambas esferas (política y religiosa) y la cooperación entre ambos. Por último, están aquellos intelectuales, los menos, que defienden la oposición de las religiones contra las sociedades, diferencia que solucionan, al contrario que los del primer grupo al que nos acabamos de referir, por medio de la justificación de la violencia y el fanatismo religioso.

En el presente artículo expondremos las líneas fundamentales del pensamiento de Benedicto XVI con respecto a la libertad religiosa, haciendo especial mención a este *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, y veremos las implicaciones del respeto o violación de este derecho fundamental en el campo de la seguridad internacional.

2. Qué es la libertad religiosa

Se entiende por libertad religiosa aquel derecho fundamental de la persona que el Estado debe proteger y que consiste en la eliminación de cualquier traba que impidiera profesar la propia fe de manera individual o colectiva, o no profesar ninguna si esa fuera la opción elegida por esa persona.

Los distintos textos legales internacionales han insistido reiteradamente en la necesidad de que los Estados respeten este derecho, obligándose a ello, y han intentado dar un contenido más concreto a tal libertad.³

Esta libertad religiosa —nótese— está conectada con otros derechos como el de expresión, el de reunión, el de asociación,... Además, implica que nadie puede ser discriminado u objeto de burla por sus creencias religiosas. Esto no sólo desde el Estado sino, también, desde el punto de vista social y de los medios de comunicación.

Se está, sí, ante una libertad en sentido negativo ya que se le pide al Estado que no intervenga, que se le deje amplio margen de maniobra a las distintas confesiones religiosas para que actúen en medio de la sociedad. Pero a la par en sentido positivo, pues se le pide a la autoridad que proteja mediante los instrumentos del Estado de Derecho a los ciudadanos que deseen profesar una fe concreta o no profesarla, evitando que ningún ente sea público o privado interfiera en el ejercicio de dicha libertad.

Un ejemplo actual de qué es la falta de libertad religiosa, para ver a contra luz su contenido, se puede ver en la situación de los cristianos coptos en Egipto. Allí deben pagar un impuesto especial por ser cristianos, deben abandonar su fe si se casan con un musulmán, se les destina los peores trabajos, además del riesgo para la propia seguridad e incluso la vida, como se vio la primera noche del año 2011 con un atentado que le costó la vida a 23 feligreses

³ Ver, especialmente, el art. 18 de la *Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos* (1948); los arts. 9 y 14 del *Convenio para la Protección de los Derechos Humanos y de las Libertades Fundamentales* (1950); el art. 18 del *Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos* (1966); el apartado VII del *Acta Final de Helsinki* (1975); el *Documento Final de Viena* (1989), entre otros, los puntos 16 y 32; la *Carta de París para una Nueva Europa* (1990); y las sentencias del Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos sobre los casos *Kokkinakis vs. Grecia* (1993) y *Otto-Preminger Institut vs. Austria* (1994).



de Alejandría, sin contar a los más de 40 heridos⁴. Así, podemos decir que el grupo religioso más perseguido, en número⁵ y en variedad de formas, es el cristiano, pues más de 150.000 son asesinados cada año por odio a la fe⁶, además de tener que sufrir otra clase de ofensas más subrepticias⁷ “y viven frecuentemente con miedo por su búsqueda de la verdad, su fe en Jesucristo y por su sincero llamamiento a que se reconozca la libertad religiosa”⁸. Además, es la persecución religiosa que pasa más inadvertida⁹.

Se puede afirmar que esta libertad religiosa implica que las personas puedan rendir culto a Dios o no rendirlo, elegir la propia religión, abandonarla sin ninguna cortapisa por parte de las autoridades, no sufrir trato discriminatorio o vejatorio por pertenecer a una confesión concreta, difundir libremente el propio credo y realizar aquello que esté en la práctica habitual de dicha religión¹⁰ (observando siempre el justo orden público)¹¹. Este último punto es el más conflictivo en el sentido de que está delimitado por el sentido común pero no por la letra de la Ley, de manera que pueden surgir muchas dudas acerca de si una procesión es una alteración del orden público o si lo es un rezo masivo musulmán en medio de la calle. Parece más claro el caso de la ablación de clítoris puesto que dicha práctica está expresamente prohibida por la ley¹², aunque, tal y como se elaboran las leyes, no sería de extrañar que a la vuelta de pocos años fuera ya una práctica arraigada en España y, por mayoría, se aprobara en el Parlamento una ley que lo contemplara como “bien cultural”.

El problema se agudiza a la hora de entender la libertad religiosa, pues hay quienes afirman que la religión es un mal endémico de las civilizaciones y que, por lo tanto, debe ser erradicado y pretenden que todo resquicio de religiosidad sea eliminada de la vía pública y que ésta quede relegada a la “sacristía” o incluso al interior de los domicilios, cuando no persiguen incluso esto último, como en el caso del régimen de Myanmar¹³. Efectivamente, siguiendo esa lógica, si se entiende que la religión no es un bien social sino un elemento perturbador o que impide el progreso, eliminarla del espacio público será un noble objetivo. Si a esto le añadimos el dogma, muy difundido en nuestros días, de que las religiones están en

⁴ “No podemos tolerar lo que cada vez se parece más a un plan particularmente perverso de depuración religiosa en Oriente Medio”. Ver “Sarkozy denuncia el “plan de depuración religiosa de Oriente Medio””, Libertad Digital, 7 de enero de 2011, en <http://www.libertaddigital.com>.

⁵ “Entre 2001 y 2010 han perdido la vida 253 agentes pastorales en todo el mundo”. Ver “Un obispo y otros 22 agentes pastorales asesinados en 2010”, ZENIT, 7 de enero de 2011, en <http://www.zenit.org/article-37804?l=spanish>. Lo que más llama la atención es la impunidad de estos asesinatos, por más años que hayan pasado desde que se cometieron. Sangrantes son los casos de Monseñor Óscar Romero, arzobispo de San Salvador (El Salvador), asesinado en 1981; Monseñor Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo, cardenal arzobispo de Guadalajara (México), asesinado en 1993; y el último de Monseñor Luigi Padovese, vicario apostólico de Anatolia y presidente de la Conferencia Episcopal Turca, en vísperas del viaje del Papa Benedicto XVI a Chipre en junio de 2010.

⁶ Ver “Unos 150.000 cristianos mueren al año a causa de la persecución religiosa”, *La Opinión de Málaga*, 27 de diciembre de 2010, en <http://www.laopiniondemalaga.es>.

⁷ Ver el *Informe 2010 sobre Libertad Religiosa en el mundo*, de Ayuda a la Iglesia Necesitada, en <http://www.ain-es.org>.

⁸ Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, 1 de enero de 2011, n. 1, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

⁹ Ver la obra de Soggi, Antonio (2002): *Los nuevos perseguidos*. Madrid, Encuentro.

¹⁰ Para ver una lista más específica, ver el art. 2 de la vigente Ley Orgánica de Libertad Religiosa (LO 7/1980, de 5 de julio).

¹¹ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 5. Ver, sobre todo, la Declaración conciliar *Dignitatis humanae*, sobre la libertad religiosa, en sus números 2, 3, 4 y 7. En el orden civil, ver el art. 16.1 de la Constitución Española (CE/1978).

¹² Ver el art. 149.2 del Código Penal.

¹³ Ver “El régimen comunista de Myanmar prohíbe rezar en los hogares”, *La Razón*, 14 de enero de 2009, en <http://www.larazon.es/noticia/el-regimen-comunista-de-myanmar-prohibe-rezar-en-los-hogares>.



el origen de prácticamente todas las guerras, o al menos no hicieron nada para pararlas, el odio contra el hecho religioso está servido. Como detallaremos más adelante, fueron de este parecer los padres de la Ilustración y de sus “hijos políticos” (liberalismo, socialismo, comunismo, anarquismo,...).¹⁴

Sin embargo, al parecer, es ampliamente admitido que la libertad religiosa no es un dato negativo sino, muy al contrario, potencia al ser humano y “En efecto, en la libertad religiosa se expresa la especificidad de la persona humana, por la que puede ordenar la propia vida personal y social a Dios, a cuya luz se comprende plenamente la identidad, el sentido y el fin de la persona”¹⁵. Es, incluso, parte de la base de una convivencia pacífica y estable ya que sin la apertura a la trascendencia, el hombre ve reducido su horizonte a esta tierra, a la materia que puede tocar, medir, pesar, y no se deja inspirar por valores o motivos más elevados que son eternos sino por algunos subproductos sentimentalistas anclados en modas pasajeras pero sin sólido fundamento, llegando incluso a negar derechos fundamentales y a exigir caprichos como derechos. Así, “Una voluntad que se cree radicalmente incapaz de buscar la verdad y el bien no tiene razones objetivas y motivos para obrar, sino aquellos que provienen de sus intereses momentáneos y pasajeros”¹⁶. Esto mismo lo había anunciado en otras encíclicas:

Digámoslo ahora de manera muy sencilla: el hombre necesita a Dios, de lo contrario queda sin esperanza. [...] Por tanto, no cabe duda de que un “reino de Dios” instaurado sin Dios –un reino, pues, sólo del hombre– desemboca inevitablemente en “el final perverso” de todas las cosas descrito por Kant: lo hemos visto y lo seguimos viendo siempre una y otra vez.¹⁷

Por último, se puede completar con una afirmación de Juan Pablo II y que recoge en este *Mensaje* Benedicto XVI, que la libertad religiosa es un “indicador para verificar el respeto de todos los demás derechos humanos”¹⁸.

3. La fundamentación de los Derechos Humanos

Ahora bien, afirmar que querer construir una sociedad sin Dios implicará dejarla mutilada y que no se podrá construir una sociedad justa sin Dios ¿quiere significar que una sociedad atea no podrá ser jamás justa? ¿Es que acaso la justicia depende de la fe en Dios? ¿Un mundo sin Dios no podrá ser completo, desarrollado, feliz? Veamos a qué se refiere el Santo Padre.

En efecto, la propuesta cristiana afirma que una sociedad sin Dios es una sociedad truncada, a medias y, más aún, que sin Él no habrá justicia. Benedicto XVI lo enunció en positivo al ser elegido papa:

¹⁴ La encíclica *Spe salvi*, de Benedicto XVI, hace un repaso de todos estos sistemas de pensamiento. Antes que él ya lo hicieron de manera extensa León XIII (*Libertas praestantissimum, Rerum novarum*), Pío XI (*Quadragesimo anno, Divini illius Magistri, Divini Redemptoris, Mit Brennender Sorge, Non abbiamo bisogno*) y Juan Pablo II (*Centesimus annus*).

¹⁵ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, nn. 3 y 7.

¹⁷ Benedicto XVI, *Spe salvi*, 23.

¹⁸ Ver Juan Pablo II, *Discurso a la Asamblea de la Organización para la seguridad y la cooperación en Europa (OSCE)*, 10 de octubre de 2003, 1, en <http://www.vatican.va>.



Quien deja entrar a Cristo no pierde nada, nada –absolutamente nada– de lo que hace la vida libre, bella y grande. Sólo con esta amistad se abren las puertas de la vida. Sólo con esta amistad se abren realmente las grandes potencialidades de la condición humana. Sólo con esta amistad experimentamos lo que es bello y lo que nos libera.¹⁹

En pocas palabras: el hombre necesita de la redención en todos los planos de la vida (espiritual pero también material, político, jurídico, social, económico,...) porque la salvación de Jesucristo es integral y el Evangelio se dirige a toda la persona y no sólo a una parte de ella, de manera que todo debe ser leído a través de esa lente: “Toda la Iglesia, en todo su ser y obrar, cuando anuncia, celebra y actúa en la caridad, tiende a promover el desarrollo integral del hombre. [...] El auténtico desarrollo del hombre concierne de manera unitaria a la totalidad de la persona en todas sus dimensiones”²⁰.

Ahora bien, esta salvación, que ya ha sido dada, no puede ser impuesta a los demás sino sólo propuesta y acogida o, en su caso, rechazada libremente²¹; de lo contrario no sería operativa²².

La explicación ulterior que da el Pontífice es que sin una fuerza espiritual, sin la energía extra que proporciona la religión (la que sea), no se puede levantar una sociedad digna de denominarse “humana”, ya que quedaría a ras de suelo como desean los inmanentistas, tal y como advirtió en su encíclica *Caritas in veritate*:

Sin la perspectiva de una vida eterna, el progreso humano en este mundo se queda sin aliento. Encerrado dentro de la historia, queda expuesto al riesgo de reducirse sólo al incremento del tener; así, la humanidad pierde la valentía de estar disponible para los bienes más altos, para las iniciativas grandes y desinteresadas que la caridad universal exige.²³

3.1. Relativismo cultural versus Ley Natural

Es precisamente en este punto en el que Benedicto XVI introduce el problema del relativismo cultural²⁴. ¿Qué tipo de sociedad podemos construir si no existen valores sólidos, universales, comunes a todos los hombres? ¿Qué mundo podemos tener entre las manos si no podemos

¹⁹ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Homilía en la Santa Misa de imposición del palio y entrega del anillo del pescador en el solemne inicio del ministerio petrino del obispo de Roma*, 24 de abril de 2005, en http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2005/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20050424_inizio-pontificato_sp.html.

²⁰ Benedicto XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 11.

²¹ “La profesión de una religión no se puede instrumentalizar ni imponer por la fuerza”. Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, 1 de enero de 2011, nº 7, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

²² “La libertad presupone que en las decisiones fundamentales cada hombre, cada generación, tenga un nuevo inicio. Es verdad que las nuevas generaciones pueden construir a partir de los conocimientos y experiencias de quienes les han precedido, así como aprovecharse del tesoro moral de toda la humanidad. Pero también pueden rechazarlo, ya que éste no puede tener la misma evidencia que los inventos materiales”. Ver Benedicto XVI, *Spe salvi*, nº 24.

²³ Benedicto XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 11.

²⁴ Sobre el origen teórico del relativismo y sus postulados, ver Sayés, José Antonio (2007): *Teología y relativismo: Análisis de una crisis de fe*. Madrid, BAC.



alcanzar un consenso mundial²⁵ en torno a lo que se debe o no se debe hacer, entre lo que es lícito o reprobable moralmente en lo que respecta a la vida del hombre en sociedad? Lo expresa con meridiana claridad el propio papa²⁶ al afirmar, como explicaremos más adelante, que la vía para la paz no es el relativismo moral sino el diálogo auténtico: “La ilusión de encontrar en el relativismo moral la clave para una pacífica convivencia, es en realidad el origen de la división y negación de la dignidad de los seres humanos”.²⁷

En este sentido, el Sumo Pontífice afirma que existe una verdad, no varias “verdades”, no meras opiniones, sino que es posible hallar la verdad auténtica, también cuando hablamos de la construcción más justa de la sociedad y especialmente al tratar de los Derechos Humanos. Así lo ha recalcado en distintas ocasiones, como por ejemplo:

En efecto, la verdad es “logos” que crea “diá-logos” y, por tanto, comunicación y comunión. La verdad, rescatando a los hombres de las opiniones y de las sensaciones subjetivas, les permite llegar más allá de las determinaciones culturales e históricas y apreciar el valor y la sustancia de las cosas.²⁸

Este es el punto nodal del texto que estamos comentando, o al menos a la idea que atraviesa no sólo este *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz* sino gran parte de las enseñanzas de Benedicto XVI: la fundamentación de los Derechos Humanos en la Ley Natural. Aunque santo Tomás de Aquino distinguió entre esta Ley y Ley Eterna y Ley Divina, en este artículo nos referiremos a la Ley Natural como aquella Ley impresa por Dios en los corazones de los hombres y que conforma la naturaleza del ser humano, es decir, aquello que el hombre es en esencia y que le resulta irrenunciable e inalienable por estar anclado en él mismo. En palabras del papa: “Dios revela el hombre al hombre; la razón y la fe colaboran a la hora de mostrarle el bien, con tal que lo quiera ver; la ley natural, en la que brilla la Razón creadora, indica la grandeza del hombre, pero también su miseria, cuando desconoce el reclamo de la verdad moral”²⁹.

3.2. Ley innata versus Ley escrita

Está, pues, delante de nosotros, el viejo debate entre iusnaturalismo y iuspositivismo³⁰, entre el contractualismo (y neocontractualismo) y los defensores de la Ley Natural³¹. Por viejo que

²⁵ “El espacio público, que la comunidad internacional pone a disposición de las religiones y su propuesta de “vida buena”, favorece el surgir de un criterio compartido de verdad y de bien, y de un consenso moral, fundamentales para una convivencia justa y pacífica”. Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 10.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, n. 3.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ Benedicto XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 4.

²⁹ Benedicto XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 75.

³⁰ Sobre este debate en torno a la Ley Natural, se pueden consultar varias obras, entre ellas Prieto, Fernando (1990): *Historia de las ideas y de las formas políticas*. Vol III. Madrid, Unión Editorial. También Fernández de la Cigoña, Carmen y López Atanes, Francisco Javier (eds) (2010): *En la frontera de la modernidad: Francisco Suárez y la ley natural*. Madrid, CEU Ediciones. Sobre cómo afecta el derecho natural a la configuración de la soberanía en la modernidad, ver Madrazo Rivas, Enrique (2010): *La soberanía: La evolución del concepto hacia una perspectiva internacional*. Madrid, Dykinson.

³¹ Por el lado del iuspositivismo encontraríamos nombres como Hans Kelsen, Norberto Bobbio o Gregorio Peces Barba. Por parte del iusnaturalismo encontraríamos a toda la doctrina de la Iglesia, con san Agustín y santo Tomás de Aquino al frente, además de otros pensadores como Grocio, Locke, Pufendorf, Burke o Kant. No podemos dejar de citar a John Rawls por su profunda incidencia en el pensamiento político posterior a la



sea, sigue más vivo que nunca pues cada año se promulgan leyes nuevas que enfrentan ambas visiones del mundo y mientras para unos hay cuestiones que no se pueden tocar (derecho a la vida, institución social del matrimonio, libertad religiosa,...), para otros, todo está disponible y todo derecho puede ser redefinido por una cámara parlamentaria elegida democráticamente si fuera necesario (aborto, matrimonio entre personas del mismo sexo, eutanasia,...). Pero, se puede afirmar con san Agustín que “Pienso que comprendes que nada hay justo y legítimo en la [ley] temporal que no lo hayan tomado los hombres de la [ley] eterna”³².

Sobre esta controversia, trató Benedicto XVI durante su intervención ante la Asamblea General de la ONU en abril de 2008³³, y señaló el peligro que implica considerar los Derechos Humanos como disponibles, fruto exclusivamente de “medidas legislativas o decisiones normativas tomadas por las diversas agencias de los que están en el poder”, convirtiéndose entonces “en proposiciones frágiles, separadas de la dimensión ética y racional, que es su fundamento y su fin”³⁴. Entra en juego la idea que tiene aquí la DSI de Derecho y Justicia. Para el Magisterio de la Iglesia, la Ley, el ordenamiento jurídico entero, el Derecho, deben ser expresión de la Justicia, que es una virtud más elevada y atemporal y que por lo tanto queda fuera de las expresiones concretas que en cada momento quedan por escrito y que rigen los sistemas de convivencia. De esta manera, el Derecho debe ser expresión de la Justicia; no se arroga aquel la autoría ni la autoridad, sino que se declara siervo de la Justicia.

Afirmar que los derechos son puestos y quitados a voluntad por los legisladores o, en última instancia, por los electores es ponerlos a su disposición con el riesgo cierto de que serán manipulados, tergiversados e incluso destruidos. No hace falta más que echar un vistazo al siglo XX para afirmarlo con total rotundidad. No faltará quien encuentre exageradas estas palabras y piense, ingenuamente, que nosotros, la civilización actual, está exenta de cometer las barbaridades que otros cometieron en el pasado y que siempre vamos a mejor; esta fe ciega en el progreso es la que llevó a dos guerras mundiales con una diferencia de menos de 25 años, o a condenar el genocidio judío cometido por los nazis y hacer la vista gorda ante los crímenes cometidos por Stalin, Mao o los jemes rojos, por no hablar de las coincidencias en el lenguaje entre los nazis y las personas que defienden el derecho a eliminar a las “personas indignas de vida” o la “eutanasia”, por ejemplo³⁵.

3.3. Los Derechos Humanos no son disponibles. El caso español

Los Derechos Humanos, especialmente su núcleo duro (derecho a la vida, libertad de pensamiento, de conciencia y religión y libertad de expresión), deben ser protegidos especialmente no porque el Estado los concede graciosamente sino porque los reconoce. Si el fundamento de estos derechos no lo encontramos en la dignidad intrínseca de la persona sino en el acuerdo de unos pocos (sean gobernantes o legisladores) se corre el riesgo que acabamos de indicar.

Segunda Guerra Mundial a través de su teoría de la justicia equitativa y distributiva, siguiendo la estela de contractualistas como Hobbes o Rousseau.

³² Ver San Agustín, *De libero arbitrio* 1,6,15

³³ Ver Alonso Marcos, Antonio y Corral Salvador, Carlos: “Benedicto XVI ante la ONU, 18 de abril de 2008”, *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, nº 17, mayo de 2008, en <http://revistas.ucm.es>.

³⁴ Encuentro con los miembros de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, *Discurso de Su Santidad Benedicto XVI*, Nueva York, 18 de abril de 2008, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

³⁵ Ver la obra de K. Binding y A. Hoch *Licencia para el aniquilamiento de la vida indigna de vivir*. Ver la exposición que hace de ello Carlos Corral en su blog en un post titulado “90º Aniversario de la publicación, “Licencia para el aniquilamiento de la vida indigna de vivir”, de K. Binding y A. Hoch (1920). [BLOG.185]”, de 22 de marzo de 2010, en <http://blogs.periodistadigital.com/carloscorral.php/2010/03/22/90o-aniversario-de-la-publicacion-licenc>.



No obstante, la adhesión a esta Ley Natural no excluye la tarea de descubrirla, de debatir en el foro público el contenido concreto de dicha Ley pues, al no estar escrita, debe ser dilucidada. Tampoco es incompatible con la necesidad de codificarla³⁶, con el fin de clarificarla y darle la mayor publicidad posible, para el mejor cumplimiento de la misma. Por eso el papa habla de la existencia de un “criterio compartido de verdad y de bien, y de un consenso moral, fundamentales para una convivencia justa y pacífica”³⁷. En efecto, aunque la experiencia del siglo XX podría hacernos caer en el pesimismo, debemos darnos cuenta de que en nuestras manos está la tarea doble de reconocer la indisponibilidad de los Derechos Humanos y la de trabajar por mejorar el cumplimiento (la gestión, si se prefiere) de los mismos. Así, se debe reconocer la indisponibilidad del derecho a la vida y legislar (en el ámbito nacional pero también en el internacional) por protegerlo. De la misma manera, se debe reconocer la importancia de la institución del matrimonio y mejorarla sin manipularla o desvirtuarla.

Lo mismo cabe afirmar de la libertad religiosa. El debate que se abrió en España iba en esta dirección pues, ante los “globos sonda” lanzados por el Gobierno de Zapatero de su deseo de reformar la vigente Ley de Libertad Religiosa so pretexto del cambio del ambiente social español operado en los últimos 30 años, muchas voces se alzaron ante tal pretensión ya que abundaba la desconfianza en un Gobierno que más que caracterizarse por mostrar respeto y agradecimiento hacia la Iglesia y su labor caritativa, mostraban desprecio y sembraban crispación y división (haciendo constante alusión a la pretendida separación entre la “Iglesia oficial” y la de base, como si existiera dos evangelios distintos; o utilizando los instrumentos del poder para difundir una imagen de la Iglesia despreciable, arcaica, retrógrada, misógina, obstáculo para el progreso social)³⁸. La sospecha que surgió en determinados ambientes es que más que reformar la Ley de Libertad Religiosa se iba a diseñar una Ley para la restricción religiosa o para el control religioso, lo cual dista mucho de la esencia de este derecho o de la dinámica propia de los Derechos Humanos en general.

Insistimos en que esta concepción del Derecho y de la convivencia entre ciudadanos no está en la mente de todos, sino que hay personas, que ocupan incluso gobiernos, que sostienen la idea contraria: “La Laicidad es garantía para desarrollar los derechos de ciudadanía ya que el Estado Democrático y la Ley, así como la soberanía, no obedecen a ningún orden preestablecido de rango superior, pues la única voluntad y soberanía es la de la ciudadanía”³⁹. Recordemos que la palabra “laicidad” aquí no se refiere simplemente al reconocimiento de la sana autonomía de las esferas política y religiosa y la cooperación entre ambas sino al enfrentamiento y oposición entre ambas. Nótese, además, que se demoniza ese “orden preestablecido de rango superior” (la Ley Natural) y se le hace incompatible con la recta construcción de la sociedad española actual, con el progreso y la garantía de los derechos.

Aun así, ni los iuspositivistas más acérrimos son capaces de negar, en coherencia, la existencia de un “orden preestablecido de rango superior”, sólo que ellos sustituyen la Ley

³⁶ Ver Pablo VI, *Audiencia General* del miércoles 4 de marzo de 1970, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

³⁷ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 10.

³⁸ Ver el Manifiesto del PSOE con motivo del XXVIII aniversario de la Constitución, *Constitución, laicidad y educación para la ciudadanía*, 2006, en www.psoe.es/download.do?id=53903. Nótese que en este documento se emplea la palabra “laicidad” cuando en realidad lo que quiere decir es “laicismo agresivo”, expresión menos afortunada y menos acorde con el marketing pseudo-pacifista de este partido. Sus campañas realizadas en video, especialmente las que arengan a las Juventudes Socialistas, subrayan esto que acabamos de afirmar.

³⁹ Ver el Manifiesto del PSOE *Constitución, laicidad y educación para la ciudadanía*, 2006, en www.psoe.es/download.do?id=53903, p. 4.



Natural, que es universal y atemporal, por un programa político; dicho programa se constituye en criterio supremo que rija el ordenamiento jurídico al haber sido votado en unas elecciones. De esta manera se deja en manos de los electores más que la fijación de dichos criterios supremos, la elección entre varios criterios que otros ya se han encargado antes de seleccionar, restringiendo sobremanera las posibilidades de elección. *In nuce*, los electores no diseñan los programas sino que eligen entre los programas que se les proponen. En este escenario, la intocable Ley Natural queda reducida a un programa político, pero éste, por ese mismo proceso, queda sacralizado, de manera que nadie puede desobedecer la Ley, pero el legislador puede, impunemente, pisotearla y darle la vuelta por completo, dándole un contenido totalmente diferente. De hecho, esa es la práctica habitual en los gobiernos democráticos occidentales, especialmente tras la Segunda Guerra Mundial: cada gobierno que llega, anula las leyes anteriores y las hace nuevas de acuerdo con su programa electoral. En esta situación, la obediencia a la Ley se hace muy cuesta arriba.

Por citar el que puede ser el ejemplo más paradigmático de esto que estamos diciendo ahora, y que es un tema que el papa trata con frecuencia⁴⁰, incluso en este *Mensaje*⁴¹, es el matrimonio. Esta institución social plurimilenaria viene caracterizada en su esencia por cuatro notas características⁴², pudiéndolo definir como la unión manifestada de manera oficial entre un hombre y una mujer, con vocación de permanencia y abierta a la progenie. Como es obvio, el matrimonio no es una cuestión exclusiva de la Iglesia católica, sino que es una institución de derecho natural y, por lo mismo, no está disponible para ser modificada, ni siquiera por la propia Iglesia. Se pueden modificar las cuestiones accesorias o accidentales (como son el lugar de celebración o la forma por la cual se oficializa la unión) pero no las esenciales, si no se quiere correr el riesgo de desvirtuarla o incluso destruirla. Por lo tanto, estaríamos ante una institución que los legisladores deben someterse a un “orden preestablecido de rango superior”, que no es el programa de partido sino la Ley Natural. De lo contrario, se cae en una banalización tal de la institución en sí que la destruye, de manera que se puede decir tranquilamente y sin temor a faltar a la verdad que en España ya no existe el matrimonio sino que ha sido eliminando de la legislación y ha sido sustituido por un sucedáneo que mantiene el nombre pero no la esencia. En consecuencia, ya no existen los términos “esposo” y “esposa” sino “cónyuge A” y “cónyuge B”, como tampoco existen los términos “padre” o “madre” sino “progenitor A” y “progenitor B”. Toda una operación de ingeniería social que desvincula a la persona del ámbito familiar, anula las relaciones esponsales y las paternofiliales y hace del ser humano un mero individuo dependiente directamente del Estado, adoctrinado por él a través del sistema de escolarización obligatoria, cuyo objetivo último no es la educación de la prole sino mantener bajo su control a los nuevos ciudadanos.

3.4. Vínculos entre la libertad religiosa y los demás derechos

En resumen, con el Sumo Pontífice afirmamos que los Estados deben descubrir la riqueza de los derechos fundamentales y protegerlos, no manipularlos o tergiversarlos, pues su fundamento no se encuentra en una asamblea soberana⁴³ sino en la naturaleza del ser humano. Nuestra tarea es discernir cuál es el contenido concreto de dicha Ley Natural.

⁴⁰ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje para la XLI Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, 1 de enero de 2008.

⁴¹ “La familia fundada sobre el matrimonio, expresión de la unión íntima y de la complementariedad entre un hombre y una mujer, se inserta en este contexto como la primera escuela de formación y crecimiento social, cultural, moral y espiritual de los hijos, que deberían ver siempre en el padre y la madre el primer testimonio de una vida orientada a la búsqueda de la verdad y al amor de Dios”. Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 4.

⁴² Ver los respectivos informes españoles de la Real Academia de Jurisprudencia y Legislación, del Consejo General del Poder Judicial y del Consejo de Estado, emitidos en 2004.

⁴³ Ver León XIII, *Inmortale Dei*, 13.



Por último, se debe subrayar que la conexión especialísima que se establece entre los derechos que conforman el núcleo esencial de los Derechos Humanos: el derecho a la vida y la libertad religiosa. La propia evolución histórica de dichos derechos lo pone de manifiesto, pues ambos pertenecen a lo que se conoce como primera generación de Derechos Humanos, los primeros que fueron “arrebataados” a la autoridad civil gracias al *habeas corpus*, y la libertad de pensamiento y expresión, que acabó con la guerra de los Cien Años en la Paz de Westfalia, donde se impuso el principio de *cuius regio, eius religio*.

No obstante, la libertad religiosa o la tolerancia religiosa ya había hecho aparición en el mundo mucho antes del siglo XVII. Entre los pueblos primitivos se solía dar cierta tolerancia que podíamos traducir por indiferencia ante el hecho religioso. Las primeras religiones monoteístas sí eran respetuosas con las creencias de los demás pueblos (adhiriéndoseles incluso en ocasiones algunos elementos, siguiendo una cierta “contaminación”) siempre y cuando los miembros de sus etnias no profesasen dichas religiones. Por su parte, el Imperio Romano practicó una especie de colonización religiosa, adoptando toda deidad que aparecía en el firmamento de sus conquistas, pero poniéndolas siempre por debajo de su sumo dios: el emperador. Este fue precisamente el mayor punto de fricción con los cristianos pues, aunque debían comportarse como buenos ciudadanos, no podían rendir culto a otra deidad que no fuera el Dios de Abrahán, de Isaac y de Jacob, lo que las autoridades civiles entendían como delito de alta traición (penado con la muerte). El Edicto de Tolerancia (año 311), del emperador Galerio, y el Edicto de Milán (año 313), del emperador Constantino, pusieron fin a esta situación, dando libertad total de culto a todo el Imperio.

La adopción del cristianismo como religión oficial del Imperio por el Edicto de Tesalónica (año 380) supuso un cierto retroceso en este sentido pues poco a poco se fue esclerotizando esta libertad religiosa y se fue controlando cada vez más por parte de la autoridad pública el cumplimiento de las normas religiosas, derivando en una uniformidad obligada, contraria a la auténtica libertad religiosa e implantando la confesionalidad, modelo que se seguiría en las tierras musulmanas.

Benedicto XVI, de acuerdo con la doctrina de la ONU en torno a los Derechos Humanos, aceptada por prácticamente todos los Estados, estos derechos son universales, indivisibles e interdependientes y están relacionados entre sí, señala la existencia de un vínculo entre derecho a la vida y libertad religiosa y, además, afirma que no están disponibles sino que son inherentes a la esencia del ser humano:

El derecho a la vida y a la libre expresión de la propia fe en Dios no están sometidos al poder del hombre. La paz necesita que se establezca un *límite claro entre lo que es y no es disponible*: así se evitarán intromisiones inaceptables en ese patrimonio de valores que es propio del hombre como tal.⁴⁴

4. La protección de la libertad religiosa: el papel de la OSCE

La OSCE juega un papel esencial en la protección de la libertad religiosa, especialmente la de las minorías nacionales pues ha constatado que el ejercicio de tal derecho, o más bien su violación, ha estado en el origen de muchos conflictos o ha sido una causa interviniente a la

⁴⁴ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje para la XL Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, 1 de enero de 2007, n.4.



hora de motivarlo, promoverlo o prolongarlo en el tiempo y profundizarlo. Si miramos los Balcanes, veremos que las causas ideológicas nacionalistas se vieron retroalimentadas con mensajes pseudo-religiosos.

La ODIHR (*Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights*) es la Oficina de la OSCE dedicada a la protección de la libertad religiosa, con sede en Viena, puesto que la libertad religiosa es considerada parte integrante del núcleo duro de los Derechos Humanos, además de entender que no puede existir una sana democracia ni un Estado estable si no está solucionada la denominada “cuestión religiosa”, es decir, que no sea causa de conflicto sino de pacífica convivencia social.

Haciendo un recorrido por los textos fundamentales de la organización, vemos la importancia que se le ha dado⁴⁵.

En el *Acta Final* de Helsinki los Estados miembro se comprometen a respetar los Derechos Humanos, haciendo especial mención de la “libertad de pensamiento, conciencia, religión o creencia”; reconocen que “derivan de la dignidad inherente a la persona humana y son esenciales para su libre y pleno desarrollo; y afirman que “respetaran la libertad de la persona de profesar y practicar, individual o colectivamente, su religión o creencia, actuando de acuerdo con los dictados de su propia conciencia”. Encontramos aquí plena coincidencia con los postulados defendidos en la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia en lo que respecta al origen de los Derechos Humanos, a su fundamentación, a su núcleo duro y, todavía más importante, la defensa de la conciencia como último bastión frente a la arbitrariedad del Estado. Precisamente es la conciencia la fortaleza inexpugnable del ser humano que no puede ni debe ser sometida a los dictámenes de los gobiernos, que vienen y van, aparecen y desaparecen mientras la conciencia permanece. Siguiendo al profesor Juan Ferreiro Galguera:

Podemos definir la conciencia individual como aquella zona del espíritu o de la actividad cerebral donde la persona forja o se adhiere a aquellas ideas y creencias que le sirven de parámetro para analizar la coherencia de su comportamiento. Es, por tanto, un espacio de autodeterminación moral. Normalmente, viene influenciada por códigos morales, religiosos o ideológicos, pero no necesariamente.⁴⁶

Uno de los padres de nuestra vigente Constitución Española, Gregorio Peces Barba, enseña que por encima de la propia conciencia está la racionalidad de la Ley, oponiendo así la conciencia (irracional) a la Ley (racional), y escribe: “Felizmente, hoy la última palabra la tienen los ciudadanos, las instituciones democráticas, los principios, los valores y los derechos: son los dioses de nuestro tiempo”⁴⁷.

Obviamente, el presupuesto del que parte el profesor Peces Barba es el de un Estado democrático, pero aún así la democracia no asegura la infalibilidad de las decisiones que se toman soberanamente y pueden llegar a hacer Ley algo que va contra el propio Derecho Natural. La democracia no es garantía absoluta de respeto de los Derechos Humanos, aunque

⁴⁵ Consultar ODIHR (2002): *Principios orientadores de Toledo sobre la enseñanza acerca de religiones y creencias en las escuelas públicas*. Varsovia, ODIHR, pp. 32ss.

⁴⁶ Ver Juan Ferreiro Galguera: “Libertad de conciencia *contra legem*: Criterios del Tribunal Constitucional en materia de transfusiones”, *Foro, Nueva época*, nº 00/2004, p.123.

⁴⁷ Ver, entre otros, Peces Barba, Gregorio: “Constitución, religión y otras “conciencias””, *El País*, 22 de marzo de 2010, en <http://www.elpais.com>.



ayuda si es verdaderamente una sana democracia y se alienta la participación de la ciudadanía en el proceso deliberativo de la toma de decisiones⁴⁸. En este sentido, la Iglesia ha denunciado en numerosas ocasiones que un régimen puede ser aparentemente democrático y ser en realidad una olocracia o tiranía de las masas⁴⁹. Al hilo de esto, Benedicto XVI vuelve a insistir en la cuestión del “consenso moral” como punto de partida de las democracias, citando el ejemplo de Alexis de Tocqueville⁵⁰ y su estudio de la democracia, recogida especialmente en *La democracia en América*. Allí, puso de relieve la importancia de que la sociedad civil esté viva, participe efectivamente en el proceso de toma de decisiones, y que goce de un consenso de base que una a todos. Si falta dicho consenso, aunque surjan discrepancias legítimas en torno a ciertos temas, tal sociedad no podrá sostenerse pues una parte importante vivirá con la constante sensación de que se le está cometiendo una grave injusticia. Este sería el caso de “la España cainita”.

Además de este consenso moral social, es el Estado quien debe garantizar el ejercicio de la libertad de conciencia y la libertad religiosa, y por lo tanto éste se ha visto obligado a aclarar el concepto jurídico de “conciencia”, base de aquella libertad religiosa:

El derecho a la libertad religiosa del art. 16.1 C.E. garantiza la existencia de un claustro íntimo de creencias y, por tanto, un espacio de autodeterminación intelectual ante el fenómeno religioso, vinculado a la propia personalidad y dignidad individual. Pero, junto a esta dimensión interna, esta libertad, al igual que la ideológica del propio art. 16.1 C.E., incluye también una dimensión externa de “*agere licere*” que faculta a los ciudadanos para actuar con arreglo a sus propias convicciones y mantenerlas frente a terceros (SSTC 19/1985, 120/1990 y 137/1990).⁵¹

Por último, nos gustaría ofrecer una definición de conciencia que ha dado recientemente Benedicto XVI, tomada del beato John Henry Newman, cardenal de la Iglesia Católica, converso desde el anglicanismo:

En el pensamiento moderno, la palabra “conciencia” significa que en materia de moral y de religión, la dimensión subjetiva, el individuo, constituye la última instancia de la decisión. [...] Para él [Newman] “conciencia” significa la capacidad de verdad del hombre: la capacidad de reconocer en los ámbitos decisivos de su existencia, religión y moral, una verdad, la verdad. La conciencia, la capacidad del hombre para reconocer la verdad, le impone al mismo tiempo el deber de encaminarse hacia la verdad, de buscarla y de someterse a ella allí donde la encuentre.⁵²

⁴⁸ “Cuando se aboga por una mayor y mejor democracia, semejante exigencia no puede tener otro significado que el colocar al ciudadano en condiciones cada vez mejores de tener su propia opinión personal, y de expresarla y hacerla valer de manera que conduzca al bien común”. Ver Pío XII, *Radiomensaje Benignitas et humanitas sobre el problema de la Democracia*, 24 de diciembre de 1944.

⁴⁹ “Pueblo y multitud amorfa o, como se suele decir, “masa” son dos conceptos diversos. El pueblo vive y se mueve con vida propia; la masa es por sí misma inerte, y no puede recibir movimiento sino de fuera”. Ver Pío XII, *Radiomensaje... op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Ver Benedicto XVI, *Audiencia a la Curia Romana en ocasión de la felicitación navideña*, 20 de diciembre de 2010, en <http://press.catholica.va>.

⁵¹ Ver STC 177/1996.

⁵² Ver Benedicto XVI, *Audiencia a la Curia Romana en ocasión de la felicitación navideña*, 20 de diciembre de 2010, en <http://press.catholica.va>.



Siguiendo con los documentos de la OSCE, en la *Carta de París para una Nueva Europa*, firmada en París en 1990, los países participantes afirmaron que todo individuo, sin discriminación, tiene “derecho a la libertad de pensamiento, de conciencia y de religión o creencia, libertad de expresión, libertad de asociación y asamblea pacífica, libertad de movimiento”. Vuelve, pues, a ponerse de relieve el papel de la religión en la vida social y la importancia de respetar la libertad religiosa para el mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacionales. Recordemos que el concepto de seguridad que maneja la OSCE es más amplio que el de las meras amenazas militares, yendo más allá y buscando los orígenes de la inestabilidad en causas políticas, medioambientales, económicas, sociales o culturales⁵³. Precisamente, en la última cumbre de la OSCE, celebrada en Astaná los días 1 y 2 de diciembre de 2010, el Secretario General de la Organización de la Conferencia Islámica afirmó que entre las amenazas más graves a la seguridad está la intolerancia y la discriminación basada en motivos religiosos o la propagación del odio religioso⁵⁴.

El Consejo de Derechos Humanos de la ONU ha advertido en numerosas ocasiones sobre el peligro que supone para la convivencia pacífica esta propagación del odio contra las religiones, especialmente después de los atentados de septiembre de 2001, y de las graves consecuencias que este tipo de actuaciones por parte de los Estados y de los medios de comunicación puede tener en la estabilidad y seguridad internacionales. Así, cada año dicho Consejo aprueba una resolución de condena de la creación de estereotipos sobre las religiones y de los consiguientes actos de discriminación e intolerancia que sufren los creyentes de dichas religiones, incluidos los ataques verbales y físicos, y le pide a un Relator Especial sobre las formas contemporáneas de racismo, discriminación racial, xenofobia y formas conexas de intolerancia, en este caso el Sr. Githu Muigai, que elabore un *Informe* acerca de las manifestaciones de difamación de las religiones, y en particular de las graves consecuencias de la islamofobia, para el disfrute de todos los derechos de quienes profesan esas religiones. Extraemos aquí un párrafo representativo de dicha resolución:

Observando con profunda preocupación los casos de intolerancia y discriminación y los actos de violencia que se dan en muchas partes del mundo contra quienes profesan determinadas religiones, entre ellos los casos de islamofobia, antisemitismo y cristianofobia, además de la proyección de una imagen negativa de determinadas religiones en los medios de comunicación y la adopción y aplicación de leyes y medidas administrativas que discriminan a las personas de determinados orígenes étnicos y religiosos.⁵⁵

Siguiendo los trabajos tanto del Consejo como del Relator Especial, podemos descubrir un hilo conductor según el cual la violencia ejercida contra las personas basándose en sus creencias religiosas no nace espontáneamente sino que forma parte de un proceso, de un continuo jalonado por una serie de etapas, a saber: se da primero una ridiculización, mofa o escarnio de una determinada creencia; a continuación, se crean y se consolidan una serie de estereotipos a través de la educación, los medios de comunicación o incluso instancias

⁵³ La *Declaración de Berlín*, de la OSCE, sobre el antisemitismo puso de relieve en 2004 estas realidades. Ver la *Declaración de Berlín* en <http://www.osce.org/es/cio/documents/31437>.

⁵⁴ “Among the gravest threats to stability, peace and security is the rise of hatred, discrimination and intolerance”. Ver *Statement by Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to the OSCE Summit*, en <http://www.osce.org>.

⁵⁵ Ver la Resolución “*La lucha contra la difamación de las religiones*” del Consejo de Derechos Humanos, dependiente de la Asamblea General ONU, A/HRC/RES/13/16, de 15 de abril de 2010, p. 2.



oficiales (sea por acción o por omisión); en tercer lugar, se pasa a los ataques verbales por y de ahí, en cuarto lugar, a los ataques físicos sea contra las propiedades o contra las propias personas.

Aunque pudiera parecer que este tipo de ataques sólo se da entre religiones, debemos destacar que en nuestro Occidente civilizado y secularizado se dan ataques diarios contra las religiones en forma de ridiculización y de ataques verbales que no caen dentro de la libertad de expresión sino en el comportamiento denunciado por la ONU en los documentos que acabamos de señalar. Más incomprensiblemente aún, estos ataques son más feroces no contra los musulmanes o los judíos sino contra los cristianos, es decir, contra la fuente principal de la propia civilización; un “suicidio” en toda regla⁵⁶. Concretamente, en España, raro es el día que la religión católica no salga ridiculizada o mal parada, sea en un programa de entretenimiento en la televisión, sea en un informativo, sea en declaraciones de algún miembro del Gobierno o del partido en el Gobierno.⁵⁷

La presidencia kazaja de la OSCE ha puesto de relieve la necesidad de dotar desde el Estado un marco de tolerancia y diálogo religioso y promover en la sociedad una visión respetuosa con las creencias, en lugar de permitir la ridiculización o el escarnio y difundir estereotipos perjudiciales para las personas que se adhieren a dichas creencias. El modelo kazajo, lo dijimos en la introducción, es realmente envidiable ya que ha hecho capaz de integrar y de que convivan pacíficamente más de 130 etnias y más de 40 confesiones religiosas. El marco jurídico ha contribuido notablemente a ello, pero también el político, con la creación de instituciones que fomenten este diálogo interreligioso y proyecten en la sociedad civil una buena imagen de las religiones presentes allí.⁵⁸

Por último, en junio de 2010 se celebró en Astaná una Conferencia de Alto Nivel sobre la Tolerancia y la No Discriminación⁵⁹, auspiciada por la presidencia kazaja de la OSCE. A lo largo de dos días, representantes de la sociedad civil estuvieron debatiendo durante dos días en torno a la situación de la tolerancia en el área OSCE, centrándose en la cuestión étnica y, sobre todo, religiosa. Posteriormente, pusieron a disposición de las delegaciones oficiales los resultados de dicho debate, que sirvió, además, de apertura para la Conferencia en sí. En ella, las delegaciones de los países miembros estuvieron discutiendo otros dos días más sobre la mejor manera de luchar contra la intolerancia, señalando que los medios más eficaces son la legislación, la educación y los medios de comunicación, además del diálogo interreligioso y la garantía de la libertad religiosa por parte del Estado. De nuevo el marco kazajo realzó el significado de aquellas palabras.

5. La disyuntiva de la modernidad

Uno de los rasgos característicos de la Era Moderna fue la separación entre ética y política. Se introdujo entonces la idea de la necesidad de expulsar a Dios de la vida pública, no sólo de la esfera del poder político. Este proceso culminó con la Ilustración, que expresó la idea de que las normas que rigen la comunidad humana no pueden estar sujetas o supeditadas a criterios

⁵⁶ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, 1 de enero de 2011, n. 13.

⁵⁷ Para información detallada sobre actos de difamación religiosa, ver la actividad del Observatorio Antidifamación Religiosa en <http://www.oadir.org>.

⁵⁸ Ver Alonso Marcos, Antonio (2011): *Kazajistán: Modelo de tolerancia religiosa*. Madrid, UNISCI.

⁵⁹ Ver la *Declaración de Astaná* en <http://www.osce.org/cio/documents/68972>. Ver especialmente los puntos 1, 3 y 9.



de origen divino o a una Ley Natural, cuyo origen último, se entiende, es Dios mismo ya que es el orden natural puesto por Él en el universo creado.⁶⁰

Los ilustrados hicieron correr como la pólvora la especie de que La influencia de las religiones en el mundo había causado un gran daño social, habían sido freno del progreso, bloqueado el avance de la ciencia, el desarrollo humano e intelectual. Estas ideas tuvieron su impacto en el plano de la praxis no en la Declaración de Independencia Americana (1776), cuya Constitución no podría interpretarse correctamente sin referencia a esta Ley Natural, superior a la voluntad de cualquier gobernante, sino que lo tuvieron en la Revolución Francesa (1789) y la posterior transformación social napoleónica que afectó no sólo a Francia sino a todo el continente europeo y de ahí a todo el mundo.

Como es bien sabido de aquel movimiento de la Ilustración surgieron dos corrientes distintas en sus planteamientos y conclusiones pero que comparten ese germen primigenio común inmanentista que señala que el dueño y señor de este mundo no es un Ser Supremo que se sitúa fuera del planeta Tierra sino que lo es el mismo ser humano; es el hombre el que acaba siendo encumbrado y puesto por encima de todo y trata de usurpar el trono de Dios. En efecto, esta idea triunfó en algunos países en el siglo XIX y tuvo su culminación en los diversos totalitarismos del siglo XX (nazismo, comunismo, fascismo), en los que el lugar de Dios lo ocupaba el Estado y era éste la última referencia válida para decir qué se debía o se podía hacer en la esfera pública (o incluso en la privada).⁶¹

Precisamente, la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia propone el principio de acción subsidiaria de la autoridad como límite al pretendido omnímodo poder del Estado. En una época en la que esta invención renacentista, instrumento que ha sido más o menos útil en el sistema westfaliano, ha adquirido dimensiones desproporcionadas a la vez que ha conseguido legitimarse, por más que aparezca como una mole inmensa inoperante en algunos casos, asfixiante en otros, que detrae capacidad económica a los privados; ante esta realidad, decimos, la Iglesia recuerda que debe guardarse un equilibrio entre el sujeto rector de la sociedad y el sujeto regido, de manera que cada uno cumpla su papel y no usurpe el del otro. En este caso concreto, se le pide al Estado que no suplante al sujeto regido en sus funciones ni le absorba ni le destruya⁶²; que no nos adocene y nos haga perezosos⁶³, esperándolo todo de las administraciones públicas, aunque sí debe ayudar a la sociedad civil a lograr los objetivos que le son propios⁶⁴.

El final de la Segunda Guerra Mundial (1939-45), la creación de las Naciones Unidas (1945) y la aprobación de la *Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos* (1948) trajeron de nuevo a la escena política la necesidad de hacer referencia a unos principios y unos valores previos a cualquier Estado, por encima de éste y, por lo tanto, fuera de su alcance, que no los

⁶⁰ Los pensadores ilustrados fueron, fundamentalmente, deístas, por lo que se opusieron a las religiones tradicionales institucionalizadas y preconizaron la denominada “religión natural”, como afirmó Voltarie en su *Diccionario filosófico*: “El deísmo es una religión difundida en todas las religiones [...] La religión revelada no es ni podía ser otra que la religión natural perfeccionada. De modo que el deísmo es el buen sentido que no está enterado aún de la revelación y las otras religiones son el buen sentido que pervirtió la superstición”. Rousseau propuso, además, la creación de una especie de “religión civil” en su *Contrato social*.

⁶¹ Recordamos aquí las encíclicas, especialmente las de Pío XI, que denunciaron el excesivo y creciente poder del Estado en su carrera por absolutizarse.

⁶² Ver Pío XI, *Quadragesimo anno*, 80. Ver también León XIII, *Rerum novarum*, 38. Ver Pío XII, *Summi pontificatus*, 47.

⁶³ Ver Juan Pablo II, *Centesimus annus*, 48.

⁶⁴ Benedicto XVI, *Deus caritas est*, 28.



podría manipular ni, por supuesto, anular. En definitiva, había que volver a hacer referencia a aquella Ley Natural que Cicerón describía como “no escrita sino ley innata”⁶⁵.

Los horrores totalitarios encontraron la oposición no sólo de demócratas convencidos sino, sobre todo, de personas con la conciencia bien arraigada de la necesidad de afirmar una realidad anterior a los dictámenes arbitrarios de cualquier gobernante, autoritario o democrático, tal como afirmó Albert Einstein en la revista *Time*: “Sólo la Iglesia se interpuso en el camino de la campaña de Hitler por suprimir la verdad”⁶⁶.

Este debate inmanentista, junto con la dinámica depredadora del Estado, que por su propia naturaleza trata de acaparar cada vez más poder y de ocupar cada vez más esferas, especialmente aquellas que le ofrezcan cierta resistencia, tuvo su traducción en otro debate en torno al papel de la religión en la arena pública, especialmente la política. No se trataba sólo de las relaciones Iglesia-Estado sino de si los creyentes podían hacer aportaciones a la sociedad desde sus creencias religiosas.⁶⁷

Este debate no está aún cerrado, ni mucho menos, sino que las posturas están cada vez más enfrentadas. De hecho, las distintas experiencias de siglo XX de ver cómo la religión se mezclaba con política anima a unos pero pone en contra a otros. No obstante, habría que enfriar el debate, desapasionarlo, ser un poco más objetivos y extraer de dichas experiencias los elementos positivos que pudieran servir para la construcción pacífica de la sociedad y eliminar aquellos elementos que la dificulten.

6. Panorama de la libertad religiosa en el mundo

Aparte de la Santa Sede, multitud de organismos internacionales⁶⁸ se dedican a vigilar el estado de salud de la libertad religiosa pues, como indicó el Papa Juan Pablo II en su encíclica *Centesimus annus*, “es un indicador para verificar el respeto de todos los demás derechos

⁶⁵ Ver su el *Discurso Pro Milone* de Cicerón, en defensa de Tito Annius Milo.

⁶⁶ “*Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth. I never had any special interest in the Church before, but now I feel a great affection and admiration because the Church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced thus to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly.* Ver “Religion: German Martyrs”, *Time magazine*, 23 de diciembre de 1940, en <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,765103,00.html>. Esta opinión contrasta con la predicción que hizo en 1934 en la Conferencia de la Asociación Americana para el Avance de la Ciencia, recogida en su artículo “Science and Religion” en el que afirma: “*To be sure, the doctrine of a personal God interfering with natural events could never be refuted, in the real sense, by science, for this doctrine can always take refuge in those domains in which scientific knowledge has not yet been able to set foot. But I am persuaded that such behavior on the part of the representatives of religion would not only be unworthy but also fatal. For a doctrine which is able to maintain itself not in clear light but only in the dark, will of necessity lose its effect on mankind, with incalculable harm to human progress.*”. Einstein, Albert: “Science and Religion”, *Science, Philosophy and Religion: A Symposium*, 1941, Nueva York, en http://www.update.uu.se/~fbendz/library/ae_scire.htm. Este párrafo ha sido manipulado en numerosas ocasiones, extrayéndolo de su contexto, para hacerle decir a Einstein que existe una oposición irreconciliable entre ciencia y fe. Sin embargo, si se lee todo el párrafo, y, sobre todo, el artículo completo, se verá que el sentido de sus palabras es que ciencia y fe tienen parcelas distintas y que la una debe dejar actuar a la otra y, así, no intentar buscar explicaciones religiosas a hechos físicos naturales, como el origen de la lluvia o de un terremoto.

⁶⁷ Ver los artículos de la revista *Debate Actual*, nº 1, noviembre de 2006, titulada “Religión y vida pública: La actualidad de un debate”, con las contribuciones de Richard John Neuhaus, Janne Haaland-Matlary, George Weigel, Roberto Formigioni y Dalmacio Negro.

⁶⁸ Podemos citar, entre otros a la ONU, a la ODIHR de la OSCE, *Human Rights Watch*, *Freedom House*, *Forum 18*, Ayuda a la Iglesia Necesitada o incluso el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos de América.



humanos”, como recuerda Benedicto XVI. Así, la libertad religiosa debe interesar no sólo a los creyentes sino a todo ciudadano. No se trata de una cuestión de mera solidaridad, como la que podría deducirse de aquel fragmento del famoso sermón de Semana Santa del año 1946 del pastor protestante Martin Niemöller “Cuando los nazis vinieron a llevarse a los comunistas, guardé silencio, porque yo no era comunista,...”⁶⁹. Antes bien, interesa a todos pues es “un elemento imprescindible de un Estado de derecho; no se puede negar sin dañar al mismo tiempo los demás derechos y libertades fundamentales, pues es su síntesis y su cumbre”⁷⁰.

En honor a la verdad, hemos de decir que la libertad religiosa es, como norma general, respetada. Sin embargo, las ocasiones en que resulta ser violada son llamativas, por lo que sobresalen más que la rutina cotidiana, que *per se* no es noticia. Precisamente, aparte de las continuas ofensas a la religión que se pueden observar en algunos medios de comunicación, los principales obstáculos provienen de actitudes sectarias impuestas por algunas autoridades que dificultan el ejercicio expedito de dicho derecho. Entre otras acciones, destacan la obligación que tienen las asociaciones religiosas de inscribirse en un registro (algo rechazado de plano por la jurisprudencia nacional e internacional), la prohibición de construir lugares de culto o de celebrar actos religiosos, la imposición de tasas o tributos especiales.

La peor parte se la llevan los cristianos, especialmente aquellos que viven en tierras acosadas por los islamistas: Filipinas, Nigeria, India, Irak y Egipto. En cada uno de esos lugares, los cristianos son discriminados socialmente y en el último año han llegado incluso a atentar contra sus propiedades o incluso contra sus vidas, como hemos afirmado anteriormente. A estos habría que añadirles los heridos y también los desplazados o refugiados por dicha causa.

El papa muestra su dolor en el *Mensaje* por estas tierras⁷¹, pero también por Europa: “Expreso también mi deseo de que en Occidente, especialmente en Europa, cesen la hostilidad y los prejuicios contra los cristianos, por el simple hecho de que intentan orientar su vida en coherencia con los valores y principios contenidos en el Evangelio”⁷². Su preocupación por la situación de los cristianos en el Viejo Continente⁷³ hace que se susciten una serie de preguntas, cuando menos, inquietantes. En esta región, el caso de España pesa gravemente en la mente y el corazón del Sumo Pontífice. Así lo expresó antes de aterrizar en Santiago de Compostela en noviembre de 2010:

España era siempre, por una parte, un país originario de la fe [...] Pero también es verdad que en España ha nacido una laicidad, un anticlericalismo, un secularismo fuerte y agresivo como lo vimos precisamente en los años treinta, y esta disputa, más

⁶⁹ Ver Lawson, Tom (2006): *The Church of England and the Holocaust: Christianity, Memory and Nazism*. Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, p. 32.

⁷⁰ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 5.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, nn. 1 y 14.

⁷² *Ibidem*, n. 14.

⁷³ De cómo Occidente entiende como problemática su relación con el cristianismo dan cuenta varias obras. Citemos algunas: Wilhelmsen, Federico C. (1964): *El problema de Occidente y los cristianos*. Sevilla, Publicaciones de la Delegación Nacional del Requeté. Negro, Dalmacio (2006): *Lo que Europa debe al cristianismo*. Madrid, Unión Editorial. Woods, Thomas E. (2007): *Cómo la Iglesia construyó la civilización occidental*. Madrid, Ciudadela.



aún, este enfrentamiento entre fe y modernidad, ambos muy vivaces, se realiza hoy nuevamente en España.⁷⁴

Esa referencia a la situación de la Iglesia en España en los años 30 parecería exagerada ya que fueron años en los que se quemaban iglesias y conventos y se mataba a curas, monjas y laicos por odio contra su fe⁷⁵. Pero, recordémoslo, el papa no está sujeto ni a la cortedad de miras de lo que sucede en un solo país sino que desde su atalaya vaticana contempla el mundo entero; tampoco está ceñido por el programa de un partido político, por lo que sus palabras no buscan un impacto mediático inmediato y perecedero sino que simplemente buscan exponer la verdad tal cual se contempla desde ese lugar privilegiado que le hace tener acceso a una inmensa cantidad de información. Por lo tanto, cuando el Santo Padre expresa su preocupación que están tomando los acontecimientos en España, no es cosa de tomárselo a risa sino que es momento de reflexionar. En efecto, en nuestro país no se queman establecimientos religiosos, pero se vitupera a la Iglesia Católica desde las instancias más altas y se le señala como elemento retrógrado y reaccionario, opuesto al progreso social⁷⁶. Además, la visita del papa coincidió con la prohibición gubernamental de celebrar Misa en una basílica pontificia, la del Valle de los Caídos⁷⁷, mientras se dedicaba otra, la de la Sagrada Familia en Barcelona. Aunque aún no se han quemado masivamente templos, sí ha habido intentos, como en Majadahonda (Madrid)⁷⁸. Quizás no estemos aún en esos hipotéticos “años 30”, pero, según la visión del Pontífice, nos vamos acercando a ellos. Y ante las pruebas expuestas parece que razón no le falta, salvo que se ponga remedio a través del diálogo, como subrayaba el mismo Benedicto XVI: “para el futuro de la fe y del encuentro —no desencuentro, sino encuentro— entre fe y laicidad, tiene un foco central también en la cultura española. En este sentido, he pensado en todos los grandes países de Occidente, pero sobre todo también en España”⁷⁹.

7. Las amenazas a la libertad religiosa

En su *Mensaje*, el papa prosigue aludiendo a las dos principales amenazas de fondo para la libertad religiosa. No se centra en este momento en las manifestaciones de violación de la

⁷⁴ Ver *Entrevista concedida por el Santo Padre Benedicto XVI a los periodistas durante el vuelo hacia España, 6 de noviembre de 2010*, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

⁷⁵ Recordemos, no obstante, que la quema de conventos ha tenido lugar en varias ocasiones en España durante los siglos XIX y XX. Citemos sólo las fechas más importantes: durante la Guerra de Independencia (1808-14), por causa de las remodelaciones arquitectónicas de José I, durante la Primera Guerra Carlista (1835), precedida de una matanza de frailes en Madrid (1834), en 1902, durante la Semana Trágica (1909), tras la pacífica proclamación de la Segunda República (mayo de 1931), con ocasión de la Revolución de Asturias (octubre de 1934) y en los meses previos a la Guerra Civil, desde las elecciones de febrero de 1936, y durante los primeros meses de la contienda fratricida.

⁷⁶ En torno al hostigamiento a la religión cristiana y su expulsión de la esfera pública, ver, entre otros: Otxotorena, Juan M. (2005): *Permiso para creer: La ofensiva laicista y el futuro de la religión*. Madrid, Ediciones Internacionales Universitarias. Weigel, George (2005): *Política sin Dios: Europa y América, el cubo y la catedral*. Madrid, Cristiandad. Mardones, José María (1993): *Fe y política: El compromiso político de los cristianos en tiempos de desencanto*. Santander, Sal Terrae.

⁷⁷ Este ha sido un episodio bochornoso en el que el propio Gobierno ha tenido que dar marcha atrás ante las protestas civiles. Se llegó a impedir el paso a los feligreses que iban a celebrar la Misa dominical “por motivos de seguridad” y a dejar vía libre a turistas chinos y franceses que iban a visitar ese mismo día la basílica.

⁷⁸ Ver “Queman la puerta de la iglesia de Santa Catalina de Majadahonda”, *La Gaceta*, 26 de diciembre de 2010, en <http://www.intereconomia.com>.

⁷⁹ Ver *Entrevista concedida por el Santo Padre... op. cit.*



libertad religiosa sino que va a la raíz última de dichos atropellos y señala dos: el fundamentalismo laicista y el religioso.

Al respecto, hace referencia en este *Mensaje* a que cabe la posibilidad de que esta libertad religiosa pueda ser manipulada o instrumentalizada para fines espurios, distintos a los que hemos expuesto anteriormente: “El fanatismo, el fundamentalismo, las prácticas contrarias a la dignidad humana, nunca se pueden justificar y mucho menos si se realizan en nombre de la religión”⁸⁰. Y de nuevo propone la vía de la libertad religiosa como la garantía más eficaz para frenar el avance de este tipo de comportamientos.

Benedicto XVI ha tratado en otras ocasiones el tema de los fanatismos. Lo primero que debe subrayarse en este sentido es que iguala el fanatismo de origen religioso con el anti-religioso y afirma que ambos son igualmente perjudiciales para el desarrollo social⁸¹. Para quienes afirman que la religión en sí es la causante de todos los males porque excluye el uso de la razón, el papa tiene una palabra de clarificación: no es la religión sino, precisamente todo lo contrario, la utilización interesada de la misma la que expulsa a la razón. Es este uno de los temas clave de todo el pontificado del presente obispo de Roma: la racionalidad de la fe⁸², que aparece en su famoso *Discurso de Ratisbona* y como uno de los temas centrales de su encíclica *Caritas in veritate*. Según el papa, ambas deben usarse conjuntamente para acceder a la verdad, no a la mera opinión sino a la verdad.

De hecho, el papa señala que los dos enemigos principales de la libertad religiosa, son en realidad fenómenos gemelos:

No se ha de olvidar que el fundamentalismo religioso y el laicismo son formas especulares y extremas de rechazo del legítimo pluralismo y del principio de laicidad. En efecto, ambos absolutizan una visión reductiva y parcial de la persona humana, favoreciendo, en el primer caso, formas de integrista religioso y, en el segundo, de racionalismo.⁸³

De nuevo, se vuelve a poner de relieve aquel concepto utilizado por Sarkozy de la “laicidad positiva”, o en palabras de Benedicto XVI, “sana laicidad”, que es fundamental no sólo para reconocer el justo papel que desempeña la religión en las distintas sociedades sino para construir una auténtica familia humana. El hecho de calificarlas de “formas especulares” no es novedoso pero sí relevante. Este tema ya lo había tratado en su encíclica *Caritas in veritate* y ahora lo retoma con más fuerza, dado que este es un texto que, debido a su breve extensión, puede alcanzar mayor difusión. En efecto, el laicismo, que es agresivo por su propia naturaleza y del que ya hemos dado cuenta anteriormente, niega el derecho inalienable del ser humano de ordenar su vida y la sociedad en la que se inserta según Dios. Y es precisamente en ese punto, en el de no dejar libertad a los hombres para entender su vida y la sociedad según su confesión religiosa les hace entender, donde fanatismo religioso y laicismo se encuentran y se funden en un solo fenómeno: el odio religioso.

⁸⁰ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 7.

⁸¹ Otros autores también han defendido esta misma tesis. Ver, por ejemplo, Otero Novas, José Manuel (2001): *Fundamentalismos enmascarados: Los extremismos de hoy*. Madrid, Ariel.

⁸² Esto ya ha sido expuesto en otros artículos, como en Corral Salvador, Carlos: “El discurso de Benedicto XVI en la Universidad de Ratisbona y las reacciones provocadas”, *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, nº 12, octubre de 2006, en <http://www.ucm.es/info/unisci>, pp. 11ss.

⁸³ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 8.



Si miramos ejemplos históricos que puedan ilustrar ambas actitudes, pronto encontraremos candidatos a este particular museo de los horrores. Por la parte del integrismo encontraremos el régimen de los talibanes, el mal uso que se hizo de la Inquisición, el actual régimen de Arabia Saudí —que impide cualquier celebración religiosa que no sea musulmana— o el régimen de los ayatolás, entre otros. Por la parte del laicismo, de la expulsión de Dios de la esfera pública, tenemos a todos los totalitarismos (el nazi y el soviético, principalmente), la China de Mao y sus sucesores y todas las dictaduras comunistas (Corea del Norte, Vietnam, Cuba,...).

Parece evidente el peligro que supone el integrismo de raíz religiosa para la sociedad, pues estamos acostumbrándonos a ver cada día en las noticias ataques contra las comunidades religiosas en India, Pakistán, Afganistán o Irak, entre otros; no sólo de musulmanes contra judíos, sino de fanáticos religiosos contra suníes, chiíes, judíos, hindúes y, por supuesto, cristianos. Pero no parece tan obvia la injusticia que supone anular la dimensión religiosa en la vida pública, pues se hace en nombre de la sacralizada razón (o incluso de la ciencia), convirtiéndose esta excusa en una especie de mantra omnipresente capaz de justificar las situaciones más variopintas. Parece que cualquier aportación que no venga de la racionalidad humana sobra en este tipo de sociedades que, defendiendo la primacía de la razón caen en un excesivo racionalismo que considera a la persona como mera materia o máquina, anulando el valor integral de la persona, llegando a cosificarla y tratarla como mercancía; y, al final de dicho proceso, se acaba afirmando el relativismo como máximo dogma indiscutible y negando la propia razón que se defendía a capa y espada frente a la religión⁸⁴. La solución, como afirma el papa, pasa por que fe y razón se purifiquen mutuamente, se complementen, para no caer en los extremos que hemos señalado anteriormente⁸⁵.

El por qué de esas afirmaciones lo explica el papa cuando dice que al impedir que las verdades de la fe inspiren la vida pública se impide el encuentro entre las personas y que la política se arrastra a ras de suelo y se convierte en un mero instrumento del poder, como defendía la Escuela de Frankfurt —entre ellos, Adorno y Marcuse—, respetando los Derechos Humanos sólo en tanto en cuanto no cause algún trastorno o perjuicio al gobernante de turno, de manera que “La vida pública se empobrece de motivaciones y la política adquiere un aspecto opresor y agresivo”⁸⁶.

8. El diálogo como vía de solución

Además de la amplia libertad religiosa, que debe garantizar el Estado, las religiones también tienen un papel positivo en la construcción de un mundo más justo, pacífico y estable a través del ejercicio del diálogo. No se trataría de una especie de mercadeo por el cual las distintas religiones irían perdiendo su especificidad y su propia idiosincrasia, sino que consistiría en que cada una aportara desde su originalidad aquello que ayuda a la consecución del bien común, que es lo que permite el desarrollo integral del hombre y de las sociedades.

Mientras la iniciativa de la Alianza de Civilizaciones pretende crear una nueva religión única mundial, quitándole el nombre a los distintos dioses y rindiéndole culto a la Madre Tierra⁸⁷, el diálogo interreligioso pretende buscar aquellos elementos comunes, aquellos

⁸⁴ Benedicto XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 78.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, nº 56.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁷ La ONU celebra el Día Internacional de la Madre Tierra el 22 de abril; ver



puntos de encuentro, que permitan un entendimiento para la convivencia pacífica. Nos atenemos aquí, por tanto, a los criterios ya expuestos por Pablo VI para el ejercicio del diálogo, especialmente en la encíclica *Ecclesiam suam*, según la cual el diálogo debe ser respetuoso y coherente y leal y realista.

No se trata de una especie de relativismo o de construir un sincretismo religioso⁸⁸. La Iglesia está convencida de que la única salvación proviene de Jesucristo⁸⁹, lo que no le resta capacidad para encontrar puntos comunes de entendimiento y colaboración⁹⁰. De lo contrario, sería imposible la convivencia pacífica en sociedades plurales como las de Europa o como la de Kazajistán.

A raíz de esto se entienden las iniciativas puestas en marcha por el Vaticano para el diálogo con las demás iglesias cristianas, con los judíos y con los musulmanes, además de la oración por la paz que se hace junto con otras religiones. Algunos de esos elementos comunes son el reconocimiento de un Dios creador de todo lo existente, el culto que se le debe rendir, el ejercicio del respeto a la dignidad del ser humano y el alto valor de la vida humana, y otros muchos aspectos de la vida social.

Al concluir el *Mensaje*⁹¹ plantea varias cuestiones. Primera, que la paz es un don de Dios que, en su insondable misterio, debemos esperar de Él. Esto, no obstante, no puede ser excusa para caer en la inactividad, sino que, siguiendo el viejo adagio de la vida espiritual, tenemos que empeñarnos en nuestra tarea como si todo dependiera de nosotros sabiendo que en el fondo todo depende de Dios.

Segunda, el papa emite un anuncio profético: la paz no se llegará a realizar nunca en esta tierra. No es que sea pesimista; es realista. En efecto, por mucho que nos esforcemos, por muchas iniciativas buenas que pongamos en marcha, la paz nunca llegará plenamente; nos tendremos que conformar con situaciones que se acercan a ese ideal y que permita un cierto desarrollo humano. Pero la paz total, como la seguridad total, es una quimera, una utopía, un don que sólo se dará en el Reino de los Cielos. La construcción de la ciudad terrena de la que hablaba san Agustín en su *Ciudad de Dios* conlleva este pequeño déficit. La herida del pecado original hace que nos sea más fácil inclinarnos hacia el mal que hacia el bien, por mucho que racionalmente estemos buscando las cosas buenas. Así lo expresaba san Pablo: “En efecto, el

<http://www.un.org/es/events/motherearthday>. Sobre el culto a la Madre Tierra, en sus distintas advocaciones, como Gaia o la Pachamama andina, ver Boff, Leonardo: “Teología bajo el signo de la transformación”, en Susin, Luiz Carlos (ed) (2001): *El mar se abrió: Treinta años de Teología en América Latina*. Santander, Sal Terrae. En el trasfondo hay una defensa del culto a la deidad femenina por excelencia y todo un discurso que defiende que las religiones patriarcales (y monoteístas) son violentas y las femeninas son pacifistas y buenas. Aquí confluyen los movimientos *New Age* y algunos grupos feministas radicales y los defensores de la “ideología de género”. Ver Blavatsky, Helena P. (2005): *La doctrina secreta*. Buenos Aires, Ed. Kier. Ver también Fernández Liria, Carlos; Fernández Liria, Pedro y Alegre Zahonero, Luis (2007): *Educación para la ciudadanía: Democracia, Capitalismo y Estado de Derecho*. 2ª ed. Madrid, Akal. Sobre la ideología de género, ver Trillo Figueroa, Jesús (2009): *La ideología de género*. Madrid, Libros libres. Libro de referencia en torno a la cuestión de la deconstrucción de la autoridad y del papel de la religión en la sociedad fue *El libro rojo del cole*, que es anónimo y fue editado por primera vez por Nuestra Cultura a finales de 1979.

⁸⁸ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 11.

⁸⁹ Ver la presentación que hizo el entonces Cardenal Joseph Ratzinger, entonces Prefecto para la Congregación de la Doctrina de la Fe, de la Declaración *Dominus Iesus sobre la unicidad y la universalidad salvífica de Jesucristo y de la Iglesia*, 6 de agosto de 2000, en <http://www.vatican.va>.

⁹⁰ Ver “El pensamiento del Papa Benedicto XVI, según el cardenal Ratzinger”, *Zenit*, 19 de abril de 2005, en <http://www.fluivium.org>.

⁹¹ Ver Benedicto XVI: *Mensaje...*, *op. cit.*, n. 15.



deseo de hacer el bien está a mi alcance, pero no el realizarlo. Y así, no hago el bien que quiero, sino el mal que no quiero” (Rm 7, 18-19).

Por último, vincula la paz con el desarrollo humano del que ya hemos hablado en otras ocasiones, que debe ser integral, abarcando a todos los hombres y cubriendo todos los aspectos del ser humano, no sólo el material. De lo contrario, no habrá garantías de que se respete la dignidad de la persona, lo que, precisamente, hace que se tambalee el fundamento último de la construcción estatal ya que si la autoridad no está para ponerse al servicio de la ciudadanía, si no nos garantiza los derechos mínimos esenciales, si no es capaz de dotarnos de seguridad, ¿para qué sirve?⁹²

Anexo

MENSAJE DE SU SANTIDAD BENEDICTO XVI PARA LA CELEBRACIÓN DE LA XLIV JORNADA MUNDIAL DE LA PAZ, 1 DE ENERO DE 2011

LA LIBERTAD RELIGIOSA, CAMINO PARA LA PAZ

1. Al comienzo de un nuevo año deseo hacer llegar a todos mi felicitación; es un deseo de serenidad y de prosperidad, pero sobre todo de paz. El año que termina también ha estado marcado lamentablemente por persecuciones, discriminaciones, por terribles actos de violencia y de intolerancia religiosa.

Pienso de modo particular en la querida tierra de Irak, que en su camino hacia la deseada estabilidad y reconciliación sigue siendo escenario de violencias y atentados. Vienen a la memoria los recientes sufrimientos de la comunidad cristiana, y de modo especial el vil ataque contra la catedral sirio-católica Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro, de Bagdad, en la que el 31 de octubre pasado fueron asesinados dos sacerdotes y más de cincuenta fieles, mientras estaban reunidos para la celebración de la Santa Misa. En los días siguientes se han sucedido otros ataques, también a casas privadas, provocando miedo en la comunidad cristiana y el deseo en muchos de sus miembros de emigrar para encontrar mejores condiciones de vida. Deseo manifestarles mi cercanía, así como la de toda la Iglesia, y que se ha expresado de una manera concreta en la reciente Asamblea Especial para Medio Oriente del Sínodo de los Obispos. Ésta ha dirigido una palabra de aliento a las comunidades católicas en Irak y en Medio Oriente para vivir la comunión y seguir dando en aquellas tierras un testimonio valiente de fe.

Agradezco vivamente a los Gobiernos que se esfuerzan por aliviar los sufrimientos de estos hermanos en humanidad, e invito a los Católicos a rezar por sus hermanos en la fe, que sufren violencias e intolerancias, y a ser solidarios con ellos. En este contexto, siento muy viva la necesidad de compartir con vosotros algunas reflexiones sobre la libertad religiosa, camino para la paz. En efecto, se puede constatar con dolor que en algunas regiones del mundo la profesión y expresión de la propia religión comporta un riesgo para la vida y la libertad personal. En otras regiones, se dan formas más silenciosas y sofisticadas de prejuicio y de oposición hacia los creyentes y los símbolos religiosos. Los cristianos son actualmente el grupo religioso que sufre el mayor número de persecuciones a causa de su fe. Muchos sufren cada día ofensas y viven frecuentemente con miedo por su búsqueda de la verdad, su fe en

⁹² Ver Juan Pablo II, *Centesimus annus*, 29.



Jesucristo y por su sincero llamamiento a que se reconozca la libertad religiosa. Todo esto no se puede aceptar, porque constituye una ofensa a Dios y a la dignidad humana; además es una amenaza a la seguridad y a la paz, e impide la realización de un auténtico desarrollo humano integral.⁹³

En efecto, en la libertad religiosa se expresa la especificidad de la persona humana, por la que puede ordenar la propia vida personal y social a Dios, a cuya luz se comprende plenamente la identidad, el sentido y el fin de la persona. Negar o limitar de manera arbitraria esa libertad, significa cultivar una visión reductiva de la persona humana, oscurecer el papel público de la religión; significa generar una sociedad injusta, que no se ajusta a la verdadera naturaleza de la persona humana; *significa hacer imposible la afirmación de una paz auténtica y estable para toda la familia humana.*

Por tanto, exhorto a los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad a renovar su compromiso por la construcción de un mundo en el que todos puedan profesar libremente su religión o su fe, y vivir su amor a Dios con todo el corazón, con toda el alma y con toda la mente (cf. Mt 22, 37). Éste es el sentimiento que inspira y guía el *Mensaje para la XLIV Jornada Mundial de la Paz*, dedicado al tema: *La libertad religiosa, camino para la paz.*

Derecho sagrado a la vida y a una vida espiritual

2. *El derecho a la libertad religiosa se funda en la misma dignidad de la persona humana,*⁹⁴ cuya naturaleza trascendente no se puede ignorar o descuidar. Dios creó al hombre y a la mujer a su imagen y semejanza (cf. Gn 1, 27). Por eso, toda persona es titular del *derecho sagrado* a una vida íntegra, también desde el punto de vista espiritual. Si no se reconoce su propio ser espiritual, sin la apertura a la trascendencia, la persona humana se repliega sobre sí misma, no logra encontrar respuestas a los interrogantes de su corazón sobre el sentido de la vida, ni conquistar valores y principios éticos duraderos, y tampoco consigue siquiera experimentar una auténtica libertad y desarrollar una sociedad justa.⁹⁵

La Sagrada Escritura, en sintonía con nuestra propia experiencia, revela el valor profundo de la dignidad humana: “Cuando contemplo el cielo, obra de tus dedos, la luna y las estrellas que has creado, ¿qué es el hombre, para que te acuerdes de él, el ser humano, para darle poder? Lo hiciste poco inferior a los ángeles, lo coronaste de gloria y dignidad, le diste el mando sobre las obras de tus manos, todo lo sometiste bajo sus pies” (*Sal 8, 4-7*).

Ante la sublime realidad de la naturaleza humana, podemos experimentar el mismo asombro del salmista. Ella se manifiesta como apertura al Misterio, como capacidad de interrogarse en profundidad sobre sí mismo y sobre el origen del universo, como íntima resonancia del Amor supremo de Dios, principio y fin de todas las cosas, de cada persona y de los pueblos.⁹⁶ La dignidad trascendente de la persona es un valor esencial de la sabiduría judeo-cristiana, pero, gracias a la razón, puede ser reconocida por todos. Esta dignidad, entendida como capacidad de trascender la propia materialidad y buscar la verdad, ha de ser reconocida como un *bien* universal, indispensable para la construcción de una sociedad orientada a la realización y plenitud del hombre. El respeto de los elementos esenciales de la

⁹³ Cf. Carta Enc. *Caritas in veritate*, 29.55-57.

⁹⁴ Cf. Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decl. *Dignitatis humanae*, sobre la libertad religiosa, 2.

⁹⁵ Cf. Carta enc. *Caritas in veritate*, 78.

⁹⁶ Cf. Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decl. *Nostra aetate*, sobre las relaciones de la Iglesia con las religiones no cristianas, 1.



dignidad del hombre, como el derecho a la vida y a la libertad religiosa, es una condición para la legitimidad moral de toda norma social y jurídica.

Libertad religiosa y respeto recíproco

3. *La libertad religiosa está en el origen de la libertad moral.* En efecto, la apertura a la verdad y al bien, la apertura a Dios, enraizada en la naturaleza humana, confiere a cada hombre plena dignidad, y es garantía del respeto pleno y recíproco entre las personas. Por tanto, la libertad religiosa se ha de entender no sólo como ausencia de coacción, sino antes aún como capacidad de ordenar las propias opciones según la verdad.

Entre libertad y respeto hay un vínculo inseparable; en efecto, «al ejercer sus derechos, los individuos y grupos sociales están obligados por la ley moral a tener en cuenta los derechos de los demás y sus deberes con relación a los otros y al bien común de todos».⁹⁷

Una *libertad enemiga o indiferente* con respecto a Dios termina por negarse a sí misma y no garantiza el pleno respeto del otro. Una voluntad que se cree radicalmente incapaz de buscar la verdad y el bien no tiene razones objetivas y motivos para obrar, sino aquellos que provienen de sus intereses momentáneos y pasajeros; no tiene una “identidad” que custodiar y construir a través de las opciones verdaderamente libres y conscientes. No puede, pues, reclamar el respeto por parte de otras “voluntades”, que también están desconectadas de su ser más profundo, y que pueden hacer prevalecer otras “razones” o incluso ninguna “razón”. La ilusión de encontrar en el relativismo moral la clave para una pacífica convivencia, es en realidad el origen de la división y negación de la dignidad de los seres humanos. Se comprende entonces la necesidad de reconocer una doble dimensión en la unidad de la persona humana: la *religiosa* y la *social*. A este respecto, es inconcebible que los creyentes “tengan que suprimir una parte de sí mismos –su fe– para ser ciudadanos activos. Nunca debería ser necesario renegar de Dios para poder gozar de los propios derechos”.⁹⁸

La familia, escuela de libertad y de paz

4. Si la libertad religiosa es camino para la paz, la *educación religiosa* es una vía privilegiada que capacita a las nuevas generaciones para reconocer en el otro a su propio hermano o hermana, con quienes camina y colabora para que todos se sientan miembros vivos de la misma familia humana, de la que ninguno debe ser excluido.

La familia fundada sobre el matrimonio, expresión de la unión íntima y de la complementariedad entre un hombre y una mujer, se inserta en este contexto como la primera escuela de formación y crecimiento social, cultural, moral y espiritual de los hijos, que deberían ver siempre en el padre y la madre el primer testimonio de una vida orientada a la búsqueda de la verdad y al amor de Dios. Los mismos padres deberían tener la libertad de poder transmitir a los hijos, sin constricciones y con responsabilidad, su propio patrimonio de fe, valores y cultura. La familia, primera célula de la sociedad humana, sigue siendo el ámbito primordial de formación para unas relaciones armoniosas en todos los ámbitos de la convivencia humana, nacional e internacional. Éste es el camino que se ha de recorrer con sabiduría para construir un tejido social sólido y solidario, y preparar a los jóvenes para que, con un espíritu de comprensión y de paz, asuman su propia responsabilidad en la vida, en una sociedad libre.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Decl. *Dignitatis humanae*, sobre la libertad religiosa, 7.

⁹⁸ *Discurso a la Asamblea General de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas* (18 abril 2008); AAS 100 (2008), 337.



Un patrimonio común

5. Se puede decir que, *entre los derechos y libertades fundamentales enraizados en la dignidad de la persona, la libertad religiosa goza de un estatuto especial*. Cuando se reconoce la libertad religiosa, la dignidad de la persona humana se respeta en su raíz, y se refuerzan el *ethos* y las instituciones de los pueblos. Y viceversa, cuando se niega la libertad religiosa, cuando se intenta impedir la profesión de la propia religión o fe y vivir conforme a ellas, se ofende la dignidad humana, a la vez que se amenaza la justicia y la paz, que se fundan en el recto orden social construido a la luz de la Suma Verdad y Sumo Bien.

La libertad religiosa significa también, en este sentido, una conquista de progreso político y jurídico. Es un bien esencial: toda persona ha de poder ejercer libremente el derecho a profesar y manifestar, individualmente o comunitariamente, la propia religión o fe, tanto en público como en privado, por la enseñanza, la práctica, las publicaciones, el culto o la observancia de los ritos. No debería haber obstáculos si quisiera adherirse eventualmente a otra religión, o no profesar ninguna. En este ámbito, el ordenamiento internacional resulta emblemático y es una referencia esencial para los Estados, ya que no consiente ninguna derogación de la libertad religiosa, salvo la legítima exigencia del justo orden público.⁹⁹ El ordenamiento internacional, por tanto, reconoce a los derechos de naturaleza religiosa el mismo *status* que el derecho a la vida y a la libertad personal, como prueba de su pertenencia al *núcleo esencial* de los derechos del hombre, de los derechos universales y naturales que la ley humana jamás puede negar.

La libertad religiosa no es patrimonio exclusivo de los creyentes, sino de toda la familia de los pueblos de la tierra. Es un elemento imprescindible de un Estado de derecho; no se puede negar sin dañar al mismo tiempo los demás derechos y libertades fundamentales, pues es su síntesis y su cumbre. Es un “indicador para verificar el respeto de todos los demás derechos humanos”.¹⁰⁰ Al mismo tiempo que favorece el ejercicio de las facultades humanas más específicas, crea las condiciones necesarias para la realización de un *desarrollo integral*, que concierne de manera unitaria a la totalidad de la persona en todas sus dimensiones.¹⁰¹

La dimensión pública de la religión

6. *La libertad religiosa, como toda libertad, aunque proviene de la esfera personal, se realiza en la relación con los demás. Una libertad sin relación no es una libertad completa*. La libertad religiosa no se agota en la simple dimensión individual, sino que se realiza en la propia comunidad y en la sociedad, en coherencia con el ser relacional de la persona y la naturaleza pública de la religión.

La *relacionalidad* es un componente decisivo de la libertad religiosa, que impulsa a las comunidades de los creyentes a practicar la solidaridad con vistas al bien común. En esta dimensión comunitaria cada persona sigue siendo única e irrepetible y, al mismo tiempo, se completa y realiza plenamente.

Es innegable la aportación que las comunidades religiosas dan a la sociedad. Son muchas las instituciones caritativas y culturales que dan testimonio del papel constructivo de los creyentes en la vida social. Más importante aún es la contribución ética de la religión en el

⁹⁹ Cf. Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decl. *Dignitatis humanae*, sobre la libertad religiosa, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Juan Pablo II, *Discurso a la Asamblea de la Organización para la seguridad y la cooperación en Europa (OSCE)*, (10 octubre 2003), 1: AAS 96 (2004), 111.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Carta Enc. *Caritas in veritate*, 11.



ámbito político. No se la debería marginar o prohibir, sino considerarla como una aportación válida para la promoción del bien común. En esta perspectiva, hay que mencionar la dimensión religiosa de la cultura, que a lo largo de los siglos se ha forjado gracias a la contribución social y, sobre todo, ética de la religión. Esa dimensión no constituye de ninguna manera una discriminación para los que no participan de la creencia, sino que más bien refuerza la cohesión social, la integración y la solidaridad.

La libertad religiosa, fuerza de libertad y de civilización: los peligros de su instrumentalización

7. *La instrumentalización de la libertad religiosa para enmascarar intereses ocultos, como por ejemplo la subversión del orden constituido, la acumulación de recursos o la retención del poder por parte de un grupo, puede provocar daños enormes a la sociedad.* El fanatismo, el fundamentalismo, las prácticas contrarias a la dignidad humana, nunca se pueden justificar y mucho menos si se realizan en nombre de la religión. La profesión de una religión no se puede instrumentalizar ni imponer por la fuerza. Es necesario, entonces, que los Estados y las diferentes comunidades humanas no olviden nunca que *la libertad religiosa es condición para la búsqueda de la verdad y que la verdad no se impone con la violencia sino por “la fuerza de la misma verdad”*.¹⁰² En este sentido, la religión es una fuerza *positiva* y *promotora* de la construcción de la sociedad civil y política.

¿Cómo negar la aportación de las grandes religiones del mundo al desarrollo de la civilización? La búsqueda sincera de Dios ha llevado a un mayor respeto de la dignidad del hombre. Las comunidades cristianas, con su patrimonio de valores y principios, han contribuido mucho a que las personas y los pueblos hayan tomado conciencia de su propia identidad y dignidad, así como a la conquista de instituciones democráticas y a la afirmación de los derechos del hombre con sus respectivas obligaciones.

También hoy, en una sociedad cada vez más globalizada, los cristianos están llamados a dar su aportación preciosa al fatigoso y apasionante compromiso por la justicia, al desarrollo humano integral y a la recta ordenación de las realidades humanas, no sólo con un compromiso civil, económico y político responsable, sino también con el testimonio de su propia fe y caridad. La exclusión de la religión de la vida pública, priva a ésta de un espacio vital que abre a la trascendencia. Sin esta experiencia primaria resulta difícil orientar la sociedad hacia principios éticos universales, así como al establecimiento de ordenamientos nacionales e internacionales en que los derechos y libertades fundamentales puedan ser reconocidos y realizados plenamente, conforme a lo propuesto en los objetivos de la *Declaración Universal de los derechos del hombre* de 1948, aún hoy por desgracia incumplidos o negados.

Una cuestión de justicia y de civilización: el fundamentalismo y la hostilidad contra los creyentes comprometen la laicidad positiva de los Estados

8. La misma determinación con la que se condenan todas las formas de fanatismo y fundamentalismo religioso ha de animar la oposición a todas las formas de hostilidad contra la religión, que limitan el papel público de los creyentes en la vida civil y política.

No se ha de olvidar que *el fundamentalismo religioso y el laicismo son formas especulares y extremas de rechazo del legítimo pluralismo y del principio de laicidad.* En

¹⁰² Cf. Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decl. *Dignitatis humanae*, sobre la libertad religiosa, 1.



efecto, ambos absolutizan una visión reductiva y parcial de la persona humana, favoreciendo, en el primer caso, formas de integrismo religioso y, en el segundo, de racionalismo. *La sociedad que quiere imponer o, al contrario, negar la religión con la violencia, es injusta con la persona y con Dios, pero también consigo misma. Dios llama a sí a la humanidad con un designio de amor que, implicando a toda la persona en su dimensión natural y espiritual, reclama una correspondencia en términos de libertad y responsabilidad, con todo el corazón y el propio ser, individual y comunitario.* Por tanto, también la sociedad, en cuanto expresión de la persona y del conjunto de sus dimensiones constitutivas, debe vivir y organizarse de tal manera que favorezca la apertura a la trascendencia. Por eso, las leyes y las instituciones de una sociedad no se pueden configurar ignorando la dimensión religiosa de los ciudadanos, o de manera que prescindan totalmente de ella. A través de la acción democrática de ciudadanos conscientes de su alta vocación, se han de conmensurar con el ser de la persona, para poder secundarlo en su dimensión religiosa. Al no ser ésta una creación del Estado, no puede ser manipulada, sino que más bien debe reconocerla y respetarla.

El ordenamiento jurídico en todos los niveles, nacional e internacional, cuando consiente o tolera el fanatismo religioso o antirreligioso, no cumple con su misión, que consiste en la tutela y promoción de la justicia y el derecho de cada uno. Éstas últimas no pueden quedar al arbitrio del legislador o de la mayoría porque, como ya enseñaba Cicerón, la justicia consiste en algo más que un mero acto productor de la ley y su aplicación. Implica el *reconocimiento de la dignidad de cada uno*,¹⁰³ la cual, sin libertad religiosa garantizada y vivida en su esencia, resulta mutilada y vejada, expuesta al peligro de caer en el predominio de los ídolos, de bienes relativos transformados en absolutos. Todo esto expone a la sociedad al riesgo de totalitarismos políticos e ideológicos, que enfatizan el poder público, mientras se menoscaba y coarta la libertad de conciencia, de pensamiento y de religión, como si fueran rivales.

Diálogo entre instituciones civiles y religiosas

9. El patrimonio de principios y valores expresados en una religiosidad auténtica es una riqueza para los pueblos y su *ethos*. Se dirige directamente a la conciencia y a la razón de los hombres y mujeres, recuerda el imperativo de la conversión moral, motiva el cultivo y la práctica de las virtudes y la cercanía hacia los demás con amor, bajo el signo de la fraternidad, como miembros de la gran familia humana.¹⁰⁴

La dimensión pública de la religión ha de ser siempre reconocida, respetando la laicidad positiva de las instituciones estatales. Para dicho fin, es fundamental *un sano diálogo entre las instituciones civiles y las religiosas* para el desarrollo integral de la persona humana y la armonía de la sociedad.

Vivir en el amor y en la verdad

10. En un mundo globalizado, caracterizado por sociedades cada vez más multiétnicas y multiconfesionales, las grandes religiones pueden constituir un importante factor de unidad y de paz para la familia humana. Sobre la base de las respectivas convicciones religiosas y de la búsqueda racional del bien común, sus seguidores están llamados a vivir con responsabilidad su propio compromiso en un contexto de libertad religiosa. En las diversas

¹⁰³ Cf. Cicerón, *De inventione*, II, 160.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *Discurso a los Representantes de otras Religiones del Reino Unido* (17 septiembre 2010): *L'Osservatore Romano* (18 settembre 2010), 12.



culturas religiosas, a la vez que se debe rechazar todo aquello que va contra la dignidad del hombre y la mujer, se ha de tener en cuenta lo que resulta positivo para la convivencia civil.

El espacio público, que la comunidad internacional pone a disposición de las religiones y su propuesta de “vida buena”, favorece el surgir de un criterio compartido de verdad y de bien, y de un consenso moral, fundamentales para una convivencia justa y pacífica. Los líderes de las grandes religiones, por su papel, su influencia y su autoridad en las propias comunidades, son los primeros en ser llamados a vivir en el respeto recíproco y en el diálogo.

Los cristianos, por su parte, están llamados por la misma fe en Dios, Padre del Señor Jesucristo, a vivir como hermanos que se encuentran en la Iglesia y colaboran en la edificación de un mundo en el que las personas y los pueblos “no harán daño ni estrago [...], porque está lleno el país de la ciencia del Señor, como las aguas colman el mar” (Is 11, 9).

El diálogo como búsqueda en común

11. El diálogo entre los seguidores de las diferentes religiones constituye para la Iglesia un instrumento importante para colaborar con todas las comunidades religiosas al bien común. La Iglesia no rechaza nada de lo que en las diversas religiones es verdadero y santo. “Considera con sincero respeto los modos de obrar y de vivir, los preceptos y doctrinas que, aunque discrepen mucho de los que ella mantiene y propone, no pocas veces reflejan, sin embargo, un destello de aquella Verdad que ilumina a todos los hombres”.¹⁰⁵

Con eso no se quiere señalar el camino del relativismo o del sincretismo religioso. La Iglesia, en efecto, “anuncia y tiene la obligación de anunciar sin cesar a Cristo, que es “camino, verdad y vida” (Jn 14, 6), en quien los hombres encuentran la plenitud de la vida religiosa, en quien Dios reconcilió consigo todas las cosas”.¹⁰⁶ Sin embargo, esto no excluye el diálogo y la búsqueda común de la verdad en los diferentes ámbitos vitales, pues, como afirma a menudo santo Tomás, “toda verdad, independientemente de quien la diga, viene del Espíritu Santo”.¹⁰⁷

En el año 2011 se cumplirá el 25 aniversario de la *Jornada mundial de oración por la paz*, que fue convocada en Asís por el Venerable Juan Pablo II, en 1986. En dicha ocasión, los líderes de las grandes religiones del mundo testimoniaron que las religiones son un factor de unión y de paz, no de división y de conflicto. El recuerdo de aquella experiencia es un motivo de esperanza en un futuro en el que todos los creyentes se sientan y sean auténticos trabajadores por la justicia y la paz.

Verdad moral en la política y en la diplomacia

12. La política y la diplomacia deberían contemplar el patrimonio moral y espiritual que ofrecen las grandes religiones del mundo, para reconocer y afirmar aquellas verdades, principios y valores universales que no pueden negarse sin negar la dignidad de la persona humana. Pero, ¿qué significa, de manera práctica, promover la verdad moral en el mundo de la política y de la diplomacia? Significa actuar de manera responsable sobre la base del conocimiento objetivo e íntegro de los hechos; quiere decir desarticular aquellas ideologías políticas que terminan por suplantar la verdad y la dignidad humana, y promueven falsos

¹⁰⁵ Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, Decl. *Nostra aetate*, sobre las relaciones de la Iglesia con las religiones no cristianas, 2.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Super evangelium Joannis*, I, 3.



valores con el pretexto de la paz, el desarrollo y los derechos humanos; significa favorecer un compromiso constante para fundar la ley positiva sobre los principios de la ley natural.¹⁰⁸ Todo esto es necesario y coherente con el respeto de la dignidad y el valor de la persona humana, ratificado por los Pueblos de la tierra en la *Carta de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas* de 1945, que presenta valores y principios morales universales como referencia para las normas, instituciones y sistemas de convivencia en el ámbito nacional e internacional.

Más allá del odio y el prejuicio

13. A pesar de las enseñanzas de la historia y el esfuerzo de los Estados, las Organizaciones internacionales a nivel mundial y local, de las Organizaciones no gubernamentales y de todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad, que cada día se esfuerzan por tutelar los derechos y libertades fundamentales, se siguen constatando en el mundo persecuciones, discriminaciones, actos de violencia y de intolerancia por motivos religiosos. Particularmente en Asia y África, las víctimas son principalmente miembros de las minorías religiosas, a los que se les impide profesar libremente o cambiar la propia religión a través de la intimidación y la violación de los derechos, de las libertades fundamentales y de los bienes esenciales, llegando incluso a la privación de la libertad personal o de la misma vida.

Como ya he afirmado, se dan también formas más sofisticadas de hostilidad contra la religión, que en los Países occidentales se expresan a veces renegando de la historia y de los símbolos religiosos, en los que se reflejan la identidad y la cultura de la mayoría de los ciudadanos. Son formas que fomentan a menudo el odio y el prejuicio, y no coinciden con una visión serena y equilibrada del pluralismo y la laicidad de las instituciones, además del riesgo para las nuevas generaciones de perder el contacto con el precioso patrimonio espiritual de sus Países.

La defensa de la religión pasa a través de la defensa de los derechos y de las libertades de las comunidades religiosas. Que los líderes de las grandes religiones del mundo y los responsables de las naciones, renueven el compromiso por la promoción y tutela de la libertad religiosa, en particular, por la defensa de las minorías religiosas, que no constituyen una amenaza contra la identidad de la mayoría, sino que, por el contrario, son una oportunidad para el diálogo y el recíproco enriquecimiento cultural. Su defensa representa la manera ideal para consolidar el espíritu de benevolencia, de apertura y de reciprocidad con el que se tutelan los derechos y libertades fundamentales en todas las áreas y regiones del mundo.

La libertad religiosa en el mundo

14. Por último, me dirijo a las comunidades cristianas que sufren persecuciones, discriminaciones, actos de violencia e intolerancia, en particular en Asia, en África, en Oriente Medio y especialmente en Tierra Santa, lugar elegido y bendecido por Dios. A la vez que les renuevo mi afecto paterno y les aseguro mi oración, pido a todos los responsables que actúen prontamente para poner fin a todo atropello contra los cristianos que viven en esas regiones. Que los discípulos de Cristo no se desanimen ante las adversidades actuales, porque *el testimonio del Evangelio es y será siempre un signo de contradicción.*

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *Discurso a las Autoridades civiles y al Cuerpo diplomático en Chipre* (5 junio 2010): *L'Osservatore Romano*, ed. en lengua española, 13 junio 2010, 6; Comisión Teológica Internacional, *En busca de una ética universal: nueva mirada sobre la ley natural*, Ciudad del Vaticano 2009.



Meditemos en nuestro corazón las palabras del Señor Jesús: “Dichosos los que lloran, porque ellos serán consolados. Dichosos los que tienen hambre y sed de la justicia, porque ellos quedarán saciados [...]. Dichosos vosotros cuando os insulten y os persigan y os calumnien de cualquier modo por mi causa. Estad alegres y contentos, porque vuestra recompensa será grande en el cielo” (Mt 5, 5-12). Renovemos, pues, “el compromiso de indulgencia y de perdón que hemos adquirido, y que invocamos en el *Pater Noster*, al poner nosotros mismos la condición y la medida de la misericordia que deseamos obtener: “Y perdónanos nuestras deudas, *así como* nosotros perdonamos a nuestros deudores” (Mt 6, 12)”.¹⁰⁹ La violencia no se vence con la violencia. Que nuestro grito de dolor vaya siempre acompañado por la fe, la esperanza y el testimonio del amor de Dios. Expreso también mi deseo de que en Occidente, especialmente en Europa, cesen la hostilidad y los prejuicios contra los cristianos, por el simple hecho de que intentan orientar su vida en coherencia con los valores y principios contenidos en el Evangelio. Que Europa sepa más bien reconciliarse con sus propias raíces cristianas, que son fundamentales para comprender el papel que ha tenido, que tiene y que quiere tener en la historia; de esta manera, sabrá experimentar la justicia, la concordia y la paz, cultivando un sincero diálogo con todos los pueblos.

La libertad religiosa, camino para la paz

15. El mundo tiene necesidad de Dios. Tiene necesidad de valores éticos y espirituales, universales y compartidos, y la religión puede contribuir de manera preciosa a su búsqueda, para la construcción de un orden social justo y pacífico, a nivel nacional e internacional.

La paz es un don de Dios y al mismo tiempo un proyecto que realizar, pero que nunca se cumplirá totalmente. Una sociedad reconciliada con Dios está más cerca de la paz, que no es la simple ausencia de la guerra, ni el mero fruto del predominio militar o económico, ni mucho menos de astucias engañosas o de hábiles manipulaciones. La paz, por el contrario, es el resultado de un proceso de purificación y elevación cultural, moral y espiritual de cada persona y cada pueblo, en el que la dignidad humana es respetada plenamente. Invito a todos los que desean ser constructores de paz, y sobre todo a los jóvenes, a escuchar la propia voz interior, para encontrar en Dios referencia segura para la conquista de una auténtica libertad, la fuerza inagotable para orientar el mundo con un espíritu nuevo, capaz de no repetir los errores del pasado. Como enseña el Siervo de Dios Pablo VI, a cuya sabiduría y clarividencia se debe la institución de la Jornada Mundial de la Paz: “Ante todo, hay que dar a la Paz otras armas que no sean las destinadas a matar y a exterminar a la humanidad. Son necesarias, sobre todo, las armas morales, que den fuerza y prestigio al derecho internacional; primeramente, la de observar los pactos”.¹¹⁰ La libertad religiosa es un arma auténtica de la paz, con una *misión histórica y profética*. En efecto, ella valoriza y hace fructificar las más profundas cualidades y potencialidades de la persona humana, capaces de cambiar y mejorar el mundo. Ella permite alimentar la esperanza en un futuro de justicia y paz, también ante las graves injusticias y miserias materiales y morales. Que todos los hombres y las sociedades, en todos los ámbitos y ángulos de la Tierra, puedan experimentar pronto la *libertad religiosa, camino para la paz*.

Vaticano, 8 de diciembre de 2010

BENEDICTUS PP XVI

¹⁰⁹ Pablo VI, *Mensaje para la Jornada Mundial de la Paz 1976*: AAS 67 (1975), 671.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 668.





NOVEDADES

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 Resolución de la Comisión
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 de 27 de Febrero de 2006

**14ª PROMOCIÓN**

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID

DIPLOMA EN PREVENCIÓN DE CONFLICTOS

CÓDIGO: D0037/5

Curso 2010/2011
 Del 10 de abril del 2010 al 31 de mayo del 2011
 Inscripción:
 Septiembre 2010- marzo 2011

Director: Antonio Marquina Barrio
 Secretaria: Gloria Inés Ospina

PROGRAMA

- Los conflictos tras la guerra fría: continuidad y cambio**
 - Prevención de conflictos. Conceptualización:**
 - Arreglo pacífico de controversias y diplomacia preventiva.
 - Crisis y control de crisis.
 - Alerta temprana.
 - Centro de prevención de conflictos: decisión, efectividad, movilización de recursos y actores.
 - Imposición de la paz.
 - La reconstrucción de la paz tras el conflicto.
 - Desarme, desmovilización y reintegración.
 - Respuestas de las Organizaciones Internacionales:**
 - Las operaciones de Mantenimiento de la Paz de Naciones Unidas.
 - La Organización para la Seguridad y la Cooperación en Europa, OSCE.
 - La OTAN, gestión de crisis y postconflicto.
 - La Unión Europea y la prevención de Conflictos: Aspectos Civiles y Militares
 - Lecciones de la experiencia de prevención de conflictos: éxitos, fracasos, equivocaciones**
 - El caso de Afganistán.
 - El caso de Bosnia.
 - El caso de Kosovo.
 - El caso de Irak.
 - El conflicto árabe-israelí y palestino-israelí.
 - El África Subsahariana.
- Prácticas:**
- Sistema de Alerta Temprana para afrontar posibles situaciones de conflicto en una zona regional con recursos y serias tensiones étnicas.
 - Gestión de Crisis-OTAN
 - Gestión Post-Conflicto: Misión de Paz ONU en África

PROFESORADO

Alberto Ucelay Subdirector General para Oriente Medio, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y Cooperación.

Cor. Carmelo Escribano: Ex-Profesor de la Academia General Militar de Zaragoza.

Javier Ignacio García: Profesor de Relaciones Internacionales IE Universidad

Antonio Marquina Barrio: Catedrático de Seguridad y Cooperación Internacional, UCM.

Antonio Sánchez-Benedito: Subdirector General para África Subsahariana, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y Cooperación.

Gracia Abad: Profesora de Relaciones Internacionales, universidad de Londres, Investigadora UNISCI, UCM.

Profesores de Prácticas:

Gracia Abad

Javier Ignacio García

María Angeles Alaminos

Duración y organización

Del 10 de abril del 2010 al 31 de mayo del 2011 (lunes a jueves de 16:30 a 20:30 horas). 60 horas (48 teóricas, 12 prácticas. La parte teórica se imparte durante el mes de noviembre quedando 4 tardes salteadas en diciembre para la realización de las simulaciones en grupo). Las clases se impartirán en la Facultad de CC. Políticas y Sociología de la UCM, Campus Universitario de Somosaguas (autobuses A, B, H, I), tren ligero.

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Información

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Fundamentación: El curso ha venido ofreciéndose como título propio en 2003, posteriormente como curso de formación continua y en la actualidad como curso de verano

Objetivos:

- 1.-Abrir al alumnado y público en general los temas de seguridad y cooperación, que viene desarrollando la cátedra, al área de Asia-Pacífico, dado que no hay ninguna asignatura reglada sobre estos temas en la Universidad.
- 2.-Contribuir al conocimiento de los temas de Asia que son incipientes en España y están consolidados en las universidades europeas.
- 3.-El alumnado podrá familiarizarse con problemas, formas y métodos de prevención y gestión de conflictos en parte diferentes a los que se realizan en Europa.
- 4.-El alumnado puede adquirir una experiencia suficiente para poder optar a puestos internacionales donde ya se exigen este tipo de conocimientos.

Duración: 100 horas

Horario : Curso de 9 a 14,00 horas

Aula: Aula que permita el movimiento de mesas y sillas de forma circular para la realización de las simulaciones

Número máximo de alumnos 40(ideal 25-30).

Alumnado: Alumnos de licenciatura de cualquier Facultad, titulados universitarios, estudiosos de relaciones internacionales, interesados en prevención de conflictos, profesionales de policía, guardia civil, Fuerzas Armadas. No hacen falta conocimientos especiales previos.

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Nordeste de Asia
Sudeste de Asia
Australia y Nueva Zelanda
- 3.- Desarrollo económico y auge en las economías de Asia (10 horas)
El crecimiento económico de Japón, Taiwan y la R. de Corea
El crecimiento económico de la R.P. China.
La ASEAN y el AFTA.
El crecimiento económico de la India
- 4.- Política exterior (10 horas)
Política exterior de los estados del nordeste de Asia
Política exterior de la RP. China
Política exterior de los Estados del Sudeste Asiático
Política exterior de la India
Política exterior de Australia y Nueva Zelanda
- 5.- Conflictos, Riesgos y Amenazas en Asia Central y Asia Pacífico (7 horas)
- 6.- El rearme en Asia Pacífico (2 horas)
- 7.- Iniciativas de cooperación y gestión de crisis en Asia Central (3 horas)
- 8.- Las relaciones de seguridad entre India y Pakistán (2 horas)
- 9.- El conflicto de Cachemira. Propuestas para la gestión y resolución del conflicto (2 horas)

- 10.- Iniciativas del ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM (4 horas)
- 11.- Propuestas para la prevención de conflictos y gestión de crisis entre las dos Coreas (4 horas)
- 12.- Interpretaciones del poder militar creciente de la República Popular China. La República Popular China en la agenda Regional de Seguridad. (4 horas)
- 13.- Las relaciones de seguridad entre la República Popular China y la República de China. Escenarios para la prevención de conflictos y gestión de postobtes crisis. (4 horas)
- 14.- Japón y la normalización militar. Reconfiguración de la seguridad y defensa de Japón. Los cambios en la alianza con los Estados Unidos. La perspectiva actual de prevención de conflictos y gestión de crisis. (4 horas)
- 15.- La reestructuración de la presencia militar de los Estados Unidos en Asia-Pacífico.
Políticas de prevención y gestión de crisis. (4 horas)
- 16.- La agenda de seguridad de Australia y Nueva Zelanda. Prioridades en la prevención de conflictos y gestión de crisis. (2 horas)

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Celebración de una reunión de Primeros Ministros de la Organización de Cooperación de Shangai como preparatoria de la Cumbre Anual de Jefes de Estado.

- SUR DE ASIA

Reunión extraordinaria del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, convocada por el presidente de turno, tras una cadena de atentados terroristas en la red de ferrocarriles de la Unión India y una escalada de la tensión entre ésta y el vecino Estado de Pakistán.

- PENÍNSULA COREANA

Celebración de una nueva reunión plenaria en el marco de una Ronda de las conversaciones a seis bandas (Six-Party Talks) con el fin de llegar a una solución pacífica definitiva que permita asegurar la consolidación de una Península Coreana no nuclearizada.

- FORO REGIONAL DE LA ASEAN (ARF)

Celebración de una Reunión Ministerial del Foro Regional de la ASEAN. En el transcurso de la reunión se planteará a los alumnos la ayuda y cooperación a poner en práctica en caso de un desastre que ha afectado a varios estados de ASEAN como consecuencia de un maremoto.

- RUSIA-CHINA

Celebración de una reunión bilateral Rusia-China a nivel ministerial, como preparación de la próxima Cumbre entre los presidentes Dimitri Medvedev y Hu. Jintao. Discusión del estado de las relaciones bilaterales en cuanto a los siguientes temas: cooperación en asuntos de defensa, cooperación económica y transfronteriza, cooperación energética, lucha contra el radicalismo y el separatismo, perspectivas sobre las relaciones regionales en Asia-Pacífico, otros asuntos decididos de común acuerdo. Elaboración de un borrador de declaración conjunta para la Cumbre presidencial.

SOBRE UNISCI / ABOUT UNISCI



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Desde su fundación en 1989, UNISCI ha realizado las siguientes actividades:

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⁶ Véase Keohane y Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

⁸ Un ejemplo aparece en Snyder *et al.*, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making, op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

A) Libros

Apellido, Nombre (Año): *Título del libro*, nº ed., colección y nº si los hay, Ciudad, Editorial.

Waltz, Kenneth N. (1979): *Theory of International Politics*, Boston, Addison-Wesley.

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Buzan, Barry; Wæver, Ole y De Wilde, Jaap (1998): *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder / Londres, Lynne Rienner.

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Lynch, Dov (ed.) (2003): *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU*, Chaillot Papers, nº 65, París, EU Institute for Security Studies.

D) Capítulos de libros

Apellido, Nombre (Año): “Título del capítulo”, en *Título del libro*, nº ed., colección y nº si los hay, Ciudad, Editorial, pp. xx-xx.

Wendt, Alexander: “Three Cultures of Anarchy”, en *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 246-312.

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F) Artículos de revista

Apellido, Nombre: “Título del artículo”, *Revista*, vol. xx, nº x (mes año), pp. xxx-xxx.

Schmitz, Hans Peter: “Domestic and Transnational Perspectives on Democratization”, *International Studies Review*, vol. 6, nº 3 (septiembre 2004), pp. 403-426.

G) Artículos de prensa

Apellido, Nombre: “Título del artículo”, *Periódico*, día de mes de año.

Bradsher, Keith: “China Struggles to Cut Reliance on Mideast Oil”, *New York Times*, 3 de septiembre de 2002.

H) Artículos en publicaciones de Internet

Igual que los anteriores, pero añadiendo al final “en <http://dirección.página/web>.”

Gunaratna, Rohan: “Spain: An Al Qaeda Hub?”, *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, nº 5 (mayo 2004), en <http://www.ucm.es/info/unisci>.

I) Otros recursos de Internet

Título del documento, en <http://dirección.página.web>.

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When the source is the same as that of the previous citation, "*ibid.*" is used, followed by the page numbers (if different).

Examples:

⁶ See Keohane and Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

⁸ An example appears in Snyder *et al.*, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making, op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

A) Books

Surname, First Name (Year): *Book Title*, xth ed., Book Series, No. x, Place, Publisher.

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Lynch, Dov (ed.) (2003): *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU*, Chaillot Papers, No. 65, Paris, EU Institute for Security Studies.

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G) Press Articles

Surname, First Name: "Article Title", *Newspaper*, Day Month Year.

Bradsher, Keith: "China Struggles to Cut Reliance on Mideast Oil", *New York Times*, 3 September 2002.

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Gunaratna, Rohan: "Spain: An Al Qaeda Hub?", *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No. 5 (May 2004), at <http://www.ucm.es/info/unisci>.

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