



AMBASCIATA D'ITALIA - OTTAWA

Italian Unification 150 years later: A Historical Perspective

Proceedings from the Round Table of December 7th, 2010
at Carleton University



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“Among Italians an identity far from complete, of language and literature, combined with a geographical position which separates them by a distinct line from other countries, and, perhaps more than everything else, the possession of a common name, which makes them all glory in the past achievements in arts, arms, politics, religious primacy, science, and literature, of any who share the same designation, give rise to an amount of national feeling in the population which, though still imperfect, has been sufficient to produce the great events now passing before us, notwithstanding a great mixture of races, and although they have never, in either ancient or modern history, been under the same government, except while that government extended or was extending itself over the greater part of the known world.”

John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Governments*, 1863

PREFACE

We are pleased to have collected here the papers presented at the Round Table *Italian Unification 150 Years Later: A Historical Perspective*. Our hope is that the essays will stimulate thinking on Italy's past, its present, and its future.

Je tiens à remercier les participants pour avoir si généreusement partagé leurs idées et leur expertise, et à exprimer mon appréciation la plus sincère à l'Université Carleton et à son Président et Vice Recteur, le Dr. Roseann O'Reilly Runte, pour son hospitalité et pour avoir inauguré la Table Ronde.

A special thanks to the Hon. Noël Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate of Canada, for his support and kind remarks to all the participants.

Nel presente volume sono raccolti gli atti della Tavola Rotonda *L'Unità d'Italia a 150 anni: una prospettiva storica* con lo scopo di stimolare una riflessione sul passato dell'Italia, sul suo presente e sul suo futuro.

Ringrazio calorosamente i partecipanti per i loro contributi di idee e di *expertise* e esprimo il mio sincero apprezzamento alla Carleton University, nella persona del Presidente e Vice Rettore la dott.ssa Roseann O'Reilly Runte, per averci gentilmente ospitato e per aver inaugurato i lavori.

Al Presidente del Senato canadese, l'on. Noël Kinsella va la mia gratitudine per le sue parole ai partecipanti e per il suo sostegno all'iniziativa.

Andrea Meloni
Ambasciatore d'Italia

Ottawa, 17 marzo 2011

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella
Speaker of the Senate

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to be present this evening and to address this conference, which has looked back in history to Italian Unification.

Uno dei fattori più impegnativi, nell'esame della storia italiana, è costituito proprio dalla sua ricchezza. Qualunque sia l'aspetto che se ne voglia discutere, sociale, politico, militare o culturale, è un'analisi che deve considerare migliaia di anni. Guardando ad esempio al processo di unificazione, che è l'oggetto di questa conferenza, è possibile andare ben oltre il XIX secolo per giungere alla prima parte del '300, quando ebbe inizio l'unificazione linguistica del paese, guidata principalmente dal sommo poeta Dante. Il suo nome viene onorato ancor oggi dalla Società Dante Alighieri, ramificata in tutto il mondo e che vede tra i partecipanti odierni il Presidente del suo Comitato di Ottawa.

Les événements à célébrer foisonnent également dans l'histoire de l'Italie, notamment, cette année, le 400^e anniversaire du décès du peintre Caravaggio. Le Musée des beaux-arts du Canada à Ottawa le soulignera d'ailleurs en tenant l'une des plus grandes expositions, assurément incontournable, sur cet artiste. Elle offrira aux Canadiens une nouvelle occasion de se rappeler leur chance de pouvoir profiter des réalisations italiennes. Il n'empêche qu'au beau milieu de tous ces anniversaires, on pourrait aisément oublier l'année 1861.

The experts who have spoken today are experts because they do not get lost in this wealth of Italian history. They focused on the political, social and demographic aspects of the Italian Unification of the nineteenth century. I do not wish to start a comparison of Italian and Canadian history,

but I will note that at about the time of Italian Unification, Canada had its own unification, commonly referred to as our Confederation. Both the unified Italy and the Canadian Confederation show that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and that a unified country can give rise to a nation.

The birth of Canada came with the 1867 date of Confederation. As Canada has grown since that date, Italians, as migrants and as immigrants, have helped us grow. Several sessions today have discussed the post-Unification movement of Italians and the effects of the movement on Canada. Canada's construction, transportation, mining and food industries have certainly been shaped by those Italians who arrived on our shores. Italian-Canadians are proud of the hard work they have done in Canada, and they remain proud of their Italian heritage, the history and the cultural achievements of Italy.

Sabato scorso la CBC Radio ha ritrasmeso una rappresentazione dell'*Aida* di Giuseppe Verdi eseguita dalla Canadian Opera Company. L'opera è giustamente famosa e i cantanti hanno offerto una prestazione eccellente, tanto che è facile immaginare il pubblico entusiasta gridare "Viva Verdi" al termine dell'opera. È probabile, però, che inneggiando al grande musicista quel pubblico non sapesse che stava contemporaneamente celebrando l'Unità d'Italia. Verdi, infatti, era un incrollabile sostenitore dell'unificazione del paese e l'espressione "Viva Verdi" divenne un grido di battaglia per i patrioti italiani, anche perché il suo nome era la sigla di "Vittorio Emanuele Re d'Italia."

La plupart des personnes qui assistaient à la représentation n'étaient probablement pas au courant des liens entre le compositeur et l'unification de l'Italie, mais des conférences comme celle-ci contribuent grandement à nous éclairer.

Thank you, merci, grazie a tutti e Viva Verdi.

Andrea Meloni
Opening Remarks

I would like to extend a very warm thanks to the speakers we have here today, who have come from Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa. Joining us are John Osborne, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Carleton University and a renowned expert on Medieval and Renaissance Italy, Bruno Ramirez from the Université de Montréal, who has written extensively on Italian migration to Canada and the history of Italy, Filippo Sabetti from the Department of Political Science at McGill where he lectures on Italy and its history. In the second session, we have two papers on Italian Unification and the first Italian immigration to Canada. We have an expert on these topics, Gabriele Scardellato from York University, and we also have the well known journalist Angelo Persichilli, who will speak to us about Italian immigration to Canada and cultural relations as a whole between Italy and Canada. Then, as this Round Table is also directed at Italian-Canadians in this country, we have remarks by three distinguished members of the Italian-Canadian community in Ottawa: the President of the Dante Alighieri Society, the President of the Ottawa Chapter of the National Congress of Italian-Canadians, and the President of Comites Ottawa, the committee of Italian citizens residing abroad.

I would like to thank CHIN Radio for hosting podcasts of this event on its website, so that this Round Table can be heard in different parts of Canada by people who are not here today.

Why have we organized this Round Table, you might ask? Well, in this month of December we would like to sow seeds for discussion, since in 2011 we will celebrate the 150th anniversary of Italian Unification. Next year in fact, both the Embassy and the three Consulates General in Canada have organized an important programme of events in honour of

this historic event. We also hope to host a second Round Table in Ottawa or Toronto – perhaps even larger than today’s. We thought it would be useful to begin with a historical perspective and move next year to a reflection on contemporary Italy and its major challenges. The origins of some of these challenges can be traced back in history, from the tensions, the dialectic between municipalities and the Centre, between localism and nationalism. I know that Professor Sabetti is also an expert on Cattaneo, one of the few political thinkers who advocated a sort of federalism for the new Italy.

I would like now to ask the President and Vice-Chancellor of Carleton University to say a few words.

Roseann O'Reilly Runte
Opening Remarks

Thank you very much Mr. Ambassador and welcome to all present. I offer you a very warm welcome on a rather grey day. The view from this building is wonderful despite the clouds. One might wonder what we are doing here at Carleton University celebrating 150 years of unification of Italy? One might wonder because, I am sure you are thinking that as a university president, my first thought of Italy would, of course, be the University of Bologna, 600 years old, while Carleton is a very young institution. Considering our youth, you might well wonder at our temerity to hold this conference here today.

In addition, as we think of Italy, one of the first things that comes to mind is that wonderful leaning tower located in Pisa. Ironically we are standing here, up straight in the tallest tower of Ottawa.

Yet we still have a lot in common and when I think of what we have in common, I think of the very first day I studied Latin. I do not know if any of you studied Latin in North America. If you did, you will recall that the first sentence in the book was, "Italy is a peninsula." As you know, Carleton is a peninsula as well, surrounded by the Rideau Canal and the Rideau River. Thus, we welcome you to your home away from home, Mr. Ambassador.

Carleton may well be a young university, but our faculty study history. We have wonderful historians who remind us of the past. We thus share knowledge of the past and the lessons garnered from understanding the past. This is certainly a second point we have in common.

When I was last in Italy, I was with two excellent friends, Umberto Eco and Marcello Danesi. We had dinner with the Mayor of a small town, and the meeting was

particularly remarkable because that Mayor was a university professor. I thought that the 18th century Enlightenment had come to pass. Denis Diderot expressed, at that time, the wish that “all kings would be philosophers and all philosophers, kings.” Italy is a country where Mayors are professors and vice versa, and this is as close as we come to living the 18th century philosophy. Welcome once more to Ottawa where we just elected a Mayor who is a graduate of Carleton University. Thus, we have one more bit of common ground.

Notwithstanding all we have in common, what really makes exchanges and ideas work, is the activity of people. Mr. Ambassador, since you have arrived here you have opened the doors of your Embassy and you have made it a vital and warm place for the community and the university. I applaud you and thank you very much on behalf of all present. What you have accomplished concerns not just the past, not simply the last 150 years of history, but the future. Take for example, the extremely successful workshop on Parliament Hill between Carleton University professors and their Italian counterparts on the topic of aerospace. Exchanges of ideas and information are about the past, the present and the future. So today, as we talk about the past, let us think about the future. Let us think about what we will do next year and the following year, and how we will make relations between Italy and Canada grow and blossom in the halls of our university. Thank you very much Mr. Ambassador. I wish you all an excellent colloquium.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

Many thanks. This first session is entitled “Becoming a State” and I will ask Professor Ramirez to speak on his topic “1861 and After: Historical Perspectives on the State, the Nation, and the Italian Diaspora”.

First Session: *Becoming a State*

Bruno Ramirez

*1861 and After: Historical Perspectives on the State, the Nation,
and the Italian Diaspora*

I welcome this initiative that His Excellency Ambassador Andrea Meloni has undertaken as one way of commemorating this foundational event in Italian history. And I am honoured to be invited to share some of my thoughts with the audience in this Round Table format. Mine are the reflections of a historian who for a number of years has taught the history of three countries (the U.S.A, Canada, and Italy), and has tried to understand the connections – direct or indirect – among them.

1861 was the year that witnessed the fulfillment of a dream for an important segment of the Italian intellectual and political class, but at the same time, the year that signalled the defeat for another segment of that class. Thanks to the diplomatic strategy of the strongest and politically most advanced of the Italian States, Piedmont, and thanks to the military genius of Giuseppe Garibaldi and his followers, Italy was finally unified into a single state, the Kingdom of Italy – a constitutional monarchy that exhibited all the main juridical and institutional characteristics of what at the time was considered a liberal state. Yet contrary to what others had dreamed and fought for, the unification of Italy failed to be the result of a widespread popular effort that would have ushered in a nation liberated from agelong oppression and finally fulfilling its historical destiny. It was far from being what the most combative and influential proponent of an Italian nation, Giuseppe Mazzini, known also as the Apostle of the Italian Nation, saw as the political, moral and spiritual unity of all Italians.

Let us first consider the expression “nation state” – a formula that has long been part of public discourse and used by scholars with reference to the several countries that became independent following the end of the “*ancien régime*,” and, more recently, with reference to those countries that emerged out of the process of decolonization in the twentieth century. Historians, however, have become increasingly aware of the problematic nature of that expression, particularly when applied to the unified Italy created in 1861. No one puts into doubt that the Kingdom of Italy was a state, endowed with all the necessary legal, political, and military institutions ensuring the exercise of sovereignty over its territory. But to what extent was it also a nation? This issue obviously would require a lengthier discussion than I can provide in these brief comments. While only scratching the surface, I hope I can offer some elements for a helpful historical perspective. In my view, part of the problem lies in the fact that although the Mazzinian project was defeated in 1861 by political, diplomatic and military realities, the idea of a nation kept surviving as an “imagined community” – to use the expression coined by Benedict Anderson¹ and in some important ways, it took on all the elements of what we historians call a “founding myth” – a myth that most “nation states” seek to preserve in their history.

It is worth reminding that – at roughly the same time as the Italian unification – in the most advanced liberal country of the nineteenth century, the United States, the myth of one nation under God was being shattered by one of the bloodiest civil wars, and it would again become operative only about half a century later, in the 1920s, largely in reaction to fears that the American nation was being seriously contaminated by the hordes of southern and eastern European immigrants who had settled in the country.

¹ Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London, 1991).

The architects of Italian Unification were able to make the distinction between, on the one hand, the state that they created and, on the other hand, the nation to which Mazzini and his followers had aspired. And one cannot think of a better expression of that awareness than the statement that has often been attributed to one of the founding fathers of the nation, Massimo d'Azeglio: "We have made Italy, now we must make Italians."²

Like d'Azeglio, the founding fathers were aware of the many localisms with deep historical and cultural roots, some of which were resistant to the highly centralized authority of the new state; a resistance that in its most extreme form would soon take the form of a quasi civil war – I'm thinking of the phenomenon of brigandage that erupted in many regions of Southern Italy and in which the eminent historian Eric Hobsbawm saw a form of "primitive rebellion" against the central state and its local representatives.³

They were also aware that large sectors of the population were subject to the moral and religious pressures coming from a supranational authority – the Church – that refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the new state and that, by papal decree ("Non expedit," 1868), discouraged Italian Catholics from participating in political life. In any case, it was no secret that the widespread landlessness and illiteracy were conditions preventing large sectors of the adult citizenry from participating in the political process. In fact, despite some progress in the extension of the political franchise, by 1882 only seven percent of the adult population was qualified to vote. Moreover, the founding fathers were conscious that the paths to industrialization the country had to take would not only exacerbate the localisms mentioned

² Gilles Pécout, *Il lungo Risorgimento. La nascita dell'Italia contemporanea (1770-1922)* (Milano, 1999), p. 197.

³ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester, 1959).

above, but would also engender new class divisions, making large sectors of the industrial working population receptive to the anti-capitalist ideologies already circulating throughout industrial Europe.

In many ways, the expression “making the Italians” translated historically into what we have come to call nation-building, where the concept of the nation is disrobed of its idealistic and quasi-religious roots and is transformed into a concrete programmatic challenge. Through a process of ongoing social, economic, and institutional reforms, nation-building would transform the citizens, instilling in them a common collective consciousness, thus making the idea of a nation within a state, if not concrete, at least politically operative.

Historians have produced a vast literature on how the Italian founding fathers went about pursuing a program of nation-building. But what needs to be stressed here is that the new State’s priorities and choices during the ensuing years resulted in one of the most massive migration movements in modern history. In many important ways, and, I’m sorry if I cannot repress my penchant for comparative history, the Italian experience in nation-building shows striking parallels with the Canadian one. Very few historians today would characterize the political entity that emerged in 1867 – the Canadian Confederation – as a nation state. Much like the protagonists of Italian Unification, the fathers of Canadian Confederation were quite aware of the kind of challenge they had to confront when they undertook a vast program of nation-building aimed at consolidating a new state while also unifying its ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse population. And much like the Italian experience, Canadian nation-building had as one of its main by-products a massive and chronic migration of its population that by 1940 had led

to a net population loss of 2.8 million.⁴ But whereas Canadians moved solely to the United States – making cross-border migration an integral part of ongoing Canada-US relations to this day – Italian migration became a global reality leading a number of historians, and more recently Donna Gabaccia, to apply the concept of “diaspora” to such a worldwide presence of Italian migrants.⁵ After 40 years of nation-building, by 1900 as many as 7 million Italians had left their country to work and live abroad and that number would double by the eve of the Great War. The unprecedented transformation of the world’s labour markets had taken them to all major poles of industrial developments in Europe and increasingly in the Americas.

Now, the question that I’ll address in the remaining 10 minutes or so is the following: what were, throughout that nation-building period of Italian history, the relations between the Italian state, the Italian nation, and the considerable number of Italians working and living abroad? It is a difficult question due to the fact that on the one end, during that period in particular, many Italians migrated temporarily, mostly men who journeyed abroad leaving their families in their native villages. On the other hand, the majority of them, certainly those headed to the Americas, ultimately settled in the countries of destination, giving rise to communities that increasingly included their foreign-born children who were often caught or engaged in processes of integration and acculturation.

I would say that migration history is probably the discipline that more than any other has helped to provide

⁴ Bruno Ramirez, *Crossing the 49th Parallel: Canadian Migration to the United States* (Ithaca, 2001).

⁵ Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy’s Many Diasporas* (London, 2000); George E. Pozzetta and Bruno Ramirez, eds., *The Italian Diaspora: Migration Across the Globe* (Toronto, 1991).

answers to that question. In previous years, the few Italian scholars in Italy who saw out-migration as a worthy subject of inquiry limited themselves to quantifying the movement and to retracing its multi-directional trajectories across oceans and continents. At the same time, in some of the most important receiving countries, such as the United States and Canada, scholars who studied immigration were primarily interested in the presence of those foreign populations for their success or failure in assimilating to the host society. In both cases, these were truncated perspectives of a process that instead constantly linked societies of departure and societies of destination or of settlement. However, the new migration historiography which emerged in the 1970s has made the link between the sending and the receiving societies a central conceptual and methodological axiom. And in so doing, it has shed considerable light on the extent to which the idea of “nation” was operative in the relations between migrants and their country of birth or their former motherlands.

Thanks to these historical contributions, that have continued uninterruptedly to the present, today we know how the various governments in power during the Italian post-Unification era stood powerless in the face of a massive phenomenon originating from virtually all regions of the country. Whatever efforts were made, these went into trying to understand the causes and offering a variety of explanations, ranging from demographic and economic factors to love of adventure. Yet, the phenomenon was so widespread that inevitably it intersected with the other major issue at the time which was the “agrarian question,” namely, how to transform the widespread landlessness among the rural classes into forms of productive agriculture – a challenge that would have required significant structural reforms and a great deal of political willpower. And although the various commissions of inquiry set up by the government clearly revealed the causal connections between landlessness and the necessity for millions of Italians to seek work abroad, the whole migration enterprise was left in

private hands – be they transatlantic shipping companies, recruiting *padroni*, or private humanitarian and religious organizations.⁶

When finally at the turn of the twentieth century the Italian state became directly involved in migration, the approach it took can best be defined as utilitarian, one that stressed the need to regulate it and possibly turn it to the advantage of nation-building. The most important move in this direction came in 1901, when the Italian parliament instituted the Italian Immigration Commissariat. An agency within the foreign ministry, it had the mandate to oversee Italian migration the world over and, where possible, protect migrants from exploitation and from various forms of discrimination. A corps of inspectors was sent around the world to inquire into mining districts, railroad towns, cities and neighbourhoods where Italians worked and lived. Their reports provided the first mass of empirical data on the presence of Italians in some of the most important sectors of the world economy.

At the same time, the realisation that migration had become irreversible and its benefits to Italy's economy considerable, led to a major shift in perspective and to an expanded notion of Italy—as if the “nation” had overflowed beyond the sovereign territory making Italian immigrants agents of civilization. The “Greater Italy” had in fact to encompass the millions of Italian emigrants spread throughout several continents. The new perspective entailed also reassessing emigration by stressing its positive role for the nation. As the historian Mark Choate has recently put it, “Emigrants would be united through culture, religion, and economics, not as fugitives, but heroes... in a consciously created, global community of Italians, under the umbrella of

⁶ Robert Harney, “The Commerce of Migration,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 9 (1977), pp. 42-53.

the Italian state.”⁷ As one of Italy’s leading liberal economists, Luigi Einaudi reframed emigration in terms of the ability of Italian human capital to insert itself in some of the world’s most dynamic economies while also constituting precious markets for Italian exports. Colonialism itself – previously thought to be the solution to emigration – was redefined by distinguishing between “colonies of direct dominion” and the free colonies that Italian immigrants created in countries and districts of settlement, most commonly known as “Little Italies.”⁸

But where the new migration historiography has been most compelling has been in its focus on the migrants themselves, on their relations with their families and villages, on their choices of destinations, and on the nature of the links they maintained with their former motherland.

In most cases, their migration project grew out of the awareness that they had to take things into their own hands, that they could not rely on the State, whether local or national, to effect changes that promised hope for their future. The awareness, moreover, that in migrating they were not leaving behind a nation but first and foremost a village, a hometown, often returning many times before settling permanently abroad. As the seat of their most immediate and meaningful social relations, of their affections and emotions, the village or hometown continued to be present in the psychic map through a variety of channels of communication.

The centrality of village-based relations and loyalties extending across boundaries and oceans has been documented by the numerous micro-historical studies of some of the major cities and neighbourhoods of Italian settlement especially in the Americas. These studies have also

⁷ Mark Choate, *Emigrant Nation : The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 62.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

shown the key role that those loyalties played in shaping various forms of immigrant associations from mutual benefit societies to leisure clubs. John Zucchi's study is illustrative of numerous such inquiries and of their conclusions. Commenting on the pre-World War One period of Italian settlement in that city, he concludes "Toronto's Italians were ultimately more loyal to their hometown groups than to an Italian nation, were more aware of belonging to a community of *paesani*, than to an Italian ethnic group."⁹

Obviously "national associations," mostly founded by local Italian elites and supported by Italian consular authorities, were also part of the Italian immigrant landscape as they sought to instil a sense of patriotism among their members. But it was mostly after the collapse of the Italian liberal state – following the Great War – and the rise of a new brand of nationalism that these national associations would gain a certain pre-eminence, sowing divisions and conflict within most Italian communities abroad.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

I would have some comments to add, based mostly on my experience as Consul General in Buenos Aires, because Argentina was a great country at the end of the 19th century – but I will save them for another moment, perhaps if we have some time at the end. I will now ask Professor Osborne to address the Round Table on the origins of the concept of Italia.

⁹ John Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto : Development of a National Identity, 1875-1935* (Montreal, 1988), p. 197; The Montreal case is studied in Bruno Ramirez, *Les premiers Italiens de Montréal : naissance de la « Petite Italie » du Québec* (Montreal, 1985).

John Osborne
The Origins of the Concept of 'Italia'

On 17 March 1861, Victor Emmanuel II, King of Piedmont, Savoy, and Sardinia, took a new title: Re d'Italia (King of Italy) – and after 20th September 1870 he could claim to be the first in more than 1200 years to rule the entire peninsula. Legend has it that, in 1859 in Naples, the cry “viva Verdi” was first used as a code to express political support of the Risorgimento, with ‘Verdi’ referring of course to the famous musician and composer of operas, Giuseppe Verdi, but also by happy coincidence working as the acronym for the political statement: Vittorio Emanuele, Re d'Italia. As we say in Rome, “Se non è vero, è ben trovato!” This is not the place to explore Verdi’s own possible political connections to the movement for Italian unification, nor whether his first great operatic triumph, Nabucco (1842), was intended as a metaphor for the Italian struggle against Austrian occupation. Instead, in the next few minutes I shall explore the origins of this name ‘Italia’ and of the title of ‘Re d'Italia’.

The etymological origins of the word ‘Italia’ are not absolutely certain, but most scholars of language believe that it originated as the name used by the Greeks for what is now Calabria, and then by extension the southern part of the peninsula. Their term is thought to derive from the Oscan ‘Viteliú’ (land of cattle) – obviously related to the Latin ‘vitulus’ (calf) and modern Italian ‘vitello’.

In the age of republican and imperial Rome, the use of the term ‘Italia’ gradually spread to cover the entire peninsula, although it never was a political unit as such. The empire was always the ‘Roman’ empire, not the ‘Italian’ empire – and indeed the emperors of Rome would use that title until the last of the line, Constantine XI, died in the unsuccessful attempt to defend the walls of Constantinople (‘New Rome’) against the Ottoman Turks on 29 May 1453. But in the former western empire, the concept of Italy lived

on, and eventually became associated with a political ruler who took the title of 'king'.

The first effective 'King of Italy' was the Germanic chieftain Odoacer, who in 476 deposed the last of the puppet emperors based in 'Old Rome,' Romulus Augustulus. In 493, he was in turn deposed by the Ostrogoth, Theoderic. Both situated their capital at Ravenna, a city which retains many buildings from that age, including Theoderic's tomb, and both used the title 'rex', in an attempt to avoid confrontation with the Roman emperors based in Constantinople. But there is no evidence for the use of the name 'rex Italiae'. The mid 6th century witnessed the conquest of northern Italy by the Lombards, and they too used the title 'king', but 'king of the Lombards,' with their capital at Pavia. The title 'rex Italiae' appears for apparently the first time in the late 8th century following the Frankish annexation of the Lombard kingdom. Charlemagne had taken the title 'King of the Lombards' himself, and it was his infant son Pippin who, in 781, would be the first to be crowned with the title 'King of Italy', by Pope Hadrian I – ironically now referring to the *northern* half of the peninsula, under Frankish rule. Pippin moved his capital from Pavia to Verona in 799, and we have a wonderful poem that survives from about that time which encapsulates the current political thinking. The poem, preserved in a single manuscript, is known as the 'versus de Verona' (or 'carmen Pipinianum'), and it sings the praises both of the city and its saintly defenders ('custodes sanctissimi'). But the first line is worthy of note, as it is one of the earliest references to Italy as a geographic entity: 'Magna et preclara pollet urbis in Italia'. It is important to note that this concept was not applied by the Franks to the entire peninsula, witness the use of the term in the anonymous poem entitled 'Lament on the death of Charlemagne' (written in or after 814): "Woe on you Rome ... Woe on you beautiful Italy ...", and it then goes on to enumerate other parts of the Frankish empire that were mourning the loss of their emperor. The point here is that 'Rome' and 'Italy' were still being seen as different. At

Pippin's death in 810, the title 'king of Italy' passed to his son Bernard, who in 818 was executed for treason by his uncle, Charlemagne's son and successor, Louis the Pious. Louis then conferred the title on his own son, Lothair. The title would survive the collapse of the Carolingian dynasty in the 9th century, being taken on occasion by whichever political ruler controlled the region – until in the mid 10th century this territory was incorporated by Otto I in a revived Roman empire. Thereafter, those who took the title 'Holy Roman Emperor' also took the title King of Italy, although this was usually conflated with notion of 'King of the Lombards', and the coronation was usually done with the 'corona ferrea', or iron crown, thought (erroneously) to be that of the Lombard kings – still preserved today in the cathedral treasury at Monza. The 'iron crown' was also used for the coronation of Napoleon as 'King of Italy' in Milan in 1805 – and Napoleon was perhaps the first to issue coinage that was self-consciously 'Italian': the first Italian *lira*. His kingdom did not survive his fall in 1814 after Waterloo – but the concept of 'Italia' survived, and of course formed the political basis for the *Risorgimento* movement in the following decades.

But there is another side to this history that must be mentioned. From the 6th to the 19th century, 'Italia,' as we understand that term today, was never a unified political whole, but rather a patch-work quilt of kingdoms, principalities, city states, republics (San Marino still survives), and from the 8th century until 1870, the Papal State. Allegiance was first and foremost to the family and the city. As the medieval Venetians were fond of saying, "Siamo veneziani, poi cristiani." 'Italiani' doesn't even figure in the list! But although never a political reality, the notion of a unified country by this name found occasional expression, first securely documented in the 14th century.

I shall conclude with two examples. The first is the great Florentine poet Dante, who, in his unfinished essay *De vulgari eloquentia*, rather ironically itself written in Latin,

focuses on the importance of the vernacular language as a sign of identity, and defines Italians linguistically as those who use the word 'si' for 'yes'. Dante was perhaps the first to think of Italy in linguistic and cultural terms, instead of as a political entity, although he also uses the word in a political sense in canto VI of the *Purgatorio*. And a combination of cultural and political elements can be found in the work of another great writer of that century, Petrarch, whose 1344 *canzone* 'Italia mia,' now written in *volgare*, would be revived and appropriated by politicians during the *Risorgimento*. Perhaps significantly, Petrarch's 'Italia' includes the lands of the Arno and Tiber, which he names, and not only the Po. For him Italy is:

La patria in ch'io mi fido
Madre benigna et pia

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

That was a fascinating "excursus" on the idea of Italy: in cultural terms, starting from Dante and Petrarca, the concept has always been there, even when Italy was divided into myriad states. There was sharp awareness among the *Literati* of the fact that Italy's weakness was *Discordia*. Another characteristic feature of the *Risorgimento*, in my view, is that the *Literati* were the driving force behind it, many times contrary to the will of the people. I am not a historian; I should be careful about what I say, but the vast majority of the population was bound by loyalties to the existing States and social order. It is fair to say that those who brought about the *Risorgimento* were a dramatically small number and, as Professor Ramirez reminded us a few minutes ago, it was in fact the work of a few.

I will ask Professor Sabetti to elaborate on his impressive title "The Making of Italy as a Constitutional Experiment".

Filippo Sabetti
The Making of Italy as a Constitutional Experiment

Thank you Mr. Ambassador. It is a pleasure to be here. The title of my talk is “The Making of Italy as an Experiment in Constitutional Choice.” The unification and liberation of Italy by the 1860s was a process that took place over 50 years of debate and efforts, and I'm asked to present it in 20 minutes or so! I will therefore have to be succinct. For those who are interested in what I have to say on the topic, may I direct them to the publications listed under my name on the McGill University website.

What needs to be kept in mind is that no one – no central planning or single directing mind – planned the unification of Italy. Rather, it was the result of separate, often uncoordinated, and certainly conflicting, efforts by different groups of individuals and parties. The making of Italy was a grassroots movement, but it was also an elite movement. Increasingly, we have become more and more aware of the role the women played in those efforts. What emerged by 1861 or so was the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy under the House of Savoy. We can now see that the outcome was the result of a complex chain of efforts and decisions involving many, from Palermo to Turin, and even beyond, in places like Paris and London that included Italian expatriates like Giuseppe Mazzini and foreign officials like Napoleon III. At the same time, and like all great historical events, the Risorgimento soon became a tool for different political groupings burdening that age with the mistakes and preoccupations that followed. Any attempt to make sense of the unification and liberation of Italy has to come to terms with many different currents of thought in the historiography that has developed for the past 150 years. Time constraints compel me to just highlight the principal interpretative currents.

One school of thought viewed the making of Italy as a very positive event, a signal achievement of Italians, a celebration of Italian Liberalism, especially when compared to the then sorry state of German Liberalism. This interpretation was voiced as late as the 1970s by Rosario Romeo, the well-known Risorgimento historian; earlier, and especially before Fascism, it had been voiced by the philosopher Benedetto Croce and some British historians like George Trevelyan. This positive interpretation of the Unification of Italy, and of the role of Cavour in particular, dominated scholarship before Fascism. A second major interpretive school of thought, followed the collapse of Fascism and tended to view the Risorgimento as a negative experience for democratic development, a sort of “failed revolution.” Antonio Gramsci used some pretty colorful, negative characterizations in the 1910s and the 1920s, and these - accepted and repeated, often unthinkingly, by historians writing after the experience of Fascism and the Second World War – became standard explanations after the Second World War. The British historian Denis Mack Smith is not a Gramscian scholar, but he is one of the most eminent contributors to this current of thought – much rejected by liberal historians like Rosario Romeo.

A third interpretive current stands between the two, and is exemplified by the life and work of Gaetano Salvemini, a sharp critic of Giolittian Italy before the First World War, a strong antifascist who for his staunch opposition to fascism escaped from Fascism and lived in exile, first in England and then in the United States. He returned to Italy after the war and died in Sorrento in the 1950s. Writing in 1945, and reflecting on his own experience in pre-Fascist Italy and in other countries since the 1920s, Salvemini retracted somewhat his earlier, exceedingly negative, assessment of liberal Italy. His words may be quoted at some length:

I would have been wiser [he said] had I been more moderate in my criticism of the Giolittian

system. My knowledge of the men who came after Giolitti in Italy as well as of the countries in which I have lived during the last twenty years has convinced me that if Giolitti was not better, neither was he worse than many non-Italian politicians, and he was certainly less reprehensible than the Italian politicians who followed him . . . Our criticism thus did not help to direct the evolution of Italian public life to a less imperfect form of democracy, but rather toward the victory of those militarist, nationalist and reactionary groups who found even Giolitti's democracy too perfect. It often happens that he who seeks only the best not only fails to get it but also plunges into the worst. . . . If it were possible for me to live again in Italy between 1900 and 1914, with a modicum of experience which I've gained during the successive 30 years, I would not admit any of my censures of the Giolittian system, but I would be more indulgent and I would regard with greater suspicion those who found pleasure in my criticism" (quoted in Sabetti, *The Search for Good Government*, 2000: p. 9).

Salvemini's words of wisdom came too late.

For a road map of the Risorgimento, we need to take as a starting point the time and place contingencies of the early nineteenth century and the seven or eight Italian states in the context of the concert of European nations that followed the Congress of Vienna. Three major issues loomed large. The prospect of a single political regime that would encompass the islands and the peninsula generated considerable debate among nationalist circles as to which constitutional design was the best suited for a population that had lived apart for many centuries. The unitary system that

emerged by 1861 was a product of a conscious choice – that is, other constitutional alternatives were rejected or became no longer feasible in the course of time. The unification or the creation of the Kingdom of Italy was expected to promote and advance political and economic liberation – that is, it was expected to promote liberty and well-being for its people.

The liberation and unification of Italy was a challenge of enormous proportion, and generated multiple rounds of discussion and action. As a way to orient the presentation, debate and action can be presented in terms of different rounds. The first round of constitutional debate took place between 1776 and 1848, the time of the revolts. A second round followed the failure of the 1848 revolts, which led to the eclipse of several constitutional possibilities, including a federal solution, and skewed the process in favor of unitary solution under the leadership of the leaders of the kingdom of Piedmont under the Savoy monarchy, as that kingdom became a leading agency for national liberation and independence. The period between 1855 and 1860, in effect the third round, consolidated Piedmont as the only place in Italy with a liberal parliament and constitutional monarchy. Still, the making of a united Italy by the 1860s was somewhat unexpected and it was short of being miraculous – Garibaldi's expedition to Sicily and the sudden collapse of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies in the South are two cases in point. At the same time, too many expectations were built into Unification to the point that some historians suggest that "success spoiled the Risorgimento."

Here are some of the challenges that awaited those who struggled for the liberation and unification.

In the consciousness of most of its inhabitants, Italy had always been a territorial unit – a single paese, if not a single nation-state as far back as Dante. For example, the republic of Venice remains the longest lived self-constituted republic, but its patrician leaders often showed a strong

identification with Italy as a whole. At the same time, several states had emerged over many centuries and so the question in the first half of the nineteenth century was how to bring about the union of people divided politically into several states. Nationalism and liberalism as currents of ideas could help overcome loyal and regional loyalties and show why it was imperative for Italy to have a single political union but these currents of ideas had to be developed, presented and made to appeal to diverse audiences throughout the peninsula and islands. It would not happen just because it was desirable. So the question: how to actually bring about this state of affairs: should unification come through peaceful means, through reflection and choice, which might take a long time; or should it come through the use of uprisings, revolts and unity imposed from the top?

Other complicating factors may be worth mentioning.

The division of Italy into different states had been ratified and sanctioned by the congress of Vienna in 1815-16, following the Napoleonic experience. Austria had emerged as the trustee of that European peace in Italy. That is, the political division of Italy was viewed as an essential aspect of European peace and balance of power after the congress of Vienna, and Austria was, in this sense, the enforcer of that peace on the peninsula. At the same time, the Papal states in central Italy were deemed essential prerequisites to the autonomy, freedom and universality of the Catholic Church, and had been returned to the Church for that reason after the Congress of Vienna. As a footnote, we should not forget the strong anti-Catholic position taken by successive Italian governments which included the nationalization and the privatization of church property, fueled by strong Masonic influences wanting to keep the Catholic Church down. Not surprising, Catholicism could and did help to promote nationalism in Ireland, Lithuania and Poland but had difficulties doing the same in Italy.

Italian patriots faced another problem. The political divisions that had existed in Italy contributed to a rich diversity of culture, languages, loyalties – once Gramsci dismissed this diversity as "municipal particularism and Catholic cosmopolitanism." So the question was how best to advance the cause of Italian unification and liberty: whether it was best to convert local patriotism – or local and regional loyalties – into some form of a pan-Italian nationalism and identity, or suppress those multiple loyalties altogether in favor of a single identity and loyalty. As maybe recalled, the making of the Canadian Confederation in 1867 was done peacefully but the founders of Canadian Confederation faced roughly the same dynamics – how to transform local, provincial and imperial (British) loyalties and different linguistic attachments into a common political nationality – events in Canada suggest that multiple loyalty and identity remain something of a challenge in provinces like Quebec and Alberta.

The first round of discussion about how to make Italy took place between 1776 and 1848. Not surprising, this first round explored several possibilities for unification. Let me quickly present each possibility.

One possibility was a unitary republic. In 1776, the French in Milan organized a literary competition as to which system of government was best suited for a united Italy. The prize went to an essay by Melchiorre Gioia which argued for a unitary republic and against a federal solution: he said that "a federal system will not work in Italy; federal systems are by definition slow, awkward, and take a lot of time to reach decisions. (We know something about that in Canada, for a unitary system in Canada would have destroyed the French factor and probably not made the country Canada is today.) Mazzini later came to share this view to some extent, but his great achievement was, above all, to promote nationalism as a positive force in the world and especially among youth. His

ideas about democracy and revolution were influential throughout Europe.

The second possibility was a confederation of princes under the Pope. It did not take long to discover that the pope – even a liberal one at that – could not be both the head of a united Italy and the head of a religion that went beyond the confines of Italy. Another possibility was a customs union of the kind that had been started in Germany. Again, the idea behind this proposal was that once Italian leaders agreed to some form of economic union, then slowly that process would lead to a political union. Time revealed that this possibility was not feasible either.

Another constitutional possibility was a federation of peoples, a United States of Italy. A leading proponent of a United States of Italy, of a federal commercial republic for Italy and for Europe as a whole, was the Milanese thinker Carlo Cattaneo (1801-1869). With the Austrians in Lombardy and other parts of the peninsula and with the Bourbon monarchy in the South, the realization of this option depended above all on creating a common political discourse that would in time and peacefully lead to a shared understanding of the value of a federal union. This constitutional option was also based on the view that the history of Italy itself was multiform, and hence federal. An educated public favorable to this constitutional option could emerge, but Cattaneo and others did not have time to create such a favorable public opinion and the federalist option remained the option of an attentive, but small, public.

The 1848 revolts started in Palermo and spread to the peninsula, reaching Paris as well as Vienna. The Italian revolts carried multiple meanings: they were popular reactions against illiberal, oppressive regimes, favored constitutional government for each state (whereby the rulers would be constrained), and offered some prospects for national unification. To revolt proved easy; to govern after the

revolt proved less so. Soon the revolutionaries found that it was impossible to engage in a constitutional reform, while foreign, Austrian, armies were assembling at the gates. Pope Pius IX, the liberal pope, discovered that he could not help to liberate Italy from foreign rule and be the Pope of the Austrians as well. The Sicilians' wish to be free of the yoke from Naples and become part of a pan-Italian federation could not be achieved quickly, and favorable circumstances were in short supply. All this to say that a complex chain of factors led to the failure of the 1848 revolts: no unification under the pope; little or no prospect for a federal union; and a customs union was deemed ineffectual if not premature. Many patriots began to see that there was something to Mazzini's argument that the single most important issue was national liberation, and not what form of government was best suited to a united country. This realization made it easy for republican patriots to accept the prospect of unification under the House of Savoy, the ruling monarchy in Piedmont. What also now made the kingdom of Sardinia (its formal name) more attractive was that it had become the best hope for Italian liberals: it was the only parliamentary or constitutional monarchy after 1849. Its leaders would have legitimacy and appeal in transforming the resources of the kingdom into institutional forces for national independence and liberation.

What also contributed to create favorable conditions was that, by 1849, Austria had become a threat to European peace, and ceased to be a guarantor of peace in Italy. The collapse of the 1848 revolts did not stop popular unrest against oppressive and illiberal governments throughout Italy – and I'm now taking a shortcut and skipping also the Franco-Piemontese war in 1859. In 1859 popular unrest again flared up in Palermo and led to the collapse of the kingdom of Two Sicilies, with the help by the well-known Expedition of the Thousand under Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Hero of the Two Worlds, Europe and Latin America.

By 1859, the central question in the making of a united Italy was no longer federalism versus unitary government but, rather, what kind of unitary system Italy would have. Discussions raged throughout the peninsula at the time, as the Savoy monarchy was becoming the new reigning dynasty for the country as a whole.

One line of argument – perhaps the best - came from Palermo and it was in the form of a memorandum to the Prime Minister of nascent Italy, Cavour, in May 1860. The memorandum outlining the different possibilities was authored by Francesco Ferrara, a leading political economist of the 19th century. Just as an aside, the North American economist, James M. Buchanan, who in the 1980s won the Nobel Prize in economics, freely acknowledged the influence that Francesco Ferrara had in developing his own ideas. Francesco Ferrara wrote to Cavour also because they knew each other, as Ferrara had taught at the University of Turin after 1848.

Ferrara noted that unless the union with the rest of Italy was done properly, Sicily could become “the Ireland of Italy.” He asked: given the fact that we all want to avoid that, what are the different constitutional options available? Unlike Cattaneo, Ferrara accepted the constitutional monarchy and by implication its system of government and administration. Still, Ferrara’s memorandum remains important because it elucidates what constitutional knowledge was available and the problems that people confront in the design of governmental arrangements, namely, knowing what results alternative sets of principles articulated in correlative forms can be expected to yield.

Ferrara went through several possibilities. Let me briefly go through each one and the reasons for preferring one alternative over the others.

The first option he reviewed was the possibility of extending to Sicily and the rest of Italy what he called the Swedish Norwegian model. That is, the two parts – Sicily and the rest of Italy – would remain separate in institutional arrangements but would be united under a common king. Ferrara noted that this solution was probably the one most Sicilians preferred, but he urged that it be rejected. It would not work in the long run and, he predicted correctly, it did not in the long run work for Sweden and Norway.

The second option was a constitutional design patterned on the French political and administrative system – a complete fusion, with Sicily becoming just another province of Italy as had happened to Lombardy and Tuscany. Ferrara rejected this solution as a form of political socialism that would not work either. Such a system of government would do away with local autonomy, while centralized institutions would sap local and regional initiatives and be subject to profound institutional weakness and failure. Such a system was also contrary to the multiform history and the experience of Italy.

Ferrara then looked at what he called the Scottish model. This design of government meant that Sicily would, with the exception of the authority of the national parliament, keep its secondary laws and institutions. Ferrara was skeptical that the Scottish system could work in Italy and in his own time with a penchant for national parliaments to take over local and regional affairs. National parliaments tend to extend their authority; they're very greedy institutions, and Ferrara doubted that this option – however applicable to Scotland and the United Kingdom – would work in Italy.

Ferrara looked to the American system. Applied to Italy, this constitutional solution meant decentralization of power from national to regional and local governments. It was a way of reconciling Sicilian and mainland political aspirations. What Ferrara suggested anticipated the creation

of the regional governments that came to Italy with the republican constitutions of 1946. Let me quote what Ferrara actually said in trying to convince Cavour. "Who can ever tell that the solution currently being advanced for Sicily" – the one he was proposing – "might not some day be extended to other parts of the peninsula." And he reminded Cavour that, "[c]ertainly ideas of rigid centralization are not native to Italy, and no other part of Italy is as distinctive as Sicily. The Italian government could profitably carry out an experiment there which could do no harm; it might be a source of precious information for the future if it ever came the day either to proceed to other annexations or to decentralize government in some of the regions already annexed."

Cavour rejected Ferrara's proposal and opted, for a variety of reasons, for a system of centralized government and administration. The American civil war probably did not help Ferrara's argument. At the same time, Cavour and other founders of unification knew the work of Tocqueville about the institutional weakness and failures of centralized government and administration in France, and that such a centralized system of government was not necessarily a model of good, successful government for Italy. But, Cavour and others reasoned, the critical difference in Italy now was the ideological forces and political preferences that would work through and upon administrative structures were liberal-parliamentary and not absolutist. They were confident that they could make the arrangements of a unitary state work as they should, avoid the problems that plagued centralized government and administration in France and make the same institutions in Italy work to create a great nation and a liberal political regime.

To return to Salvemini, in his 1945 reflections he acknowledged that tremendous improvements in all areas of public and private life had occurred between the period of the Risorgimento and the united Italy that succeeded it, between 1848 and 1914. He noted that it could not be denied that the

statecraft of the founders of the Italian state and the framework of government they had left behind had something to do with this immense human and material progress. The Italian universities before 1922 produced some of the ablest minds in social and natural sciences – from Mosca’s theory of the ruling class, to the Italian school of public finance and to the Gini index. Giolitti’s ascent to power in 1901 solidified, during almost a decade of rule, the progress made in different areas of Italian life. Still, there is no way to deny what my colleague here, Bruno Ramirez, suggests about Italian emigration after 1870. Many Italians emigrated in search of a better life from Canada to Argentina and beyond. One of the earliest accounts of Canadian Confederation was by Enea Cavalieri who came to study Canada in 1876, and in his travels he discovered a family originally from Pisa living in Prince Edward Island.

When what my colleague Ramirez said is duly taken into account, the theme of failure still cannot, in my view, account for everything that followed the creation of the Italian state. There is more force and truth in a less pessimistic, and more positive, assessment of liberal Italy.

The creation of the Italian state was hailed, justifiably, as one of the most notable achievements of the nineteenth century. Rosario Romeo reminds us that “even as late as 1932 G.F.H. Berkeley could say of Italy that “no other nation in Europe has made so much progress during the last seventy years.” But we also now know that that progress was not secure. Liberal Italy won the First World War but lost the peace that followed with tragic consequences, and not just for the people of Italy. The post-1945 success of Italian industrial democracy was not anticipated by many analysts writing in the early 1950s. Italy has often defied the odds, survived and prospered. There is, therefore, something to the view that Italian politics can be treated as a school for good government precisely for what it can teach us about the search for good government, self-governance and human progress. Human

progress is not something that once obtained remains. To endure, successive generations must work to maintain and transmit that experience. The best way to reflect on, and celebrate, the making of Italy 150 years ago today is to draw attention to what that experience can teach about which institutions of government facilitate or hinder the pursuit of freedom and self-government. That lesson in constitutional choice is, in my view, the Risorgimento's enduring legacy.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

Prof. Sabetti immersed us in the atmosphere of the mid-19th century, with all the difficult choices to be made. Of course, many of the consequences were unintended, but I have the feeling that for some the aim, the objective, was quite clear: an undivided Italy. That master tactician Cavour had this goal in his mind, and was ever adapting the way to reach it. When one studies this period, one cannot but have enormous admiration for the work of Cavour, and also for the group of people who independently, perhaps one against the other, went to extraordinary effort and were in the end extremely successful.

Second Session: *Italian Unification and the First Emigration to Canada*

Andrea Meloni

We have heard three very lively, deeply interesting papers. This second session focuses on the first Italian emigration to Canada as linked to Italian Unification. Professor Scardellato of York University will tell us something about it in “Creating the Chains: Post-Unification Italians discover Canada.”

Gabriele Scardellato

Creating the Chains – Post-Unification Italians Discover Canada

Thank you Mr. Ambassador, for the invitation to participate in this meeting and for taking the wonderful initiative to bring us together to discuss interesting topics.¹⁰ I begin my lectures on Italian immigration to North America with my second-year students by asking them a question: “Which is younger? Italy or Canada?” Of course, this is a trick question, and once they’ve stumbled around in their attempts to answer and remembered that Canadian Confederation took place in 1867 and that the Italian Risorgimento begins in the early 1860s and ends in the 1870s, I try to make the point (which is really where my own interests begin as a historian) that neither those who would eventually become Italians nor their hosts across the Atlantic waited for the creation of either state before they decided to deal with the issues that confronted them.

¹⁰ This presentation describes part of a much larger project on which I am working with my good friend and colleague from York University, Professor Emeritus Elio Costa. Professor Costa was kind enough to accept my offer to join him in his research for a biography of Andrea Lorenzo Grassi. We intend to publish this biography in the very near future.

Those issues, at least in the words of one of the individuals who I will speak about in some detail today, were quite simple. When asked why he left Italy in 1912, by then it was Italy, of course, and more to the point why he left Piedmont, one of the territories of origin of the movement that would unify and produce the modern Italian nation state, he replied simply, and no doubt in a difficult version of English, "I had to find something to eat." The person in question was, I think, originally a migrant but we have to speculate because we don't really know his long-term plans. We have a rough sense of the economic and similar conditions that motivated him – the need to find something to eat was certainly one of them – but we do not know much about the influences that might have drawn him to any particular location. Eventually, he became an immigrant in Canada, an experience that began with a stint as a labourer in northern Ontario of about one year, followed by some four years in the Rocky Mountains, in both cases he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) – in fact, his employer, both in northern Ontario along the shore of Lake Superior and later in British Columbia, is one of the clues in the story I will outline in this presentation – before transferring to Canmore, Alberta, in the foothills of the Rockies. In Canmore he became a contract coalminer and an accomplished one who made a living in that arduous, challenging, and dangerous occupation. Despite the fact that he also became, amongst mountaineers, one of the most famous mountain climbers that the Rocky Mountains have seen, it is unlikely that you will recognize his name.

Andrea Lorenzo Grassi, or as he would come to be known in the Rocky Mountains, Lawrence Grassi, was the individual whose migrant and immigrant journey I have outlined briefly above and whose experience I will use as an illustration of a somewhat unusual type of emigration from Italy in the post-unification period. He is unusual for a number of reasons. By the time that mass migration to Canada was in full flow, the majority of those who travelled

to this country, certainly from the late 1890s and through to the Second World War, and definitely after the Second World War, were southern Italians. They were “products” of the situation in the newly created nation state that Professor Bruno Ramirez and many other scholars of Italian emigration have described, of that ancient and difficult tension that existed in Italy between its northern and its southern realities. Lorenzo Grassi is unusual in this regard because of his origins, as noted, in the region that provided one of the essential motivating forces for the creation of the nation state, and Grassi seems to have been part – we must speculate because available sources are not as good as they might be – of a long tradition of migration from that particular corner of Piedmont to other places nearby, to other jurisdictions in Europe, and most unusually – this is part of the reason for telling this story – most unusually to Canada.

The Cannobino valley, in which Falmenta, Grassi’s town of origin, is located, had a population of some 6000 to 7000 people in its heyday in the era of mass migration. Falmenta was the largest of the eleven main valley settlements in the Cannobino valley, with a population in the late 1800s of some 1500 residents. Additionally, Falmenta was the largest settlement of the four *comuni* or municipalities within the valley and almost from its historical beginnings, from the first moments when we can begin to trace its history, we know that migration was a reality in the lives of the Falmentines just as it was in the lives of others in the valley. The modern-day valley is stunning in its beauty and can be recommended strongly to anyone wishing to experience what is now an isolated and gorgeously verdant environment! The town of Falmenta is situated at about 700 meters in elevation on a very steep-sided valley. It is now the type of setting which some of us have the good fortune to be able to visit as the recreation of a type of re-imagined Italy that, according to local memory and photographic and other evidence, was far from paradisiacal through the period of mass migration in Italy. Clearly, according to these sources, Italy as a land of

now immaculately restored and often pristine towns and villages did not exist when Lorenzo Grassi decided to leave in 1912. Nor had it been a particularly hospitable environment for its inhabitants for much of the settlement's history.

The valley inhabitants were accustomed to a type of migration – transhumance – which might have served as an important introduction or preparation for the experience of the other types of migration that are much better known. The transhumance practiced in the valley was controlled by seasonal changes and the different climatic conditions they created in the valley at different elevations on its steep sides. The peasant farmers in the valley began their agricultural season on the lower slopes and as the season warmed through the summer they literally moved their dwelling places up the sides of the valley so that by the end of the summer, when the hay in the highest alpine meadows was ready for harvest, the entire household, together with their all-important livestock, had been transferred to their alpine dwellings or *cascine* so that they could mow their meadows, prepare the hay, and tend to their animals. The valley families often had several properties in the valley which were worked according to this system of migration based on the changing seasons.

This was not the only type of migration with which the residents of the Cannobino valley were familiar. A second type was also known in many other places in Italy including Falmenta and, more specifically, in the municipality situated just around the mountain from Falmenta called Gurro. By the late nineteenth century this town already had a tradition, a tradition mercifully long since finished, of supplying young boys to serve as *spazzacamini* or chimneysweeps. Parents in the valley entrusted their young male children into the service of so called *padroni* who accompanied them out of the valley to practice their trade in cities like Milan and Turin. This form of migration easily predated Italian unification and survived well into the period of the present study. As we

know, it was only one type of child labour that was common in Italy and in other jurisdictions, and it is only singled out here because it is another type of migration that was part of the difficult economic and social reality of life in the valley, and it also might have helped to condition its inhabitants to think of looking elsewhere “to find something to eat.” Clearly, conditions in the valley did not make for easy subsistence, and other means had to be found to supplement what could be produced on the basis of the local economy.

The last type of migration was much more commonly practiced in the valley compared to that of padroni-led chimneysweeps, and it is a type with which we are, perhaps, more familiar. This was the practice that led one famous observer of the Mediterranean economy, Fernand Braudel, to describe the mountains of the region as “factories of men.” They were factories of men because male labourers poured forth from them in search of employment, a search that in the case of Italy often led them to cross the border. Rarely it seems – and this is also very much the case for the Cannobino valley in Italy’s northwest – did this migration lead to other places in Italy that were industrializing, especially in the north. Rather, the preferred destinations were located across the border in Switzerland or France. Eventually for some settlements like Falmenta, but unfortunately available sources do not provide a date, this migration was extended to locations as distant as Canada. Lorenzo Grassi’s early life, from the age of twelve in fact, until his departure for Canada in 1912 at 21 years of age, mirrors this migration history.

Thus, from his adolescence to his early adulthood, Grassi travelled seasonally with his father, Giuseppe, to the vicinity of Grenoble, France where father and son laboured as woodcutters to supplement their family’s subsistence economy in Falmenta. Long before Grassi set out for Canada, therefore, he was well aware of various types of migration that were necessary if one was to survive in the valley. In fact, as we will see, even the relatively unusual journey (judged by

distance and similar criteria) to Canada and to the north shore of Lake Superior was a well-known reality in the lives of Grassi's peers long before Grassi's own departure.

From at least the time of Unification, therefore, and probably long before it, as Braudel and others have described, the settlements of the Cannobino valley were familiar with a variety of migration strategies. By the time of Lorenzo Grassi's emigration from Falmenta to Canada in the early years of the last century, it is clear that he is participating in a well-established process, that he is part of a particular migration network that has been in place for some time. The first references for departures overseas from Falmenta do not include much detail, especially concerning destination. Instead, emigrants are presented as destined generally for North America, and these references date to the mid to late 1880s, that is, some 10 to 15 years after the end of the process of Italian unification. Clearly, as Professor Ramirez has described, as the industrialization of North America began to unfold in the late-nineteenth century, a key resource that was needed so that financial capital could be put to productive use was labour, and migrants and immigrants like those from the newly-created Italian nation state were ready and able to meet this need. As the North American economy began to develop, so too did the infrastructure that would allow the exploitation of the resources of the continent – in this case that infrastructure was the great Canadian undertaking, the Canadian Pacific Railway – so it became dependent on the emigration of ever increasing numbers of migrants and immigrants from Europe and elsewhere.

This is the context in which we discover emigrants from Falmenta, a remote valley in the rugged landscape of northwestern Piedmont, probably by means of a type of migration network that we have not yet been able to trace with any precision, relocating either temporarily or permanently to an equally, or even more, remote location across the Atlantic Ocean, thousands of kilometres away in

northern Ontario, in the settlement now known as Thunder Bay. At the time, these emigrants were destined for Fort William which, with Port Arthur, was then one of two growing settlements at “the lakehead” of Lake Superior. At some moment in the 1880s when we can begin to trace these individuals in their migrations, they have already “discovered” Canada, or possibly Montreal. In fact, at least in the earlier years of emigration, many of them give Montreal as a destination, but it appears to be named simply as a transshipment point and not the point of settlement. Their journey takes them through Ellis Island, at New York, probably the most famous portal in the era of European mass migration to North America, and from there, probably through Montreal, to Fort William, in northwestern Ontario. The migration and emigration from Falmenta allow us to trace a unique aspect of Italian emigration in these early years in the history of the new nation state, and in the process expand our knowledge of Piedmontese immigration to North America, and to Canada in particular.

To repeat, the migrants of the Cannobino valley, and those from Falmenta in particular, devised a migration chain that sidestepped local possibilities like Milan or Turin or other similar centers of industrialization in the north of the new nation state. Remarkably, this occurs in the 1880s when the Italian-national population of Canada was less than two thousand or less than half of one percent of the total population of the newly-confederated state. By the time of the Canadian census of 1891, the Italian-national population in Canada was about 2800, but this may well be an under-estimation, because it may not account for those who were migrants and thus unlikely to be found at a fixed address at the time of the enumeration. These, like the Falmentines, were sojourners who were intent on an economic campaign whose success would allow them to return to their place of origin. The sojourners from Piedmont are only unique because of the apparently early date of their migration, their “target” destination(s), and the long-lived nature of this particular

migration stream. As noted, by the 1890s, migration from Italy in general for all destinations, including the United States and Canada, had shifted from a northern to a southern phenomenon.

In the post-unification period before this, however, the reverse is true; departures from the north of the newly-formed nation state formed about 70 percent of the national total with about 10 percent departing from the centre and 20 percent from the south. Further, the overseas destinations before the early 1890s – with the large majority headed for South America – were also very different from what they would become later. The emigration from the Cannobino valley therefore, is unusual in a number of respects, including its timing from a relatively early moment after Italian unification, its North American and northern Ontario focus, and its persistence through the 1890s and beyond, by which time the more general migration from Italy came from the Italian south.

According to sources like the Ellis Island ships' manifest records, a very large majority of those migrating from the Cannobino valley, and from Falmenta in particular, were destined for the lakehead settlement of Fort William. The settlement, which began its history as an outpost in the 18th century for the fur trade then based in Montreal, developed an interesting and heterogeneous Italian community from the 1880s, and that growth was coterminous with the arrival of the Piedmontese. They were not, however, necessarily bound for Fort William itself as their final destination. Much of the available information suggests that they were bound first for Montreal and then for Fort William and from there, perhaps to their dismay, to various stations on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), to settlements located across northern Ontario to the east of the lakehead. Moving eastward from the present-day city of Thunder Bay there were significant groupings of Falmentines in places like Nipigon, Rossport, Schreiber, Jackfish, Peninsula Harbour,

Coldwell, Heron Bay, and White River. Some of those who have been traced through various records clearly were sojourning or temporary residents who worked in the region for only a season or two before returning to Italy, then perhaps repeating the journey again as their economic circumstances dictated. Others, however, settled for longer periods of time in these relatively remote communities across northern Ontario; indeed, some lasted as long as the communities themselves.

Lorenzo Grassi spent a year in one of these settlements as a navvy, a labourer employed for the arduous work of maintaining a section of the railway track. He settled in, or was based at a place called Jackfish, Ontario, a small port and coal-handling facility for the CPR, and a vibrant community boasting its own school, churches, hotel and other amenities until the 1960s. It began to decline to its present ghost-town status when the change to diesel from coal-fired steam locomotives on the railway did away with the need for coal. Grassi worked for about one year in this area of northern Ontario and then either was transferred or asked to be moved almost to the other side of the continent to an equally small, CPR-based settlement called Field, in British Columbia. This former railway section point is located just on the other side of the great divide, in the Rocky Mountains. The settlement lies at the foot of the famous Kicking Horse Pass and its spiral railway tunnel in what is now Yoho National Park. He spent some three or four years in Field, again as a railway navvy working to maintain the railroad track to the east as far as Wapta Lake at the top of the pass and the CPR's Hector Station located there. Perhaps because of the difficult nature of the railway work – the Kicking Horse Pass section of the railway was notorious for the gruelling work it demanded of the section men who were employed to maintain it – Grassi chose an alternative occupation. He became a coal miner, work that may have been at least marginally less difficult but perhaps more dangerous. He moved to Canmore, on the Alberta side of the great divide, at the foot of the Rocky

Mountains on their eastern side, but he wasn't simply employed as a labourer in the mines of the Canmore Coalmine Company. Rather, and this suggests some ability in the young Falmentine, he became a contract coalminer, the worker responsible for the often demanding task of shoring up the tunnels to the coalface, blasting out the coal there and moving it out of the mine.

Canmore and nearby Banff, and of course the Rocky Mountains, are as enthralling as the Cannobino Valley, possibly even more. This western Canadian geography is extremely captivating, and what is even more interesting for our current topic, there are now at least three place names in the geography of the Canmore region itself that bear Grassi's surname. One of these, Mount Lawrence Grassi, is a mountain that overlooks the city of Canmore, the middle peak of a massif that includes on one end the Ship's Prow and on the other Ha Ling. In addition, a hike from the town of Canmore itself – indeed, originally beginning from the back door of Lawrence Grassi's cabin – along a trail carved out by the Falmentine coalminer, leads up into the foothills behind Canmore to two small lakes which are officially designated as Grassi Lakes. In addition, in the town of Canmore itself, on the flat land of the valley below Mount Grassi, is a modern and well-appointed school that has been named in Grassi's honour.

Clearly, if we are to judge by this form of public recognition we have in the persona of Lorenzo/Lawrence Grassi a remarkable individual whose rise to recognition began, as noted above, with only the most humble and prosaic motivation of finding something to eat. He died in Canmore at ninety years of age, in a home for the elderly, carefully watched over by some of the many good friends he had made over a very long life.

In conclusion, we might try to outline, however briefly, how it was that a modest and retiring working man

from the Cannobino valley came to be held in such high regard by his contemporaries and by those who came after him. A review of virtually everything that has been published about him as a mountaineer reveals the enormous respect he was accorded as a climber. In this regard, this self-deprecating and very modest and retiring person who, until the very end of his life spoke English very poorly, is described only in superlatives. Perhaps even more striking than his mountain climbing – including occasional selfless acts of heroism like packing an injured climber down from a mountain peak – is the praise that is bestowed on Grassi for his selfless, dedicated and extremely accomplished trail building. At various locations near his Canmore home and perhaps more famously at the supremely beautiful Lake O’Hara, in what is now Yoho National Park in the Rocky Mountains, he laboured to construct paths that would facilitate access for all manner of hikers intent on exploring the wilderness. These routes that he created across previously inaccessible territory or that he improved where others had preceded him, have received the highest accolades: praise that comes from the most qualified professionals as well as everyday folk who are simply interested in a good hike. Indeed, at both Lake O’Hara and near his former home in Canmore, on the trail he perfected that leads to the lakes named in his honour, there are now commemorative plaques that memorialize Lawrence Grassi.

It should be clear, even in this brief overview, that Grassi’s life followed both a typical and an atypical trajectory. The “typical” path is that which led him, and many, many others like him from the Cannobino valley in the years not long after Italian Unification, to often far-flung destinations in search of sustenance for themselves, and their nearest and dearest, that the newly-formed nation state could not provide. For Grassi this sustenance came as a result of hard labour, first as a woodcutter in nearby France in his youth, then as a railway navvy and, for some 35 years, as a coalminer situated an ocean and almost a continent away from his place of birth.

In this regard Grassi's life was typical of that of millions of Italians who left their homeland in the period of mass migration that lasted until the beginning of the 1970s. In very significant ways, it was their departures and the remittances that they were able to send home (those by Grassi to Falmenta included) that would eventually make possible the so-called "great leap forward" that Italy was able to take in the 1970s.

As we have seen, Grassi's life went well beyond this typical, albeit still extremely laudable, course, but it is also interesting to note that he is remembered primarily for the atypical or unusual components of his life. The Canadian place names that have been dedicated in his memory, for example, honour his considerable exploits amongst the peaks of the Rocky Mountains, including many first ascents, often undertaken as solo climbs and with equipment that is considered rudimentary at best by today's standards. For these types of exploits, as well as the work of trail building, he was voted lifetime member of every significant alpine and other association that existed in his day, both in the Rocky Mountains and in nearby Canmore. What is usually ignored, and certainly undervalued, is that this man was also a labourer and a coalminer for most of his life and that the impetus that, according to him, caused him to leave Falmenta and the Cannobino valley, was the sentiment that *ubi panis ibi patria*: where there is bread there is my homeland.

Lorenzo (Lawrence) Grassi then, was part of the process that created and strengthened the migration chains from their places of origin to the locations where Italian emigrants were able to find sustenance if not fame. It was these chains or migrant and immigrant networks that facilitated the journeys of Falmentines (and hundreds of thousands of others) and improved, to some extent, the odds for their success at their chosen destinations. The late pioneering historian of Italian migration and immigration to Canada, Robert Harney, noted that 'these men left as outriders of their villages, of their places of origin, and they

carried that world with them, and some were able to return while some did not.' Lorenzo Grassi did not return in person to Falmenta: he died in his adopted Canmore, near the mountains which had entranced him from when he first arrived in their midst in the second decade of the last century. His accomplishments, however, certainly have returned to his birthplace and his few descendants – the children of his three nieces – together with the few hundred remaining citizens of Falmenta, express an enormous pride for Lorenzo Grassi and the reputation that he established for himself at the far end of his migration chain.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

Thank you for this insight not only into micro-history, but into the history of one person: of course, the cumulative history of individuals makes history, in a sense. I will travel to Sault St. Marie later this week, and in my reading I noticed that the city's Italian population began in 1890: there was the railway and a new steel mill.

You mentioned that roughly 70% of Italian immigrants, in the early years and up to the turn of the century, came from northern Italy. This is more or less true in other parts of the world as well. It was the same in Argentina, where there were many Veneti, Piedmontese – from specific areas as well, for example, Val d'Ossola, one of the important sources of migration from that region. But, of course, your example was that of an individual. There are many other individual experiences as well, chains of people coming from the same town for example.

Now, Angelo Persichilli will speak to us. There is a question mark in your title, "Italian-Canadians: Canadians, immigrants, or ethnics?" I am very curious to hear what you have to say.

Angelo Persichilli
Italian Canadians: Canadians, Immigrants or Ethnic?

Good evening everybody. Ambassador, thank you for the invitation. I will try to not disappoint but I must admit, making a relevant addition to this discussion will be a challenge given the illustrious nature of my fellow speakers. I'm not smart enough to be a historian. I'm not intelligent enough to look ahead like the Vice-Chancellor did. I'm just a journalist. I talk about the present: the news. But someone said that the news is a first draft of history. So, if I'm lucky, what I say today is what historians will talk about 100 years down the road.

I will talk about this important anniversary and I will, of course, talk about immigration.

As mentioned by one of our previous speakers, immigration was an important part of Italian history. I think it was Professor Ramirez who mentioned Garibaldi, l'eroe dei due mondi, who left South America for Italy to be part of the Italian Risorgimento. In today's ever shrinking world, Italy needs heroes like Garibaldi more than ever. Today, the modern Garibaldi is Sergio Marchionne. Where Garibaldi sought to save all of Italy, Marchionne's Risorgimento seeks to save Fiat. So I believe that immigration and immigrants have always contributed greatly to and been part of Italian culture much more than some would like to believe. And the contribution is not just from big people like Garibaldi and Sergio Marchionne. People like us have done a lot for Italy. In fact just by leaving, we've provided room for others and more space for growth.

Someone mentioned earlier the money that immigrants were sending back to their family in Italy until a few decades ago, and then we, of course, are promoting the Italian culture, food, and the 'made in Italy' in general. We

are the most important and first promoter of what Italy is all about in the World.

But this role is not always properly recognized and appreciated. For example many Italian singers talk about their tournee in North America but they try hard to ignore in their presentation of their 'international tour' that their "customers" are the Italians abroad. In fact, some time ago, a well known Italian singer specifically said during the press conference in Rome, to present his tour in North America to the Italian media, that he was not coming here to sing to the immigrants because the only thing they were interested in was "O' sole mio". The fact of the matter is that he was performing in cities like Toronto, Philadelphia, New York or Montreal, not in Memphis, Tennessee or Phoenix, Arizona; he was singing only in North American cities with a huge presence of Italians abroad.

So let's ask ourselves a question: who are the "Italians abroad"?

It's a very specific question, but if you ask ten people you will get eleven answers. Before we try to answer this question, it might be interesting to ask another question: who do other people think we are?

While we may see ourselves in a certain way, it might be interesting (and at times disappointing) to learn how others see us.

So, before we define ourselves, let's try to define the phenomenon known as immigration.

Traditionally, immigration means moving to a geographically different location leaving behind one's cultural, linguistic, or economic habitat. However, if we look at the world today, when we look at new technology spurring global cultural osmosis that forces people to move frenetically

from a place to another, we see cultures and races crushing together.

The concept of habitat is not as clear as it once was. People were used to leaving their homes and then seeing their families after several years. Now people go for a weekend in Paris. People used to travel for twelve hours from Palermo to Milano where today, they need only eight hours from Toronto to Rome. The space between places is no longer a measure of distance, but time. This means that today the “space” between places is shrinking. People are closer and live together in habitats that change continuously.

Once upon a time, (and I’m talking about 25 years ago) I welcomed the president of an Italian Region to Toronto saying ‘Welcome to Italy.’ He looked confused but I told him that it was no mistake: “You are living in a country that is what Italy is going to be tomorrow; you are living in the future” - I said. What he was seeing in Italy 25 years ago was a country with a clear distinction between Italian culture and “others.”

On the other end of the Atlantic, Canadian culture was already heavily peopled by Portuguese, Chinese, Greek and many other cultures from around the World. In modern-day Italy, we now see the same thing. Even if a given Italian citizen doesn’t leave his/her birthplace, they will see their natural habitat completely changed. In Italy, you can technically be an immigrant even if you live in the same house where you were born. In any given region of Italy, there are Moroccans from the south, Albanians from the east, Portuguese, English, and everything else from the North and, if you don’t know them, you are going to be an immigrant in your own land.

The boundaries between cultures and languages are blurred and getting blurrier. A friend of mine told me that he had always insisted that his two children keep their names

with their original Italian spelling. But when he went back to Italy to visit his relatives, he realized that the names of his Italian nieces were Lucy and Mary.

I could make a lot of those examples when we talk about our language. Again, an Italian politician was in Canada and I was asked to be the MC. I was introducing a Canadian minister that was just coming from Ottawa and he was a bit late because he had to participate, I said, in "Question period." I asked the Italian politician how they were calling Question Period in Italian. He said "Question Time." So much for the Italian language.

And how many times Italians in Italy mock those living abroad because of the presence of a strange new language called "Italiese". Think of words like "besamento" (scantinato), carro (auto), checca (torta) or stritto (strada). However, laughter notwithstanding, you now find Italian newspapers using words like "settare", "chattare", "briffare" and so on: and I let your imagination find the proper Italian words.

Given all this change, I can't help but wonder if those tasked with governing us understand this new reality. Unfortunately, based on my experience dealing with governing officials, I don't think they do. What I find troubling is that their image of immigrants is still that of people who left their country on boats and landed on Long Island in New York or at Pier 21 in Halifax.

And this is in no way a partisan criticism. I can give you several personal experiences I went through and I can tell you that there are huge discrepancies between what's going on in the street and what's going on in our Parliaments and other important institutions. I'll give you two examples of how we are seen by people with political responsibilities, in both countries.

For the past 10-15 years, I've been writing for The Hill Times – a weekly English newspaper here in Ottawa – about Canadian politics. In 2002, I wrote something that the then Prime Minister Jean Chretien didn't like, so he invited me to chat with him at 24 Sussex. It was not an interview; everything was confidential and will remain so. At the end of the conversation, he walked me to the door and he asked me if I was going to Kananaskis the following week (the G8 Summit was in Kananaskis, Alberta that year). "Yes I am going to Kananaskis" I said. His answer shocked me: "I'm glad. We are going to welcome your Prime Minister" he said.

Think about it: I was there as a Canadian journalist writing about Canadian politics in an English-Canadian newspaper, but for the Prime Minister of Canada, my Prime Minister was still Silvio Berlusconi. But this is not happening just in Canada.

I remember a few years ago, a Canadian-Italian businessman (a tour operator), whose main business was with Mexico, Acapulco, Central and South America, and of course Italy, decided to bring some Canadian tourists to his home region of Abruzzo.

Yes, the region is beautiful, but this businessman really didn't need to expand his activity in Abruzzo to make more money. It would have been much easier for him to exploit cities and regions in Italy already well known in the world. His intent was to do something grand for his region "which is one of the most beautiful in the Peninsula" he would say with great pride.

So he organized a tour with several tour operators and Canadian journalists. He made a presentation, saying that he was not looking for any funding help from local governments. The only thing he was asking for was an extension of the local airport strip that was not long enough to handle larger planes. The regional Minister of Tourism

said that it was a wonderful idea and that “we have to accept this proposal because we have a debt with our immigrants.”

Can you believe it? The businessman was trying to bring jobs to Abruzzo and the politicians said they had to extend the runway as a favour to him because they had a “debt” with the immigrants. He was trying to eliminate a debt with immigrants by accepting a gift from us.

First of all there is no debt. If we left, it was our choice. Some decided to find fortune abroad, others decided to stay and fight through poverty. Heroes are not the people that leave, heroes are the people that stay. So let’s be clear: he was not looking for a handout, he was looking at an opportunity to do what would benefit both parties: something that would help the Italian economy and, simultaneously, allow us to better define ourselves. Currently, we are “ethnics” for Ottawa and “emigrants” for Rome.

So, let me go back to the original question: Who are we? Who is an immigrant? Who is the Italian-Canadian? The person with an Italian passport? Or the ones with a dual citizenship? Is it the people born in Canada from Italian parents? People born in Italy who immigrated here? That would mean that in my immediate family there are only two Italian-Canadians. What about mixed marriages? What is the definition of being of Italian origin? Is it the language one speaks? Is it a ‘cultural thing’, whatever that means?

Wait, I’ve got it! There is only one thing that clearly identifies an Italian: all those cheering for the national soccer team.

I guess the point I want to make is this: It’s hard to define ourselves in a country that is still trying to define itself and, at the same time, coming from a country that is trying to redefine itself. We are an entity suspended in the middle of

the Atlantic Ocean. People don't know who we are numerically, culturally and socially. Yet still they are trying to define us without really knowing us at all.

One thing is certain: we are trying hard to understand how to relate to this new reality in Canada, in Italy, and around the world. But this process of self-discovery and self-definition is common ground for everybody, and the only thing we know about ourselves is that we are not a monolithic identity paintable with the same brush.

So, who are we? I believe that we are an opportunity. We are an asset for Italy because we can help them export their products, services, and culture. We will be the first people to buy the new Fiat 500 when it goes on sale in Canada. We are always the first to promote whatever comes from the peninsula and, regardless of one's passport, we are always ready to stand by the country. Italian culture, from Michelangelo to Leonardo, is not a trademark of the people whose phone number begins with the country code 39, but belongs to everybody who feels associated with that culture.

But we are an opportunity for Canada as well. In an age of globalization, we have no choice but to reach out to the rest of the world. The so-called 'ethnics' are not just a voting block to be courted during elections then repaid with cheap wine and cheese during multicultural events. We can give much more to Canada. We can make Canada a country that can go out in the world and communicate with anyone. Canada gave us an opportunity and we now call Canada our country and our home, and we want to give back. When entrepreneurs want to take their enterprises abroad, we know the cultures and customs of the people they will be doing business with.

We need something from Italy and from Canada, but they both need something from us.

I remember the last time the writer Alberto Moravia came to Canada. I interviewed him and asked him to define the Italian-Canadian community. He was very nice, trying not to be rude. He said that “to make money, you need a talent, to spend it, you need a culture.” Well, between Canada and Italy we have both, and we, the Italian-Canadians are the best people to combine these two elements, talent and culture. Let’s take advantage of it. Thank you.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

There are of course many things on which an Ambassador of Italy to Canada, or to any other country, can reflect after this talk, but the question can be answered only by the individual, because we are all so different. However, as you said, there are more and more people in the world who have cumulative identities, so no one identity is the defining one; it can be a multiplicity of identities, and I think this reality is increasing at an amazing speed.

I would now like to invite Josephine Palumbo, the President of the Ottawa Chapter of the National Congress of Italian-Canadians, to say a few words.

Josephine Palumbo
Comments

At the outset, I would like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Andrea Meloni and the Embassy of Italy for having invited me to speak to you all today. I am so pleased to be included among this illustrious group of presenters.

The Italian Risorgimento (Italian for “revival”) are the years that brought the creation of the united Italy of 1861. The proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy (March 17, 1861) in Turin, Piedmont was the political and social movement that agglomerated different states of the Italian peninsula into the single state of Italy in the 19th century.

The process began in 1815 with the Congress of Vienna and the end of Napoleonic rule, and ended in 1871 with the Franco-Prussian War. Noted figure during this period, Giuseppe Garibaldi, an Italian nationalist revolutionary hero and leader in the struggle for Italian unification and independence. Garibaldi travelled to the United States in 1848 and settled in Staten Island, New York, and later became a US citizen. During the same year he returned to Italy and participated in the movement for Italian freedom and unification.

The celebration of the Italian Unification 150 years ago is indeed an important milestone in Italian history and has had its impact on Canada and Italians who live abroad.

In the world of globalization, the reinforcement of ties of friendship between countries is so essential. The unique bond that exists between Canada and Italy is undeniable and something which I am very proud to have witnessed on various occasion in my field of public and community life.

Italians have contributed greatly to the creation of this wonderful country. The hard work, dedication and passion which Italians have demonstrated to the development of Canadian life is remarkable and should never be forgotten. The richness of our culture, heritage and history is exemplary and admired by Canadians. Indeed, Canadians of Italian origin have earned a prominent position in the Canadian multicultural mosaic.

My topic of discussion is the National Congress of Italian Canadians and in particular its importance for Italian immigration to Canada. Let me begin by explaining some of the history behind the National Congress of Italian Canadians: its creation, mandate, and existence in the 21st century.

The National Congress of Italian Canadians is an umbrella organization representing over 1.4 million Canadians of Italian background living across Canada. Founded in 1974, (by written statement of the then Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliott Trudeau), the Congress, in the 1970s, took on the responsibility of promoting Italian identity and rights. The organization is made up of a National Executive Committee, whose headquarters are in the City of Ottawa, seven affiliated regions each representing a geographic division of Canada, and a number of Districts in those regions.

One of the major functions of the Congress has been to engage individuals, groups and associations in a dialogue and, through a consultative process, to arrive at common solutions dealing with the social, cultural, educational and economic aspirations and needs of people of Italian origin within a Canadian context.

All levels of the Congress, although functionally autonomous and having their own individual boards of

directors, share the common objectives set out in the Constitution namely:

1. To foster the evolution of a better Canadian society by basing its actions on Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the core elements of global ethics, which includes promoting mutual understanding, goodwill and cooperation between Canadians of Italian and other origins;
2. To act as a linkage among various Italian-Canadian communities and organizations which are dispersed across the country;
3. To provide, when required, a means of two-way consultation between the Italian-Canadian community and Canada and various governments and organizations;
4. To promote full participation in Canadian society by Italian-Canadians;
5. To encourage the development, retention and understanding of Italian-Canadian heritage;
6. To promote and encourage the involvement of Italian-Canadians in public affairs;
7. To foster the retention among Italians in Canada of their rich cultural heritage; and to interpret their heritage to fellow Canadians through creative encounters and interchanges, and to represent, promote and defend the interests and welfare of Italian-Canadians.

Canada is one of the world's most ethnically and culturally diverse societies and it recognizes diversity as a source of strength and innovation. Within this framework of tolerance and understanding, it is not surprising that an organization such as the Congress would have emerged within the Canadian landscape.

Turning for a moment to the issue of immigration, since 1867, people from across the world have come to Canada in search of new opportunities and a better life. Immigration and migration have helped build our country and have contributed much to our prosperity, quality of life,

and to our rich cultural diversity. It is without question that immigration has played an important role in forming our Canadian heritage.

According to the 2006 census of Canada, 1,445,335 Canadians (4.6% of the total population) consider themselves to be of Italian origin. The Italian-Canadian population climbed by more than 12%, and half (over 700,000) have combined Italian origins with another ethnic group, mostly other European ethnic groups. Altogether, Italians continue to be the 5th largest ethnic group in Canada after British and Irish origins, French origins and German origin. The majority live in Ontario where they constitute more than 7% of the population while another 300,000 live in Quebec. In Ottawa, it is estimated that 45,210 are of Italian-Canadian descent. Today, there may not be a distinct Italian community concentrated in one specific area, but the community has left its mark on many streets and avenues in Canada's cities.

The contributions of Italian-Canadians to the development of this great country is undeniable, from the very first Italian to set foot in Canada. We know that the earliest contact with Canada dates from 1497, when Giovanni Caboto (known to many Canadians as John Cabot), an Italian navigator from Venice, explored and claimed for England the coasts of Newfoundland.

Between 1928 to 1971, Italians were the second largest group of immigrants arriving in Canada at Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It has been said that Italian immigration to Canada occurred in 2 main waves, from 1900 to WWI and from 1950 to 1970. A substantial influx began in the early twentieth century when over a hundred thousand Italians moved to Canada. These were largely peasants from rural southern Italy and agrarian parts of the north-east (Veneto, Friuli). A second wave occurred after the Second World War when Italians left their war-impoverished country for opportunities in a young and growing country, Canada.

Indeed, after WWII, the Canadian labour market expanded in an unprecedented manner. This gave Italy the opportunity to act and become a leading supplier of unskilled and semi-skilled labour. During the peak of Italian immigration in the 1950s, one out of six immigrants was Italian.

It is in the second wave of immigration that we see the emergence of the National Congress of Italian Canadians. The founding in Ottawa in 1974 of the organization was an attempt to bring national cohesion to the Italian community (a form of Italian-Canadian unification) and to increase its political influence. The Congress coordinated the raising of millions of dollars from across Canada to provide relief for victims of the earthquakes that devastated Friuli in 1976 and Campania and Basilicata. In the late 1980s, the Congress took up the issue of the wrongful internment of Italian-Canadians during WWII, for which the country received an apology from the then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Indeed, on November 4, 1990, speaking to the delegates of the National Congress of Italian Canadians Biennial Conference, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, acknowledged the injustices committed against Canadians of Italian heritage during World War II, and apologized to all Canadians of Italian origin on behalf of the Government of Canada for the injustices perpetrated on a quiet, law-abiding community. This issue continues to dominate the Congress agenda at the National level.

On June 10, 1940, the very day that Italy entered the war against the Allies, Canadian authorities launched a vast operation aimed at Italian-Canadian individuals and groups. Canadians of Italian origin suddenly found themselves the targets of prejudice and repression in their native or adopted country. Immediately, 6,000 Canadian men of Italian heritage were ticketed as enemy aliens, even though

most were Canadian-born citizens. Over 70 years ago, 17,000 men, women and children (over 90 percent of whom were either born in Canada or had become Canadian citizens) were designated as "enemy aliens"; 6,000 were arrested with 700 interned, some for up to 5 years.

Aside from the issues of redress, the Congress made numerous submissions to the federal government on a number of issues over the years. Specifically, the Congress looked at some issues pertaining to the way in which people of Italian ancestry were represented in television and film.

In the 1980s, multiculturalism as a vehicle for celebrating cultures from the homelands became an official government policy in Canada. This concept of multiculturalism is distinct from the American policies of assimilation, that resulted in a cultural "melting pot," through Canadian policies that promote tolerance of diversity in a "cultural mosaic" model. In this context, the National Congress was a key participant in the introduction of the very first Canadian Multiculturalism Act back in 1988, making submissions to Government committees specifically on the content of the proposed legislation. The Ethnocultural Council of Canada was created during this period and the National Congress of Italian Canadians occupies a key position on the Council.

Interestingly, the line between community involvement and political representation has frequently shifted in that we have seen many key players of the Congress elected to office to serve the community in a public service role.

The first successes of Italians in politics occurred in northern Ontario and the West rather than major cities, with Italians being elected to local councils and mayoral offices. However, it was not until 1981 that Charles Caccia - initially

elected as a Toronto MP in 1968 - was appointed the first federal Italian-Canadian cabinet Minister by Prime Minister Trudeau.

By the mid-1980s, Italian-Canadians had attained a level of political representation commensurate with their numbers. In 1993, 15 Italian-Canadians were elected to Ottawa, a number which represented 5% of the House of Commons seats. We also had four Italian-Canadians representing us in the Senate (Senator Marisa-Ferretti-Barth, Senator Bosa and Senator Rizzuto) with Senator Consiglio Di Nino currently the final remaining and holding the prestigious position of Senate Whip.

It was during the Martin era where, out of 25 federal cabinet ministers, 8 were of Italian origin with 38 Members of Parliament, irrespective of their party affiliation, occupying a seat in the House of Commons. Many of these had involvement and direct contact with the Italian Congress prior to and during their mandate in office. Interestingly, the Italian ethnic vote has generally supported the Liberals (at least at the federal level), partly because they were perceived as being more open toward immigration and more committed to multiculturalism. However, like other Canadians, Italians have tended to vote differently at the provincial level. Today, there is a recognition that the Congress needs to evaluate its role within Canadian society - shift its focus to those areas of primary concern and interest to the Italian-Canadian community. Italians are well entrenched within the various fields of Canadian society (medicine, law, science, education and politics). The objective of fostering integration is no longer as necessary as in the years of the inception of the organization. However, as the Canadian mosaic continues to grow and expand to include more and more people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, it is important for Italians to maintain their proper place within the Canadian landscape - we are no longer viewed as immigrants but rather

as an integral part of this wonderful country. This is an important factor to bear in mind.

While the Italian Community is enriched by a number of regional Associations which meet, congregate and organize a number of traditional functions, we must be careful not to further divide the Community by Regions. Regionalizing can be a good thing, but recognizing that we are part of a bigger group which is "Italian" within the larger context of the multicultural mosaic we call Canada is critical as the ethnic complement continues to grow and expand.

Italian-Canadians continue to make important contributions to the Canadian multicultural society while maintaining strong links to their country of origin, which is wonderful. Within modern-day society, notwithstanding the diverging views and opinions, the Congress continues to play a vital role of cohesion, and continues to be seen as a vehicle of representation and communication between the Italian-Canadian community and various authorities at all levels of government. In simple terms, the Congress continues to act as a vehicle of unification among Canadians of Italian descent.

As Prime Minister Jean Chrétien stated, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the organization:

Today, our nation stands as a perfect illustration of the substantial benefits that can accrue to a country that has embraced Italy's rich cultural heritage and has welcomed the contributions and talents of its people. For twenty-five years the National Congress of Italian Canadians has helped to facilitate and foster friendships and ties amongst Canadians of Italian background, and, in so doing, has contributed towards the growth and prosperity of our nation. (Ottawa, 1999)

Again, I wish to thank His Excellency Ambassador Meloni for organizing such a unique encounter, and the Congress looks forward to working with him and his colleagues as we plan to celebrate, in the coming months, this momentous occasion in Italian history.

Thank you.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

Many thanks, and we will now call on Marco Pagani.

Marco Pagani
Comments

So, I haven't prepared anything, so maybe that means it will be shorter or maybe it will be longer, we'll see. Grazie Signor Ambasciatore, buon pomeriggio a tutti. I am Marco Pagani, President of the Comites of Ottawa, which stands for Committee of Italians Abroad. We act as an interface in the local community to whoever represents the Italian government, and here in Ottawa it is obviously the Embassy and in other cities across Canada, it's the consular offices. I wasn't really sure what I wanted to speak about today. I am very impressed by the intellectual capacity of the individuals who are here today.

I think as Italian-Canadians we can be proud of many many things, and as one person suggested, it is very easy to be euphoric when la Nazionale wins the World Cup, and we are all proud of culture, music, art, food, fashion, and science, etc., but from my perspective, we, here in Ottawa, and we here in Canada, are Italy to our neighbours. So I would like to perhaps provoke in your intellects when you are thinking about how we are perceived by Italians in Italy, or here in Canada, or maybe more importantly how we are perceived by Canadians, our neighbours in particular. To me the thing that sticks out is our value system. We are known to be hard-working, known to be compassionate. For example, it is typically the Italian neighbour who is shoveling the old lady's steps in the winter. It is typically the Italian mother who is preparing an extra batch of pomodoro sauce to give to the neighbours down the street. It is typically the Italian father or grandfather who is picking cucumbers in the back and distributing those cucumbers to the members of our neighbourhood. So for me, the thing that I think about and the thing that I am most proud of is the way the Italian value system is manifested through their legacy, whether it is their children or their grandchildren.

This is something that is hard to measure; something perhaps difficult to analyze in a scientific context, but certainly when you are speaking to individuals and you are connecting at the heart and soul level, these things come across in a very direct and strong way. So that is really the message that I want to communicate to all of you. Perhaps a little story. I am a proud son of two wonderful parents who are unfortunately both deceased – Giulio and Angelina Pagani. When I was 16, the oldest of four boys, my father and mom encouraged many things in us, and one of the things they encouraged was entrepreneurship. We lived out in the country and we had a small business – a grocery store and gas bar – and we got to deal with the community at a very real level, giving away free groceries and free gas to people who couldn't afford it for example. This was a big part of my mother's business strategy. My father was big on vision. There was an individual who was a farmer and a part-time real estate salesperson out in the country. He came into the grocery store and said to my dad "Giulio I have a piece of property you might be interested in;" I had just turned 16 and my dad said, "I am not interested but my son Marco might be." Long story short, my dad got into our pickup truck and we drove to this location, and my father was driving of course; I was in the passenger seat., He parked on the corner of the lot and he said, "Marco what do you see?" Knowing that my dad was a visionary kind of individual and had big-picture dot-connecting capabilities beyond anything I could ever hope to achieve, I started trying to think the way he would think, so I said, "There is a farm house there so that would be a good source of income – we can rent the farmhouse –" he said, "yes, good". "There are some fields; we can rent the fields to some farmers, and we can grow crops so that is another good source of income." He said, "yes, very good. Anything else?" "Yes, there is a little wooded area in the back so people can cut firewood and sell the wood for their fire-burning facilities in their farmhouses." He said "anything else?" I scratched my head and I could not think of anything, and I was anticipating maybe a little slap

across the back of the head because I couldn't see another thing.

Then he asked what did I notice along the perimeter of this property. I said, well, that's very interesting. In fact there were three major concession roads that were the perimeter of this property. So he said again, stimulating this 16-year old future entrepreneur, so what does that mean? I said that would probably be extremely appealing to a future land developer and he said yes, and that is the reason you're probably going to buy this piece of land. So we go back, and we make an offer. Being 16 and having worked for other people from the time I was 11 – because it is one thing to work for your own family, but my dad always taught us that you will probably learn a lot more working for others – I'd accumulated a few dollars. Being four boys, we had to divvy up the list price of this particular parcel of land four ways: I had to pay my share, and my dad said he would lend the money to my brothers. So with him having a Grade 2 or 3 education, he was teaching me about real estate; he was teaching me about land development; he was teaching me about revenue-generating sources in a business enterprise, but most important he was teaching me about the value of dealing with my younger brothers, who may or may not have money, and who may need me to take care of them. Of course, down the road he taught me about how to deal with the people who rented the land, the people who rented the farmhouse, the people who cut down the trees, etc. Long story short, we bought it, made a really good profit because two years later a land developer came and purchased the property.

So, the moral of the story is although as Italian-Canadians we can be proud of many exports from our mother country, the most important thing, in my mind, is the stuff that is hard to measure, the stuff that's in the heart and the stuff that's in the soul, the stuff that starts with the big letter V for values, and I hope with the urbanization of the world, and

the development of technology – I am a computer science grad from Carleton in 1985, so I understand phenomena like the Internet - that we don't let these things marginalize our value system. A lot of people spoke today about what they brought from Italy, in particular from their little villages, and if anything, those little villages were the seeds that germinated into demonstrative values for us Italians and we should be proud of that always. Grazie and congratulations on a wonderful conference.

Comments by Ambassador Meloni

What Mr. Pagani omitted, speaking of the Italian system of values, is that he is the past President of and continues to be involved with the Villa Marconi long-term care centre and the Marconi Centre, the most significant community center of the Italian community here in Ottawa.

Now, I would like to ask Mr. Alfredo Mazzanti to talk about language, Italy, and Unification.

Alfredo Mazzanti
Comments

Mr. Ambassador, dear participants, ladies and gentlemen my name is Alfredo Mazzanti and I'm speaking to you in my capacity of President of Dante Alighieri Society's Ottawa Chapter.

Having a very short time for my presentation and not wanting to bore you too much, especially now that I have come to the end of such an interesting debate, I will limit myself to the following: first I'm going to give a few pieces of information about the organization I represent here and, secondly, I will touch on two considerations of a more general nature.

In order to do this, I would like to make a reference to a book that matches perfectly the theme, or rather the two topics of discussion at this round table. The book is entitled *Emigrant Nation - The making of Italy abroad*, it was written by historian Mark I. Choate and published in 2008 by Harvard University Press. In his interesting analysis, Choate analyzes the very impressive and enormous mass migration from Italy that took place from 1880 to 1915: 13 million Italians left their homeland during this period. Under scrutiny in the book are also the means by which the new Italian State endeavoured not only to maintain contacts and establish ties with this great mass of its compatriots abroad, but also to create a national identity amidst these Italians overseas. Among these tools, Choate identifies, along with athletic groups, schools, the Catholic Church, the Chambers of Commerce, etc., also the Dante Alighieri Society, to which is dedicated a large part of Chapter 4, entitled "The language of Dante".

The Dante Alighieri is a society that promotes Italian culture and language around the world. Its sole purpose, according to its statute approved in 1893, is "to promote the study of the Italian language and culture throughout the

world...a purpose independent of political ideologies, national or ethnic origins or religious beliefs....The Society is a free association of people - not just Italians - but all people everywhere who are united by their love for the Italian language and culture and the spirit of universal humanism that these represent."

I should add that the Society relies on 423 Chapters or local branches located outside of Italy in almost 60 countries. Jointly they run about 6,100 courses of Italian language and culture. More than 250,000 members and students attend its classes and activities every year. In addition, the Dante oversees the management of over 300 libraries scattered in every corner of the planet.

As you can imagine, I am proud to mention these figures because most of our presence and efforts are on a volunteer basis, but volunteer work has advantages and disadvantages. It's an advantage when, like now, the Government, in its otherwise commendable action to limit the overall public deficit, cuts by half the financial allotment to the Dante Alighieri. Public funding is now reduced, for 2011, to 600,000 euros in total, a laughable amount that puts at risk the very survival of Dante's already skeletal central structures. But relying mostly on volunteer contributions can often result in a disadvantage, such as a fragile, uncertain and ultimately ineffective structure.

In the words of Mr. Pasquale Villari, the illustrious historian who let out a regretful lamentation in 1903, when he was President of Dante Alighieri Society, and quote, "Constant and utter instability is our fiercest enemy. When we think we have established things well, everything changes suddenly and we have to start over again from the beginning." (pg. 111 of Choate's book.)

Public funding cuts involving cultural institutions (cinema, theatre, opera, ballet, Academies and Foundations

and so on) have sparked a lot of protest and have drawn the attention of the media. In an extraordinarily successful public TV show “Vieni via con me” broadcast by Rai, an interesting but actually misleading comparison was made. Reporting on a series of figures already published by the daily newspaper *La Repubblica*, the two hosts of the show, Fabio Fazio and Roberto Saviano, read a list comparing Dante Alighieri Society with European cultural institutions. From that list, it appears that by the end of 2010 the Dante Alighieri Society will have received 1,2 million euros from the Italian Government. In contrast, the British Council received 220 million, the Goethe Institute, 218 million, the Spanish Cervantes Institute 90, the Portuguese Camoes 13 million, l’Alliance française 10.6.

True, but misleading. Why misleading? Simply because all the financial allotments to the cited foreign cultural institutions should actually be compared not, or not only or principally, to the Dante Alighieri Society, but especially to those allocated to the network of the 93 *Istituti Italiani di cultura*, branches of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. So, besides the 423 Chapters of Dante Alighieri Society operating abroad (which are often very small and understaffed or better, as I said above, staffed on a volunteer basis) the promotion of Italian culture relies much more substantially on the network of the *Istituti Italiani di cultura*. What is important here is not to establish which one of the two institutions is more important or even more effective (as the IIC are the actual tool of Italian Government in the field of promotion of Italian culture, this comparison would appear entirely meaningless), but rather to underscore the presence even in this field of a potentially dualistic structure.

And here I come to my last point. This duality appears to be a permanent feature of our history as a nation. As an example, let’s think about the presence of two police forces: the Carabinieri and la Polizia di Stato or the competing jurisdictions of the Provinces towards those of the Regions,

and I could cite other examples of a more conflicting nature (for example: different branches of the secret services). However, given my limitation of time, suffice it to say that the concurrent presence of two or more realities asked to operate in the same field, even with different structures, missions and historical roots, can be positive if there is optimal cooperation and coordination but it is entropic, inefficient, wasteful if cooperation and coordination are not pursued or simply not in place. And cooperation and coordination are so important in a world of growing globalization where the single cultures get more and more into the same pitch and thus bound to face each other, to confront and to compete.

Andrea Meloni
Closing Remarks

This reminds me of the complicated and far-reaching consequences of the budget cuts in Italy, of which I have to say, I am reminded almost every hour of my workday. Of course, when culture suffers in a country like Italy, hard questions must be asked.

I must say that we have had a very interesting afternoon, and I am very grateful to all of you for your remarks. I am very encouraged by our discussions today. We will continue working during the coming year to prepare another event that will focus more on some critical issues in present-day Italy. A very warm thanks to all of you; we have spent more than three hours together. I come out of this meeting with a wealth of ideas, and I hope you have had an interesting time as well.

Now, I look forward to welcoming you all at my residence and ending our day together in convivial fashion. The Speaker of the Senate, the Hon. Noël Kinsella, will join us there – so I must be on time – typically Italian of course!

Senator Noël A. Kinsella was appointed Speaker of the Senate of Canada on February 8, 2006 by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. His parliamentary service began with his appointment to the Senate by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney on September 12, 1990.

Alfredo Mazzanti has been a member of the Steering Committee of Dante Alighieri Society's Ottawa Chapter for the last five years and President of the same Chapter for the last three.

Andrea Meloni assumed his duties as Ambassador of Italy to Canada in January 2010 after serving in Brussels as Permanent Representative of Italy to the Political and Security Committee of the European Union. He has been in the Italian Diplomatic Service for over 30 years.

Roseann O'Reilly Runte is President of Carleton University and Professor of French. She is the author of several volumes of poetry and numerous articles and chapters on the subject of cultural and economic development as well as literature.

John Osborne is a medievalist and cultural historian, with a special focus on the art and archaeology of the cities of Rome and Venice between the 6th and 13th centuries. A graduate of Carleton University, the University of Toronto, and the University of London, he has held faculty and administrative positions at the University of Victoria (1979-2001) and Queen's University (2001-2005), and is currently Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Carleton.

Marco Pagani runs his own Executive Management Consulting Practice. He is President of the COMITES of Ottawa; he was President of Villa Marconi long-term care centre from 2006 until 2010; he was the Founding Grand Knight of St. Anthony's Knights of Columbus, and continues to participate in the local Italian community and the Ottawa community at large.

Josephine A.L. Palumbo is Senior Litigation Counsel for the Federal Department of Justice (Canada). Ms. Palumbo is considered a community leader and is currently President of the National Congress of Italian Canadians (Ottawa District), a not-for-profit umbrella organization representing the interests and rights of Italian Canadians in Canada.

Angelo Persichilli is the Political Editor of *Corriere Canadese*, the Italian daily newspaper headquartered in Toronto. He has been a political columnist for the *Toronto Sun* and *The Hill Times*. Persichilli is the recipient of the Canadian Ethnic Journalist's and Writer's Club award for excellence in journalism reflecting multicultural issues. He has also won several national awards for his contributions to broadcasting.

Bruno Ramirez is Professor of history at the University of Montréal. He is also a screenplay writer and author of several books, including *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914*.

Filippo Sabetti is Professor of political science at McGill University, Montreal. He has written extensively on the topic of his talk in a comparative perspective. His many publications include *The Search for Good Government: The Paradox of Italian Democracy* (2000) and *Civilization and Self-Government: the Political Thought of Carlo Cattaneo* (2010).

Gabriele Scardellato is Assistant Professor in the Italian section of the Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, York University, Toronto and the director of The Mariano A. Elia Chair in Italian-Canadian Studies. He has published extensively on aspects of Italian migration and immigration to Canada including, most recently, a special issue of the journal *Quaderni d'italianistica* (Fall 2006).

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