



Accademia di Studi Storici Aldo Moro

Aldo Moro's Interrupted Project

*Inclusion, Social Pluralism and the Achievement
of Democracy*

30th Anniversary: 1978-2008

Presentation Note

October 2008



On occasion of the 30th anniversary of Aldo Moro's death, in 2007 the Accademia di Studi Storici Aldo Moro started up a set of initiatives of reflection and study entitled "**Aldo Moro's interrupted project: inclusion, social pluralism and the achievement of democracy**". The initiative enjoys the High Patronage of the President of the Republic and the patronage of the Chambers of Deputies; the patronage of regional governments of Basilicata, Calabria, Marche, Piedmont, Puglia, Umbria and Veneto; of the provincial authorities of Bari, Belluno, Cremona, Cuneo, Ferrara, Foggia, Genova, Gorizia, Novara, Parma, Pesaro e Urbino, Reggio Emilia, Sondrio, Treviso, Udine, Venezia and Viterbo, as well as of the municipal governments of Brindisi and Lecce. The initiative is also financially supported by the Fondazione Cariplo, Intesa SanPaolo, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Pistoia e Pescia and by the regional governments of Lazio and Liguria, the provincial authorities of Milan and Rome, the municipal government of Bari.

In line with its almost 30-year research tradition, the Accademia di Studi Storici Aldo Moro has wished to give this initiative a feature of **discussion and exchange on the great issues** concerning societies today, also by taking up and valorising some elements of Aldo Moro's thinking which are still topical and have a lasting vitality. To this end, the initiative also aims to be a space for more deeply analysing the fundamental aspects of Moro's work and for supporting more systematic historiographic research on his figure – research that is just in its early stages.

The following section will present the framework of the initiative, while the one after will contain a description of the study, promotion and scientific exchange activities of the initiative.

The framework

The initiative is based on a "cultural strategy" which, as highlighted by the title itself, aims to focus the reflection on Aldo Moro's "**project**", that is, the existence of a conscious "plan" that he had on the development of Italian democracy, on Europe and on the governance of international relations, and that presumably guided his action throughout his political career.

If such a design did exist, then it can certainly be considered an **interrupted project**, stunted in its development by his political murder and thus destined to remain largely unexpressed and confined to the realm of unachievable possibilities, as also seen in other cases when a violent death interrupted the action of political leaders who were bearers of great demands for change. This tragic circumstance thus makes it even more difficult, in the various moments that made up Moro's political life, to identify the project elements themselves, such as the presence of long-term goals, a propaedeutic nature of the actions to be taken or a unitary logic underlying the different decisions that Moro had to take, as much in internal affairs as in foreign policy.

It must also be recalled that Moro lived at a time when Italy and the international sphere was marked by great social changes, deep and apparently irreducible ideological contrapositions, and by great conflicts. They were thus turbulent times, to say the least, which were not conducive to the development of long-term or wide-ranging projects.

Nevertheless, the very idea that Moro had in mind and concretely pursued a project of this kind may constitute a research hypothesis that can provide important orientations, especially at a time, such as ours today, in which, with respect to the need to develop a mature interpretation of the figure of Aldo Moro, we risk not having solid points of reference available. More specifically:

- These cannot be provided by **historiographic research** on Aldo Moro and on his times, since this research is still in its early days.
- Nor can they be supplied by the very rich “**memory**” (also made up of narrations, iconographic materials, symbolic elements and manifestations of recognition and popular affection) accumulated on Moro's personality and which represents a precious testimony of Moro's importance in Italian culture, but which has still not been the object of interpretative analysis and thus not yet studied in its more profound meanings.
- They cannot even be provided by the **many interpretations** on Moro that have been made over the last three decades, since – with some exceptions – they are hardly usable, either because they are partial and incomplete or because they have been constructed on the basis of the news of the day, or because they are excessively influenced by the political debate prevailing at the time they were made.

Another insight into the possible **existence of a “project”** of Aldo Moro is the presence in him of certain factors of continuity, of an overall vision of politics and of the relationship between state and society, as well as certain general strategic orientations which, on the whole, seem to have constantly guided his political action. Three elements can be highlighted in this regard.

The first is the constant **tendency for inclusion** that Moro showed throughout his political life. With great awareness and determination, he always tried to involve everyone in the democratisation and development processes, thereby avoiding the creation of fences or boundaries, and he always tried to open negotiation channels when these fences or boundaries were set up by others.

It is in this light that one should interpret his efforts – in the Assembly drafting the Italian Constitution – to oppose any instrumental behaviour and to favour the emergence of an orientation open to dialogue and to constructive solutions, despite the great resistance to this at the time. This also concerned the Catholic sphere which, in some of its important spheres, had a tendency to view the democratic system as a space to occupy rather than as a “common house” – as Moro suggested – to be built together with the other political cultures.

At the same time, behind the entire experience of the Centre-Left, one notes Moro’s explicit and often emphasised preoccupation to strengthen the democratic system so that it could include sections of the population that were or felt excluded.

Strong traces of this particular attitude towards inclusion is also found in Moro’s action in **foreign policy**. It is enough to recall his interpretation of the processes of **distension between East and West**, which he wanted to be increasingly based on trust and thus geared to openness and cooperation with the eastern European countries, rather than on a balance between the forces fielded (which inevitably led to an escalation in the arms race).

Even Moro’s approach to themes of **international cooperation** and to **North-South relations** seems to be driven by this very same logic. This approach, which was the forerunner of positions that came to light in a complete manner only later, is based on a consideration of the intrinsic value of every culture and of every society and thus rejects any form of

lgitimacy of positions affirming or even tacitly assuming a substantial “hierarchy” between different social systems, thereby making it possible to have really inclusive relations on an equal footing between people and countries.

Similarly, even Moro’s interpretation of **European unification** links up with this inclusion theme. For Moro, a united Europe was the result of a complex process of social and cultural convergence, even before being a political and economic one, that had to be steered in order to create new opportunities of expression for all the continent’s territorial and social realities, above all for the “outermost and most neglected” ones, so that they could escape the “iniquitous law of the great concentration of wellbeing”.

In this regard, one must also not overlook Moro’s commitment to supporting **human rights**, which he interpreted not only as an overall reference for political action, but also specific instruments of intervention through which to search for those conditions of mutual recognition and equality between individuals and societies for the construction of cohesive and solid societies.

A second element that appears to characterise Moro’s “project” is **social pluralism**, which he considered as a manifestation of the multiplicity and vastness of the forms of social life.

Unlike many political leaders of his day, he saw in the growing tendency of contemporary societies to differentiate one another and to socially and culturally articulate, an “expression of the free expansion of man’s varied and rich unitary vocation” that can open new spaces for action and creativity – spaces that politics was called upon to identify, interpret and support, but also to regulate, in order to enable everyone to fully enjoy them within an authentically democratic framework. In Moro’s view, the different manifestations of social dynamism represented as many **signals** that did not only concern politics, but also brought deeper spheres into play, up to and including religious faith itself. Not by chance, in referring to these manifestations, Moro often resorted to the category of “**liberation**”, which is the bearer of meanings transcending the horizon of politics itself to connect up with a broader perspective of emancipation.

Also for the positive meaning that he accorded to it, Moro did not see in social pluralism, *per se*, any factor of division or source of conflict. The problem was, if anything, that of searching for and maintaining a conver-

gence – in any condition – between the demands and meanings of every cultural, religious or political family on the basis of a common “**human value**”, of an “elementary idea of man” in which everyone could identify and on which to base civil cohabitation.

What stands out in this orientation is Moro’s particular propensity to topologically place values not “on high”, as assumptions from which to deductively derive personal and collective behaviours, but “below”, as concrete and free driving forces acting at the very foundations of social life and equipped with an autonomous “moral force”.

Indeed, Moro was not unaware of the serious difficulties of politics in coping with the increased social pluralism and in seeking unifying and synthesising elements. It is in this key that we should interpret Moro’s preoccupation with a political system increasingly less able to **completely and effectively represent** all the members of a society that has become increasingly more articulated and differentiated. With similar apprehension, Moro also noted a serious inadequacy of the “**political party**” form itself, as an institution that could channel citizens’ needs and could interpret their increasingly manifest and pressing aspirations and demands.

To this latter aspect is connected a **third element** that appears to point to a “project” underlying Moro’s political activity and which revolves around the idea of “**achieving democracy**”.

At various times in his political career, Moro repeatedly showed a clear awareness of the incompleteness of the democratic process and the resulting need to move towards a common goal of a stable democratic system that is dynamic and open to change – over and beyond political contingency and momentary divisions.

In the Italian political context, this element crystallised around the idea of a “**third phase**” to which Moro devoted himself, particularly in his later days, without, however, having the time to fully develop and formalise it. Around this idea was Moro’s preoccupation of activating and sustaining over time a process for stabilising the political system in order to enable the introduction, even in Italy, of a real **democracy of alternating governments**.

Although there are still doubts on the contents and stages it would have had, this “third phase”, in Moro’s thinking, undoubtedly was not an action of mere institutional construction. Instead, it appeared to be a process

geared to favouring an overall growth of Italian political culture enabling the affirmation and concrete implementation of a set of democratic principles and rules that are sincerely shared by all the actors of civil and political life. All this constituted a precondition for achieving a shift from a “**blocked democracy**” – a victim of conflicting vetoes and of various forms of *conventio ad excludendum* – to an “**accomplished democracy**”, focused on a normal turnover of powers from one government to another. Indeed, this “third phase” does not seem to be a perspective developed by Moro only later in life but the “natural” result, as it were, of a process that started a long time before. This is suggested, amongst other things, by the contiguity between Moro’s aspiration for a democratic system based on a relationship of trust between political parties and his vision of the building of a “common house” of all political cultures – a vision he had already developed thirty years before.

These three elements – but perhaps others can also be found – already seem enough to confirm the thesis of the existence, in Moro, of a strategic continuity that takes on, for many aspects, the features of a real political project whose presence can also be found in the more difficult and contradictory phases of his human and political life.

The activities

Commemoration meetings

The itinerary of the initiatives promoted to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Aldo Moro’s death saw an initial public event in the roundtable discussion entitled “**Responsabilità europea. La necessità e l’urgenza di portare a compimento il processo costituente per l’Europa unita**” (European Responsibility. The need and the urgency to bring to completion the constitution process for a united Europe), held in Rome on 9 May 2007 in the Sala del Cenacolo of the Italian Parliament. The roundtable saw the participation of Mino Martinazzoli (lawyer), Massimo D’Alema (Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Pierferdinando Casini (President of the Foundation of the Chamber of Deputies). The initiative focused on the European unification process, which is experiencing a moment of great uncertainty and difficulty and that, also for this reason, still needs to be fully interpreted, not just because it is a political-institutional project, but also – as Moro proposed – because it is a social, economic and cultural process that is somehow irreversible.

On 9 May 2008, on the occasion of the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of Aldo Moro's death, a roundtable discussion was held in the Sala delle Colonne of the Italian Parliament. The roundtable was entitled “**Aldo Moro tra memoria e storia**” (Aldo Moro between memory and history) and saw the participation of Alfonso Alfonsi (President of the Accademia di studi storici Aldo Moro), Agnese Moro (Accademia di studi storici Aldo Moro), Alberto Melloni (University of Modena & Reggio Emilia), Renato Moro (Roma Tre University), Franco Frattini (Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Francesco Rutelli (senator).

The issue raised was that of how the figure of Aldo Moro has been interpreted by Italian culture, by becoming deeply rooted in collective memory, and how it is now possible to support serious systematic historiographic research on the statesman which is only possible to start up today, thirty years after his death.

The international conference

The itinerary culminates with the international conference entitled “**The governance of societies in the 21st century. Thinking back to Aldo Moro**”, to be held on 17-20 November in Rome, in the Palazzo Marini of the Italian Parliament.

The conference deals with some of the great changes affecting contemporary societies in the shift from “modernity” to the so-called “post-modernity”, by highlighting the issue of how to provide political guidance to social contexts that have become increasingly more fragmented and complex, characterised by new forms of social life that tend to escape traditional political categories. In promoting this reflection, the conference also aims to favour a discussion on aspects of Aldo Moro's work which, if analysed in adequate depth and recontextualised, can still be useful in order to face the change processes underway, despite the fact that Moro lived and worked in very different times to those of today. To this end, part of the initiative will be devoted to analysing the situation of historiographic research on Moro and on the years he was a leading figure in the political scene.

The international conference, as already mentioned, is organised into an **opening session, a concluding session and a work session**.

The **opening session** envisages the participation of exponents of the cultural, political and institutional world. It aims to present the general framework of the conference and to introduce the themes to be dealt with during the initiative.

The **concluding session** involves some of the speakers already speaking in the preceding work session, in order to summarise the results and to relate them to each other.

As regards the **work session**, which represents the most important part of the conference, it is focused on **five theme areas**, each one of which will have a specific **session**, as detailed in the following sections.

- **First session:** “Italy and Europe in international relations change processes”;
- **Second session:** “Building consensus in contemporary societies”;
- **Third session:** “Aldo Moro in historiographic research”;
- **Fourth session:** “Religions and democracy”;
- **Fifth session:** “Constituent processes and the achieving of democracy”.

These sessions are conceived as moments of scientific discussion and thus mainly see the participation of Italian and foreign exponents of the research world.

Other activities

- **Website**

A website has been set up for the Accademia (www.accademiaaldmo.ro.org) and this contains, amongst other things, all the information on the various initiatives envisaged as well as the relative documents.

- **Scientific discussions**

Some meetings have already been held in 2008 in order to discuss the themes at the heart of the 30th Anniversary. These meetings, chaired by Giancarlo Quaranta, were held at the Scuola di Sociologia e di Scienze Umane, with which the Accademia traditionally cooperates in order to carry on its own study and research activities. Participants of these meetings included Renato Moro (Roma Tre University), Alberto Melloni (Uni-

versity of Modena & Reggio Emilia) and Danilo Zolo (University of Florence).

- **Group for the promotion of historiographic research on Aldo Moro**

The Accademia promoted the setting up of a group of historians from various Italian universities to support historiographic research on Aldo Moro. The work group, coordinated by Renato Moro, will be instated on 22 May and will include the participation of: Piero Craveri (Ateneo Suor Orsola Benincasa, Naples), Guido Formigoni (IULM, Milan), Agostino Giovagnoli (Università Cattolica, Milan), Francesco Malgeri (La Sapienza University, Roma), Alberto Melloni (University of Modena & Reggio Emilia), Leopoldo Nuti (Roma Tre University), Paolo Pombeni (University of Bologna) and Mariuccia Salvati (University of Bologna).

- **Newsletter**

To help provide suitable information on the initiatives envisaged in the itinerary, the Accademia has started up an online newsletter.

- **Archives**

Within the various initiatives, the Accademia is sorting the photographic archive on Aldo Moro and is preparing an archive of documentary materials of various kinds (press reviews of the times, correspondence, notes, etc.) in order to make them available to scholars and researchers.

- **Institutional meetings**

A programme of institutional meetings has also been started up within the itinerary. The ones already held include the one with the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, and the one with the President of the Foundation of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Pierferdinando Casini.

Initiatives under the patronage of the Accademia

Within the itinerary marking the 30th anniversary of Aldo Moro's death, the Accademia is supporting events of particular importance organised by other subjects during the year in order to commemorate the statesman.

These events include the cultural programme that the Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII is dedicating to Aldo Moro, starting with the **installation-exhibition of historical film footage** "Moro, l'Italia, la coscienza. Trittico 1978-2008", scheduled in many Italian cities.

The Accademia is also patronising some conferences focusing on Aldo Moro's thought and work, and these will be held in Iseo (Brescia), on the initiative of the review "L'autonomia", and in San Pellegrino Terme (Bergamo), under the aegis of the municipal government, respectively on 10 and 11 May. On both occasions, the conferences will be followed by two concerts, the first in the Teatro Grande of Brescia and the second at the Donizetti theatre of Bergamo, scheduled within the **45th Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli International Piano Festival**.

Finally, the Accademia is supporting the in-depth study and research initiative entitled "Per non dimenticare Aldo Moro, per conoscere la nostra Storia" ("Lest we forget Aldo Moro, to know our History"), currently underway and conducted by the **Centro di Documentazione Archivio Flamigni**, in cooperation with CEDOST of Bologna. Amongst other things, the initiative envisages roundtable sessions, theatrical performances and editorial initiatives as well as the dissemination of materials taken from the Centre's archives.