

My father belonged to a fascist family and was called up to Africa. He returned shell-shocked. Graziani had carried out mass hangings and used poison gas, which at times struck down the Italian soldiers too. While he was assigned to the juvenile detention camp in Ancona, it was bombed. A splinter hit him in the neck and he was presumed dead. They took his gold Eberhard watch which his father had given him before he left. He was admitted to the military hospital where he was treated and then sent home to recover. He had an arrangement with my mother, but she believed she would not see him again. Yet as soon as he had recovered he returned to her and they married in 1947.

My father had been shell-shocked and he would often speak negatively of those who governed the country. Not directly, at the table or in front of the family. But I remember, while he shaved in the bathroom with the door half-open, he would say, 'Criminals, murderers!' I would get upset and wonder who he could possibly hold a grudge against; he was so gentle. He held a grudge against Pajetta, who he felt had been a puppet. Originally my father was right-wing but then he reconsidered his stance to such an extent that there was a Republican magazine in the house, *Il Lucifero*, which he would keep hidden: he was a soldier and probably could not have even received it. As soon as it arrived, he would hide it in a drawer. I would go and read it but not understand a word: I would think, 'For crying out loud!' My uncle and aunt joined the Italian Communist Party. I began to read bits and pieces of Marx, Engels and Gramsci. Then university gave me two points of reference: Boneff, who was killed during the Resistance, and Eliade, an Armenian scholar of religion. I was interested in understanding religion beyond the Catholic Church.

My political life unfolded in the union and in public demonstrations but it all ended shortly after the '80s. Oligarchic tendencies, where the party or the top brass of the union make the decisions, damaged everything. In the '80s, we would meet up and complain about the relationship between the card-carrying members and the top brass. Consulting the grass-roots was no longer important in the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano; PCI) either. Surely the death of Berlinguer would bring about change. The PCI could not hold its own against the situation because things, which until then had been covered up, were starting to come out. There were many of us members. Running something so significant was difficult but they could run it differently; not by remaining silent but by broaching the situation. The idea was for citizens to rise up against injustice. Yet, when I went to demonstrations or meetings back then, my mother would say to me, 'Be careful because you are all on file.'

Until the 1980s we were living the great social dream, which can be described by the song *Imagine*: the dream of a better world. It's a flagship song: a request for peace. Then the massacres took place; from Piazza Fontana to Brescia, on the Italicus Express. These were times of tragedy, uncertainty and darkness. The state failing to reveal the instigators of a massacre implies that there was some complicity. Since we were all under control, especially the most influential people... It was here that the dream faded.

In Italy there had always been a fear of subversive action. Those who were narrowly defeated never gave up because the population was illiterate and easy manipulated. I am talking about the republic vs. monarchy referendum. At that time, we felt as if we were under the influence of very strong subversive action, which had even converted the Red Brigades into Black Brigades. There was great uncertainty because they targeted the grass roots, not those at high levels. Even Aldo Moro: the people who acted have never been uncovered. Then Gladio and P2, which was headed by Licio Gelli, appeared, as well as fresh hungry tigers who deceived on a central and local level, went unpunished and have therefore paved the way for today's decay. And so the plan of the coup d'état was achieved. The impoverished population is at the mercy of brainwashing power of TV which is in the hands of those who only consider their own personal interests.

We cannot send work abroad. We need to protect local production. It was agreed to send work to non-European countries, gaining enormous profits. Therefore the state, along with

other European countries, is responsible. We cannot do this any longer: unemployment is rife. I do not know what growth will depend on if there is not a strong incentive for our own production. We need to build people who are strong, mindful and confident in their own abilities.