Italy Tries to Kick Out Their Right-Wing Extremist from the ‘Gladiator Cloister’

Steve Bannon, a former White House strategist and Breitbart editor, was finally kicked out of an Italian monastery, which even Newsweek wittily described as a “far-right boot camp”.

This author, along with a few others, has been warning for some time that the former Trump’s top advisor had crossed all lines, and began directly interfering in the internal affairs of the European Union, by promoting and amalgamating dangerous extreme right-wing alliances of all natures; political, philosophical and religious. The monastery was supposed to offer “classes”, which Bannon described as “the kind of underpinnings of the Judeo-Christian West”.

Tactics? “A modern gladiator school”, according to Steve Bannon’s own assessment.

Journal NEO (New Easter Outlook) has already published one essay in 2019, analyzing Bannon’s activities in Italy and beyond: “Steve Bannon – a Profile of a US Apparatchik. From China to the Pope”. There, it was argued:

“Steve Bannon is a talented propagandist and promoter of Western supremacy and imperialist “culture”. He is extremely dangerous, mainly because he knows precisely what he is doing and what he wants to achieve: total control over the world.”

Last year, it was hard to imagine that Italy would dare to rock the boat, disturbing the activities of one of the most powerful and canny neo-cons in the world. But the unimaginable suddenly took place. Reported by Newsweek’s Rosie McCall:

“The Italian culture ministry has announced it evicted what has been described as a far-right political bootcamp from a thirteenth-century monastery, AFP reports. The bootcamp has ties to Steve Bannon, a former adviser to President Donald Trump, through its DignitatisHumanae Institute (DHI), which Bannon funds.

According to AFP, the bootcamp—which had been established to train students to “defend the West”—had been given a 19 year lease on Trisulti Charterhouse in the Province of Frosinone, central Italy, in February 2018. However, the ministry said on Thursday that the group had falsely tendered for the lease, and thus they were evicted. This follows reports from May that the ministry was intending to revoke the lease due to “violations of various contractual obligations,” according to The Telegraph.

This will come as a blow to Benjamin Harnwell, a British conservative and the director of DHI, who had hoped to launch the first three-week course to a small group of students this year and was in the process of securing planning permission to revamp the venue. Harnwell is an associate of Bannon, who had reportedly promised to give $1 million to the project.”

Of course, the “boot camp” has been evicted on technicalities, not on ideological bases.

My contacts inside the ruling 5-Star-Movement (Movimento 5 Stelle) are hushed and cautious on the topic. Usually outspoken, they are reluctant to go on the record. I am only receiving bits and pieces of news. But what I get is telling. This are big, and extremely dangerous issues. Mr. Bannon has not been on Donald Trump’s team, for quite
some time, but only few have any doubts that he is still working on behalf of the President’s neo-con crew.

What do I get from Rome? Barks of confused inside news, and requests not to use real names in my essays, when it comes to Bannon’s case:

“We have orders not to speak to the press, Andre... Until a decision is made by State Council... Here, inside the administration, it is a war; more than a war; a battle inside the government... and the Church. Pope Francis is against conservatives. The new Minister of Culture, Franceschini (PD) is linked to the Church... Things are uncertain until now. The Tar (Administrative Tribunal), threw its support behind Bannon and blocked the decision of the Minister of Culture. And now the State Council has to decide.”

Another source coming from Rome offered much more concrete analyses:

“There are parties in Italy, like the Northern League and “Fratelli d’Italia” [Italian Brothers] who are producing propaganda and take direct orders from Bannon, yielding to his hate towards China.”

Of course, this is big. The Northern League and “Fratelli d’Italia” are some of the most powerful political forces in Italy. The fact that they are under the boot of a U.S. right-wing extremist, is tremendous and scandalous news.

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For a long time, Steve Bannon has been cheering right-wing forces in Italy and beyond.

According to La Presse (23 September, 2018), he praised Italian right-wing movements, claiming that “with them here in Italy the revolution works”:

“On the Roman stage of "Atreju", the event of Fratelli d’Italia, Steve Bannon praises the parties of Salvini and Meloni: "In the elections the Italians spoke against the system, saying that it is time for a change. They are tired of the feeling of being told that they are racist and xenophobic, just because they want to defend their culture and their country," said the former White House strategist. "Yours is the most important experiment, if the revolution works here, then it will spread," added Bannon.”

Unsurprisingly, Steve Bannon evokes wrath in those on whose behalf he is claiming to be speaking for; the modern-day Catholic Church, and even Christianity in general. Pope Francis, whom Bannon has personally insulted on several occasions, is clearly against his politics. I also approached one of the most important living theologians/philosophers, my friend John Cobb Jr., who clearly stated his point for this essay:

“Steve Bannon makes it clear that one can today renew Charlemagne’s kind of Christianity without embarrassment and gain significant support from other “Christians.” He makes little if any pretense to follow Jesus or the Hebrew prophets. His heroes are the gladiators. He is preparing people to fight in all sorts of ways including, it seems, violent ones. The war is in support of the West rather than any one nation, what we once called “Christendom.” From the point of view of the Bible, devotion to a nation state or to the West is idolatry.”

John Cobb concluded:

“Christians of the first sort, those who seek to be followers of Jesus are called to love even those who spread hatred. But one aspect of that love must be to identify those who make the defense of the West their highest priority as idolaters. Christians should go on to show the consequences of this idolatry. It is destructive of society. It also damages the idolater. If we truly love Steve Bannon, we are called to try to reduce the damage that his idolatrous thought and action does both to others and to himself. If his understanding of Christianity gives any place at all to the teachings and ministry of Jesus, we can point out how radically his work opposes that of Jesus. If he has any interest in the Biblical God, we can point out that he is profoundly failing to serve those whom God calls him to serve. If he really cares about the future of the West we can show that he is blocking paths to a flourishing future. Perhaps, just perhaps, he can listen.”
It becomes clear that for Steve Bannon, it is not going to be easy to sail through the turbulent waters of European politics. True, Europe has been moving, consistently and alarmingly, towards the right. Some would even say, towards the extreme right.

But it is not the Bannon’s right, not Trump’s right. Europe feels that it does not need yet another U.S. apparatchik, to dictate to it in which direction to go.

The European right is exceptionally nationalist. But Mr. Bannon is trying to create a united fascist European front. It does not appear that the European countries are searching for unity, of any type. U.K., Hungary, and even Italy are proving this point.

Europeans are willing to work with Russia or China, if it serves their interests (and very often, it actually does). People like Bannon are cultural and religious fundamentalists. They are made exactly from the same stuff as the colonialists and fascists were, who attacked countless countries and murdered millions of people precisely in countries like Russia and China. At least now, this kind of attitude is not very popular in Berlin, Rome and Madrid. There, populations want all the benefits they have been getting from neo-colonialism, but without the risks of wars or any other direct belligerent interventions.

Bannon is ready to go “all the way”; to bomb and even to put Western boots on the ground.

And he provokes, arrogantly and undiplomatically.

Even when the tiniest détente is forged, with Russia, China or other adversaries of the West, he immediately begins pouring salt into the wounds.

Just recently, he insulted China and its diplomacy, in a most vulgar way. On January 20, 2020, Forbes wrote:

> “What you are seeing in the signing today with China and with the USMCA is the beginning of the end of the managed decline of the United States,” said Steve Bannon, former Trump advisor, speaking on CBNC Wednesday. “This is a huge win for the U.S., and it’s why you don’t see Xi Jinping over here signing it and no one in the Chinese media writing about it. Trump has changed the center of gravity from the way the elites have to think of China.”

But even Forbes is doubtful about such shots off the hip.

Things get even deeper and more sinister. Bannon is searching for funding, teaming up with the most anti-PRC and anti-Communist individuals, be they from the West, or originally from China (PRC) itself. In October 29, 2019, Axios reported:

> “The mystery of who's funding Steve Bannon's work has been at least partly solved: Guo Media, a company linked to a controversial Chinese billionaire, has contracted Bannon for at least $1 million for “strategic consulting services,” according to contracts obtained by Axios.

> Why it matters: The billionaire fugitive — a man named Guo Wengui, also known as Miles Kwok — is embroiled in the U.S.-China conflict. He’s a vocal critic of the Chinese Communist Party and is reportedly a member at Mar-a-Lago. He's on China's most-wanted list for alleged bribery, fraud and money laundering, per the New York Times...”

Steve Bannon does not do analyses; he manipulates, he does politics as he speaks or writes.

And now it appears that Italy has had enough. Or at least some people inside the Italian administration. The country is going through a complex period of transformation. It does not appreciate the U.S.-style right-wingers, anymore.

Italy needs China. And China has various allies in the 5-Star Movement. And the same could be said about countries like Venezuela and even Iran. This is not Berlusconi’s Italy, anymore.

If Bannon is kicked out of the “gladiator cloister” for good, it may be a signal that yet another Italian and European beginning has arrived. Not necessarily a left-wing or a ‘progressive’ beginning, but a beginning nevertheless. It could signal that Washington is not going to be allowed to rule from across the ocean totally unopposed, through
ideological gladiators obsessed with lethal combat. Bannon miscalculated both geography and the era: 21st Century Rome and its vicinities have nothing to do with the ancient Greek city of Sparta.

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