

# Donne R-Esistenti

## Antifascist resistance and urban guerrilla warfare

From September 8, 1943 to June 4, 1944

The 271 days of Rome Open City

The 271 days of the Nazi-Fascist occupation of Rome were characterized by urban guerrilla warfare in which the whole city was involved and in which everyone gave her/his contribution, directly or indirectly. Guerrilla warfare was the military response that the three left-wing parties of the CLN (Partito d'Azione, Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity and Italian Communist Party) gave to the occupation. Thus, the tripartite junta was born and the city was divided into eight zones, over which the four GAPs, the patriotic action groups, operated.

Other formations, unrelated to the CLN, such as Bandiera Rossa, were also born. It was an opportunity for redemption, socially and politically, at the capitulation of September 8th. Actions were decided based on the value of the targets to be hit; the goal was to extend the irregular practice of conflict to the whole city, in the perspective of a mass action of the people. The peculiarities of the Roman context, however, did not allow the implementation of a popular insurrection; the Roman Resistance therefore ended with the entry of the Allied forces, after very long days of waiting.

In these days the men and women of Rome did their part: hiding Jews and straggling soldiers, taking in displaced persons, making neighborhoods and townships inhospitable to the Nazis and Fascists, failing to show up for forced labor calls and suffering roundups, killings, torture.

It is mainly Roman women who weaved the thread of a great spider web that, from the center to the suburbs, procured food by organizing assaults on bakeries, distributed leaflets and clandestine newspapers in a capillary manner, distributed four-pronged nails to be thrown on the streets to delay the entry of German troops into Rome, and transported weapons and supplies for the partisan formations at enormous risk.

In addition to the armed Resistance in Rome, as Carla Capponi points out, another Resistance was carried out, the "civil" Resistance, whose goals were to overcome hunger, loneliness and abandonment, to survive and make a living for their children, the elderly, the soldiers disbanded after September 8th, the partisans, and to hide Jews. In the words of Michela Ponzani, with women, the Resistance became "care for life," with countless actions of opposition to war and fascism, conducted without weapons. In 1943, the presence of women in the public sphere in Rome, as in the rest of Italy, took on a mass character but remained invisible, believed to be the result of unconscious choices, due either to an innate maternal sense or an equally innate pacifism. The "official" historiographical approach locates the only true Resistance in the armed one and therefore "the armed male" is the one who liberated Italy and founded the Republic. Women, even female partisans, are credited with a "weak contribution," thus not as foundational. But this is not the case; on the contrary. Without women, the nine months of the Resistance, for which Rome received the Gold Medal for Military Valor, would have been very different.

## The “Gappiste”<sup>1</sup>

When people talk about women and the Resistance in Rome, they mostly talk about the four “gappiste”: Carla Capponi, Lucia Ottobriani, Marisa Musu and Maria Teresa Regard. Their courage and participation in military actions is celebrated. Marina Girelli and Matilde Luciana "Lucy" Ribet are also among the gappiste.

They came from middle-class families, were educated, and had developed a strong rebellion against the fascist, patriarchal culture fomented by the school and propaganda. Awareness of the absence of basic rights, prohibitions and impositions drove them to go underground and fight for freedom. They abandoned home, security, work and shared with their comrades bread, loneliness, danger, gained their trust and in some cases their love.

They participated in important military operations, such as the partisan action of Via Rasella, they armed, they shot, they killed. They were not inferior to men, submissive and obedient wives and mothers, but were comrades in struggle and life. They considered themselves their equals and this was a trait that characterized them. Their contribution to the Roman Resistance makes their testimonies particularly relevant.

### Carla Capponi

Carla Capponi was born in Rome on 7 December 1918, growing up in an antifascist family of the Roman petty bourgeoisie. Her first civic engagement began the day after the San Lorenzo bombing, there Carla rescued wounded and assisted displaced people. On that occasion a friend asked her to host a meeting of communists in her home. While they decided on their next actions, Carla was playing Chopin's Nocturnes to cover the noise of the meeting: this was the beginning of her resistance activity. In the aftermath of the battle of Porta San Paolo, Carla saw partisans walking in front of her house and decided to join them. Under the battle name "Elena", she joined the GAP coordinated by Rosario Bentivegna, with whom she later got married. Initially she played marginal roles, but Carla wanted to fight and in the face of her comrades' refusal to own a weapon, she stole a *beretta* (a gun) from a young soldier. In March 1944, she first participated in the attack on Via Tomacelli against a fascist procession, then was among the perpetrators of the Via Rasella bombing. After the liberation, she was awarded the gold medal for military valor, and in 1953 she was elected MP on the PCI lists. Shortly before her death, she published the book *With a Woman's Heart*.

### Lucia Ottobriani

Lucia Ottobriani was born in Rome on 2 October 1924, and spent her childhood until the age of 15 in Mulhouse, in the Alsace region. The second of nine children, she grew up in a poor environment, and it was her social condition that would later determine her anti-fascist choice. In a climate of religious tolerance, she came into contact with Judaism, but following the invasion of France, she was forced with her family to return to Rome in 1940. In 1943, she met Mario Fiorentini, a communist intellectual who introduced her to anti-

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<sup>1</sup> The **Patriotic Action Groups** ([Italian: Gruppi di Azione Patriottica; GAP](#)), formed by the general command of the [Garibaldi Brigades](#) at the end of October 1943, were small groups of partisans that were born on the initiative of the [Italian Communist Party](#) to operate mainly in the city, based on the experience of the [French Resistance](#). The militants of the GAP were called **Gappiste**.

fascist circles. A love affair begun with Mario, forming Rome's first Gappisti couple. Lucia Ottobri in the aftermath of 8 September 1943, joined the Resistance without delay, with the battle names "Maria and "Leda." Her assignments were first civilian, but already in the following month she became deputy commander of the Central Gap "Antonio Gramsci." After the Via Rasella attack, she and Mario were sent outside Rome, on the Tivoli hills, from which they continued their partisan activities. After the Liberation of Rome, she married Mario Fiorentini and returned to her job as a clerk; in 1953 she was awarded the silver medal for military valor.

### **Maria Theresa Regard**

Maria Teresa Regard, a silver medalist for military valor, was born in Rome on 16 January 1924, to a Swiss family. She spent her childhood in Naples, where, at age of 16, she discovered political commitment by approaching a Trotskyist group. Back in Rome, she studied at the Liceo Mamiani, where she met Marisa Musu and Adele Maria Jemolo. She joined the ranks of the PCI in 1941, then the Gap, with the battle name "Piera". She was assigned to the group commanded by Calamandrei, later her husband. She participated in the Porta San Paolo clashes (carrying orders and dispensing ration and water to fighters), in the action against the German command at the Hotel Flora, and in the attack on the German soldiers' refreshment point at Termini station. She was arrested on 30 January 1944 and taken to Via Tasso, interrogated and then released for lack of evidence. After the Liberation, her journalistic career took her to London, Vietnam, Tibet and China. In 1999 she was a witness at the Priebke trial.

### **Marisa Musu**

Born in Rome on 18 April 1925 to an antifascist family of Sardinian descent. Her parents were among the founders of the Partito D'Azione. In 1942, the young Liceo Mamiani student joined the underground organization of the Communist Party with the role of partisan relay. She participated in the battle of Porta San Paolo and, with the battle name "Rosa", she became the youngest member in the Gappist formation led by Calamandrei. Among the many actions in which she took part was the notorious Via Rasella attack. She distinguished herself by cunning in the arrest of Carla Capponi, saving her companion from arrest. Arrested and sentenced to death by the Germans in April 1944, pretending to be ill, she escaped with the help of some anti-fascist doctors from Santo Spirito Hospital. At the end of the war, she was awarded the Silver Medal for Military Valor. After the war, she continued her political activity in the PCI and was a journalist for "Paese Sera" and "L'Unità". She was sent to Beijing, Vietnam, Prague in 1968, Mozambique and Palestine. On the Resistance in Rome, she wrote two books *La ragazza di via Orazio*, and, in collaboration with Comrade Polito, *Roma ribelle*.

*<<There followed uninterruptedly the ritual of finding each other, of hugging and being surprised that we were still alive [...]. Suddenly someone called me 'comrade' [...]. It was the first time someone said "comrade" to me [...] - "that word gave me the measure and sense of the freedom I had won.>> Carla Capponi*

## **Partisan women and patriot women**

### **Adele Bei**

She was born in 1904 in Cantiano (Pesaro and Urbino) into a socialist family. In 1922 she married Domenico Ciufoli, among the founders of the Communist Party of Italy. To escape arrest, the couple took refuge in Belgium, Luxembourg and finally France. In 1933, on one of her underground trips, she was arrested in Rome and sentenced to eighteen years in prison. She served seven years and six months and two years of confinement on the island of Ventotene, between Lazio and Campania. After 8 September 1943, she joined the Resistance in Rome, organizing women's defense groups and bakeries assaults. At the end of the conflict, she was awarded the rank of captain and granted the Military Cross for valor. She was a leader of the UDI and the only woman appointed to the National Council by designation of the CGIL. On 2 June 1946, she was among the twenty-one women elected to the Constituent Assembly. Elected senator in the lists of the PCI in 1948, in the following decade she was leader and secretary of the tobacco workers' union. In the 1953 and 1958 elections, she became an MP. In 1972 she became a national councilor of ANPPA.

### **Marisa Cinciari Rodano**

She was born in Rome in 1921. She was arrested in May 1943 and detained for some time in the Mantellate Prison. Her Resistance took place in the ranks of the Catholic Communist Movement and in the activities of the Women's Defense Groups, including propaganda, collection of food and clothing, assistance to partisans and families of the fallen ones, mobilization of women in workplaces, organization of demonstrations and strikes. She called it a "resistance without weapons." Co-founder of UDI, in 1946 she joined the Italian Communist Party and was among the first women to vote in the Referendum between monarchy and republic. City councilwoman in Rome from 1946 to 1956, deputy for twenty years, senator for another five, and the first woman to serve as vice-president of the Chamber (1963-68). In 1979 and 1984, she was elected to the European Parliament.

### **Maddalena Accorinti**

Committed to the dissemination of the clandestine press, she was among the organizers of assaults on bakeries, where white bread was baked for fascists and Nazis. The assaults took place in the neighborhoods of Trionfale, Borgo Pio, and Via Leone Quarto. She was, moreover, among the many women of the Resistance mixed in the crowd in front of the barracks from Viale Giulio Cesare on the day Teresa Gullace was killed.

### **Marcella De Francesco**

Born in Rome on 19 June 1920, in 1942, in total hiding, she joined the Communist Party, for which, during the Resistance, she committed herself as a "gappista". After liberation, she was appointed second lieutenant in the Italian Army to honor her wartime commitment. She was secretary to Palmiro Togliatti when the latter became Minister of Justice. She later became editorial secretary and later editor-in-chief of the magazine "Rinascita." In '45, she married Maurizio Ferrara, with whom she was in Moscow between '58 and '61 to join him in his role as correspondent of "L'Unità". She became involved in

the women's section of the PCI together with Nilde Iotti, Adriana Seroni and Miriam Mafai. With these, she wrote several books, including *Conversando con Togliatti*.

### **Laura Garroni**

Born in Rome in 1922. She attended the Liceo classico Visconti, where she met Giulio Cortini, a future Gappista and life companion. It was in that environment that she began her militancy: at 21, she was arrested for spreading subversive material and after three months released. After 25 July 1943, she decided to join the GAP coordinated by the Communist Party. Under the nom de guerre "Caterina" she was in charge of explosives in the bomb disposal group, in particular making the device used in the Via Rasella action. After liberation, she worked as a librarian at the University of Naples Federico II. She died in Rome in 1996. In 2015, Mayor Ignazio Marino dedicated a section of the bike/pedestrian path from Ponte Milvio to Castel Giubileo to her.

### **Giuliana Lestini**

She was born on 11 January 1922. At only 21, she collaborated with her father, Engineer Pietro Lestini, who, after the German occupation of Rome, had created a clandestine network to hide politicians, military personnel, Allied prisoners and Jews from the Nazi-Fascists. The first hiding place was the little theater provided by the parish priest of the church of San Gioacchino in the Prati district. Then a safer hiding place was found: the narrow space between the trusses and the barrel vault of the dome. In case of need, the refugees were taken in at the Lestini house. In 1995, Peter and Giuliana were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. In 2004, Giuliana was included among the Righteous in the Garden of the Righteous in Washington and since 2009, father and daughter have been part of the Garden of the Righteous of the World in Padua.

### **Fanny Gasparini**

She was born in Bagnolo in Piano (Reggio Emilia) on 7 February 1911. Orphaned by her mother at the age of three and with her father paralyzed, she grew up with her aunt and uncle who were seasonal laborers and worked as a "mondina" (rice worker) until she was fourteen. With the advent of fascism, her brother, clubbed by local "squadristi" (fascist paramilitary squads), fled to Belgium. She arrived in Rome as a service woman and, after marrying in the village, returned with her husband to the capital where she obtained a portage. During the Resistance, she joined the PCI and the GAP. The porter's lodge became a meeting place, a hiding place for anti-fascists and a clearinghouse for orders. Fanny herself, later appointed second lieutenant, was responsible for retrieving weapons and bombs, transporting them in her son's baby carriage, with the baby on top. After the war, she continued her political militancy for decades.

### **Marcella Ficca Monaco**

Marcella Ficca, a silver medalist for military valor, was born in 1915 and was an active antifascist from the 1930s along with her husband Alfredo Monaco. She took part in the Resistance as a partisan relay, assigned to the transport of weapons and giving asylum to partisans in the house at Via della Lungara 28B, located inside Regina Coeli Prison and assigned to her husband as the prison doctor. This circumstance, on 24 January 1944, enabled her to coordinate the escape from Regina Coeli of Pertini, Saragat and five

other political prisoners. The brilliant operation was recounted by Marcella Ficca herself in the documentary "Woman in the Resistance," filmed for RAI in 1965. She also managed to hide a Polish Jewish child in her home, who was reunited with her mother after the war.

### **Joyce Salvadori Lussu**

Gioconda Salvadori was born in Florence in 1912 to an antifascist Anglo-Marchigian family. In 1924, she was forced to move to Switzerland following the beating of her father by Florentine "squadristi". She studied philosophy in Germany, but with the advent of Nazism returned to Switzerland. Here, she approached the anti-fascist Justice and Freedom movement and met Emilio Lussu, an anti-fascist intellectual and future life companion. Between 1933 and 1938, she lived in Africa, where she touched the effects of Italian colonialism and began his poetic activity. In the aftermath of September 8th, under the battle name "Simonetta", she served as a partisan relay. After the liberation, she was awarded the Silver Medal for Military Valor. She fought for civil rights and engaged in the translation of resistant poets from around the world; she died in Rome in 1998.

### **Fulvia Ripa Di Meana**

Fulvia Ripa Di Meana was born in 1901, a cousin of Giuseppe Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, she hid her beloved "Beppo" in her home during his time in hiding. In fact, in the months following September 8th, Fulvia's house on Bruxelles Street became the headquarters of the Clandestine Military Front, of which Montezemolo was the founder. On 25 January 1944, Montezemolo was arrested; Fulvia strived for his release, first speaking with General Dollman, then receiving an audience with the Pope, but both attempts proved unsuccessful: Montezemolo died in the massacre of the Fosse Ardeatine. Despite this, Fulvia understood the vital importance of the FMCR and continued her resistance activities within it. After the liberation of Rome, she published *Roma clandestina*, a diary recounting the dramatic months "in which Rome experienced its passion".

### **Laura Lombardo Radice**

Born in Rijeka on 21 September 1913, to pedagogists Giuseppe Lombardo Radice and Gemma Harasim. After the arrest of his brother Lucio, she joined the Resistance, collaborating with the underground Communist group. She sponsored, after the fall of the regime, the Committee for Assistance to Victims of Fascism, and joined the Women's Defense Groups and the UDI. She taught at the School for War Veterans, organizing anti-fascist activity in the school, demonstrations after the murder of Teresa Gullace and numerous other initiatives, such as bakeries assaults. In clandestine antifascist activity, she met her future husband Pietro Ingrao. An active militant in the PCI and UDI, she contributed to the magazine "Noi Donne" and many other newspapers. After the teaching experience ended, she was a volunteer at Rebibbia Prison and a founding member of the association "Ora d'aria"

### **Adele Maria Jemolo**

Born in 1926 to Catholic historian Arturo Carlo Jemolo and writer Adele Morghen Jemolo. She studied at Liceo Mamiani, where she developed an antifascist consciousness, with

her schoolmate Musu. In 1942, she met Lucio Lombardo Radice, whom she married in 1946. Admitted to the underground network of the Communist Party, she formed a "Little Committee" with other partisan women to help escaped prisoners, organize demonstrations, distribute press and posters. On 3 March 1944, she witnessed the assassination of Teresa Gullace and, together with Laura Lombardo Radice and Marcella Lapicciarella, set up a burial chamber in the street. The action forced the Nazis to release the widowed Gullace. After the Liberation, she graduated in medicine, became a lecturer and researcher. In 1968, her name, along with that of her parents, was inscribed among the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem.

### **Anna Carrani**

Among the most important days that characterized the Resistance in Rome was the general strike of 3 May 1944, organized by the CLN in agreement with the city's Trade Union Committee. Workers in the tobacco industry, led by Anna Carrani, were in the front line. The women workers of the Manifattura Tabacchi in Piazza Mastai, who had been mobilizing for a few weeks already, demanded an increase in the bread ration, a 'bombing allowance' and a wage increase. All linked to firm hostility to the regime, as evidenced by the participation in the May 3rd strike: a solidarity army of eight hundred female workers stood outside the Manifattura Tabacchi more than an hour.

### **Matilde Bassani Finzi**

She was born in Ferrara in 1918 to an antifascist Jewish family. In 1940, she received a degree in literature from the University of Padua, at the time of which she was denied honors because she was Jewish. Already an active antifascist, she was arrested on the night of 11 June 1943 as a subversive. In the aftermath of Mussolini's fall, she reached Rome. Here, Matilde begun her partisan activities; in fact, together with Ulisse Finzi she was among the organizers of the Comando Superiore Partigiano, which was responsible for coordinating the partisan bands outside the CLN. While on her way to the Vatican to hide two Polish refugees she was wounded in the knee by the SS. After liberation, she was vice-president of the National Women's Union and active in other democratic organizations, in which she worked tirelessly on behalf of women and minors.

### **Sister Marguerite Bernés**

She was born in Algiers in 1901 and grew up in Marseille. At age 27 she joined the Daughters of Charity. Between 1943 and 1944, together with the parish priest of the church of San Gioacchino in the Prati district, Antonio Dressino, and engineer Pietro Lestini, she helped political fugitives, disbanded soldiers and Jews. The refugees were hidden in the church attic, and Sister Margherita provided and prepared food for them. In 1953, in Jerusalem, she served as superior of the local convent and worked to assist physically or mentally handicapped children. In 1974, she was recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem.

### **Maria Michetti**

She was born in Rome in 1922 into an antifascist family. It was among the desks of the Liceo Visconti that her awakening took place, when in 1938 she saw some Jewish schoolmates disappear. The circulation of the clandestine sheet "L'Unità" was her first

antifascist activity. She was mainly involved in logistics, gathering information and organizing relays and mass work in the neighborhoods, especially among women. When the Nazi occupiers reduced the daily per capita ration of bread in March '44, partisan women like Maria worked to ensure that the protest was organized and had political significance. After the arrival of the Americans, she continued political work in the Communist Party and UDI. She headed the Women's Commission in the Roman Federation of the PCI, was a councilor in the Province of Rome and, from 1959 to 1971, a city councilwoman. From 1954 to 1987 she was a university researcher and sociologist.

### **Marina Girelli**

Belonged to the GAP Gramsci commanded by Mario Fiorentini. She was the first wife of GAP member Luigi Pintor. After the war she worked for years in the administration of "l'Unità". She died in the late 1970s.

### **Raffaella Chiatti**

Raffaella Chiatti was born in 1904. Nicknamed "Sora Lella", the events of the war caught up with her at an advanced age. Her house on Sant'Audutto Street, close to the small bridge that reaches Piazza Brin, offered a valuable observation point on the access road to the neighborhood. Her work at the Red Cross as a nurse also exempted her from the curfew, reasoning that Raffaella fitted perfectly into the role of partisan relay. She died on 22 January 1993 of suffocation, probably as a result of an attack in her home by a robber. She had recently turned 89 years old.

### **Egle Gualdi**

Egle Gualdi was born in Modena in 1901, then moved, at the age of six, to the province of Reggio Emilia. She worked as a factory worker in the Setifici Italiani Riuniti to cope with the difficult family economic conditions. In 1923, she joined the Communist Party and, in 1924, was among the founders of the first Communist cell at the Setifici. From 1926 to 1929, refusing to submit to fascism, she was sent to confinement first on the island of Favignana, then on Ustica and, finally, on Ponza. She went into hiding and expatriated to Paris in 1931 and, at the outbreak of war, shuttled between Paris and Marseille, engaging in spreading anti-fascism. She returned to Italy after the fall of fascism, on 14 August 1943, and from September 8th contributed to the creation of the first partisan formations in Lombardy and Rome. In Rome, the PCI appointed her head of the II zone of operations and she organized with other communist leaders the oven assaults of April-May 1944. Among the founders of the Unione Donne Italiane, in 1945 she was a delegate to the first congress of the trade union CGIL, where an agenda in favor of women's right to vote was approved. Recognized as a partisan with the rank of captain, she became a national-level communist leader after the war. She died in Rome in 1976.

### **Cesira Fiori**

Cesira Fiori was born in Rome in 1890. In 1912, she graduated in pedagogy and French language and, a few years later, won the competition as a primary school teacher. In 1921, she was among the first members of the Communist Party. In 1933, she was arrested with her adopted son Mario for conspiratorial activity against the fascist regime; after her imprisonment, she was sent to confinement first on the island of Ponza, then on



Ustica and finally to Maratea. She then joined her husband Umberto Cumar, also in confinement in Abruzzo. With the beginning of the Resistance, the Communist Party asked her to remain in Abruzzo, where she organized a partisan band. In 1944, she and her husband were sentenced to be shot for sabotaging some telephone lines at German headquarters. Thanks to a tip-off from the local Carabinieri marshal, they escaped and took refuge on the Gran Sasso mountain. She returned to Rome in 1944, and although her partisan activities did not take place in our city, her connection with the Roman Resistance was unbreakable. She died in Rome in 1976.

### **Concetta Piazza**

Concetta Piazza was born in Delia, in the province of Caltanissetta, on 19 November 1910. While practicing her profession as a midwife in Guidonia Montecelio (RM), she provided aid to Italian and Allied prisoners who escaped from prison camps, in close collaboration with the Banda Ferraris. She was arrested in January 1944 and initially taken to Via Tasso, where she was tortured, and then transferred to Regina Coeli prison, in which she remained for a month, from 25 February to 23 March 1944.

After the war, she was recognized as an invalid combatant partisan due to the severe wounds she sustained after her arrest and, in 1967, she was awarded the Bronze Medal for Military Valor.

*<< For all those who only know of tobacco the good taste of cigarettes, it is difficult to have a clear idea of the living and working conditions of tobacco workers.>> Adele Bei*

*<< In the morning the nuns came running in shouting: You are free! Down at the door the guard, a very fussy guy, took our fingerprints! Unbelievable! I didn't have tram money. I go up and tell the attendant: I don't have the money I'm leaving Regina Coeli now, I was a political prisoner, what do I do? He smiles at me and says: Bella mia, sit down! >> Carla Angelini*

## The postwomen and partisan relays

### **Alba Meloni**

Alba Meloni was born in Chiusi in 1925. In her youth she moved to Rome, where her family joined her shortly afterwards because of the absolute poverty in which she fell. Alba's most dramatic moment was the bombing of San Lorenzo, which sharpened her sense of rebellion. In fact, after September 8th, under the battle name "Stella," Alba took part in the Resistance as a partisan relay, making herself the protagonist of numerous partisan actions including assaults on the Ostiense ovens. After the liberation, she attended the PCI school but fell ill with tuberculosis and therefore was forced to stay in a sanatorium. Here, she received the care of Pietro Ingrao and made the acquaintance of Carla Capponi. Granitic with respect to her communist position, in 2020 the ANPI section in Testaccio was named after her.

### **Giuliana Nenni**

Born in Faenza in 1911, her father was Pietro Nenni, future secretary of the PSI. In 1927, she joined him in Paris, expatriated to escape persecution by the "squadristi". From there, she began her political activity, which culminated in 1936 with the secretariat of the Anti-Fascist Struggle Committee. When war broke out, she moved to Palalda (France), continuing her anti-fascist propaganda activities. With the fall of Mussolini, she returned to Italy and organized in Rome together with Adele Bei Ciufoli, the Ribet sisters, Adele Maria Jemolo, Maria Fermi and Linda Puccini, the Piccolo Comitato, which dealt with tasks collateral to partisan activity. After 1945, she was elected a deputy from the ranks of the PSI and then a senator between 1958 and 1963; she was the first parliamentarian to present a divorce bill. After her father's death, she edited and published his Diaries.

### **Lidia De Angelis**

Lidia De Angelis was born in 1922 to a family of laborers from Abruzzo. At first the family emigrated to Brazil, then moved to Rome, where her father was employed as a garbage collector. In 1942, her father died, and Lidia was eligible for public employment at the Rome registry office. This obliged her to take a Fascist Party membership card, but as early as 1943, Lidia joined the Communist Party, thus beginning her partisan activities. During her employment at the registry office, she produced false documents intended for other partisans, meanwhile she was a protagonist with about a hundred other women in the assault on the bakery near the "Giulio Cesare" cinema. After the liberation, she was a fervent trade unionist working in the secretariat of the Federbraccianti in Maccarese. In 2019, the park between Viale Maria and Via del Buttero in Maccarese was named after her.

### **Luciana Ribet**

She was born on 26 June 1924 in Rome. After September 8<sup>th</sup>, she was active in the Resistance. At first, she attended Carla Capponi's house together with her sister, then she joined the GAP "Sozzi and Garibaldi." Under the name "Lucy" she carried out delicate tasks within the Piccolo Comitato, an organization of only antifascists women conceived by Giuliana Nenni. Her wartime efforts earned her recognition as a fighting partisan with the rank of Second Lieutenant.

### **Giovanna Marturano**

Giovanna Marturano was born in 1912 into an antifascist, petty bourgeoisie family in Cagliari. In 1931, she moved with her family to Milan and in 1936 she joined the Communist Party. In 1938, she was arrested with her brother; she was granted a pardon, while her brother was sentenced to 14 years in prison. Despite the outbreak of war, Giovanna managed to work, and in 1940 she was hired as a decorator at the Ganci Company, from which she quit because of the harmfulness of lead and because she was not paid according to the qualification for which she was hired. In 1941, she reached the island of Ventotene to marry the confined Pietro Grifone, a union that will go down in history as the "Ventotene marriage." In 1942, she returned to Milan and obtained employment with FACE (Fabbrica Apparecchiature per Comunicazioni Elettriche) In 1943, she returned to Rome and joined the Resistance as a partisan relay alongside the Garibaldi Brigades, a role that earned her a bronze medal for military valor. After the war, she continued to work in the PCI, especially on behalf of women's rights. She died at the age of 101.

### **Giovanna Ribet**

Giovanna Ribet was born on 26 June 1926, in Rome. During the War of Liberation, she participated with her sister in meetings organized by Adele Bei in Carla Capponi's house, where women's emancipation was discussed. Framed within the military formations of the PCI, she was an active protagonist together with Luciana in the Small Committee. In particular, "Giovannella" helped Carla Capponi to find a new refuge when following Guglielmo Blasi's betrayal, the GAPs in Rome suffered a series of arrests. After the liberation, she was recognized as a fighting partisan with the rank of Second Lieutenant

### **Gianna Radiconcini**

She was born in Rome in 1926. After September 8<sup>th</sup>, she joined the Resistance as a partisan relay, carrying dynamite, but first she bought it herself, selling the gold medal of Our Lady of Pompeii she was fond of. She hid some partisans in her house in the Prati neighborhood. One event marked her: the murder of Teresa Gullace. After the liberation, she was first a member of the Partito d'Azione, then fought for women's and family rights between the lines of "La Voce Repubblicana" and finally she was a European federalist with Spinelli. She was the first woman appointed RAI correspondent, working in Brussels and Strasbourg. In 2015, she published *Memorie di una militante azionista – Storia della figlia di un onesto cappellaio* and in 2019 the novel *Semafori Rossi*.

### **Adriana Romoli**

Adriana Romoli was born on 7 December 1928 into an anti-fascist family. Her opposition to fascism began at age 10 when, for defending a Jewish schoolmate discriminated against by racial laws, she was expelled from all schools in the kingdom along with her sister Luciana. Under the name "Anna", she became a partisan relay. She is famous for the episode in which, with great promptness and cold blood, she declared to the Germans, who stopped her at a roadblock, that she was carrying hand grenades. The German let her pass believing in a joke, but what she declared was true. At the age of twelve, she began working as a printer, an activity she carried on all her life. She became an executive

of the Polygraphers and Papermakers union. She was also an executive of the F.G.C.I in Rome.

### **Maria Baccante**

She was born in 1915 in L'Aquila. In 1943, she moved to Pigneto, a popular district in Rome, and immediately began her militancy within the "Bandiera Rossa" group. She specialized in throwing nails and carrying weapons and maintained contacts with partisans in Monte Boragine (Rieti). While in hiding, Fascist police tried to capture her organizing a roundup of all women with the name "Maria" in Pigneto: the action proved to be a failure. In 1946, she was hired as a worker at the "SNIA Viscosa" factory; in 1949, she organized with the other workers the occupation of the building and she was fired for this. No longer able to afford her rent, she displaced to the school of S. Maria della Scala in Trastevere. Here, she organized, together with the other displaced women, workers meetings at the local PCI headquarters, where she fought in favor of women and children.

### **Luciana Romoli**

Luciana Romoli was born on 14 December 1930. Her first "political act" occurred at the age of eight, when she protested in defense of a Jewish classmate who had been humiliated by her fascist substitute teacher. She denounced the classmate's expulsion with a writing prepared with her father's help and printed by an uncle who was a printer, which she and her sister Adriana put in the schoolchildren's folders the next day. This costed her expulsion from all schools in the kingdom. She participated very young in the Resistance under the name "Luce", becoming a partisan relay together with her sister and experiencing very risky situations. Only at the end of World War II, she managed to complete her studies, becoming a biologist. After the war, she worked for the PCI and collaborated with Gianni Rodari. In the 1990s, she begun to bring her testimony to schools.

### **Titina Maselli**

The painter and screenwriter was born in Rome on 11 April 1924 to an artistic family, in which she matured her artistic vocation. As a young girl, she was a partisan relay in the Roman Resistance. Animated by lively ethical and political convictions, her being a communist will never translate into a militant commitment to the party. In September 1944, she participated in the First Free Italy Art Exhibition, promoted in Rome by the Action Party. In 1945, she married painter Toti Scialoja, from whom she divorced a few years later. Her passion for painting was combined in the postwar period with her interest in writing, literature, cinema, theater, and music. Her exhibition activity had as its landing places the Venice Biennale and the Quadriennale in Rome in various editions.

### **Franca Angelini**

Born in 1930, daughter of opponents to the regime, she was a partisan relay in support of her sister Carla. A scholar of literature and theater, after the war, she was professor of History of Theater and Performance at La Sapienza University. She also lectured at the Universities of Florence, Barcelona, Stockholm and Paris. In 2001, she conceived and directed the Multimedia Archive of the Italian Actor, and she was the founder of the International Center for Dramaturgy at the Roman Theater in Fiesole. She published

critical essays, literary works but also magazines. Until before her illness, she was president of the "Istituto Casa di Pirandello e di Studi sulla Drammaturgia Contemporanea", directing "Ariel," the Institute's journal.

**<< From work you retire, from struggle never. >> Giovanna Marturano**

*<< I joined the party driven by a certain class instinct and for action to the politics of fascism. Such anti-fascist consciousness had matured over the years. Contributing factors: hatred of the society that I saw since then represented by fascism, which made me live in the blackest misery. My father's salary was not even enough to feed his seven children. I had been denied the right to study, which was always a great desire of mine. And then the exploitation practiced on me and the factory workers. >> Lidia De Angelis*

*<< 1944 and 1945 were unrepeatable years. In liberated Italy no more arrests, torture, shootings and bombs: end of the nightmare. Suddenly the joy of freedom, until then never experienced. Years indelible in the memory of those who lived through them. We were poor, malnourished, but gai. We were full of hope. Hope in the future. We imagined it full of promise. >> Gianna Radiconcini*

## **Prisoners**

They acted with "prudence, intelligence, cunning, heart" while Rome was prey to the roundups, in degradation and misery. Many of them were arrested, like Elettra Pollastrini, Lina Tozzi, Vera Michelin Salomon; they suffered harsh interrogations, cruel confrontations like Maria Teresa Regard and Iole Mancini. None gave in, each one resisted imprisonment and torture. Regina Coeli is Rome's prison, but there were other places of imprisonment and torture that have become infamous in the city's memory: Via Tasso where the SS Command was quartered, the Oltremare boarding house and the Jaccarino boarding house, used by the fascist gang led by Pietro Koch. After interrogation and torture by the SS and the Koch gang, prisoners were transferred to Regina Coeli, an intermediate stop before deportation or worse, execution.

### **Carla Angelini**

Carla Angelini was born in Rome in 1923 to an anti-fascist family. When the Germans occupied the city, she was enrolled in the second year of medicine at "La Sapienza" University. Her commitment to the Resistance was immediate; in fact, at 17 years old, she was already a partisan relay in the GAP in the Salario district. Later, she worked with Carla Capponi in the PCI's information service, which operated in close contact with the Clandestine Military Front. On 28 January 1944, Carla was arrested because of a denunciation, but she made it in time to warn her parents who managed to save some draft dodgers and a friend of theirs who had escaped from Via Tasso. Carla was taken to Via Tasso where she remained for a month, undergoing numerous interrogations, but given her silence she was transferred to Regina Coeli. After the war, Carla became a psychiatrist and was awarded the silver medal for military valor.

### **Iole Mancini**

Iole Mancini was born in 1920 in Nemi (Rome). Her father never had a Fascist Party membership card, and she became completely avulsed from the regime when she became engaged to Ernesto Borghesi, a sergeant in the Sanità, later framed in the GAP in Rome and then arrested on 7 April 1943. During Ernesto's imprisonment, Iole travelled three times a week to Regina Coeli to bring clean laundry to her husband. In the process, Ernesto managed to obtain a false permit and thus he was released from prison. Following a confession, the Germans searched for Borghesi at his wife's home and, not finding him, Iole was arrested and taken to Via Tasso in May 1944. There, the partisan relay was interrogated over and over again by the one she later discovered to be Erich Priebke, one of those responsible for the massacre of the Fosse Ardeatine. When they asked her "where is Ernesto?" she replied "at Regina Coeli." She did so all night long. Iole remained a prisoner for 10 days in a small room equipped with a slit through which the air filtered, with 14 other women. On 3 June 1944, some prisoners were put on two trucks to be shot, but the truck where Iole got on did not start because of a breakdown. At dawn the following day, the Allies made their entry into Rome: Iole was safe.

### **Olga Fera**

Olga Fera, along with other women, carried out an efficient information and weapons transport service, which supported the armed actions of the partisans of Zone III. She

was arrested and taken to Via Tasso.

### **Vera Michelin Salomon**

Born in Carema (Turin) in 1923 into a Protestant family of Salvation Army officers. In 1941, she moved to Rome and after September 8<sup>th</sup> joined the unarmed Resistance. Arrested in February 1944 for her propaganda activities among young people, she was imprisoned in Via Tasso and then Regina Coeli. She was tried and sentenced by the SS to three years of hard prison to be served in Germany, where she spent one night in the Dachau concentration camp before being transferred to various camps. She was freed by the Allies in 1945 from Aichach Prison. She was president of the Roman section of Aned for several years.

### **Lina Trozzi**

Born in 1916 into an antifascist and socialist family, after 25 July 1943, she joined the underground groups of the Resistance, participating in sabotage activities. Surprised by the SS at the home of Gioacchino Gesmundo, an inmate in the Via Tasso prison, despite being interrogated for nine consecutive days she managed to exonerate Maria Teresa Regard, who was arrested with her. She was sentenced to ten years and deported to Germany. On 29 April 1945, she was freed by the Allied army from Aichach prison.

### **Trude Zeizz**

Anti-Hitler German citizen, former schoolmate of Kappler, imprisoned in Via Tasso for her interventions on behalf of many arrested Italians and especially for her relationship with Italian Jew Dino Eminente.

### **Maria Adelaide Tucci Riccio**

She was a partisan relay for the clandestine information service of the Regia Marina, of which her brother was a member. On 18 February 1944, the SS, led by Priebke and followed by two "republicchini" (members of the army of the Repubblica Italiana di Salò), arrested her. She was taken to Via Tasso and interrogated. Despite her threats to be deported and never to see her daughters again, the Nazis got no information. They released her after 56 days through the intercession of family friend Trude Zeiss, Kappler's former schoolmate.

*<< It was a terrible place. From the peephole of my cell, I could see mangled people, with faces on which it was no longer possible to distinguish any human features, so bruised and swollen were they, and still unconscious they were being carried back to the cell by weight because they were unable to stand because of the torture they had undergone.>>  
Maria Theresa Regard*

## Stories of extraordinary resistance

Under constant bombardment, in the devastated city, women sheltered, cared for, and clothed those who fled: soldiers of all nationalities who fled so as not to be deported, men who, in order not to join the Salò Republic, joined the Resistance. Roman women, in the central districts, but especially in the suburbs, organized themselves, thanks to women from the anti-fascist parties. When, after clandestinity, confinement, and deportation, they arrived in Rome, they formed an initial coordination of resistance and support for the civilian and military fighting forces. Among them are Clara Cannarsa, Egle Gualdi, Maria Maggi, Marisa Rodano, the Bruni sisters, Laura Lombardo Radice. It was the first nucleus of what in the north would be called "Women's Defense Groups", which organized more than seventy thousand women, most of whom were not recognized either as partisans or patriots. Among them, there are some of the 21 Constituent Mothers, whose importance and role in the Constituent Assembly are still poorly known and recognized today.

### **Teresa Gullace**

Teresa Talotta was born in Cittanova, Calabria. She moved with her husband Girolamo Gullace to one of Rome's poorest neighborhoods, Vicolo del Vicario. In March 1944, during a roundup, her husband was arrested and taken to the barracks on Viale Giulio Cesare, where dozens of women gathered, waiting to understand the fate of their children and partners. Teresa, pregnant, was among them. When she noticed her husband facing the gratings, she tried to give him food but a German soldier shot her. Militants Laura Lombardo Radice, Adele Maria Jemolo and Marcella Lapicciarella improvised a burial chamber in the street, praying and covering the body with flowers. The protest prompted the Nazis to release Girolamo Gullace. Teresa was awarded the Gold Medal of Civil Merit.

### **Emma Castelnuovo**

Born in 1913, she graduated in 1936 in mathematics from the University of Rome, where she worked as a librarian until 1938, the year of the promulgation of the racial laws. As a Jew, Emma was dismissed and did not get a teaching position, for which she regularly won a competition in the same year. From 1939 to 1943 she taught in Israelite schools to Jewish students driven out of public schools. After finishing secondary school, Jews were not allowed to enroll in university, so Emma's father, Guido Castelnuovo, set up an underground university in Switzerland. In 1943, Emma split from her family to escape deportation. After the Liberation, she obtained tenure and in 1949 published *Intuitive Geometry*. It is to the teaching of mathematics that Emma dedicated her life, making important innovations.

### **Rosa Gualtieri Calò Carducci**

Born in Castel del Piano (Grosseto), she lived and married in Rome. After 8 September 1943, she was killed by a troop of Germans and Fascists in Viale delle Milizie, while trying to resist the arrest of her son, considered a renegade to forced labor. This type of episode and many others inspired Roberto Rossellini for the film *Roma città aperta*. After the liberation, she was awarded the gold medal for civil valor. In addition, a street in Rome, which previously bore the name of Rosa Maltoni, Mussolini's mother, was named after Rosa; a square in her hometown also bears her name.



### **Orietta Doria Pamphili**

She was born in 1922. Daughter of Filippo Andrea Pamphilj, prince of Melfi and Catholic anti-fascist, she inherited her noble title and her political orientation from the latter. In fact, from 1942 she held various positions in the Hospital of the Order of Malta and in the Vatican's Office for the Search of Prisoners and Missing Persons. In 1943, she clandestinely founded the AGI (Italian Guide Association) with other companions. During the Liberation War in Ancona she became involved with the Catholic Women's League (a refreshment post for British soldiers). After liberation, her father was elected mayor of Rome and Orietta, an art lover and patron, decided to open the family palace on Via del Corso in Rome to the public. She died in Rome in 2000.

### **Caterina Martinelli**

She was born in 1904. She married Giuseppe Martinelli, a militant communist and clandestine speaker of "L'Unità", with whom she conceived six children. During the Resistance, Carla Capponi frequents Martinelli's home, when the latter was suffering the grip of hunger like much of the Capitoline population. The food situation worsened in 1944, when the Nazi authorities decided to reduce the daily bread ration for civilians to 100g. The order provoked a spontaneous reaction from women who, overwhelmed by hunger, assaulted the bakeries. During one of these assaults, on 2 May 1944, a soldier rushing to quell the riot shot Caterina Martinelli. The woman fell to the ground with a loaf of bread clutched to her chest and her infant daughter in her arms, who survived but with an injured spine. The next day, at the site of the murder, an anti-fascist sign remembered Caterina. After liberation, that sign became a commemorative plaque.

### **Giuliana Benzoni**

Born in Padua in 1895, a descendant of the Benzoni dynasty, she was a noblewoman who frequented royal circles. When Fascism was on the wane, she became the adviser to Maria Jose, Princess and later Queen consort of Umberto II di Savoia. In fact, from 1942 to 25 July 1943, she was a silent protagonist in organizing the conspiracy against Mussolini. Benzoni in those months weaved a dense network of contacts with important men of the anti-fascism movement and in parallel advised the Princess on how to convince King Vittorio Emanuele III to depose Mussolini. In July 1943, however, "the ladies' operation" foundered, and the King decided on his own. After September 8<sup>th</sup>, she fought alongside the Resistance; she died in Rome in 1981.

## The victims

Roman women were active right away, participating in the battles of the Magliana, Montagnola, and Porta San Paolo, bringing relief to the wounded, supplying fighters. Many women died in the defense of Rome, we do not know the exact number; a plaque commemorates them at Porta San Paolo. Ten women were murdered during the roundups. Emblematic was the killing of Teresa Gullace, while with hundreds of other women she demanded the liberation of her husband, one of the two thousand rounded up, locked up in the barracks of the 81<sup>st</sup> Infantry on Viale Giulio Cesare. An episode known for Rossellini's intense portrayal of it in "Roma città aperta." Another woman in similar circumstances was killed on the steps of the Church in Piazza dei Quiriti, while ten were shot in front of the Forno Tesei mill at Ponte di Ferro, stormed to procure bread for their families. An episode that is still alive in the city's memory, although there is no written record of the names of these women.

### **Domenica Cecchinelli**

Domenica Cecchinelli was born in San Vincenzo Valle Rovereto (Aquila). A mother of five children, she was 64 years old when the battle between Italians and Germans broke out in Rome following the announcement of the Cassibile armistice. On the evening of September 9<sup>th</sup>, Domenica left her home, located at the Montagnola, and set out for Forte Ostiense to rescue wounded soldiers. A German soldier surprised her as she was pulling the body of an Ariete Division tank driver from the turret of a tracked vehicle; the German ordered her to stop, but Domenica refused and for this she was shot, falling lifeless over the tank driver's body

### **Maria Di Salvo**

Maria Di Salvo was born in 1899 in Salcito (Campobasso). In the early 1900s, she moved to Rome to seek her fortune. On 28 March 1944, Maria at the age of forty-five was intercepted by Nazi-Fascist police while together with a group of anti-fascists she was writing on a wall the phrase "In Rome all heroes! Death to fascists and Germans!" A gunshot to the head killed her. All this happened a few days after the massacre of the Fosse Ardeatine, in a climate of desperation and exasperation of the war that was turning in favor of the Allies.

### **Fedele Rasa**

Born in Gaeta in 1870 and displaced to Rome in the Breda Village, she was victim number 336 of the Fosse Ardeatine massacre. The murder came to light thanks to the research of historian De Simone, who found in the records of the Littorio Hospital, now San Camillo, a note regarding the elderly woman's death. The story is reconstructed as follows: the woman was picking vegetables near the quarries, probably for reasons of deafness, did not stop at the halt of a German soldier, who fired, mortally wounding her.

### **Rosa Tozzi**

Born in Florence. A housewife, she married Filippo Forte, with whom she lived at 22 Laurentina Street. She was wounded in the leg on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the blow causing her kneecap to burst. She died on September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Ospedale del Littorio at the age of

77.

### **Sister Teresina (Cesarina D'Angelo)**

Cesarina D'Angelo was born in Amatrice in 1914. It is September 8<sup>th</sup>, and in Rome the battle was raging between the Italian military divisions remaining in the capital and the German divisions, at which time Sister Teresina, age 29, improvised herself as a nurse taking care at Forte Ostiense of the wounded who had arrived from the clashes near the Montagnola. While doing her best to relieve the suffering of the survivors, she noticed a German soldier intent on snatching a gold chain from the neck of a fallen man. So, Cesarina lunged at the soldier and repeatedly stroke him in the forehead with her brass crucifix. As the battle continued, searching for the wounded fighters, she was struck down and died after 3 months. Sister Teresina did not kill, she attempted to give a Christian burial to the dead ones, which is why she was considered the first Christian partisan.

### **Pasqua Ercolani**

Pasqua Ercolani was born in 1900 in Contigliano (Rieti). She lived in Rome, where together with her brother-in-law Quirino Roscioni she ran a bakery in a red house, headquarters of the Fascist district group until September 8<sup>th</sup>. In fact, with the rise of the Resistance, the grenadiers requisitioned the house to place their command post there. When the Germans succeed in conquering the Magliana bridge, the battle of the Montagnola developed around the possession of the red house. In those days, Pasqua and his brother-in-law provided bread for the grenadiers, but the house was occupied by German soldiers who took both prisoners. When asked by an officer where he wanted to go, Quirino replied "to church," so the officer agreed and Pasqua and his brother-in-law set off outside the house. The two managed to take only a few steps before being killed by a volley of bullets.

### **Other victims**

AVOLI MATTIA  
BASILE MARIA  
BELLINA ANTO  
COCCHI EMMA  
CRISTINI GIUSEPPINA  
D'ANGELO PASQUA  
FERRARIS DE STABILE NEREA  
FIOCCA/FIACCA ALBINA  
FRAMPA BIANCA  
FRATICELLI VICTORY  
GAGLIARDI LUISA  
GIRALDI MARIA  
MAIORANI EMILIA  
POLETTI MARIA  
SABATINI ANNUNZIATA  
SABATINI MARCELLA  
SALVADORI EDDA

SILVI ELVEZIA  
TESTANI GIUSEPPINA  
TONTINI GIUSEPPA  
ZAMPA BIANCA

*Source: Albo d'oro dei caduti nella difesa di Roma del Settembre 1943, Associazione fra i Romani, 196*

## The Voice of R-Existing Women

"I had taken the revolver, which, usually, in bomb or explosive fragment attacks I preferred not to take with me because, if I were stopped and found, I would not have escaped torture and death. But I was alone this time and, after thinking it over, I had thought that armed I could always escape by shooting or shooting myself in case I had no escape."

*Marisa Teresa Regard*

"Mine and others' was a natural choice, based on knowledge. If one knows, one can only behave accordingly."

*Vera Michelin Salomon*

"The fear, before the action I don't think there was [...] The sense of death, yes. They had caught me, they had sentenced me to death; once you were caught, that you thought you were going to be killed [...] you had the distinct feeling that your life was going to be broken." *Marisa Musu*

"One afternoon Ernesto and I were walking down Crespi Street. [...] often held a hand on his shoulder. That day we were apostrophized: - Hey you can't -. It was a plainclothes officer who prevented us from walking, I won't say hugged, but not even with that little contact. This was the regime in the last months.... And then for me the word liberation really meant to be free in every sense of the word."

*Iole Mancini*

"I was with my sister, riding a bicycle. The Germans stopped us on the Portonaccio Bridge and asked what we were carrying. She jokingly replied, 'Hand grenades.' I felt myself freezing. He laughed too and let us pass."

*Luciana Romoli*

"Over the years, I've asked myself that many times. But was I the one who was shooting in cold blood? Who let a man, even if an enemy, a German, die on the street in the rain? I often feel as if the Lucia of those years had been someone else. But no, that was me. And the courage to do certain things had to be there."

*Lucia Ottobrini*

"Being a woman I have always considered it a positive thing, a joyful and aggressive challenge. Some people say that women are inferior to men, that they can't do this and that -- what is there to envy men? Everything they do, I can do too. What's more, I can also make a child."

*Luciana Romoli*

"I never took a weapon in my hand except to carry it and I only did what hundreds of women did in those months."

*Marisa Cinciari Rodano*

## **Credits**

This exhibition aims to celebrate the many women - of all social conditions, with different roles, recognized or not - who with their courage and sacrifice gave life to the Roman Resistance. It was born thanks to the passionate and accurate work of volunteers and Civil Service volunteers on the data of ANPI Rome's fully digitized archive, with the contribution of the organization and ANPI Rome Women's Coordination "Tina Costa." ANPI's historical archive contains more than 9,000 files, of these 389 are files of women who were recognized as partisans and partisan fighters, 136 files instead are of women who were recognized as patriots. The file of commissions for the recognition of men and women of the Resistance collects a total of 27,278 cards of women, of these 1,643 are cards belonging to the Lazio Regional Commission, a part of which are related to Rome. The archives do not coincide; only a small portion of the records are in both archives. The research work - which began with the analysis of the cards in the Rome archive - has since expanded to other sources, both digital and paper, both historical and memorial. The women recounted here are only a small representation, many are missing and many remain unknown. It is also limited to the city area only; there are no women framed in the partisan groups operating in the province. This is therefore only a beginning, much work remains to be done, the exhibition is also an invitation to continue it together.

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