



Political Party Flags of San Marino

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Abstract

San Marino is a small, independent republic, totally surrounded by Italy, with about 32,000 inhabitants. After a period of rule by the Sammarinese Fascist Party (1923–43), San Marino reintroduced a multi-party system very similar to the Italian one (the Christian-Democratic Party, Communist Party, Socialist Party, Social Democratic Party were the main competitors). Since the early 1990s the party system has undergone a number of rearrangements, some of them similar, some of them different from developments in Italy. Currently in the 60-seat parliament there are 11 parties in 8 parliamentary groups. The government is led by the Christian Democrats.

Most of the parties, even the small ones, use party flags. The party flags combine international and Italian influences with distinctive Sammarinese symbols. The predominantly red colour used by the leftist parties is the most obvious international element; the use of circular emblems on an often unicoloured field is very similar to Italian practice. The specific national symbols are either part of the emblems (the three mountains from the Sammarinese arms; the Statue of Liberty; Saint Marinus) or of the flag background (white-blue field or at least a small white-blue stripe).

The actual presentation included a number of flags from the author's party flag collection.



Flag with the current logo of the *Alleanza Popolare*

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1. Introduction

San Marino is a small republic with about 32,000 inhabitants and a land area of 61 km². Totally surrounded by Italy, it is situated in north-central Italy close to the Adriatic Coast. Its official name is *Repubblica di San Marino* (Republic of San Marino); *Serenissima Repubblica di San Marino* (Most Serene Republic of San Marino) is sometimes also used.

Although the legend says that San Marino was founded by a certain stonecutter Marinus (later Saint Marinus) in 301, historical evidence for a first community dates to much later centuries.¹ Having achieved political autonomy in the Middle Ages, its laws (including constitutional ones) were codified in 1600 as *Leges Statutae Sancti Marini* (Statutory Laws of San Marino). Many of the political institutions are older, however, although the details have changed considerably over the centuries.

The political system is very much based on the ancient Roman Republic: there is the *Arengo*, gathering the heads of each family (similar to the Roman *comitia*), as an element of direct democracy; there is the *Consiglio Grande e Generale* (similar to the Roman *senatus*), a 60-seat parliament, as an aristocratic element; and there are the two *Capitani Reggenti*, elected for a term of six months (similar to the Roman *consules*) as the monarchic element. The system, however, has been adapted to more modern political ideas: nowadays the *Capitani Reggenti* are largely representative; the *Consiglio Grande e Generale* has changed from an aristocratic assembly to an elected parliament; there is a government (*Congresso di Stato*) elected by the parliament; referendums supplement the *Arengo* in direct democracy. All in all, San Marino is now a parliamentary democracy.²

Although independent, in modern times San Marino's political ideas were largely imported from Italy. That includes the political parties that usually were closely linked to their Italian counterparts. Therefore also my interest in Sammarinese party flags is largely derived from my research into Italian party flags, conducted for several years now.

2. History of the Sammarinese party system

Modern party politics in San Marino begins with the founding of the PSS (*Partito Socialista Sammarinese*) in 1893.³ Together with allied democratic forces, the PSS campaigned for a democratic reform of the largely oligarchic political system, resulting in the *Arengo* (assembly of the heads of each family) of 1906.⁴ The *Arengo* introduced the election of the 60-seat parliament (*Consiglio Grande e Generale*), but only for the election in 1920 were proper party lists presented: at the time the PSS, the Catholic PPS (*Partito Popolare Sammarinese*) and the conservative UDS (*Unione Democratica Sammarinese*).⁵ New parties were the Communists (PCS = *Partito Comunista Sammarinese*) and the Fascists (PFS = *Partito Fascista Sammarinese*), founded in 1921⁶ and 1922,^{7 8} respectively.

Following the model of Italy, the Fascists took power in 1923 and remained there until 1943. The PFS was the only legal party during this period, and elections were reduced to referendums approving the single slate presented by the Fascists.^{8 9}

After the fall of the Italian fascism the antifascist forces came to power in San Marino. These were organized into the *Comitato della Libertà* (Freedom Committee),¹⁰ mainly formed by PSS and PCS. The first postwar elections in 1945 and 1949 were won by the CdL against a

conservative coalition (UDS, later APS).¹¹ The Christian-Democratic party (PDCS), newly founded in 1948 as successor to the PPS, went into opposition.¹² The first elections with proper party lists, in 1951, were won by the PSS-PCS coalition, as were the 1955 elections, although the PDCS always was the largest single party.¹³

In 1957 several dissident socialist parliamentarians crossed the floor, resulting in a hung parliament. The following constitutional crisis (“*Fatti di Rovereta*”) led to a government of PDCS and the newly-formed social democrats (PSDIS).¹⁴ Until 1990 the four major parties (PDCS; PCS; PSS; PSDIS, later PSU) governed the country in varying coalitions. Other parties were usually short-lived and of minor significance (e.g. MLS and CDR).¹⁵

The years since 1990 particularly reshuffled the parties of the left: the socialists and social democrats reunited (but resulted in several splits); the PCS transformed itself into the post-communist PPDS (and the dissident RCS) and afterwards the PdD. The unification of the two main currents (PSS and PdD) of the left into the PSD in 2005 resulted in another series of splits. In the meantime also the PDCS lost some dissidents: a few smaller ones, but mainly the AP, founded in 1993, which now plays a central role in Sammarinese politics as it has switched coalition alignment between the left and the right.

All in all, the current party system is remarkable for its fragmentation: as of June 2011 there are eleven parties in eight parliamentary groups—for a country of roughly 32,000 inhabitants. The electoral reform of 2007, introducing a majority system and therefore producing electoral coalitions instead of party lists (similar to Italy) has even increased the number of parties.

The country’s small size leads to a high degree of personalization in politics, so few dissidents can easily form a new party: all unification attempts of the last 20 years have produced several splinter groups.

Italy	San Marino
Democrazia Cristiana (DC)	Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese (PDCS)
Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI)	Partito Comunista Sammarinese (PCS)
Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI)	Partito Socialista Sammarinese (PSS)
Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano (PSDI)	Partito Social Democratico Indipendente Sammarinese (PSDIS)
Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI)	[Intesa Democratica – Partito Repubblicano (ID-PR)]
Partito Liberale Italiano (PLI)	—
Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI)	[Comitato Difesa Repubblica (CDR)]
Partito Radicale (PR)	[Movimento Libertà Statutarie (MLS)]

Table 1: Comparison of main Sammarinese parties (1943–1990) with their Italian counterparts; minor Sammarinese parties in brackets only roughly compare with their Italian counterparts.

Parliamentary group	Party abbreviation	Party	Seats
PDCS-AeL	PDCS	Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese	17
	AeL	Arengo e Libertà	2
AP	AP	Alleanza Popolare	7
LdL	NPS	Nuovo Partito Socialista	2
	NS	Noi Sammarinesi	2
USdM	ANS*	Alleanza Nazionale Sammarinese	1
	PS*	Popolari Sammarinesi	1
UpR	EPS*	Europopolari Sammarinesi	3
	DdC*	Democratici di Centro	2
PSD**	PSD	Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici	10
PSRS**	PSRS	Partito Socialista Reformista Sammarinese	8
SU	RCS	Rifondazione Comunista Sammarinese	3
	PdS-ZF	Partito della Sinistra - Zona Franca	2

Table 2: Current parties and parliamentary groups in the *Consiglio Grande e Generale* (after the 2008 elections).

* united since 2011

** originally all elected as PSD, PSRS broke away in 2009

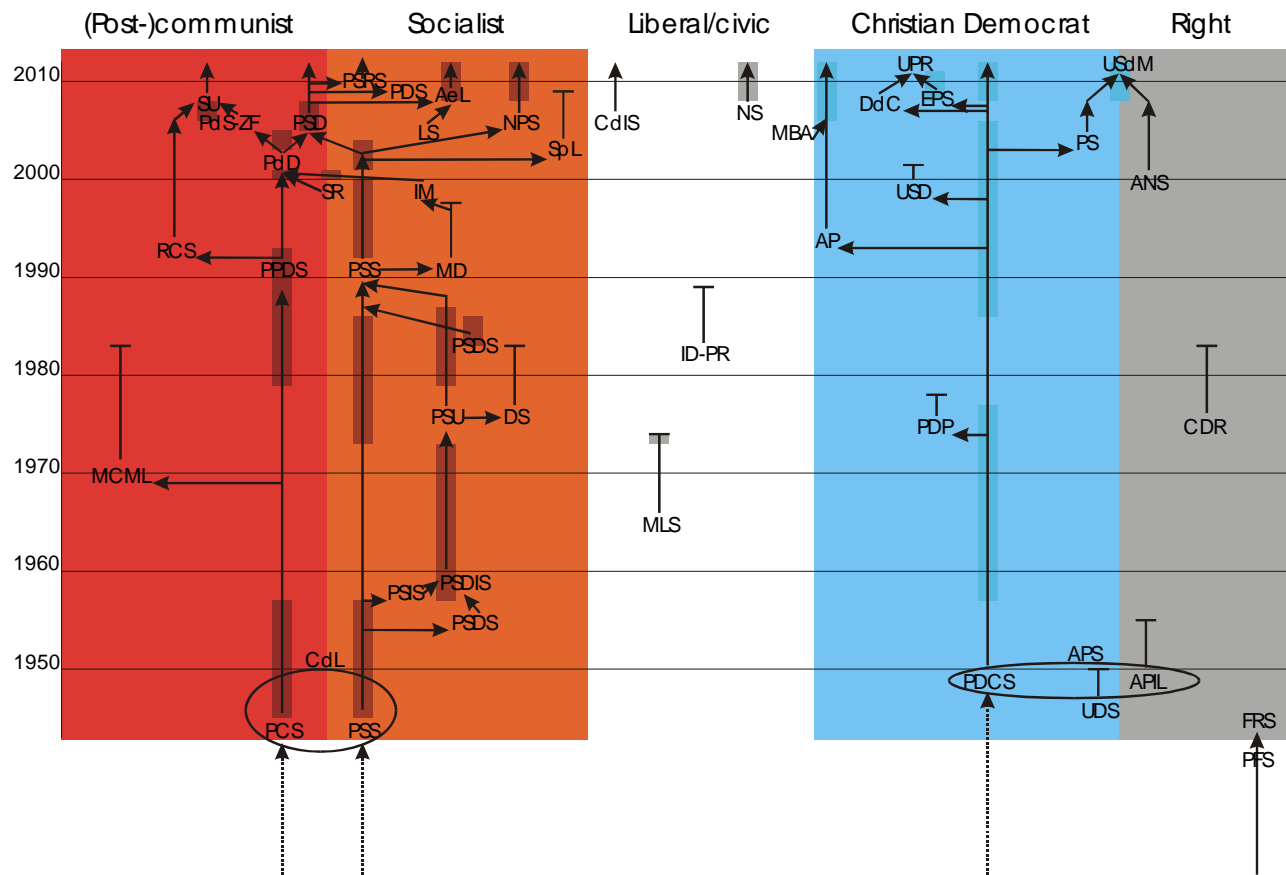


Fig. 1: Family tree of the Sammarinese parties since 1943; government parties are highlighted in stronger colours.

3. Arms and flag of San Marino

The coat-of-arms of San Marino is based on seals used at least since the 14th century. As with many seals of cities of the time it prominently features fortification elements.¹⁶ The current version of the arms was introduced in 1862, when the crown was changed to a closed one.^{17 18} It can be blazoned as follows:¹⁹

Lo stemma ufficiale della Repubblica è sormontato da corona chiusa, simbolo di sovranità. Lo scudo ha il campo azzurro, tre monti di verde, le torri d'argento, finestrate, merlate e distinte in nero, cimate di penne di struzzo d'argento. Lo scudo è ornato da due rami verdi e decussati sotto la punta dello scudo, uno di alloro, l'altro di quercia, fruttati d'oro. Su nastro d'argento il motto LIBERTAS in caratteri capitali di nero.

The official arms of the Republic are surmounted by a closed crown, symbol of sovereignty. The shield is Azure with three mountains Vert, three towers Argent, windowed, embattled and masoned Sable, topped by ostrich plumes Argent. The shield is decorated by two branches Vert, crossed in saltire under the shield, the one of laurel, the other of oak, fructed Or. On a ribbon Argent the motto LIBERTAS in capitals Sable.

The graphical details of the coat-of-arms were rather variable, as until recently there were no formal specifications. A law of 2011 modernized and standardized the image of the arms and flag (Fig. 2).¹⁹

The flag of San Marino consists of two stripes, white over light blue, and usually shows the arms in the centre. Also the depictions of the arms on the flags vary widely. The introduction of the flag is usually linked to the introduction of a cockade in white and blue during the Napoleonic era in 1797.^{18 20} The first mention of a flag (probably in the colours white and blue) occurred in 1829.²⁰

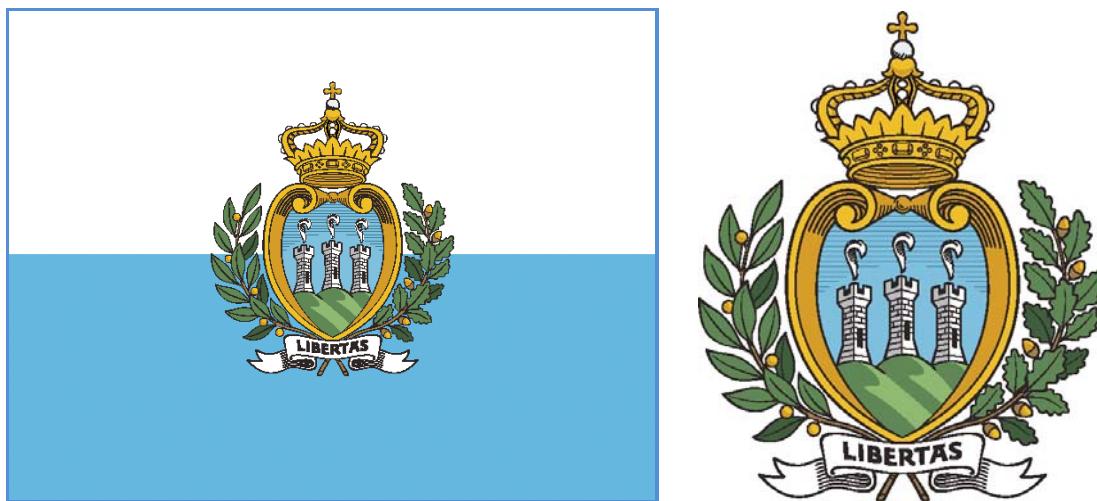


Fig. 2: The Sammarinese flag and arms as shown in the 2011 law.¹⁹

4. Early political flags

Although there were a number of small and short-lived political groups in the last decades of the 19th century, mainly from the socialist and anarchist area²¹, information about their symbols or even their flags is scarce. One short text from the journal *La Repubblica di San Marino* mentions political flags in 1882:²²

Questa mattina (31 Agosto) alle ore 9, è stato scoperto l'annunziato MONUMENTO A GARIBALDI. – Sono intervenute le rappresentanze di sette Società locali colle rispettive bandiere. Fra queste rappresentanze notavasi quella dei Socialisti col vessillo rosso e nero sormontato da una lucente mannaia. – (...)
Il Governo sammarinese avrebbe preso parte alla cerimonia: ma cangiò d'avviso quando seppe che v'intervenivano i Socialisti colla loro bandiera.

This morning (31 August) at 9 o'clock, the announced Monument to Garibaldi has been unveiled. – Delegations from seven local societies with their respective flags have participated. Remarkable among these delegations was the one of the Socialists with its red and black banner charged with a glowing headsman's axe. – (...)
The Sammarinese Government would have taken part in the ceremony, but it changed its mind when it realized that the Socialists with their flag would participate.

Typical for the time, the cooperative movement also became active in San Marino with the founding of the *Società Unione e Mutuo Soccorso* (SUMS) in 1876.²³ The banner (*gonfalone*) of the SUMS (Fig. 3) can be considered one of the oldest political flags in San Marino, although the date of its origin is not clear. It is vertically divided in the national colours, and contains as main symbols the clasped hands and a yellow star with rays.

Strangely enough, I have not found much about the flags of the fascist party. From the widespread usage of all kinds of flags in Italian fascism²⁴ one might assume that the Sammarinese fascists would have used a lot of flags as well. The only relevant photograph of Sammarinese fascists (Fig. 4) shows an item, most probably derived from the national flag, but no kind of additional symbols is visible. The party symbol of the PFS combined the Sammarinese arms with the fascist fasces (Fig. 5).^{25 28}



Fig. 3: Banner (gonfalone) of the Società Unione e Mutuo Soccorso²⁶



Fig. 4: A flag used by a group of Sammarinese fascists in 1923²⁷

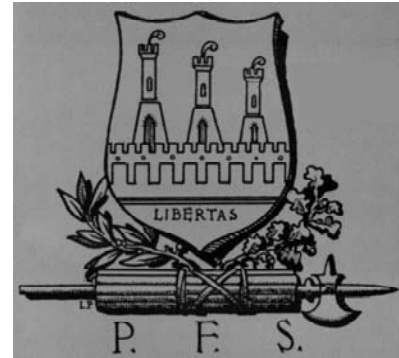


Fig. 5: One of the versions of the PFS party symbol²⁸

5. Post-1945 party flags

5.1. Partito Comunista Sammarinese (PCS) / Sammarinese Communist Party

The PCS, originally founded in 1921,^{6 29} was refounded in 1943³⁰ and together with the PSS was dominating in the antifascist *Comitato della Libertà*. Until 1957, together with the PSS, it formed the government. A small Maoist faction formed the MCML (*Movimento Comunista Marxista Leninista*) in the 1960s, but remained unsuccessful.³¹ In the 1980s the PCS was again part of the government in changing coalitions. The fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the transformation of the Italian counterpart, the PCI, brought about the reformation and renaming of the party into PPDS in 1990 (see 5.2.).

The archive of the current PSD (see 5.10.) contains several old flags of the PCS, quite obviously of different age.³² The earliest flag (Fig. 6) shows the party name under a star and hammer & sickle on a red field, accompanied by a stylized version of the central element of the Sammarinese arms, the three towers on three mountains; the mountains are depicted remarkably flat. The flag is a single item, fringed on three sides, the emblems embroidered in a now bleached golden colour.

A probably slightly newer flag (1950s/1960s) used by the local branch of San Marino City (*Cellula Città*) (Fig. 7) doesn't include any national symbols, only the hammer & sickle in a large star, a very stylized party abbreviation "PCS", and the name of the branch. Also this flag is embroidered and fringed on three sides.

More modern flags, from the 1970s, show a circular party symbol, containing the elements of the oldest flag, on a red field (Fig. 8); the flag of the local branch of Dogana (*Cellula di Dogana*) adds the branch name (Fig. 9). These more recent flags are printed and not embroidered.



Fig. 6: Flag of the Partito Comunista Sammarinese from the 1950s.



Fig. 7: Flag of the PCS (San Marino City branch), 1950s/1960s



Fig. 8: Flag of the PCS, 1970s



Fig. 9: Flag of the PCS (Dogana branch), 1970s

5.2. Partito Progressista Democratico Sammarinese (PPDS) / Sammarinese Democratic Progressive Party

The PCS reformed and renamed itself in 1990, now called *Partito Progressista Democratico Sammarinese*.³³ The orthodox-communist faction later broke away as RCS (see 5.4.).

The party flag³⁴ (Fig. 10) shows the oval symbol on a red field and a narrow stripe in the national colours white-blue in the upper hoist corner. The party symbol shows a peace dove as central symbol, accompanied by a very sketchy depiction of the Sammarinese towers on mountains. Two rhomboids in the national colours are another small detail of the symbol.



Fig. 10: Flag of the PPDS (1990–2001)



Fig. 11: Flag of the PdD (2001–2005)

5.3. Partito dei Democratici (PdD) / Party of the Democrats

Another reformation took place in 2001, when the PPDS united with several smaller groups (*Riformisti Democratici*; *Idee in Movimento*) to form the *Partito dei Democratici*.³⁵

Its flag³⁴ shows the party symbol on a red field (Fig. 11). The symbol is graphically more elaborate than its PPDS predecessor: in the centre a blue depiction of the three towers on mountains, surrounded by the symbols of the Party of European Socialists (PES), i.e. the European stars and a red rose.

5.4. Rifondazione Comunista Sammarinese (RCS) / Sammarinese Communist Refoundation

The *Rifondazione Comunista Sammarinese* was founded in 1992 as an orthodox-communist split-off from the reformed PPDS (see 5.2.), following the model of the Italian *Rifondazione Comunista*.³⁶ Since 2005 it has been allied with another left party, the PdS-ZF (see 5.5.) forming the *Sinistra Unita* (see 5.6.).

The flag (Fig. 12) of the RCS is bluntly communist: a big yellow hammer & sickle with star on a red field, surrounded by the party name; the only national symbol is a stripe in the colours white-blue above.³⁷



Fig. 12: Flag of the RCS (since 1992)



Fig. 13: Flag of the PdS-ZF (since 2005)

5.5. Partito della Sinistra – Zona Franca (PdS-ZF) / Party of the Left – Free Zone

When the PSS and the PdD united in 2005 to form the PSD (see 5.10.), a left-wing group founded the PdS-ZF, and immediately allied itself with the RCS as *Sinistra Unita* (see 5.6.).³⁸

The flag³⁷ shows the party symbol on a white ovoid with blurred outline on a red field (Fig. 13). The party symbol features the peace dove also found on the older PPDS flag; an interesting detail are the feathers of the right wing of the dove: they form three mountain tops with stylized feathers, reminiscent of the Sammarinese arms.

5.6. Sinistra Unita (SU) / United Left

For the elections in 2006 and 2008, the RCS and PdS-ZF formed a coalition, the *Sinistra Unita*. Beginning about 2009 the cooperation became closer, resulting, *inter alia*, in common flags.³⁹

One flag (Fig. 14) shows just the coalition symbol on a red field; the symbol rather unimaginatively combines the two party symbols with the emblem of the Party of the European Left, a red and white star accompanied by eight yellow stars. The other flag (Fig. 15) is less traditional, as it shows the coalition name in white and red letters on a black stripe, all on a red field with a thin yellow stripe above the black one.



Fig. 14: Flag of the *Sinistra Unita* (since about 2009)



Fig. 15: Flag of the *Sinistra Unita* (since about 2009)

5.7. Partito Socialista Sammarinese (PSS) / Sammarinese Socialist Party

The *Partito Socialista Sammarinese* is the oldest Sammarinese party, founded in 1893 shortly after its Italian counterpart, the PSI.⁴⁰ After an initial successful period in alliance with democratic forces, the maximalist positions after WW1 precipitated a decline. Together with the PCS it dominated the antifascist *Comitato della Libertà* from 1943 onwards, and was in the government until 1957. The first of a number of splits occurred in 1957, when the moderate faction broke away as PSIS (*Partito Socialista Indipendente Sammarinese*),⁴¹ that united with the already existing *Partito Socialdemocratico Sammarinese*⁴¹ to form the PSDIS (*Partito Social*

Democratico Indipendente Sammarinese).⁴² The latter became the major partner of the Christian Democrats in the following governments.

In 1990 the PSS reunited⁴³ with the PSU (*Partito Socialista Unitario*; renamed from PSDIS in 1975)⁴⁴, but a faction broke away as MD (*Movimento Democratico*).⁴³ Another split occurred in 1987 resulting in the formation of the SR (*Socialisti per le Riforme*).⁴⁵ A group still active are the SpL (*Sammarinesi per la Libertà*), formed in 2002 (see 5.8.).

In 2005, the PSS united with the post-communist PdD (see 5.3.) to form the *Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici* (PSD) (see 5.10.). A small faction broke away as NPS (*Nuovo Partito Socialista*), though (see 5.9.).

The party symbol changed a lot over time:⁴⁶ the one after the reunification in 1990 (Fig. 16) shows the red carnation typical for the Italian PSI from the late 1970s; however the circle around the carnation is in light blue instead of red. A later symbol, used 1999–2005, shows a differently stylized version of the carnation, all on a light blue field, accompanied by the stars of the Party of European Socialists. This version was, of course, also used in the centre of red flags (Fig. 17).³⁴ The statute describes the symbol as follows:⁴⁷

Il Simbolo del Partito è costituito da un garofano rosso stilizzato, che s’innalza sulla sigla PSE (Partito del Socialismo Europeo) racchiusa all’interno di un cerchio formato da dodici stelle, attorniato dalla scritta Partito Socialista Sammarinese.

The symbol of the party consists of a stylized red carnation that rises from the abbreviation PSE (Partito del Socialismo Europeo) enclosed in a circle of twelve stars, surrounded by the inscription Partito Socialista Sammarinese.

The youth organization of the PSS, the AGSS (*Area Giovani Socialisti Sammarinesi*), used an own flag hand-painted by Elisa Canini (Fig. 18):⁴⁸ in the centre of a red field the rectangular symbol of the AGSS, consisting of a field irregularly divided white over blue, with the letters “AGSS” in white and a red/green carnation.



Fig. 16: Symbol of the PSS (1990–1999)



Fig. 17: Flag of the PSS (1999–2005)



Fig. 18: Flag of the youth organization AGSS

5.8. *Sammarinesi per la Libertà* (SpL) / Sammarinese for Freedom

Founded in 2002 as a split-off from the PSS, the *Sammarinesi per la Libertà* style themselves as civic list instead of proper party. In the 2006 elections they won one seat in parliament, for the 2008 elections they were allied with the PSD (see 5.10.).⁴⁹ It is not clear if they are still active.

The flag (Fig. 19) can be seen only in small photographs and shows the party logo on a white field.⁵⁰ In addition to the party name it shows the government palace (*Palazzo Pubblico*) with the *Statua della Libertà*, as well as 10 yellow stars to show European affiliation.



Fig. 19: Flag of the SpL



Fig. 20: Flag of the NPS

5.9. *Nuovo Partito Socialista* (NPS) / New Socialist Party

The NPS was founded by dissident socialists in 2005, when PSS (see 5.7.) and PdD (see 5.3.) united to form the PSD (see 5.10.).⁵¹ For the 2008 elections it allied itself with the Christian Democrats and won two seats in the parliament.

The flag⁵² shows the party symbol on a red background (Fig. 20); the party symbol combines several elements in an older graphic style: two red carnations, a red rising sun, the three

mountains with towers from the arms, and the date 1892 (meant to be the founding date of the original PSS—it should be 1893).

5.10. *Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici* (PSD) / Party of the Socialists and the Democrats

The founding of the PSD in 2005 was meant to be the final reunification of the two main currents of the Sammarinese left: the socialists (PSS), and the (post-)communists (PdD). A left (PdS-ZF, see 5.5.) and a right (NPS, see 5.9.) group split away, however. The party is the largest opposition party since 2008. Another major split occurred in 2009, when almost half of the parliamentary group founded the PSRS (see 5.12.).

The party flag shows its symbol on a red background (Fig. 21).³⁴ The symbol cleverly combines elements from the symbols of the earlier parties: on a background with the Sammarinese mountains and towers there are the red carnation from the socialist tradition and the red rose from the post-communist tradition, in base accompanied by the yellow stars of the Party of European Socialists. The statute describes the symbol as follows:⁵³

Esso è costituito dalla rosa rossa, da garofano rosso, dall'immagine del monte Titano, dalle stelle dell'Unione Europea, dalla sigla PSE (Partito Socialista Europeo) attorniato dalla scritta Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici.

This consists of the red rose, the red carnation, the image of the Monte Titano, of the stars of the European Union, of the abbreviation PSE (Partito Socialista Europeo) surrounded by the inscription Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici.



Fig. 21: Flag of the PSD

5.11. *Arengo e Libertà* (AeL) / Arengo and Freedom

AeL was founded in 2008 by a small group from the PSD and allied itself with the Christian Democrats for the elections that year, winning two seats in the parliament.⁵⁴ The party name refers to the Sammarinese institution of the *Arengo*, originally the assembly of all heads of the families.

The party symbol very prominently shows the three towers with the ostrich feathers from the Sammarinese arms in different shades of light blue on a darker shade of blue, over a stripe of dark orange, combined with the party name. The flag is remarkable, as it does not follow the usual pattern of a circular logo on a plain field, but it shows the symbols spread out over the whole field, i.e. it is a banner-of-arms (Fig. 22).⁵⁵



Fig. 22: Flag of the Ael



Fig. 23: Flag of the PSRS

5.12. *Partito Socialista Riformista Sammarinese* (PSRS) / Sammarinese Reformist Socialist Party

The PSRS is one of the most recent additions to the Sammarinese party system, founded as a split-off from the PSD in 2009, mainly combining the former socialists.⁵⁶ It currently holds eight seats in the parliament.

The flag shows the party symbol on a red field (Fig. 23).⁵⁷ The party statute describes the symbol as follows:⁵⁸

Esso è costituito dal Garofano Rosso stilizzato che rappresenta l'ideologia storica del socialismo; la prima Torre (Guaita), l'attaccamento al Paese e simbolo di forza; l'Orizzonte ed il Mare rappresentano il proiettarsi verso il futuro. L'apertura del cerchio, infine, sta a significare che il Partito Socialista Riformista Sammarinese è aperto a tutti coloro che condividono gli ideali ed i valori della tradizione e della cultura socialista.

This consists of the stylized red carnation that represents the historical ideology of socialism; the first tower (Guaita), the attachment to the country and symbol of power; the horizon and the sea represent the orientation to the future. The opening of the circle, finally, means that the Partito Socialista Riformista Sammarinese is open for anyone who shares the ideals and values of the socialist tradition and culture.

5.13. *Casa delle Identità Sammarinesi* (CdIS) / House of Sammarinese Identities

The CdIS is a small liberal civic list allied with the PSD. The flag shows the symbol on a white background (Fig. 24).⁵⁹ The symbol consists of a lot of writing, beside the organization's name it shows the following text in a circle around the symbol: *Gruppo dei Riformatori Liberali*

(Group of the Liberal Reformers); the three quills probably allude to the ostrich feathers in the Sammarinese arms.



Fig. 24: Flag of the CdIS



Fig. 25: Flag of the NS

5.14. *Noi Sammarinesi* (NS) / We Sammarinese

Noi Sammarinesi is a civic list founded in 2006, currently holding two seats in the parliament;⁶⁰ they form a parliamentary group (LdL) together with the NPS (see 5.9.).

The flag shows the party symbol on a light blue background (Fig. 25).⁶¹ Differing from most other party symbols, the NS symbol is rectangular and shows a silhouette of the city on the Mount Titano.

5.15. *Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese* (PDCS) / Sammarinese Christian Democratic Party

Following the Italian model, the Catholic movement founded the PPS (*Partito Popolare Sammarinese*) in 1920.⁶² Although very successful initially, it dissolved itself in 1926 after the fascists had taken power. After WW2 only in 1948 a successor party, the PDCS, was founded. **Error! Bookmark not defined.** Although always winning a plurality of seats in parliament, the PDCS remained in opposition until 1957, after which it has governed the country in varying coalitions for most of the time. A major split occurred in 1993 with the founding of the AP (see 5.16.); a few smaller splits (PS, DdC, EPS) followed suit. In the 2008 elections the PDCS-led coalition (*Patto per San Marino*) has again gained a majority of the seats.

The party flag shows the party symbol on a background, divided white over light blue, the national colours (Fig. 26).⁶³ The symbol is seal-like, has no solid colours, but only outlines, and shows the legendary founder, Saint Marinus, after the statue by Adamo Tadolini (1830) in the Basilica di San Marino. I don't know when the party symbol and flag began their use.

The statute briefly describes symbol and flag:⁶⁴

L'emblema del Partito è l'effigie del Patrono San Marino. La bandiera è il vessillo bianco-azzurro in due bande orizzontali recante l'emblema al centro.

The emblem of the party is the effigy of the patron Saint Marinus. The flag is the banner in white and light blue in two horizontal stripes adding the emblem in the centre.

The youth organization (*Giovani Democratico Cristiani*) has its own symbol, but does not use particular flags.⁶⁵



Fig. 26: Flag of the PDCS

5.16. *Alleanza Popolare* (AP) / Popular Alliance

The *Alleanza Popolare*, founded in 1993 as a split-off from the PDCS, absorbed the *Movimento Biancoazzurro* in 2005.⁶⁶ The party espouses a mixture of populism and liberalism; for some time now it has been the third-largest party and as such switches coalition between the right and the left. Currently it holds seven seats in the parliament and is part of the PDCS-led government.

The original symbol (Fig. 27) showed a yin-yang-like arrangement of arrows, as well as in bottom a stylized allusion to the Sammarinese arms, all in white on a green field; the flag was white with the symbol in the centre. The current symbol is totally different, showing the photographic representation of head of the *Statua della Libertà* (Statue of Liberty) in front of the government palace (*Palazzo Pubblico*). The flag puts this in the centre of a white field, accompanied by a wide green stripe at the hoist (Fig. 28).⁶⁷ The colour green has no tradition in Sammarinese politics and it does not refer to environmentalism; it might refer to the colour of the Italian regionalist and populist *Lega Nord*, although this is denied by AP staff.⁶⁸ The youth organization (*Alternativa Giovanile*), although having its own symbol, does not use it on flags.⁶⁹



Fig. 27: Older flag of the AP⁷⁰



Fig. 28: Flag with the current logo of the AP

5.17. *Democratici di Centro* (DdC) / Democrats of Centre

A left-wing split-off from the PDCS, founded in 2007, the DdC were allied with the PSD in the 2008 elections and gained two seats.⁷¹ In 2011, they united with the EPS (see 5.18.), another PDCS splinter, to form the UpR (see 5.19.).

In its short history, the DdC had made use of two slightly different party symbols, both featuring as central element a shield with the inscription *LIBERTAS* and a stylized silhouette of the city. The first flag⁷² showed the older symbol on a white-blue background (like the PDCS) (Fig. 29). The newer flag⁷³ shows a modified second logo on a plain white field (Fig. 30).



Fig. 29: First flag of the DdC



Fig. 30: Newer flag of the DdC

5.18. *Europopolari Sammarinesi* (EPS) / Sammarinese Europopulars

The EPS are another PDCS split. Founded in 2007, they remained allied with the PDCS; it currently has three seats in the parliament.⁷⁴ In 2011, they united with the DdC (see 5.17.) to form the UpR (see 5.19.).

The flag is divided diagonally white over blue and shows the elements of the party symbol in the centre (Fig. 31): these are a stylized red heart, three yellow stars (for the European affiliation shown also in the name), and several inscriptions.⁷⁵



Fig. 31: Flag of the EPS



Fig. 32: Flag of the UpR

5.19. *Unione per la Repubblica (UpR) / Union for the Republic*

Founded in 2011, the UpR combines the former parties DdC and EPS into a new centrist force.

The flag⁷⁶ shows the symbol in the centre of an orange field (Fig. 32). The symbol consists of a very stylized map outline of San Marino, also on an orange field. The colour orange, hitherto unknown to Sammarinese politics, might be derived from several Christian-democratic parties like the German CDU and the Italian UDEUR.

5.20. *Popolari Sammarinesi (PS) / Sammarinese Popolars*

The PS were founded in 2003 as a right-wing split from the PDCS; they currently have one seat in the parliament.⁷⁷ They united in 2011 with the ANS to form the USdM.

The party symbol is white over blue with three triangles topped by three dots, i.e. a very stylized allusion to the Sammarinese arms (Fig. 33). Although the PS have a flag as well, I have not yet received a photograph of it.⁷⁸

5.21. *Alleanza Nazionale Sammarinese (ANS) / Sammarinese National Alliance*

The ANS was founded as a national-conservative party in 2001,⁷⁹ following the model of the Italian *Alleanza Nazionale* (successor to the neofascist MSI); it currently holds one seat in the parliament. The ANS in 2011 with the PS to form the USdM.

As the colours of the Italian AN are the white-blue Sammarinese colours, the ANS loads its symbol with a double meaning: three flying flags in the colours white, blue, and white-blue (Fig. 33). I don't know if they have used a flag as well.

5.22. *Unione Sammarinese dei Moderati (USdM) / Sammarinese Union of the Moderates*

The USdM was founded in 2011 as a fusion of PS and ANS; as such, it currently holds two seats in the parliament, being part of the government coalition.

The symbol just combines the symbols of the two former parties, in the background a house (Fig. 33). I don't know if they use a flag as well.

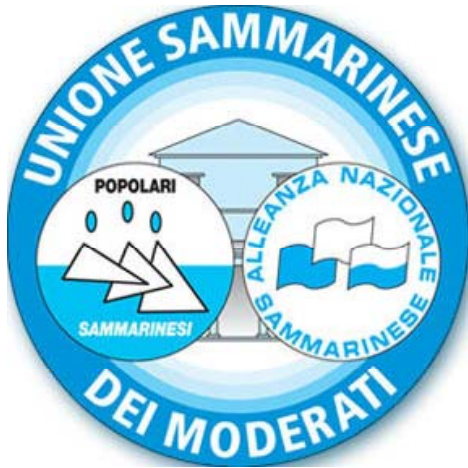


Fig. 33: Symbol of the UsdM, combining the symbols of ANS and PS



Fig. 34: Symbol of the LS

5.23. Other parties

A small short-lived party without parliamentary representation were the *Liberal Sammarinesi*, founded in 2006 and now united with AeL. They used a symbol prominently featuring a cartoon-like donkey,⁸⁰ quite obviously derived from the one in the symbol of the Italian *Democratici*⁸¹ (founded in 1999 by Romano Prodi, later prime minister), that in turn was derived from the donkey of the U.S. Democrats. A very small and sketchy depiction of the three mountain tops in red gives the Sammarinese touch. I don't know if there was also a flag with this symbol.

Many of the smaller historical parties, but also several more important ones (like the social-democratic PSDIS, later PSU) could not be featured here, because of lack of information.

6. Analysis

The Sammarinese party symbols, and even more so the party flags, show a remarkable synthesis of international and Sammarinese symbols with a lot of Italian influence.

6.1. Sammarinese symbols

Rather widespread is the use of the Sammarinese national colours (white and light blue): either the flags are horizontally striped like the national flag and show the respective party logo in the centre (PDCS, DdC), or there are stripes or ribbons in the national colours (PPDS, RCS). In some cases, also small details (like the rhomboids in the PPDS symbol) show the colours. The party symbols very frequently show a predilection for these colours as well: a striking example is the PSS symbol of 1990 modelled after its Italian counterpart, but using a light blue ring instead of a red one.

The symbolism of the coat-of-arms (three mountains with three towers) is too striking not to be used in party symbols. Very different stylizations occur for instance in the symbols of the PCS, PPDS, PdD, PSD, NPS. The AeL logo and flag show the towers even more prominently, whereas only a small detail (the wing feathers) is alluding to the arms in the PdS-ZF symbol. In several logos the symbolism is more naturalistic and not heraldically stylized: this is the case for the silhouettes of Monte Titano in the DdC, NS and PSRS symbols. A very recent addition is the very stylized map outline in the UpR logo.

Rather surprisingly, the legendary figure of Saint Marinus is only used by the PDCS, the largest party; although there are a lot of different depictions of the saint in history,¹ this one refers to the 1830 statue by Tadolini in the basilica. A landmark building, the government palace (*Palazzo Pubblico*) prominently features in the SpL symbol. The current AP symbol shows a photographic representation of the head of the Statue of Liberty in front of the palace.

6.2. Italian influence

Most symbols nowadays (with the exception of the NS and PS symbols) are circular, and usually the flags show these symbols on a plain or simply striped background. This is the most direct Italian influence, as there the electoral symbols (*contrassegni elettorali*) printed on ballots have to be circular, even if the original party symbol has a different shape. In the case of San Marino, the development of the PCS flags clearly shows this influence: the newer flags have a circular logo, whereas the older ones had the symbols spread out over the whole flag.

It might be surprising to classify the red carnation under “Italian influence”, as there were and are a large number of socialist groups in the world using this symbol. However, the carnation was a central element of the rebranding of the Italian PSI under Bettino Craxi in the 1970s, and it remains a symbol of the Craxian tradition there, in contrast to other socialist, socialdemocratic or post-communist traditions. Therefore, also in San Marino, the carnation was (at least from 1990 onwards) the symbol of the socialists, and nowadays refers to this tradition, either in the symbols of the traditionalist socialist parties (NPS, PSRS) or in the combined symbol of the PSD (together with the rose, standing for a different tradition). The ANS in name and logo refers to its Italian counterpart, the *Alleanza Nazionale*. As the Italian party was using white and light blue as colours, it is not surprising that the Sammarinese party adopted the same and thus loaded them with a double meaning.

An almost direct copy was the symbol of the LS, showing a donkey, originally used by the Italian *Democratici* of Romano Prodi, itself of course derived from the donkey of the American Democrats.

6.3. International symbols

Regarding colours, the Sammarinese party flags are rather unimaginative: either they are using the national colours, or the colour red, internationally used by left parties of the socialist and communist tradition. The only differing flags are the ones of the UpR (orange) and the AP (green). The latter is not referring to environmentalist causes, but might be influenced by the Italian regionalist *Lega Nord*.⁶⁸

Another international symbol is the combination of hammer & sickle with a five-pointed star, traditionally used by the PCS and nowadays by the RCS. A more modern leftist symbol is the peace dove used in the PPDS and PdS-ZF symbols.

The red carnation has been referred to already. The red rose as symbol of either the socialdemocratic or (in the Italian context) the post-communist tradition, is frequently shown in the form of the former symbol of the Party of European Socialists, i.e. combined with a circle of 12 yellow stars, derived from the European flag.

The European stars alone can be found in the symbols of the SpL and, of course, the *Europopolari*.

7. Summary

Originally thought to be a short digression from the rather vast research of German and Italian party flags, the Sammarinese topic appeared just as remarkably time-consuming and complicated. Not only is the party system rather complicated for such a small country, but it is also remarkable that even the tiniest parties and groups and civic lists actually do use flags. This is of course in the Italian tradition, but still surprising. Of course I would wish to have filled a few more of the gaps, but the Sammarinese party flags still give an image of modern Sammarinese history in a nutshell, as well as providing a clear account of the Italian character of the country and its politics.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to several party headquarters that generously donated flags for my collection (PDCS, AP, RCS, PdS-ZF) or at least gave me the opportunity to photograph the flag (EPS, NPS). A special thanks to the staff of the PSD who not only provided me with current and historical flags but also allowed me access to the flags in the PCS archive.

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Appendix: Abbreviations of the parties and organizations

AeL	Arengo e Libertà (= Arengo and Freedom)
AG	Alternativa Giovanile (= Juvenile Alternative) (AP youth)
AGSS	Area Giovani Socialisti Sammarinesi (= Group of Young Sammarinese Socialists) (PSS Youth)
ANS	Alleanza Nazionale Sammarinese (= Sammarinese National Alliance)
AP	Alleanza Popolare (= Popular Alliance)
AP	Altre Proposte (= Other Proposals) (PdD youth)
APIL	Associazione Patriottica Indipendente del Lavoro (= Independent Patriotic Labour Association)
APS	Alleanza Popolare Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Popular Alliance) (coalition 1949)
CdIS	Casa delle Identità Sammarinesi (= House of Sammarinese Identities)
CdL	Comitato della Libertà (= Committee of Freedoms) (coalition 1945/49)
CDR	Comitato Difesa Repubblica (= Committee for the Defense of the Republic)
DdC	Democratici di Centro (= Democrats of Centre)
DS	Democrazia Socialista (= Socialist Democracy)
EPS	Europopolari Sammarinesi (= Sammarinese Europopulars)
FGCSM	Federazione Giovanile Comunista San Marino (= Communist Youth Federation of San Marino) (PCS youth)
FRS	Fascio Repubblicano di San Marino (Republican Fascio of San Marino)
GDC	Giovani Democratico Cristiani (Young Christian Democrats) (PDCS youth)
GG	Gruppo Giovani (= Youth Group) (DdC youth)
GSD	Giovani Socialiste e Democratici (= Socialist and Democratic Youth) (PSD youth)
ID-PR	Intesa Democratica – Partito Repubblicano (= Democratic Accord – Republican Party)
IM	Idee in Movimento (= Ideas in Movement)
LdL	Lista della Libertà (= List of Freedom) (coalition 2008)
LS	Liberal Sammarinesi (= Sammarinese Liberals)
MBA	Movimento Biancoazzurro (= White-Blue Movement)
MCML	Movimento Comunista Marxista Leninista (= Marxist-Leninist Communist Movement)
MD	Movimento Democratico (= Democratic Movement)
MLS	Movimento Libertà Statutarie (= Movement for Statutory Freedoms)
MV	Mio Voto (= My Vote)
NPS	Nuovo Partito Socialista (= New Socialist Party)
NS	Noi Sammarinesi (= We Sammarinese)
PCS	Partito Comunista Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Communist Party)
PDCS	Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Christian Democratic Party)
PdD	Partito dei Democratici (= Party of the Democrats)
PDP	Partito Democratico Popolare (= Popular Democratic Party)
PDS	Partito Democratico Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Democratic Party)
PdS-ZF	Partito della Sinistra – Zona Franca (= Party of the Left – Free Zone)
PSE/PES	Partito del Socialismo Europeo / Party of European Socialists
PFS	Partito Fascista Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Fascist Party)
PPDS	Partito Progressista Democratico Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Democratic Progressive Party)
PPS	Partito Popolare Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Popular Party)
PS	Popolari Sammarinesi (= Sammarinese Populars)
PSD	Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici (= Party of the Socialists and the Democrats)
PSDIS	Partito Social Democratico Indipendente Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Independent Socialdemocratic Party)
PSDS	Partito Socialdemocratico Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Socialdemocratic Party)
PSIS	Partito Socialista Indipendente Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Independent Socialist Party)
PSM	Patto per San Marino (coalition 2008) (= Pact for San Marino)
PSRS	Partito Socialista Riformista Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Reformist Socialist Party)
PSS	Partito Socialista Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Socialist Party)

PSU	Partito Socialista Unitario (= Unitary Socialist Party)
RCS	Rifondazione Comunista Sammarinese (= Sammarinese Communist Refoundation)
RD	Riformisti Democratici (= Democratic Reformists)
ReL	Riforme e Libertà (= Reforms and Freedom) (coalition 2008)
SpL	Sammarinesi per la Libertà (= Sammarinese for Freedom)
SR	Socialisti per le Riforme (= Socialists for Reforms)
SU	Sinistra Unita (= United Left)
SUMS	Società Unione e Mutuo Soccorso (Society of Union and Mutual Aid)
UDS	Unione Democratica Sammarinese (=Sammarinese Democratic Union)
UFR	Unione Forze Repubblicane (= Union of Republican Forces)
UPR	Unione per la Repubblica (= Union for the Republic)
USD	Unione Sammarinese Democratica (= Democratic Sammarinese Union)
USdM	Unione Sammarinese dei Moderati (= Sammarinese Union of the Moderates)

Remarks on usage in the literature:

1. Names are not always used consequentially, particularly in the early years.
 2. Abbreviations do differ somewhat, according to the sources (e.g. USM instead of USdM)
 3. The “S” for Sammarinese is sometimes omitted for convenience (e.g. PS instead of PSS)
 4. Capitalization is not stringently applied (e.g. one might find PdD or PDD).
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End Notes

- ¹ Storia illustrata, p. 77ff.
- ² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Marino
- ³ Storia illustrata, p. 417
- ⁴ Storia illustrata, p. 973
- ⁵ Dall'Arengo, p. 77
- ⁶ Storia illustrata, p. 975
- ⁷ Storia del PFS, p. 23
- ⁸ Storia illustrata, p. 976
- ⁹ Storia del PFS, p. 30, 33, 131
- ¹⁰ Dall'Arengo, p. 98ff.
- ¹¹ Dall'Arengo, p. 102, 106f.
- ¹² Dall'Arengo, p. 103f.
- ¹³ Dall'Arengo, p. 110ff.
- ¹⁴ Dall'Arengo, p. 115ff.
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- ¹⁸ Zeichen der Menschen und Völker, p. 278
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- ²⁰ La bandiera sammarinese, p. 210ff.
- ²¹ Storia illustrata, p. 397ff.
- ²² Storia illustrata, p. 407
- ²³ Storia illustrata, p. 406, 429ff., 972
- ²⁴ Il tagliardetto
- ²⁵ <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Pfsm.jpg>
- ²⁶ from a SUMS poster reproduced in: Storia illustrata, p. 429
- ²⁷ Storia del PFS, illustrations
- ²⁸ Storia illustrata, p. 541
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- ³¹ Dall'Arengo, p. 144
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- ³⁴ Author's collection, donated by PSD headquarters, 2 June 2008
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- ⁴¹ Dall'Arengo, p. 114f.
- ⁴² Dall'Arengo, p. 118
- ⁴³ Dall'Arengo, p. 158f.
- ⁴⁴ Dall'Arengo, p. 147
- ⁴⁵ Dall'Arengo, p. 178.
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- ⁷³ photograph from the WWW, now disappeared
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