

Anglo-American Secret Services, Italo-Americans and Italian Antifascists’ Networks from World War II to the Early Cold War: from Historical Sources to Network Data

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1 Introduction

During the Second World War, while Italy was torn apart by the clash between the occupying armies and by the civil war, intelligence covert networks spread in the country thanks to an unprecedentedly high presence of secret services (Nutti, 2007, 957). More specifically, the Allies’ Italian campaign was supported by the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and by the British Special Operations Executive (SOE). Even before the Allied landing in Sicily in June 1943, OSS and SOE contacted representatives of Italian antifascists in exile and American citizens of Italian descendants to set up a recruitment strategy on the Italian territory, with the goal of pursuing sabotage and guerrilla operations and intelligence collection beyond the enemy lines. A decade later, when the CIA was elaborating its first general strategy of political warfare in Italy with the Demagnetize plan, some of the relations born during the war years still represented a channel of cooperation between US agents, Italo-Americans and Italian élites. Guasconi and Di Nolfo (1999)¹. What had deeply changed in ten years was the nature of the threat to counter; the goal had shifted from the military defeat of nazi-fascism to the containment of communism through political, social, cultural, and economic means (Sapio, 2015, 217-218). The PhD research project that constitutes this paper’s framework relies on these considerations. Through Historical Network Analysis, it investigates the political relations between Anglo-American secret services, Italo-American prominents and Italian antifascists from the Second World War to the Early Cold War. Starting from the assumption, based on secondary and primary sources, that it is possible identify a continuity in the relations between Anglo-American secret services’ agents, Italian antifascists and Italo-American élites from the Second World War years to the Early Cold War years, the research aims at answering the following questions: which individual relations made this continuity? Is it possible to trace a common political pattern in such persistent relations? And how these connections between Italian and Italo-American antifascists and Anglo-American

¹ On this matter see also Mario Del Pero, “Gli Stati Uniti e la “Guerra psicologica” in Italia (1948-56)” Pero (1998), Kaeten Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare, 1945-1950* Mistry (2014), Enni Di Nolfo, *La Guerra fredda e l’Italia*, Di Nolfo (2010)

secret services constituted a resource to reach political goals, linked first with the defeat of nazi-fascism, and then with the containment of communism in Italy?

Historical Network Analysis' theoretical premises provide on the one hand the conceptual framework to focus on relations instead that on mere individual actions. On the other hand, HNA leads to the shift from the metaphorical use of the term network to its consideration as a concrete tool of analysis, functional to answer the mentioned research questions (Grandjean, 2017a; Kerschbaumer et al., 2020, 1) .

Having briefly described the general aspects of my study, this paper will focus on the process of coding highly qualitative historical information, taken from heterogeneous sources, into homogeneous network data. Particular attention will be given to the process of selection of information, with the aim of producing a transparent critic of the sources. This will also lead to the consideration of the issue of preparing a suitable data set to develop a longitudinal and multilayered network analysis, in relation to the mentioned research questions. In fact, it will be important to highlight how the relations object of the study changed from the war years to the postwar years, and how individual relations also created ties between institutional and private organizations. Therefore, even if those aspects will not be deepened per se, as they would require a paper themselves, they will be considered in terms of selecting information and preparing a data set suitable for these kinds of elaborations.

2 The protagonists' selection and the structure of the work

Before entering the core of the paper, a brief paragraph on the selection of the study's protagonists and case-studies will be provided, as well as a description of the general structure of the dissertation as it is imagined at this point of the work.

As far as the research has shown, some individual relationships seem to be relevant to explain how the cooperation between American secret services and Italian antifascists during the war has shifted towards the construction of meaningful political - but unofficial- relations. These ties had repercussions on the building of the alliance between Italy and the United States in the postwar years. Therefore, it is not single protagonists' work that I aim at highlighting, but the network developed around a particular dyad or triad, whose relationship had started in the war years and persisted in the postwar years. In this paper, as example, I will take into account the relational data referred to one of these dyads, which has as principal nodes Alfredo Pizzoni and Allen Dulles.

Alfredo Pizzoni is one of the protagonists of the history of Italian Resistance, even if he has been quite ignored by the wide historiography on the theme. He was a bank officer at the Credito Italiano in Milan when World War II exploded. Antifascist but still convinced patriot, he decided to voluntarily enroll in the army in the summer of 1941, to then get back to civil life after an injury in January 1942. Back in Milan, he got in touch with a group of antifascists of liberal ideals, and after the armistice of the 8th of September 1943 and then the occupation of the Northern part of Italy by the Nazis, he became president of the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale Alta Italia (CLNAI)² and in charge of the Resistance financial issues Piffer (2005).

² The CLNAI was a political and militar antifascist organization that was established in the Northern part of Italy. It included the most important Italian political parties and had the role of controlling and coordinating Italian Resistance and partisan brigades. To deepen the History of Italian Resistance see Battaglia, 1970 Battaglia (1970); Pavone, 2010 Pavone (2010). To deepen the relations between Italian Resistance and the Allies see Piffer, 2010 Piffer (2010), Stafford, 2012 Stafford (2012),

Not far from Milan, beyond the Swiss border, the Anglo-Americans had established their wartime strategic services' station. One of their purposes was the creation of a network of cooperation with Italian antifascist underground movement to promote sabotage, guerilla operations and intelligence collection in the occupied Italy Aldrich (1997); Chalou (1995); Troy (1981). In November 1942, Allen Dulles, well known as director of the CIA from 1953 to 1961, moved to Bern as Chief of the American Office of Strategic Services station Grose (1994); Srodes (1999). In this context of cooperation between the OSS and the Italian Resistance, Pizzoni and Dulles met each other and established a friendly relationship that, as their personal papers show, persisted in the postwar years. While Dulles advanced in his career in US intelligence circles, arriving to cover the position of CIA director in 1953, Pizzoni formally left politics and became director of the Credito Italiano bank. Nevertheless, through a series of trips in the United States in the postwar years, he kept tidying unofficial but politically meaningful new relations and strengthening old ones, as the one with Dulles himself.

3 Introducing the sources

Two types of historical sources will be used to create the dataset for the Pizzoni-Dulles network, having chosen as research boundary to include, at least at this time, only the documentation produced or preserved by the two egos in their papers.

These types are correspondence and diaries³. Pizzoni and Dulles' correspondence is held respectively at the Istituto Nazionale Ferruccio Parri in Milan and the Princeton University Library⁴. The diaries used are all referred to Pizzoni's missions in Switzerland on behalf of the CLNAI and then to his business trips in the US in 1949, 1953 and 1956.

4 Collecting network data

This paragraph constitutes the core of the paper, and it is the one that will be mostly developed in the conference presentation and final work.

After having described the variety of sources that I will be using, I will focus on the way I am transforming their contents in network data.

Taking as reference point Claire Lemerancier's workshop "From historical source to network data" held at the conference "Historical Networks - Réseaux Historiques - Historische Netzwerke" co-organised by HNR and ResHist from June, 30 to July, 2 2021, I will describe the process of transformation of the information found in historical sources into network data.⁵ I will focus in particular on the way I am dealing with the issue of selecting and organizing data in a suitable way to elaborate a longitudinal and multilayer network analysis, explaining why I believe that this levels of complexity should be added to answer my research question Grandjean (2017b); Lemerancier (2015).⁶

Bailey, 2014 Bailey (2014), Corvo, 1999 Corvo (2005)

³ The official documentation of the OSS should be mentioned as a fourth type of source, but since the National Archives at College Park, where they are held, are still inaccessible, they cannot be included in the analysis at this time.

⁴ The documents relate to Dulles' activity in the OSS make an exception. They are held by the National Archives of United States at College park, but due to the pandemic it has been impossible to access them yet.

⁵ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLgCSKNrTBY&t=2s>

⁶ To deepen how multilayer analysis can help dealing with a complex historical reality see

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