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Subversive Anarchy

Individualists, Iconoclasts, and Nihilists against
Fascism Against Black Fascism: Part 1

Renzo Connors

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Against Black Fascism: Part 1
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were blamed for influencing him to kill Mussolini and were locked up.

Bibliography

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- (2)Freedom My Dream by Enrico Aragoni
- (3) Mussolini, Second Edition by Peter Neville
- (4)The rebel's dark laughter: the writings of Bruno Filippi
- (5)Enemies of Society: An Anthology of Individualist and Egoist Thoughts
- (6)1918-1922: The Arditi del Popolo - Libcom
- (7)Lucetti, Gino, 1900-1943 - Libcom
- (8)Prisoners and Partisans: Italian anarchists in the struggle against fascism

“And this is where the anarchist reaction diverges from the simple reaction. As anarchist, we take things further. We are radical, rebellious, iconoclastic, nihilistic individuals who's only goal is the destruction of which destroys us. Capitalism, White Supremacy, Patriarchy, all of these apparatuses of domination that aim to control us, that expect us to submit. They are not met by a simple proclamation of againstness but a swift and decisive action that not only proclaims but shocks those in power. From the simple smashing of windows to the placement of a bomb or the robbing of the bank our actions are heard and felt rather than ignored and treated as everyday life.” - Armeanio Lewis, Why Break Windows

This writing is Dedicated to Sean Kealiher "Armeanio Lewis", born in Portland on the 26th of June 1996 and lost his life at age of 23, on the 12th of October 2019

Just after leaving a bar he was killed by a suspected far right militant who drove into him in a car. Sean was hated by the far right in Portland he was in their sights and on their list of undesirables to target.

In the 12 months since his death, the US, (as well as many other parts of the world) has seen uprisings and riots spread across the country and in Portland in particular. If Sean was alive today there is no doubt he would be fighting alongside his friends and comrades in Portland.

Following on from a previous writing titled "Subversive Anarchy Past and Present" this writing is a similar attempt at mapping out a subversive history in which most red anarchists historians would gladly throw into the bin and forget about.

The focus of this writing is on the individualist and insurrectionist anarchists in Italy who fought against Mussolini and the black shirt fascists.

Judging by the writings of the anarchists mentioned in the following writing (Renzo Novatore, Enzo Martucci, Bruno Filippi, and Enrico Aragoni), their individual rebellions were not motivated purely by an antifascist ethic. What motivated their

fight was an egoistic desire for individual freedom. Mussolini and his black shirt fascists were mere obstacles in the way of achieving that. If fascism never came about they would have still reacted to the domination of society with the same rage, riots, gun shoots and dynamite, and indeed they did. And I believe the same is true for Sean Kealiher.

Sean, like the anarchists mentioned in this writing, was one of many anarchists of action who targeted "Capitalism, White Supremacy, Patriarchy, all of these apparatuses of domination that aim to control us, that expect us to submit.." with all his rage.

And likewise he knew anarchists of action are not "politicians" or a "political elite" looking to lead the "working class" to liberation. We fight for our own liberation and for our own revenge against society, and the only way any individual can do this is by doing it herself.

Politics whether far right, left wing, or center, is a byproduct of civilization. Politics is the social and moral control of the individual and one of many institutions of domestication and domination that keeps the totalitarian murder machine that is civilization alive and keeps the individual subjugated to it; and so needs to be attacked and destroyed with the same anger and rage that is shown against fascism and its modern manifestation of far right nationalist christian fundamentalism.

Bruno Fillipi knew the dangers of civilization and the lies of its "progress" when he wrote:

"I envy the savages. And I will cry to them in a loud voice: "Save yourselves, civilization is coming."

Of course: our dear civilization of which we are so proud. We have abandoned the free and happy life of the forests for this horrendous moral and material slavery. And we are maniacs, neurasthenics, suicides.

Why should I care that civilization has given humanity wings to fly so that it can bomb cities, why should I care if I know every star in the sky or every river on earth?

me still, as now, stained with sloth, for sixty centuries, you consume the ritual of the lie; you curse me, applauding your laws and your idols... I will always cast the red flowers of my contempt in your face." Enzo Martucci, *The Damned Song*

Gino Lucetti, an individualist anarchist, was born in 1900 into a working class family in Carrara. Like the other anarchists in this writing Gino was self taught and took part in the anarchist struggle from a young age. When the Biennio Rosso erupted after the war Gino took part in struggles and occupations. When the fascists emerged he fought against them and was one of the founding members of the anti-fascist group *Arditi del Popolo*. (7)

During one particular incident between anarchists and the black shirts Gino got shot in the neck and a fascist was shot in the ear. Gino had to flee to France to get medical treatment. While in France Gino and his comrades planned an attentat on Mussolini. On the 11th of September 1926 as Mussolini was being driven Gino threw a bomb at his car. The bomb failed to detonate when it hit the car and bounced off then detonated when it landed in the street.

Gino fled but was soon caught by Mussolini's guards who gave him a severe beating. The guards found a second bomb, a hand gun and a dagger on him. He was charged with attempted murder and sentenced to 30 years in prison. He spent the first 3 years of his sentence locked in isolation away from the other prisoners; the only company he had was from a sparrow that would fly into his cell.(8)

The following month after Gino Lucetti's attentat attempt, a young individualist anarchist aged only 15 called Anteo Zamboni tried an attentat of his own. During a parade celebrating the fascists "March on Rome", Anteo emerged from the crowd of spectators firing a handgun at Mussolini, missing him. Fascists grabbed hold of Anteo and hung him there and then on the street. After this attack the fascist government abolished liberties and banned all opposition parties. Anteo's father and aunt

the final one remaining begged for his life. Pollastro speared his life and escaped.

Attentat

“Oh!... Why wasn't I born on a pirate ship, lost on the endless ocean, in the midst of a handful of rugged, brave men who furiously climbed aboard, singing the wild song of destruction and death? Why wasn't I born in the boundless grasslands of South America, among free, fierce gauchos, who tame the fiery colt with the “lasso” and fearlessly attack the terrible jaguar?... Why? Why? The children of the night, my brothers, impatient with every law and all control, would have included me. These people, spirits thirsty for freedom and the infinite, would have known how to read the great book that is in my minds, an utterly marvelous poem of pain and conflict, of sublime aspirations and impossible dreams... My intellectual heritage would have been their intangible treasure, and at the clear fount of my satanic pride and eternal rebellion, they would have fortified their strength, already violently shaken by a thousand hurricanes. Instead, I was fatally born in the midst of the nauseating herd of slaves who lie in the filthy slime where the imperial ruling Lie and hypocrisy exchange the kiss of brotherhood with cowardice. I was born into civilized society, and the priest, the judge, the moralist and the cop have tried to weigh me down with chains and transform my organism, exuberant with vitality and energy, into an unconscious and automatic machine for which only one word was supposed to exist: Obey. They wanted to kill me!... And when I rose in the violence of irresistible force and wild shouted my “no,” the idiotic herd, amid the splashing of stinking slime, launched its vacuous insults.

Now, I laugh... The crowd is unable to understand certain spiritual depths, and doesn't have a sharp enough gaze to penetrate the hidden recesses of my heart... You curse me, you curse

In the past, it is true, there were no legal codes, and it would seem that justice was done summarily.

Barbarous times! Today, instead, people are killed in the electric chair unless the philanthropy of Beccaria [18th century aristocrat whose work ‘On Crimes and Punishments (1764)’ inspired reform in the Italian penal system. — translator] only torments them in the penitentiary for the rest of their lives.

But I leave you to your knowledge and your legal codes; I leave you to your submarines and bombs. Still you laugh at my beautiful freedom, my ignorance, my vigor. Yesterday the sky was beautiful to look at; the eyes of the unknowing gazed at it.

Today, the starry vault is a leaden veil that we vainly endeavor to pass through; today it is no longer unknown, it is distrusted.

All these philosophers, all these scientists, what are they doing?

What further crimes are they plotting against humanity? I don't give a damn for their progress; I want to live and enjoy.”

- Bruno Fillipi, *Il Me Faut Vivre Ma Vie*

And like Sean, Bruno eagerly threw himself into battle against its oppressive systems and structures, and also died in his fight.

Setting the Stage

“Several years ago, all the earth's kings, all the world's tyrants crossed the threshold of time, and — turning their backs on the dawn — called in a great voice — the ghosts of the past, of the gloomiest past!

The voices of the tyrants and kings were joined by the raucous voices of all the great misers of the spirit, of art, of thought and of the idea! — And in the voices of the tyrants, kings and misers, ghosts and phantoms were raised from their tombs and came to dance among us...

The “state,” the “race,” the “fatherland” were macabre storm clouds assailing the heavens, ghastly phantoms darkening the sun; they threw us back into the dark night of distant medieval times.” - Renzo Novatore, Black Flags

Abele Rizieri Ferrari, more known by his pen name Renzo Novatore, was born on May 12, 1889. Born into a poor peasant family in Arcola. Leaving school at a young age, he educated himself while working on his father’s farm. He was influenced by writers such as Max Stirner, Friedrich Nietzsche, Georges Palante, Oscar Wilde. When he discovered the large anarchist scene in his town he took part at once.

In 1910 he was convicted for burning down a local church and got sentenced to 3 months in prison. In 1911 he went on the run because he was wanted for a robbery. He was arrested on 30th September 1911 for vandalism. (1)

Enrico Aragoni, known later in life as “Frank Brand” was born on February 20, 1894 in the province of Milan into a working class family. And like all working class families of the time Enrico had to start work at a young age. Aragoni developed a love of books at an early age and became inspired by writers such as Errico Malatesta and Max Stirner. By 14 years of age he was a committed anarchist:

“From that moment, individual liberty became my dream inspiring all my social battles, and war against all tyrants and tyrannies became the ideal of my whole life” Freedom My Dream

The period from 1908 running right up to the first world war there was lots of agitation for better working conditions in Italy. Aragoni during this period living in Milan, took part in the agitation. Aragoni and many of his anarchist comrades got blacklisted from employers as a result of their involvement in the class warfare and found it impossible to find work.(2)

This was a period of violent demonstrations between workers against the capitalists bosses and the state, and was a training ground for the young Aragoni. During street battles cob-

Milan in 1919. The group preached a mixture of populist nationalism, anti-communism, and even populist leftist rhetoric such as workers rights to an 8 hour working day and voting rights for women. Its membership was made up of ex-service men, ex-syndicalists, and students. The same year the fascists grew strong enough to successfully burn down the socialist party newspaper office “Avanti”, something they were unable to achieve before. Four people were killed in the attack. (4)

Gaining more and more support from the working class and middle class the fascists grew strong across Italy, receiving finance from the industrialists and land owners. It wasn’t long before they were breaking up strikes on behalf of the bourgeoisie.

With help from the police, the fascists destroyed socialist unions and attacked newly elected councils. In one such attack in Bologna the black shirts stormed a newly elected council and killed 9 people in the process.

By 1921 Fascist militias controlled many rural towns. The same year Mussolini formed the National Fascist Party and set up fascist trade unions.

In June 1921 a antifascist group named “Arditi del Popolo” (The People’s Daring Ones) was formed by a mix of anarchists, socialists, communists and republicans to fight back at the growing fascist movement. (6) Novatore was active in this group. None of the left parties or the Italian syndicalist CGT union supported the group.

In 1922 a fascist gang surrounded Novatore’s home where they knew where he was hiding. Novatore fought his way out using homemade grenades.(1)

Novatore’s individual insurrection against society came to an end on November 29th 1922. Novatore and his comrade Sante Pollastro were ambushed when leaving a tavern by 3 police officers. Novatore was shot dead. The cop that killed Novatore was then shot dead by Pollastro, another cop ran away while

And it is well known that when fascism is born, socialism alone is its direct accomplice and responsible father.

Because, if when the nation, if when the state, if when democratic Italy, if when bourgeois society trembled in pain and agony in the knotty and powerful hands of the “proletariat” in revolt, socialism had not basely hindered the tragic deadly hold — losing the lamps of reason in front of its wide-opened eyes — certainly fascism would never even have been born, let alone lived.

But the awkward colossus without mind is then allowed to take hold — for fear that the vagabonds of the idea would push the movement of revolt beyond the appointed mark — in a most vulgar game of sullen conservative pity and false human love.

Thus, bourgeois Italy, instead of dying, brought forth...

It brought forth fascism!

Because fascism is the stunted and deformed creature born of the impotent love of socialism for the bourgeoisie.

One of them is the father, and the other the mother. But neither wants the responsibility for it.

Perhaps they find it a child much too monstrous.

And this is the reason they call it a “bastard”!

And it gets revenge.

Already wretched enough for being born this way, it rebels against the father and insults the mother...

And perhaps it has reason...

But we, we bring all this out for history.

For history and for truth, not for ourselves.

For us — fascism — is a poisonous mushroom planted quite well in the rotten heart of society, that is enough for us.

” - Renzo Novatore, *Toward the Creative Nothing*

The dark times of socio-economic uncertainty in post war Italy provided space for the politics of patriotism and nationalism to grow and fester.

In 1919 Mussolini founded the “Fasci di combattimento” (The Fighting Leagues aka the fascists Leagues) in his heartland of

blestones would be pulled up from the roads and used as missiles against the police. The police would often retaliate by firing volleys of gun shots. These struggles and battles were just a precursor to what he would experience and take part in later in life.

Bruno Filippi, born on the 30th of March 1900 in Livorno, another well known individualist anarchist, took part alongside Aragoni as Aragoni brought him into the anarchist movement. Aragoni recalls in his autobiography, after one demonstration while a general strike was ongoing demonstrators were ambushed by police and cavalry that were hiding to attack the striking workers. During the ensuing street battle Aragoni, Filippi, and their comrades were throwing cobblestones at the police, when all of a sudden shots rang out as the police opened up on them. One of the anarchists was shot dead.

A few days later Bruno Filippi was arrested and charged with the killing of his comrade. The only evidence the police had was a witness, Bruno's employer. He saw Bruno was carrying a handgun while in work.

The day before his boss was to give “evidence” at the trial Aragoni and a handful of their comrades went into Bruno's boss pharmacy and smashed it up with bats as a warning. The next day the Pharmacist did not show up for the trial, and so Bruno walked out free.

Emergence of the Nationalists

”If a people is suffering and wants to suffer from nationalistic nervous fever and political ambition, it must expect that all sorts of clouds and disturbances - in short, little attacks of stupidity - will pass over its spirit into the bargain...” - Friedrich Nietzsche

The first world war started in 1913. Italy didn't enter the war until 1916. Prior to Italy entering the war Milan was one of

the most active areas in Italy against entering the war. Milan was an important battle ground because it was the industrial heartland of Italy which made Milan a decisive area for either the pro-interventionists (pro war) or anti-interventionists (anti war) factions. Both factions knew if the pro-interventionists got a foothold in the industrial centre would sway Italy into the war.

Benito Mussolini, a socialist at this time, turning more and more nationalist, was an active supporter of Italy entering the war. Because of his stance he was thrown out of the socialist party. It didn't take long for Mussolini to raise funds for a public campaign for Italy to enter the war. To no surprise he was funded by capitalist companies such as the Italian car manufacturer Fiat and the French government who would gain an ally by Italy entering the war.

The anarchist movement was strong in Milan and was at the centre of resistance against the war. The socialists joined forces with the anarchists to fight back at Mussolini who was directing all his aggression against the anti-interventionists factions.

Mussolini and the pro-interventionists faction made many attempts to attack the socialist party's "Avanti" (Forward) newspaper office. The socialists with the support from Aragoni and the anarchists fought them off each time.

One night Aragoni and several anarchists decided they wanted to hit back at Mussolini and take him out once and for all. The plan was to catch him at his newspaper office. The office was heavily fortified and guarded. It would be impossible to storm. So they walked up the street towards the office loudly singing the interventionist hymn and shouting "Viva Mussolini!". The guards thought the anarchists were supporters so they opened the big doors to the court yard of their office to allow them in.

The anarchists continued singing and shouting "We want Mussolini! Let Mussolini speak!"

Enzo wrote about their meeting:

"We passed unforgettable hours together. Our discussions were long and he helped me fill gaps in my thinking, setting me on my way to the solution of many fundamental problems. I was struck by his enthusiasm." - Enzo Martucci, On Renzo Novatore

After their meetup they went their separate roads of rebellion. Two months later Enzo made contact with Renzo which unknowingly to both, would be their last time speaking.

This was 1920 during the height of the Biennio Rosso. By this stage in the uprising fascist gangs were roaming parts of Italy attacking anarchists, socialists, and anyone taking part in the uprising. (4)

In the weeks after their meeting Enzo was attacked by a group of fascists and left severely beaten for refusing to say "Down with Anarchy and long live Mussolini" instead proclaiming "Long live Anarchy and down with Mussolini!" Enzo went on the run because he was wanted before the courts on charges relating to his own attack by the fascists. He made it to France and stayed there till 1923 returning back to Italy believing there had been a political amnesty. When he went home he was arrested and sentenced to 8 years, five of the years he spent in jail and the final 3 were suspended. (5)

The Rise of Fascism and the death of Novatore

"Socialism is the material force that, acting as the shadow of a dogma, resolves and dissolves in a spiritual "no".

Fascism is a consumptive of the spiritual "no" that aims — wretch — at a material yes.

Both lack willful quality.

They are the bores of time; the temporizers of the deed!

They are reactionary and conservative.

They are crystallized fossils that the strong-willed dynamism of history that passes will sweep away together.

Because, in the willful field of moral and spiritual values, the two enemies are equal.

The meeting of two Iconoclasts

"I understand that since Individualism is neither a school nor a party, it cannot be "unique", but it is truer still that Unique ones are individualists. And I leap as a unique one onto the battlefield, draw my sword and defend my personal ideas as an extreme individualist, as an indisputable Unique one, since we can be as skeptical and indifferent, ironic and sardonic as we desire and are able to be. But when we are condemned to hear socialists more or less theorizing in order to impudently and ignorantly state that there is no incompatibility between Individualist and collectivist ideas, when we hear someone stupidly try to make a titanic poet of heroic strength, a dominator of human, moral and divine phantoms, who quivers and throbs, rejoices and expands himself beyond the good and evil of Church and State, Peoples and Humanity, in the strange flickering of a new blaze of unacknowledged love, like Zarathustra's lyrical creator, pass as a poor and vulgar prophet of socialism, when we hear someone try to make an invincible and unsurpassable iconoclast like Max Stirner out to be some tool for the use of frantic proponents of communism, then we may certainly have an ironic smirk on our lips. But then it is necessary to resolutely rise up to defend ourselves and to attack, since anyone who feels that he is truly individualist in principle, means and ends cannot tolerate being at all confused with the unconscious mobs of a morbid, bleating flock." - Renzo Novatore, My Iconoclastic Individualism

Around this time Novatore met a young anarchist whose name was Enzo da Villafore but became known by his pen name Enzo Martucci who then in 1920 was 16 years of age. Inspired by Stirner and Neitzsche he left his middle class home to take part in anarchist rebellion. When he read Novatores "My Iconoclastic Individualism", Enzo knew he had to meet the author as he felt the writing was close to his ideas of anarchy. (5)

Musolini came out on the balcony and wouldn't come down to his "fans" to greet them. He was a story up so there was no way to reach him. Musolini began to speak, unable to reach him, as soon as he opened his mouth the anarchist threw a barrage of projectiles at him.

Straight away Mussolini dived for cover. The anarchist caught Musolini and his guards by total surprise. Arragoni and his comrades fought their way out of Mussolini's fortress through a wall of guards.

This was the first of many attempts to kill Musolini. If the anarchists had succeeded who knows what could have changed in what was to come? It could have possibly saved countless lives from the gas chambers and concentration camps; or the genocide in Etiopia (in which hundred of thousands of civilians were killed)? But all we can do now is speculate.

After months of battles and street fights with the nationalists and the government organized a big public rally to take place at Piazza del Duomo. Musolini, the nationalists idol, would be the main speaker.

By this stage the socialists had stopped their resistance against the war and the anarchists were resisting alone.

Ultimately the pro-interventionists won the battle for Milan, but not without one last fight.

Aragoni knew it was a lost cause and was only a matter of time before Italy entered the war, he and the anarchists couldn't just give up without one final street battle. Araigoni and 7 other anarchists organized to crash the pro-interventionist rally which had 6000 nationalists who volunteered for the French army had been sent back to Italy armed with bats and guns to boost up their numbers.

The pro-interventionists idol, Musolini, would be the main speaker. The anarchists pulled whatever little money they could scrape together, they were broke so couldn't afford a gun. With the little money they could get they printed off a few thousand leaflets, the printer was a sympathiser so let

them off the majority of the costs. They then distribute the leaflets outside the factories and in the poor working class districts of Milan in an attempt to ignite them into action. Enrico and the anarchists had built up trust with workers from past struggles, so the workers knew they could trust the anarchists to be there with them fighting.

On the day of the nationalist rally, at Piazza del Duomo square, the anarchist mingled in with the large crowd of supporters of the war, they couldn't tell who was there for their counter demo and who supported intervention.

As Mussolini came onto the steps of the Cathedral to speak the crowd went silent. As soon as he opened his mouth uproar followed "Down with Mussolini! "Get hold of the traitor!", "Hang him!"

The anarchists immediately went into battle with the crowds that were trying to protect Mussolini. Mussolini scurried off once again to safety.

There were thousands of individuals fighting each other openly across the square. The battle lasted hours. Aragoni had two teeth broken by a blow of a baton.

Aragoni, not noticing his wound, was in the battle punching, kicking, hitting, and lashing out in every direction at anyone shouting "Hurray for war".

The police and the interventionists couldn't use their guns in fear of shooting their supporters in the crowd

In the end the anti-war forces won the street battle chasing the interventionists from the square. But it was to no odds. Italy entered the war very shortly after.

But Aragoni was satisfied it was the anarchists that resisted to the end and called the last street battle before Italy entered the war.

scented pagan earth smiles at us with a lyrical and amorous smile, saying to us: "hasten destiny and come to rest in my turgid breast, swollen with fruitful seeds." Since he was a poet, Bruno Filippi heard this voice. He heard it and he answered: "Oh good earth! ... I will come, I will come on the great day and you will welcome me into your arms, good, fragrant earth, and you will make the timid violets blossom on my head." Now that Bruno Filippi has taken all the roses and thoughts germinated in the vermilion garden of his spring winds into the grave, rejoicing in strength and youth, in will and mystery, "Oh earth, take back this body and recall what was strong for your future labors." Because I see in Him as well the "necessity of the crime that burdens the resolute man elevating him at last to the titanic condition."

Who was he? Where was he going?

Fools! And where have you gone? Where are you going?

He was broken while breaking the chains that you, United in a cowardly and hateful way in your manifold quality as dangerous lunatics, riveted logically and morally to his twenty year old rebel wrists in order to crush his Uniqueness, his mystery, because he was incomprehensible to you, precisely as the complicated mind of one who feels complete in himself must be. Bruno Filippi hated. But the forces of Hatred did not crush the powers of Love within Him. He immolated himself in a fruitful embrace with death because he madly loved Life. We have the need and the entitlement to say of him that which was said of the D'Annunzian hero: "That the slaves of the marketplace turn around and remember!" - Bruno Filippi, In The Circle of Life

In Memory of Bruno Filippi by Renzo Novatore

1920 after an attack in Val di Flornola naval base on its arms depository Renzo Novatore was once again arrested , but was free again within months taking part in the planning of another attack which failed because of a rat. (1)

accuses us of having provoked these attacks, we respond with figures or direct questions:

Who spread hatred and pain during four years of carnage? It was the various Gratianni, those filthy, decorated assassins.

In spite of the 507,193 dead sacrificed to the trust and the bank, when the war ended, the bloodthirsty bourgeois beast wanted and still wants to kill.

From April 13 up to now (bloodshed in Lainate, 3 dead), 54 people have been killed by royal bullets. This is the propaganda for hatred! The monopolizers deprive us of food, and the industrialists place us at the crossroad between a most abominable exploitations and hunger. And someone cries out: "It is necessary to produce!" I read the other day that a young man killed himself for lack of work. I say: "What must be produced? Coffins for the dead?" So the provocation comes from the top. There are the various Bredas protected by the state camorra[A secret criminal association for terror and extortion. (the translator)]; there are the cynical Centanni decorated with madness; there are the military brass, filthy with blood and maddened with lust.

A reaction? It is surely coming. The anarchists don't fear it. They have faced it for too long. Now the bourgeoisie has created a desert around itself. And true law endures there.

from Iconoclasta!" (4)

On September 7th 1919, while transporting a bag containing dynamite Bruno Filippi died when the dynamite went off prematurely. He was bringing the bomb to destroy the meeting place of the rich in Milan named the "club of nobles".

Novatore wrote about his friend:

"He, Bruno Filippi, in the delirious impulse of his annihilation, wanted to make the most intimate and sublime Sin acknowledge Life. Then he dissolved in the Void, a luminous and wandering voice that remains for us, incessantly whispering: "Dare, dare!" And at the desperately serene cry of this symbolic twenty year old voice, it seems to us that the romantically

Italy enters the slaughter

"Force! You raise your cowardly lament in chorus! You say that you are hungry. You stretch out your hand in front of the shop window full of jewels. Do it, take it! You complain to each other about the war when you yourselves are its authors, and it continues because you put up with it! But I flee from your putridity that would sully me. Proudly alone, I break the chains that link me to you and separate myself from the pack of mangy dogs, submissive to the shepherd. I will wander the world alone carrying my hatred and scorn everywhere. Alone in struggle. A one in victory and in defeat." -Bruno Filippi, The Free Art of a Free Spirit

Not long after, Aragoni was drafted into the army but managed to escape Italy after two attempts of crossing the Mountains into Switzerland. He was sentenced to 17 years for desertion in his absence.

During this time Renzo Novatore was also drafted into the Italian Army. Instead of fighting a cause that was not his own he deserted and went on the run and survived by means of illegalism. On 31st of October 1918 he was tried in his absence for treason and sentenced to death Remaining on the run till the war ended.(1)

The war ends

"The revolt of the individual against society is not given by that of the masses against governments. Even when the masses submit to governments, living in the sacred and shameful peace of their resignation, the anarchist individual lives against society because he is in never-ending and irreconcilable war with it, but when, at a historical turning point, he comes together with the masses in revolt, he raises his black flag with them and throws his dynamite with them.

The anarchist individualist is in the Social Revolution, not as a demagogue, but as a inciting element, not as an apostle, but as a living, effective, destructive force..." - Renzo Novatore, Anarchist Individualism in the Social Revolution.

At the end of the war Italy had an estimated 500,000 war dead. The allies reneged on their deal they made with Italy for entering the war. Italy only received a small part of the war spoils that the allies conquered. Italy was now also in massive debt from the war and sank into an economic recession which affected people from all classes.

As the recession worsened so did social unrest and the heightening of class struggle amongst the working classes which led in 1919 to workers uprisings known as the "Biennio Rosso" (two red years). There were general strikes, factory and land occupations, rioting, looting. It seemed social revolution could be just around the corner. (3)

Novatore and Bruno weren't so optimistic about a workers revolution. They were disillusioned with any idea of a "revolutionary working class" that would supposedly "rise up in revolution and seize the means of production", after they went willingly in their droves to fight and get slaughtered for imperialism without any resistance. They had no hopes in a revolution the sort envisioned by Marxists and leftists of all varieties. But just because they no longer held a dogmatic fate in the revolutionary potential of the working class didn't mean they were just going to give up their own individual wars against society.

So as the class warfare intensified so did the warfare of the iconoclastic rebels.

In May 1919 Novatore took part in the uprising in the city of La Spezia. But just in the following month June 30, 1919 he was arrested while hiding on the outskirts of the city. A local farmer grassed him up to the police. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison but released in a general amnesty a short time later and went on the run once again fearing being rearrested. (1)

Bruno Fillipi, along with other anarchists took part in a bombing campaign against the bourgeoisie of Milan. Fillipi writes about it:

"Dynamite Speaks

Since the explosion in the court, a series of actions has thrown the fat Milanese bourgeoisie into disarray and fear. The first to be attacked was the industrialist, Giovanni Breda, owner of the well-known warmongers enterprise of the same name.

He escaped an attack with sulfuric acid and a bomb that exploded at his villa. Then it was Senator Ponti's turn. He was president of the mechanical Society of Lombard. A bomb was thrown at his house as well. But it was all limited to formidable explosions and damage to the homes. Fortune favors the warmongers! Another bomb was found unexploded in the central station.

The delivery of bombs goes forward with diligence! It is only done at home.

It is natural that a thousand rumors about the motives behind these attacks would spread. The fact that the unknown dynamiters have chosen the big shots of the metallurgical industry lends support to the idea that it is a matter of retaliation for the truly disgusting arrogance of the masters. While these warmongering gentlemen have a good time in Cova and Biffi, the poor strikers gulp down a little rice and tighten their belts. Those who are hungry do not fight against capital with folded arms and hope; that is slow agony. But the masters want it this way, and, protected by the murderous guns of the King's cavalry, they make profit from misery.

Meanwhile, from the side of the reactionary press, The witch hunt for anarchists has begun, and the usual laws demand capital punishment. We are not among the number of armchair pseudo-subversives quick to repudiate every confidence for fear of going to prison. But to anyone who