

## **Writing a History of Broken Continuity: The One Hundred Years of Italian Unification Celebrations**

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*Abstract: One hundred years of united Italy were officially celebrated in 1961 with an exposition named 'Italia '61'. Held in united Italy's first capital, the northern city of Turin, and comprising three major exhibitions, Historical, Regional and International, the common themes selected were unity, continuity and work, and emphasis was placed on conveying an understanding that the process of nation-building was complete. While the Regional and International exhibitions were constructed in the new Italia '61 Park, the Historical Exhibition was shown in the Palazzo Carignano in the historic centre of the city. In the late-1950s, a curatorial team was appointed and charged with narrating the history of Italian unification in such a way that was befitting for the new Republic of Italy. This article is a study of the Historical Exhibition at Italia '61 and it questions the extent of 'regime' change that took place in Republican Italy.*

*Keywords: national celebration, Risorgimento, Italia '61, memory*

In 1961 one hundred years of united Italy were officially celebrated at an exposition<sup>1</sup> entitled 'Italia '61'. Held in Turin, united Italy's first capital city, the intention of the exposition was that through three major exhibitions – Historical, Regional and International – national and international visitors would view the 'principal moments of the Risorgimento and the progress made in Italy in 100 years of national life' (Comitato Turin '61, 1962). The common themes selected for the main exhibitions were unity, continuity and work, and emphasis was placed on conveying an understanding that the process of nation-building was complete. The main exposition site was in a newly created park along the river Po, and it was just south of the Valentino Gardens, the traditional site for expositions and National Exhibitions. However, when the planning started, the exhibition organisers decided that only the Regional and International exhibitions would be shown there and that the Historical Exhibition would be shown in the

historic centre. The selected site was the Palazzo Carignano, which was one of the three Savoy family palaces designed by baroque architect Guarino Guarini. The Palazzo Carignano was inspired by Gian Lorenzo Bernini's rejected plans for Louis XIV for the Louvre and as a result contained a large gallery space. It was also the birthplace of Victor Emanuel II, the home of Charles Albert, and where the House of Deputies of the Subalpine Parliament had convened from 1848 to 1861. In the 1870s, and under the direction of the liberal politician, Tommaso Villa, the Palazzo Carignano had become the first National Risorgimento Museum, and in 1961 was still Italy's 'national' Risorgimento museum (Baioni, 1996: 220).

By deciding to show the Historical Exhibition in the Palazzo Carignano, national exhibition organisers seized the opportunity to revise the story of nationhood which was on display and replace it with one that they believed was in line with the values of the Republic. The previous exhibition had been installed under the direction of Cesare Maria De Vecchi, the founder of the Rome-based Institute for the History of the Italian Risorgimento (Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano, ISRI), a leader of the March on Rome, the Fascist Education Minister and ambassador to the Vatican (Levra, 2004: 367). In 1938, the year in which the Racial Laws were introduced, De Vecchi had ordered that the museum return to the Palazzo Carignano from the Mole Antonelliana, a national monument dedicated to Victor Emmanuel II, which the city of Turin had bought in 1878 from the local Jewish community, who had originally intended it to be a synagogue, and to where the National Risorgimento Museum had temporarily moved in 1908 (Levra, 2004: 346). The revised story of nationhood was installed in 1938, ran from 1706 to 1918, the new moment of Unification, and was sprinkled with 'Mussolinian citations' that drew parallels between the politics of the Fascist Regime and the traditions of the Savoy Monarchy (Baioni, 1996: 229). Although the regime fell in the next decade, De Vecchi's narrative remained on the walls of the Palazzo Carignano, and by the late-1950s, with the centennial looming, removing it was a priority.

However, the situation of the exhibition in the Palazzo Carignano also had other implications. Having completed their tour of the Italia '61 park where the exhibits celebrated work, production, industry and national values, in order to visit the Historical Exhibition visitors had to take Unity Road (corso d'Unità) to the Historic Centre. On their way they passed through Turin's industrial zone and the Fiat factory. Doing so made a link between Italy old and new and suggested that the Economic Miracle was the result of these values meeting and merging. It also suggested, in a manner that was encouraged by leaders in the city of Turin, that Turin was not only the powerhouse of the Economic Miracle because of the presence of firms like Fiat and Olivetti, but that the city was the fulcrum of the unifying ideals and values of the nation. In the context of both the politics

of the Cold War and events such as the Tambroni Affair (which raised questions about the presence of fascism in Republican Italy), and as Rome was increasingly associated with scandal, debauchery and the negative aspects of the Economic Miracle (Gundle, 2011), making a connection between national values and ideals, the Republic and the Economic Miracle was pertinent.

In this article I shall undertake a study of the Historical Exhibition as it was shown at Italia '61 and analyse the intersecting narratives that are commandeered to describe 'Italy', its past, values and future. First, however, I shall introduce the background to the planning of Italia '61 and the realisation of the Historical Exhibition, before moving on to an examination of what was on show in the Palazzo Carignano. I shall conclude with an analysis of the narratives that emerge and of how the history of unification was revised for the purposes of Italia '61, and question the extent to which there was a 'regime' change in Republican Italy.

### **The back story: From To '61 to Italia '61**

The first suggestion for a 1961 centenary of unification celebration was made in Turin in 1956 by Gioacchino Quarello, a Turinese Christian Democrat (DC) senator, former metalworker and partisan, who proposed the city host an international event to recognise the centennial year (Dogliotti, 1961: 57). Amedeo Peyron, his friend, colleague and the mayor of Turin, agreed and they began outlining a plan for an exhibition entitled: 'Man at Work: A Century of Technological and Social Development: Achievements and Prospects' (*L'Uomo al Lavoro: Un secolo di sviluppo tecnologico e sociale: conquiste e prospettive*) (Office Memorandum, 1960). The theme was deliberately chosen to reference the 1911 semi-centennial when Turin had hosted the international exposition (*Il Popolo Nuovo*, 1956). The idea, as Quarello wrote portentously in his *Il Popolo Nuovo* column, was that while 1911 was remembered as 'the last great exposition in a world that died', 1961 would be the 'first in a world that was about to be born' (*Il Popolo Nuovo*, 1957a). Making his case to the Turin municipal council in March 1957, Peyron asserted that an industrial theme would help shake off the outdated perception of Turin as a dusty distant city removed from the centre of power and replace it with an impression of a city driven by rapidly developing industry and advanced commerce (Peyron, 1957). Supporting Peyron's motion, Quarello declared it 'was the best occasion to break the isolation and resolve any problems that were afflicting the city and to put Turin in the limelight, not only of the nation and Europe but of the world' (Peyron, 1957). Thus they argued that a centennial exhibition was a judicious use of city funds, as, set against the backdrop of a technologically and materially modern Turin, and making reference to the

city's role in national Unification, it would represent the city and the nation as a 'forerunner in the new organisation of people, society, work and progress' (*Il Popolo Nuovo*, 1957b).

Expanding the scope of the centennial celebrations to make them national was the first step to doing so. Thus, Peyron went to Rome to hold talks with Raffaele Ciasca, the DC Senator for Basilicata and historian who was a member of the Accademia nazionale dei Lincei and the president of the Institute for Modern and Contemporary History (l'Istituto Storico Italiano per l'Età Moderna e Contemporanea, ISIEMC), about the possibility of receiving state funding and to ask the President of the Italian Republic if he would be the event's official patron (*La Stampa*, 28 February 1957). Peyron was successful and, on 7 November 1957, Giovanni Gronchi officially offered the centennial committee his patronage and publically confirmed that the city of Turin would coordinate the centennial celebrations in 1961 on behalf of the nation (Dogliotti, 1961: 57). Soon after, on 27 January 1958, a committee named 'Turin '61' (dubbed 'To '61') was formed and Achille Mario Dogliotti was nominated as the chair (Verbale Comitato Esecutivo, 8 March 1958). To '61 was asked to formulate a programme, a budget, a finance plan and legislation. Most important was financing and it was proposed that one way to recover some costs would be to charge a nominal entrance fee (Comitato Nazionale per la Celebrazione del Primo Centenario dell'Unità d'Italia [CNC], 1962: XVII). Another would be to appeal for financial help from the other cities and regions (*La Stampa*, 18 May 1958). Their rationalisation was that: 'Turin has always helped all of the other cities and regions' and so in 1961 they could repay the debt. Furthermore, as Peyron submitted in his address to the committee: 'in 1961 we celebrate not the unity of Turin or of Piedmont but of Italy, therefore not only the government but every region and village must be interested and contribute morally and materially to the event' (Peyron, 1958).

Peyron defined 'unity' as constitutional patriotism, asserting that it was not a political party or a particular group that united the nation but a set of commonly shared values by a number of communities that may not necessarily be alike or naturally identify as a part of the same grouping. Furthermore, he suggested that Turin was the fulcrum from which these values emerged and so the model for how Italian civil society should operate, thus introducing an easy slippage between Turin and nationhood.

On 5 March 1958 Ciasca presented the draft legislation for the extent of the State contribution to the Centennial celebrations to the Chamber of Deputies (Camera dei Deputati, 1958a). It included a provision to set up a fund for the publication of historical materials relevant to the celebrations and Ciasca noted that since the official school text books and public history had not been amended in the previous decade, the approaching centenary would provide an opportunity to undertake a revision of these manuals and books as well as of the exhibitions shown in the Risorgimento

Museums in Turin, Florence, Rome and Naples, and other public history sites (Intervento del senatore Ciasca, 1958: 1827-8). In June 1958 Antonio Segni and his colleague, Giuseppe Ermini, another DC Deputy and former undersecretary for the Ministry for Public Instruction, submitted to Parliament that a government-appointed committee should oversee the process of rewriting the history of the Republic (Camera dei Deputati, 1958b). Segni's position was of particular importance as in early 1958 he had been nominated head of the Historical Exhibition Organising Committee (HEOC). A Sardinian, a committed Catholic (he had been rector of Sassari University), an advocate of European integration and a specialist in agrarian law, he had entered national politics in 1946 as the DC Minister for Agriculture. Within the DC, Segni was a conservative moderate, a member of the *Dorotei* faction and opposed to any alliance with the Left, views he made clear during his two terms as prime minister. Segni asserted that the Scientific Commission should comprise the head of ISRI, a representative from the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei and three government-appointed experts (Camera dei Deputati, 1958c: 1). He argued that this committee would mean that the study would be undertaken in a 'serious scientific manner' and fairly, as, he claimed, it was possible that from these 'a new interpretation of the issues that still divide scholars' might emerge. Hence, Segni asserted that it was simply a way to ensure that the new story of nationhood was inclusive and that unification was presented as a process in which all aspects of social, political, economic and civic life – 'education, finance, the law, government, political movements, work' – were progressively integrated into the national form (Camera dei Deputati, 1958c: 1). As his example demonstrated:

United Italy was born not only due to the efforts of the Savoy monarchy, which had the military might, but as a result of collaboration between the State and the people, through the power of arms and the power of spirituality, the exercise of which brought together the north and the south of Italy, which for around one thousand years had had diverse histories, organisation and political life (Camera dei Deputati, 1958c: 3).

Hence, by proposing the Scientific Committee, Segni, as the government representative, tried to provide assurance that the new national story would be inclusive. Doing so was in keeping with the position generally adopted by the DC and in May 1958 the Italian Prime Minister Adone Zoli called a meeting in Rome for 10 June 1958 and he asked that an official representative from each city, town and province attend (*La Stampa*, 18 May 1958). At the meeting, the plan for Turin to host the centennial exposition was ratified and a General Assembly led by the Mayor of Turin, Peyron, and an Executive Committee was appointed. With the legitimising framework in place, the following day Zoli unofficially accepted the

funding application put forward by To '61, and asked that the appropriate finance legislation be drafted immediately. He also made an official appeal for funding from industry. To '61 responded promptly and the draft finance legislation was circulated on 22 July 1958, and on 29 July 1958 the heads of the organising committees, former DC Prime Minister and former President of the European Parliament, Giuseppe Pella and Peyron officially assumed their roles (*La Stampa*, 23 June 1958).

However, despite these measures, not all were convinced by the inclusivity claims and suspicions about the intentions of those in charge, as well as criticisms of the plans, concentrated on the question of how the historical revisions would be done and by whom. In April 1959, Vinicio Baldelli, a DC deputy representing Umbria, addressed Parliament and speculated – accurately and uncritically – that the reason that Segni wanted to maintain tight control over the process was because he wanted to determine the possible interpretations, such as, whether the Risorgimento was a ‘conquest by a hegemonic power or a popular uprising’ (*Intervento del deputato Baldelli, 1959a: 78*). Doing so, he recognised, was important in the political climate of the Cold War but also had ramifications for how Turin – the host of the centennial and the city claiming to have led Unification – was perceived. Favouring the hegemonic story implied that Turin and the Savoy monarchy were not the natural leaders of the nation but akin to colonisers, while the popular uprising narrative unfortunately had communist overtones. Thus, the story needed careful political management. Also speaking in Parliament, the Socialist Party (PSI) deputy Matteo Gaudio raised his concerns about tight control and asserted that such a narrow ‘Scientific Committee’ limited the interpretative framework, meaning that new ideas and alternative perspectives would not be embraced. If not contested, he contended, Italy risked repetition of the 1848 centennial in 1948, which the DC had monopolised by selecting those who participated and so ensured that only an interpretation of 1848 that was not anti-Church or Left-leaning emerged. Hence, in the 1848 centennial the efforts of Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi had remained officially unrecognised simply because of the suspicion directed at them by the Savoy monarchy, despite the fact that they were both advocates of Italian nationhood (*Intervento del deputato Gaudio, 1959: 9,728*). Gaudio’s request for the breadth of the commission to be expanded to include a wider spectrum of views was echoed by the Republican Party (PRI) senator Cino Macrelli, who labelled Mazzini a ‘luminary’ (*Intervento del deputato Macrelli, 1959: 9,729*). Their arguments were rejected by the Monarchist senator Adamo Degli Occhi, who expressed his – equally disingenuous – concern that by taking the approach suggested by the PSI and the PRI, there was a chance that the resulting history would be ‘politicised’ and distract from the major players in the history of

unification: Napoleon III and Victor Emmanuel II (Intervento del deputato Degli Occhi, 1959: 9,728-9).

Sharing the same scepticism and concerns that their story would be left out, the Communist Party (PCI) suggested a new solution: instead of appointing a single committee to 'revise' History, it would be better to allocate funding to different historical institutes, who could carry out their own research and publish their own monographs. Qualifying the suggestion, the PCI deputy from Milan, Raffaele De Grada, argued that the story of unification would be incomplete if money was only given to institutions focused on preservation of the memory of the Risorgimento; they needed to extend into the twentieth century, to show how these values had continued to define the Italian nation. Hence he asked for sharing of the funds between ISRI, ISIEMC and the Historical Institute of the Resistance (Istituto storico per la Resistenza) (Intervento del deputato De Grada, 1959: 9,729). Surprisingly, and in what could be viewed as an example of an early concession made by the DC to what is now termed 'the myth of anti-Fascism', Segni announced that the revisions would be undertaken not by a government-appointed scientific committee, but in the manner proposed by the PCI. However, he added two qualifications. First, ISRI and ISIEMC would receive the majority share of the grant money and the Historical Institute of the Resistance a lesser sum and, accordingly, prestige. Second, referencing their concern not to be associated with the PCI or movements related to it, Segni ordered that the Historical Institute of the Resistance be renamed the National Institute for the History of the Italian Liberation Movement (Istituto nazionale per la storia del movimento di liberazione, INSMLI) (Intervento del deputato Baldelli, 1959b: 9, 730-31). These conditions were accepted by all parties, in particular the PCI, whose spokesperson Alessandro Natta saw it as an opportunity to receive official recognition for the explanation that 'the true crowning glory of the Risorgimento was in the Resistance and that its social and ideological foundations exist in the desire for social and civil progress in our country' (Intervento del deputato Natta, 1959: 9,734).

Although accusations of exclusivity with regard to historical revision had been avoided by dividing the task between the historical institutes on the advice of the PCI, the accusations that the centennial was being dominated by a leadership group were not quelled and many were suspicious of the central position being awarded to Turin. Conscious of this, the first step the new Executive Committee had taken was to change the name for the event from Turin '61 to Italia '61 (Istituzione del Comitato nazionale per la celebrazione del 1° Centenario dell'Unità d'Italia, law 1,235, 30 December 1959). In the related discussions, Peyron claimed that the reason was to make clear the celebrations were national and of the nation, as 'this formula more effectively expresses the intentions and the

development of a national character for the Celebration while openly recognising the unique and national contribution of Turin' (Peyron, 1959).

However, the name change did not resolve the problem and complaints were still raised about the level of state finance that Turin would receive in the centennial year. Responding in Parliament on 6 November 1959 to criticisms that Turin was being unfairly favoured, the DC deputy from Abruzzi, Natalino Di Giannantonio, asserted it was not, for the spirit of the centennial was that in 1961 Turin 'represents, in synthesis, "the nation"' (Camera dei Deputati, 1959: 1589). Hence, his argument was that it was imperative that funds were concentrated in Turin to ensure that the best possible impression was created of Italy as a nation with a rich history and cultural life and thriving industry and commerce. Di Giannantonio also made the argument that if the celebrations were dispersed throughout the nation, the government risked encouraging *campanilismi* (localism or parochialism). Doing so, he averred, was the antithesis of unity and risked presenting a fragmented nation, as, he alluded, had happened in 1911 when the semi-centennial was divided between Turin, Florence and Rome (Camera dei Deputati, 1959: 1,589). Furthermore, and returning to the inclusivity theme, as Giovanni Villa, another DC deputy, asserted: concentrating the celebrations in Turin did not mean that other regions should be ignored, or that the Italy of Turin should be presented as the only model. Different traditions, patterns of development and ways of being Italian had to be included, not only to mark the difference of the DC from the Fascist government and their standardised models, but also to make the point that differences in the nation existed because of natural causes rather than institutional disadvantage. In a nod to the PCI and their narrative of nationhood, the government and organisers also suggested that holding the centennial in Turin, a city connected to the Resistance, rather than the national - and once Fascist - capital, Rome, would re-assert the alignment of post-war Italy and liberal democracy, which also fitted neatly into the DC's efforts to show the US that Italy was not tempted by communism as even the PCI favoured democracy. Finally, and showing their support for the argument made by the DC, the PSI deputy Luigi Castagno stressed the need for all documents relating to the centennial to foreground that it was set in Turin:

To render Turin's role in national unification invisible would also mean that one could no longer refer to a unified celebration but instead to many varied and distinct events [...] we declare ourselves definitively opposed to the deletion of the word 'Turin' from this provision. Such a solution seems to us, in fact, very dangerous (Camera dei Deputati, 1959: 1,589).

Thus, he argued, for better or worse it was necessary to recognise that Turin and Piedmont had a central and guiding role in the unification



process and that although there are stories of unification that are specific to each region, for a nation to be unified there had to be one that stood out or was dominant, and in the case of Italy, it was Turin's.

These arguments continued until 30 December 1959 when the legislation to determine the State contribution to the centenary celebrations was finally approved. The passage of the legislation had involved a number of compromises by the DC, and, finally, a political shift in definition of the word 'contribution', not least because of the demand made by the PCI and the PSI that they be included. However, although it is not clear whether receiving public money to preserve the memory of the Resistance was an indication to the left that there was some acceptance of the story of the partisan resistance as a popular or national movement, or if the DC agreement to include the Resistance was an example of political *lottizzazione* ('sharing-out'), the legislation did ensure the inclusion of the parties on the left in HEOC, which appeared to be a small (political) 'opening to the left'. Furthermore, it also reinforced that Turin was *the* site of the centennial celebrations and it provided extra funds for the refurbishment of the Palazzo Carignano to prepare it to host the Historical Exhibition and what would remain as the permanent display of the national unification story.

### **Finding a balance: Forming the Historical Exhibition Organising Committee**

Once the legislation had passed, and acting in his capacity as president of HEOC, Segni appointed the HEOC committee, which comprised a mixture of historians and scholars from different institutions and political affiliations. Selected as vice president was Francesco Cognasso. A liberal yet conservative and Catholic medievalist from Turin who had published works on the Savoy monarchy, the House of Visconti, the Risorgimento and the Byzantine era, his career path was prestigious: he was a member of the Academy of Sciences of Turin and the Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, the president of the Deputazione Subalpina di Storia Patria, and the editor of *Il Bollettino*. Cognasso was entrusted by Segni to appoint three further vice presidents and he chose Franco Antonicelli, Guido Astuti and Luigi Mondini. Antonicelli was a Turin-based poet, essayist and publisher who had established the Historical Institute for the Resistance in Piedmont (Istituto Storico per la Resistenza in Piemonte), and who on HEOC represented the interests of INSMLI. He was also openly opposed to the DC's method of retaining government by forming coalitions to secure an absolute majority, and to the President of Fiat, Vittorio Valletta's, practices to control the trade unions at Fiat. He argued these practices were undemocratic and at odds with the Italy fought for in the Resistance and founded in the Risorgimento. The second appointee was General Luigi

Mondini, a military historian at ISRI who worked on the concept of volunteerism in the Risorgimento and then the First World War (Mondini, 1961, 1963). Finally, and also at ISRI, Guido Astuti was a legal historian who worked on the administrative unification of Italy and had begun to study medieval law and its connection to the formation of modern Italy (Astuti, 1963).

Cognasso also asked the directors of the Risorgimento Museums in Milan and Turin, Leopoldo Marchetti and Luigi Bulferetti, to curate the Historical Exhibition. Appointed as their chief historical advisers were Nino Valeri and Alberto Maria Ghisalberti. The liberal Valeri was a Professor of History at the University of Trieste who, after 1945, changed from working on medieval Italy to focus on post-Unification history, especially the policies of Giolitti. Ghisalberti described himself as a liberal and a nationalist historian yet was a critic of Giolittian policy. A sometime supporter of the Fascist regime, after the introduction of the Racial Laws in 1938, which directly affected his family, Ghisalberti distanced himself and began to contest the style of nationalist history of those like Gioacchino Volpe. In 1941 he was conscripted and in 1943 he returned to Rome, where he supported the Action Party and used the ISRI building as a refuge. In Republican Italy, Ghisalberti was president of ISRI, an advocate for the establishment of INSMLI and his personal history positioned him as a subject of the Republic: someone made new by their participation in Liberation (Talamo, 1999).

More than twenty others were invited to sit as members of the committee as secondary advisers. Representing a wide ideological spectrum from the centre right to the far left, they included well-known jurists, political scientists and historians such as Rosario Romeo, Franco Venturi, Guido Quazza, Raffaele Ciasca, Giorgio Falco, Piero Pieri, Arturo Carlo Jemolo and Luigi Salvatorelli. The only group noticeably absent was the far right. The omission appeared as fortuitous later that year when the presence of fascism in Italian life appeared to be a reality, and perhaps one encouraged by the DC, during the Tambroni Affair. In the early part of 1960, the government of Fernando Tambroni invited the neo-fascist party, the Italian Social Movement (MSI) to form an informal coalition and help the DC secure a parliamentary majority. While Tambroni's government fell within a couple of months, and there was popular protest against the alliance and the concessions that were made to the MSI because of the coalition, the MSI did not disappear from Italian life and the very fact that the Government had invited it to form an alliance raised questions in both Italy and the wider world about the nature of the Italian character and national identity, which the Historical Exhibition offered an opportunity to correct and reassert.

### **The Historical Exhibition: A popular tale**

In an effort to translate the inclusivity directive into the Historical Exhibition, at one of the early HEOC meetings the committee passed a policy initiative to make the exhibition as interactive as possible and filled with 'aids in understanding'. One would be an exhibition guide: when visitors entered the first hall, which contained a giant map of the exhibition, they would wait there to meet their - female - guide who would take them through the thirty-two rooms of the exhibition, and who would ensure that the correct interpretation was communicated (Anon, 1960a: 18). They also agreed that one of the key messages they wanted the Historical Exhibition to project was that national unity and unification were as much about popular participation as they were about strong leadership on the part of various individuals: 'the Risorgimento was the work not only of great intellectuals but also and above all of the heroism manifested in the generous contributions of all the social classes, upper and lower, peasantry and nobility' (Anon, 1960a: 18). Making this announcement provided early protection against accusations that Turin and the story of Turin in the Risorgimento would dominate, and refuted the suggestion that by choosing to show the Historical Exhibition in the Palazzo Carignano rather than the Italia '61 site, HEOC favoured the interpretation that the roles of the Savoy Monarchy and the Piedmont political elite in the Risorgimento were the most important. Finally, they also decided that the exhibition would begin in the eighteenth century and end in 1870, leaving the period following 1870 to other exhibitions, meaning that many difficult historical periods and events - namely Fascism - could be circumvented. The exhibition would, however, begin again in 1943 and end in 1945, just covering the period of the Resistance and the fall of the Fascist regime. These two years would be represented as a moment in which those who believed in the values of the Risorgimento rose up to 'liberate' the nation from the forces that were taking it off the course determined by the values of Unification. In this manner the Risorgimento and the Resistance, styled as the Second Risorgimento, would be presented in the same way as uprisings informed by a liberation movement that resulted in the foundation of a new state form with which to make the Italian nation. It would also be emphasised that it was the actions of orderly state-builders rather than revolutionary liberation movements that established nation statehood.

To give structure to the vast time period, the curators decided that after an overview of 'The Development of Italy and the Risorgimento' - a room decorated with flags and arms used in the wars of unification and which contained maps of the Italian peninsula from 1748 to 1918 (Anon, 1961: 10) - the exhibition would be structured in five sections. Reinforcing the periodisation of the exhibition the Unione Tipografica Editrice Torinese released a five-volume *History of Italy (Storia d'Italia)* with contributions from each member of the HEOC (Anon, 1960b: 32).

The first section began in the eighteenth century and outlined the formation of the Risorgimento and identified relevant influences. The purpose was to trace a history of liberalism in Italy and it was shown to come from France and through the Enlightenment. The aim of doing so was to intimate a connection or synchronicity about French and Italian histories in that period and thereby infer that in Italy, as in the rest of Western Europe, 'liberal institutions triumphed as the feudal regime was demolished' (Comitato Ordinatore della Mostra [COM], 1961: 34-41). By labouring the point about these early interactions, the exhibition organisers made it clear from the very beginning that an important element of their historical revisionism was the effort to place the history of Italian unification in the context of European developments, which also served to justify extending the historical time period for unification by one hundred years. Hence, it was from France that the spirit of emancipation came and from its influence the first 'awakenings' occurred, as Room Eight - 'Restoration and Romanticism' - characterised them (COM, 1961: 56-61). The influence of England was introduced through Mazzini and reference was made to Giuseppe Garibaldi (COM, 1961: 68-73). The focus on France gave way to what was represented as the other significant influence in this period: Catholicism, which was displayed in the section entitled 'Cultural and Economic Growth from 1831 to 1847' where links were drawn between Catholicism, liberalism and progressivism (COM, 1961: 74-77). The final room in the section on the emergence of liberalism and the Risorgimento, was dedicated to Pope Pius IX, who in an act of radical revisionism was represented as a figure of reason and friend of the liberal movement. His liberalism would have continued, so the narrative claimed, if not for what was portrayed as the excessive violence of 1848 and the threat of losing the Papal States and especially Rome. Hence, liberationist and revolutionary movements were represented as responsible for the Church/State schism. Making direct reference to the weight accorded to the problem in revolutionary Italy, the final image in the room was of a young Savoy king Charles Albert who was a supporter of the liberation of Italy and who had promulgated the constitutional law code, the *Statuto Albertino*. He was also a supporter of the Revolutions of 1848 and he declared war on Austria. His actions lost him the support of the Church and, his continued support of, and attempts to try to achieve, the liberation of the Italian peninsula, led him to the point that in 1849 he was forced to abdicate the throne in favour of his son Victor Emmanuel II and to move to Oporto in Portugal where he died in the same year. Making reference to this history and conflict with the Church, and to the importance of his actions for the foundation of the Italian nation-state, the next series of rooms took the visitor on a tour of his quarters, which after 1849 had become the Parliamentary rooms. Hence visitors were invited to stand and sit in the place in which the nation was

formally declared on 17 March 1861, and in the space that linked the nation, state and the monarchy (COM, 1961: 78-9).

After the interlude, visitors entered the second section and the period 1848-1859. Following the same format as the previous section, the first room explained the political situation that resulted from the revolutions of 1848, and placed them in the wider European context, particularly emphasising the growth of socialism (COM, 1961: 80-7). There was also considerable attention given to developments in Piedmont, which in the late-1840s and into the 1850s was represented as the fulcrum of all liberal ideals and one removed from revolutionary violence. One room in this sequence was used to introduce Count Camillo Benso di Cavour, to detail his life and his political accomplishments, singling out in advance the figurehead status for the Turin-born leader of the Risorgimento (COM, 1961: 88-90). The following room was an exhibition of the different cultural contributions related to and produced for the Risorgimento movement. Special attention was given to the role of Giuseppe Verdi and opera in the Risorgimento and the importance of entertainment in the nation building process was emphasised. These roles of high and low culture in the late-1840s and 1850s engaged with the theme of popular participation and linked back to Turin as the nation building city (COM, 1961: 90-2).

The following section was entitled 'From the Congress of Paris to 1859'. Despite the first reference, the first portrait shown was not of Cavour but of Agesilao Milano, a soldier from the village of San Benedetto Ullano (Cosenza), who was a part of the Albanian regiment that served under the Bourbon king of Naples, Ferdinand II, and which fought for him in the Napoleonic Wars. In 1848 Milano had joined forces with the Mazzinians and made an attempt to overthrow the government. He was imprisoned but pardoned in 1852, after which he rejoined the army with false papers and in 1856 he attempted to assassinate Ferdinand II. Immediately apprehended and condemned to death by hanging, as he died he was reported to have shouted "Viva l'Italia!". Milano's story was used as an example of how the idea of 'Italy' as a nation had spread and had been embraced by popular movements. Making clear that nationhood was not possible without orderly state-builders, the next item on display was a document from the 1856 Congress of Paris, at which Cavour represented the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. The meeting was attended by the 'Great' European powers at that time: Russia, Great Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire and had been called to decide on a peace settlement for the Crimean War. The war had begun in 1853 through an act of Russian aggression and ended on 26 January 1856 when the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia had sent 10,000 troops, and Austria threatened to do the same. The invitation to join the Paris Congress thus represented a significant diplomatic victory for the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia as they were recognised as a legitimate power in their own right. The speech Cavour

gave at the Congress denounced the crushing presence of Austria in the north of Italy, which he claimed impeded efforts to unify 'Italy'. The inclusion of the speech in the display provided another piece of evidence that unification was a process that required both an emancipation movement and diplomatic negotiation (COM, 1961: 110-5).

The following two rooms were reserved for the War of 1859. The story of how the Kingdom of Piedmont Sardinia joined with Emperor Napoleon III and the French forces against the Austrian Empire, was told through a series of paintings produced by the war correspondent Carlo Bossoli (COM, 1961: 116-9). The display in the next room concentrated on the Provisional Government and the Annexations in 1860 and presented a narrative that described how the actions of Cavour put into motion a series of events that caused the transition of Italy from a divided peninsula into a single nation state (COM, 1961: 120-30). The exhibit showed how all fell into place accordingly, except for three areas: the Papal States, the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Gaining these presented a problem for Cavour, and prompted a change of approach: 'Cavour had reached a stalemate. All that could be obtained through diplomatic action had been achieved. What was capable of reactivating the process? [...] The mother of the Risorgimento, revolution: which once awoken contains the energy to overcome obstacles that would otherwise seem impervious to manipulation' (CNC, 1962: 281).

This statement made room in national life for the presence of revolution and uprising, which were both feminised and presented as inferior actions, and operated as an introduction to the room that followed: Garibaldi's - successful - Sicilian expedition. However, it also made it appear that for a 'revolutionary action' to be successful it had to be managed rather than left to occur spontaneously. 'The King's Expedition' was the final room in the sequence and it traced the journey of Victor Emmanuel and his troops as they travelled to Teano to meet Garibaldi and formally claim the Kingdom of Sicily for Italy. The exhibition guide gave the explanation that Cavour had sent the King to prevent Garibaldi trying to spark further revolutionary action and to claim Rome and so provoke a diplomatic crisis, thus reinforcing the trope that nation-state building was about bureaucratic forces, which were rational and masculine, managing the more spontaneous liberation movement. In the exhibition narrative, their meeting marked the moment at which 'Italy was made', as the popular forces and the monarchy, or leadership, united (CNC, 1962: 284). Returning to Turin, the final section focused again on Cavour, who was selected by Victor Emmanuel II as the first prime minister of Italy. However, Cavour's term was short: in early June 1861, only a few months after the opening of the first parliament, he died leaving only - the catalogue dramatically stated - 'his work, his teaching' and his final utterance: 'govern with a respect for freedom ... remember that even a

donkey can govern in a state of siege.' It was a 'warning' the text in the explanatory panel lamented, 'which the Italian ruling class forgot in this grave hour of our history' (CNC, 1962: 284).

The effect of the sequence of these rooms, ending with the death of Cavour, the Father of Italy, was to make it appear that Cavour and his strategising were the catalyst for the events that would - eventually - result in the unification of the Italian nation. Hence, the message, which was pertinent in the wake of the Tambroni Affair, which had come about because of popular protest, was that while radical and violent actions were indications of a general feeling that was spreading across the peninsula, they alone did not effect change and if not carefully managed could cause irreparable damage and possibly broken relations with those who may be later needed as allies: the Catholic Church and, to a lesser degree, France. Progressive change, so the argument made in the exhibition asserted, was the result of actions that came from a 'conservative base' and using legitimate means, which as the final few sections would demonstrate, was not re-established until post-1945 when the DC was elected to government following the liberation and emancipation movement of the Resistance (CNC, 1962: 286).

Demonstrating the assertion that the loss of Cavour resulted in the loss of direction for the unification movement, the fourth section detailed the events of 1861 to 1870: the post-unification struggle to complete geographical unification and most importantly to make Rome the capital of Italy. The period was presented as one of lawlessness, of violence and brutality, rampant brigands and undirected activity. The implication was that while the object was achieved - Rome became the capital - the method was not the best one to pursue and resulted in a further breakdown in relations with the Catholic Church, as well as unnecessary deaths. It was at this point that the organisers chose to end the story of unification in the Kingdom of Italy. As a way of introducing the transition to what they presented as the final stage in the unification of Italy, the last room in the section was dimly lit and empty except for two documents: the Piedmontese constitution of 1848 signed by Charles Albert, which became the first constitution of united Italy, and the new constitution of Republican Italy, which contained the signature of the first President of the Republic of Italy, Enrico De Nicola, and which was enacted on 22 December 1947 (CNC, 1962: 288). The intention of the exhibition organisers was that the placement of the two documents side by side would 'immediately recall the events that occurred in the period between the signing of each [...] the fall of the nation [Patria] under a new tyranny. The darkness of the room is supposed to evoke the immense sadness and the tragic memories connected to these events' (CNC, 1962: 288).

The darkness was the only reference made in the Historical Exhibition to the Fascist period, and no attempt was made to deal with the

difficult history leading up to that period. Doing so was perhaps not so unusual or unexpected in 1961 as up to that point no official discussion over understandings of the period as a moment in historical time had taken place. As a review of the conferences held by ISRI up to that point reveals, topics selected were almost exclusively prior to 1918, leaving the history after that period uncharted territory. Even the 'history book' of the Italian Republic, Benedetto Croce's *Storia d'Italia*, ended at 1915 (Croce, 1928). Instead of trying to make sense of the past, the view taken in the new Republic, and by the DC, was that instead of dwelling on the past, the concentration should be firmly on reconstruction and the future (Castronovo, 1987: 363-403). Following such a directive was especially important in the context of the centennial celebrations for three reasons. First, as stated above, to avoid confrontation with a difficult national history that challenged the story of liberal nationhood. Second, to avoid engagement with a past that could evoke divided memories and which could suggest that Italy was not a nation united by a history that all identified with and which was common to all, and which implied that some Italians, at least, must have been in support of the regime. Thus, and third, in this context, the darkened room indicated a commonality shared by all Italians: that at some point during the previous twenty years they had all experienced hardship and a moment in which what they believed in and were fighting for was in some respect challenged.

Making a strong statement about the connection between reconstruction and the future (modernity), by contrast, the next room – and final section in the Historical Exhibition – was brightly lit by artificial and natural light. The exhibit was entitled 'Echoes of the Risorgimento in the Resistance', and the focus was on the ideological connection between the Risorgimento and the Resistance and a parallel was drawn between the revolutionary actions of those fighting for emancipation in both periods. The small room was filled with hundreds of photographs of Resistance fighters and memorabilia as well as a prominent display of a number of flags from partisan battalions named after Risorgimento heroes: 'IV Brigata Garibaldi' and 'XXI Brigata mazziniana Fratelli Spazzoli' (COM, 1961: 146). These visual signals made the unsubtle argument that the ideals that had inspired Garibaldi's men to take up arms were those which motivated the resistance to Nazi Fascism, thus officialising a version of history in which Fascism was a foreign element in Italian life, and drawing the two stages of unification into direct, physical and spiritual, relationship. However, the deliberate choice of the Garibaldi flags made yet another allusion: just like Garibaldi's expedition, the Resistance movement provided the impetus that made possible the foundation of the Republic of Italy but it was a revolutionary and potentially dangerous movement that needed careful management (COM, 1961: 146-7). Hence, in keeping with the narrative of the Historical Exhibition, it was not this 'act' that founded the nation, the



nation was not the product of revolutionary and insurrectionist action, the nation was founded by a declaration that united those who would live within it and the administrative system that would govern it. Furthermore, and, making reference to the Tambroni Affair, the message was that while it was sometimes necessary to take quick and direct action in the form of insurrection, these actions were not ones that founded nation states. Finally, the organisers averred, without irony, that there was a need to limit such action for, as the case of Garibaldi proved, it was possible for personal ambitions to be confused with national needs, which orderly state-builders like Cavour, and by implication the DC, did not do. Thus, armed with these thoughts, visitors were left to exit alone, through the apartment of Victor Emmanuel II, past a display of coins from each of the Italian states in the nineteenth century, which referred to the merging of the economic system, yet another feature of bureaucratic nation state-building, and into the Piazza Carlo Alberto (COM, 1961: 148).

### **A new dawn?**

Thus concluded the Historical Exhibition with a new narrative that made room for a liberation movement but which emphasised the importance and superiority of orderly state builders. The narrative also reconciled the relationship between the Church and the nation state and implied that the schism was due to the radical nature of the liberation movements rather than the actions of the Church, which was assigned the role of moral and spiritual guide for the nation. Nevertheless, the new narrative did balance out the political interests of Republican Italy and made it appear that the DC were honouring their promise of including the political viewpoints of all participants. However, as my analysis of the composition of the Historical Exhibition has revealed, inclusion did not necessarily mean equality. In fact, the Historical Exhibition narrative reasserted that there was a 'natural' order to things; that there was a hierarchy that existed not because of privilege or bias but because it was the way of things. The 'natural' order naturalised the privilege assumed by those who held national leadership roles and the narrative implied that those who were dominant were so because of their natural attributes. Reinforcing the idea of natural order, all of those who were depicted in the Historical Exhibition in active roles and with agency were men; women only appeared in passive roles, as homemakers, as peasants, as wives, as victims, and even in the Resistance section women were not presented as autonomous and active participants. On the exhibition committees, women were under-represented, and where they did appear they were in supportive roles, rather than on the Executive. Thus, in the Historical Exhibition, women were assigned service roles as the hostesses and guides to direct visitors around the site or as cleaners.

The marginal functions assigned to women mirrored those they were ascribed in Italian society where a woman's role was passive, and it was in reaction to this representation that the only protest against the story told in the Historical Exhibition was mounted by the National Women's Committee for Equal Pay (Comitato di associazioni femminili per la parità di retribuzione). They used the centennial as an opportunity to protest the place of women in Italian society and the way that society was organised more generally and certain people, areas, regions and institutions favoured because of what was said to be the 'natural' order and way of things, one example that they raised being the perception of southern backwardness and northern modernity. One way they did this was by hosting a conference entitled 'The emancipation of women in Italy' (*L'emancipazione femminile in Italia*). Held in November 1961, the event inspired a more concerted struggle for change, and the women's history journals *Memoria* and *DonnaWomanFemme* resulted from the conference. The concern of the conference was principally the emancipation of women in Italian society and the argument made was that while the Italian Republic afforded women the right to vote, which was a victory, they were still not treated as equals despite the roles that they played and the contribution that they made and had made to civil society. The argument was that Italian society would only be democratic when this fundamental imbalance in Italian life was corrected and biological difference stopped being an explanation and rationalisation for inequality; for only then would the primary marker that determined difference be removed and other imbalances judged to be because of biology or nature be reassessed (Comitato di associazioni femminili per la parità di retribuzione, 1962).

The argument being made by those participating in the conference was expressed in the work of the historian of the Risorgimento, Franca Pieroni Bortolotti, which was published in 1961 and entitled, *Alle origini del movimento femminile in Italia, 1848-1892* (The origins of the women's movement in Italy, 1848-1892). A follower of Antonio Gramsci and Gaetano Salvemini (despite their differences), she argued against the dominant, liberal view that the women's movement in Italian history was socially and politically irrelevant, and asserted that it was central to understandings of society. Pieroni Bortolotti's interest in women's history was sparked by her experience as a young woman as a Resistance activist and then committed PCI member, and she was intrigued by the coincidental pattern by which women were drawn to support the Risorgimento and the Resistance only to be pushed to the political margins afterwards and not recognised despite, in different circumstances, claims that Italy was an emancipated nation. Women, it appeared to her, were cast outside the 'imagined community' of the nation by virtue of biology rather than ideological difference or capability. It was the presumed fact of this immutable difference that Pieroni Bortolotti protested: as her history proved, such perceptions

disappeared at times women were needed but returned shortly afterwards and when the history of the period or event was being written they were erased from historical and so 'national' memory. This, she argued, was proof that it was not 'biology' or nature that created and maintained differences but social orders and structures of power. One such power structure was maintained by the dominance of the story that Unification came from Turin and that Piedmont was the unifying force because the natural characteristics of the people and the area meant it was where the liberal spirit of nationhood had taken hold (Buttafuoco, 1999: 919-20; Wood, 1999; Spackman, 1995: 116-7).

Pieroni Bortolotti's monograph, *The Origins* considered the emancipation of women and the development of modern Italy and challenged the notion that Italy was or had ever been democratic (Pieroni Bortolotti, 1962). Proposing the history of women as a lens for viewing rather than a subject of study, through the questions that she raised in *The Origins* she attempted to cause a re-thinking of the social and political structures and hierarchies in Italian society, denaturalising those that were presented as organic but were in fact artificially constructed relations of power. In doing so she challenged the presumption of the formation of the nation itself, suggesting that it was not a product of the 'people' as not all people were allowed to be, or were recognised as, participants and agents. Furthermore, by shifting the focus to concentrate on women in the Risorgimento, Pieroni Bortolotti presented a need to revision the Risorgimento, and so the constitution of the nation state, and the processes of 'emancipation' that Unification was said to bring. Thereby she suggested an alternative narrative and asserted that until all groups were given autonomy and agency then Italy could neither claim to be democratic nor to have completed the process of unification. Pieroni Bortolotti asserted that there was little difference between the Italian Democratic Republic and previous eras and regimes, and her views had ramifications not only for the role of women in Italian society but also the roles of the regions and other nations, how they were classified and perceived, and the way that the historical narrative of nationhood was understood. Furthermore, by contesting from the inside and using the formal tools of the system she criticised - considered intervention rather than radical action - she was making an appeal for long-term and structural change.

## Conclusion

However, that change was not to come. It was not the purpose of the exhibition to generate it and what is made clear by considering the purpose of the Historical Exhibition is the continuity of the DC with previous governments: they were appropriating the foundational story as a means to stay in power rather than seeking to create a united nation. Hence, the

Historical Exhibition in Italia '61 was an opportunity for the DC not only to undertake a historical revision of the story of unification and to place it in a wider European and American historical context but to officialise it and have it on permanent display in a national museum. It was for that reason that the construction of the story of nationhood had to be managed carefully to ensure that it was accepted and regarded as representative.

As I have traced, the stories of unification that were told claimed that internal and external obstacles were conquered to achieve territorial unity; that the method for doing so was 'European'; that a uniform economic and administrative system had been instituted, and that there was a spiritual unity. Furthermore, it was represented as democratic because it was inclusive of other political viewpoints. The history of Italian unification was thus revised with regard to the wider political context. The Risorgimento was represented as a movement connected with emancipation and so was an expression of the European 'spirit of freedom', demonstrated in the nineteenth century wars of unification and reasserted in the Resistance (see de Tocqueville, 2000). Furthermore, there were links made to the French revolution through the Enlightenment and there was a direct historical allusion made in the representation of the Italian wars of unification and the American Civil War, thus suggesting that 'Western' histories of nationhood were not so different.

The Historical Exhibition also assimilated the story of the Catholic Church and Italian unification: hence the decision to focus on Catholic attitudes to liberalism. Doing so represented a real effort to engage with the new views on the Risorgimento expressed by Pope John XXIII. In a public commemorative speech given at the Vatican in March 1961, he expressed the opinion that the opposition of the Catholic Church to the formation of the Liberal state had been overstated. In fact, he argued that the Catholic faith had always been one of the fundamental elements in the formation of nation and added the equally unconvincing thesis that the involvement of the Vatican in the Fascist regime following the signing of the Lateran Pact in 1929 was a part of the design of Divine Providence to establish unity of the Peninsula (Runi, 1995: 523-34). Thus John XXIII tried to protect the Church from accusations that it may have supported or aided the Fascist regime and may not have been a supporter or part of liberal Italy. However, HEOC did place limits on the parameters of historical revision and most pertinently they did not grant John XXIII's request that they recognise Pius IX as a father of Unification, although they did downplay the extent of Pius IX's opposition to the liberal monarchy and the 1863 encyclical *Quanta Cura* and the Syllabus of Errors were only acknowledged in a fleeting reference (COM, 1961: 140).

A place was also created for far right and extremist groups. While they were excluded from government and not on HEOC, they were not eliminated from civil society. The reason was that in much the same way

that Fascist memorials and statues were retained, the far right represented a physical reminder of the moral limits of Italian society, which, according to the new narrative, the Church then reinforced (see for an example: *Il Messaggero*, 1960). As it was presented in the Historical Exhibition, an indication that democracy in Italy was operating was the reaction provoked when these groups tried to exert influence and power over government, an example of which had been the Tambroni Affair the previous year.

Similarly, although in a nod to the left the HEOC did include Mazzini and Garibaldi, they were not officially named founding fathers like Cavour and Victor Emmanuel II of Turin. Instead Mazzini and Garibaldi were presented as important populist leaders in the same way that the Risorgimento and the Resistance were represented as ideologically connected, popular unification movements, with the Risorgimento as the fundamental one. Doing so included the history of the left. However, the constant emphasis placed on the achievements of orderly nation state-builders and how they realised the hopes of the revolutionaries, simultaneously explained that although the left had a place in modern Italy, their association with a history of revolution was the reason that the parties of the left could not sustain a stable government. The limited recognition of the Resistance was representative of the extent to which the HEOC and the DC were willing to allow the left to test these boundaries, which became evident in the context of the Historical Exhibition when the PCI made an application for permission for a national rally of the partisans of the Resistance to be held in Turin on 1 October 1961. The HEOC and the mayor's office in Turin at first refused to give consent for the 'Memorial Day' to go ahead as they were concerned about the numbers for the event (it was calculated that around one hundred thousand patriots would travel to Turin) (CNC, 1962: 292). Following the Tambroni Affair, HEOC and the city council reversed their decision in line with the new DC policy that it was in their best interests to appear to be inclusive of this movement, especially as the PCI still attracted a respectable minority vote. However, inclusion did not signify ideological openness. Instead, the PCI were forced to make huge concessions, primarily by agreeing to accept the Catholic and Crocean interpretation of Italy's history as presented in *Italia '61*. Thus, as the PCI were forced to compromise, the DC, by only altering their position slightly, appeared to have become the party that embraced the left, and having first converted the PCI's ideological position, they could next lay claim to their voters, thereby abating the Communist threat in Italy. Furthermore, taking such a position gave the Government and leaders an opportunity to assert that the nation was not made in popular, revolutionary movements such as the Risorgimento or the Resistance but through actions that implemented the rights and values fought for to benefit all, such as the introduction of a nationwide bureaucracy that provided civic services across Italy, or a government that provided housing

for all, both of which were aims of reconstruction. Thus, unity came from the everyday actions of those who were committed to the provision, and improvement, of national infrastructure.

However, more than anything the Historical Exhibition made clear that these alternative views, while being 'included', were not completely accepted. Their inclusion depended on how they fitted in with the version of Italian history and nationhood approved by the DC. As I have argued, the version of events presented in the Historical Exhibition at Italia '61 made the DC appear to be the natural choice for leadership of the Italian Republic. Furthermore, the new version usefully placed the development of Italy in a European context and also made allusions to the history of nationhood in western, liberal and democratic nation states – a category that Italian leaders pushed for Italy to belong to. Hence, I asserted that just like previous regimes, the DC and the leadership in Turin recognised that control of the unification story was vital to remaining in power. However, they were also aware that they needed to do so in such a way that did not appear to be in continuity with the past. For the leadership in Turin it was an opportunity to re-establish their relevance to nationhood in the Republic and leadership role. They did so by shifting the focus away from the relevance of Turin to the nation because it was the seat of the Savoy monarchy, and instead constructing a narrative that demonstrated how the city had always embodied the values that had defined the nation and which, in its darkest hour, had led it back onto the path to reunification. For the DC it was their chance to explain how a Catholic party could claim to be the heirs of Unification when, ostensibly, one of the chief enemies of the Risorgimento movement was the Church of Pius IX. It also provided them with an opportunity to demonstrate how the cosmopolitan and not nationalist ideologies of the DC could be manipulated to accommodate patriotism and patriotic events.

In sum, and in an effort to demonstrate their difference but also maintain control of the narrative that would be constructed in the Historical Exhibition, the DC's approach to writing the new narrative of Unification was to make the offer to include all interpretations and contributions to the history of unification by appointing an organising committee that reached across the spectrum of what was deemed acceptable. To do so they made use of a 'Melting Pot' model of assimilation, whereby the heterogeneous elements were 'melted together' into a harmonious whole and the troublesome elements were removed. In doing so, they opened the way for other groups to be involved in the story of unification, so long as they represented an ideological connection to the process. It was an approach that was embraced and accepted by all political groups for hope of inclusion. However, as the final analysis of Pieroni Bortolotti and her work demonstrates, the result was a hierarchy that

connected Turin, the DC and the Catholic Church suggesting that other than regime change, very little had changed in Republican Italy.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> I use the term 'exposition' throughout this article to refer to Italia '61 as it was the term used by the official organisers in their bid to have the celebrations recognised by the International Expositions Bureau. One reason they chose it was that it made allusions to the World's Fairs or Expositions held in Philadelphia, London, Paris and Brussels.

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