Global Italy: Media, Identity and the Future of the Nation-State

Mark Hayward

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Approved by
Lawrence Grossberg
Michael Hardt
Kara Keeling
John Pickles
Sarah Sharma
Abstract:

This dissertation explores transformations in the structure of the Italian media policy, paying particular attention to public broadcaster Radiotelevisione Italiana (RAI) and its operations outside of Italy since the end of the Second World War. Through an analysis of government documents and broadcast programming, I look at how the links between cultural production, state institutions, the rights of citizens, and the economy are reorganized in relation to discourses about Italians living outside of Italy. Part of the reorganization that has taken place over the past fifty years has involved a re-conception of what it means to be ‘Italian’ both in terms of legal rights and ideas of belonging. It argues that these transformations, often attributed exclusively to processes of economic globalization, cannot be understood properly unless placed in the context of shifts in the meaning of Italian identity, the practice of citizenship, and media consumption. This project explores how this ensemble of changes relates to broader shifts in state-form globally and begins to evaluate how notions of identity and agency, in other words the ways in which people live and understand themselves in the ‘global’ era.
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C’è tutta un’opera educativa da svolgere, una coscienza da creare: la coscienza dell’italiano nel mondo, affinché non solo il nostro popolo sappia che l’emigrazione è qualcosa di essenziale alla vita del nostro popolo, ma affinché chi parte sappia che egli ha una missione...

There is an entire work of education to be carried out, a consciousness to create: the consciousness of the Italian abroad, not only until our people understand that emigration is something essential to the life of our people, but until those who leave know that they have a mission…

-Mariano Rumor, Speech to the Third Congress of the Christian Democratic Party of Italy, 1949
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Chapter One: Introduction

On 9-10 April 2006, national elections were held in Italy. Being in Rome on election night, I walked from my apartment to *Piazza del Popolo* where Romano Prodi’s centre-left coalition had planned a massive victory celebration. Voting had closed a few hours earlier and, based on polls leading up to the election, the centre-left had felt confident enough about the outcome that they announced earlier in the day that the evening’s events would start at eight o’clock. The leaders of the coalition parties were scheduled to take the stage together sometime before midnight. In spite of early indications that Prodi’s “Democratic Union” coalition was heading towards certain victory, the piazza was almost empty and the stage dark upon my arrival at half past nine.

Curious as to what was going on, I walked back towards my apartment, stopping along the way in the *Piazza Sant’Apostoli* where Prodi’s campaign headquarters were located. A crowd had gathered in front of the offices and was watching the results come in on a large projection television. The joyous mood among supporters of the centre-left coalition that I had seen earlier on evening news had now disappeared. Results coming in from polls across the country (primarily the slower to report rural areas in the North and the provinces of the South) revealed that the left’s sizeable lead had eroded almost completely. By 11pm they were trailing in the senate. As the hours passed, it became increasingly apparent to those gathered in front of television screens across the nation that the election would not be decided that night. In fact, the election would not even be
decided in Italy. It would ultimately be resolved by the results from a handful of seats newly created for this election – voted on by Italian citizens living around the world. The votes of the Italiani all’estero [Italians abroad] had been cast approximately a month before and mailed to Rome. They sat under lock and key at the Ministry of the Interior and were waiting to be counted.

On the evening of the 10th of April, the supporters of Romano Prodi did not take this as a good sign. Common sense dictated that the Italiani all’estero tended to be conservative (and even harbor nostalgia for Fascism) and vehemently opposed to the parties of the left. Casting further shadow on the situation, the seats abroad had been the invention of Silvio Berlusconi’s government in 2001. Their creation was the culmination of a long-term project of the formerly fascist but now far-right (and centre-moving) Alleanza Nazionale [National Alliance] to reward their longtime supporters outside of Italy. To borrow a phrase used to describe the centre-left’s habitual shortcomings, it seemed as though they had once more managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory (Jones 2003).

It was, therefore, surprising to many when it was announced the next day that the majority of seats abroad in both the lower house and the senate (there were twelve of the former and six of the latter) were taken by the centre-left coalition. The seats solidified the centre-left’s majority in the Camera dei deputati, the Italian parliament’s lower house, and broke the deadlock in the senate. As a result of the outcome, the role that non-resident Italians played in the country’s political life – a question that was seen traditionally as having symbolic but little actual importance for understanding how Italy was governed – became central to determining what kind of government would be
formed in the matter of a few hours. After all, the deciding vote in the senate was now held by an 80 year old industrialist who had immigrated to Buenos Aires many years earlier and who explained his party affiliations by saying: “Those of us from abroad do not have the luxury of sitting in opposition” (Cotroneo 2006).

The instability of the newly formed government that emerged from the election was matched by a public debate about the meaning of the results. While the normal accusations of corruption were exchanged, many of these tensions were focused on the role of the italiani all’estero in the electoral process. Outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi immediately began to question the validity of the vote from abroad, suggesting that there were irregularities in the elections overseas. He even sought to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the seats themselves. “They don’t pay taxes,” he remarked, “therefore, it is arguable that they should be able to vote” ("Berlusconi" 2006).

Meanwhile, those on the centre-left were forced to quickly recalibrate several generations of received wisdom about Italians that had migrated. The italiani all’estero were transformed from the mass of lumpen-proletariat with ‘cardboard suitcases’ and proto-fascist tendencies into the undervalued conscience of the Italian nation, more finely attuned to the status of Italy in the world and the damage done by Berlusconi’s time in office (Zucconi 2006).

Unfolding at the intersection of received ideas about Italians abroad and the evolution of the Italian state, the election and the debate that followed the 2006 election brought together many of the themes addressed in this dissertation. The unlikely electoral outcome provided an occasion that gave new attention to long-standing ideas about Italians abroad and the role that these migrant populations played in the life of the nation.
Italians deserved (or did not deserve) the vote in Italian elections because of the way that their relationship to Italy was understood. This moment in 2006 is, however, part of a much longer history of Italy since the end of the Second World War.

Developing this history, my dissertation attempts to trace the evolution of the Italian republic in its relations with Italians abroad. More than simply a question of limited import, I believe that the pages that follow offer a convincing argument that Italians abroad, as a subset of population for which the Italian state has some responsibility, stand at the intersection of the institutional development of the Italian state and the ideological transformation of Italian politics. These institutional and ideological developments have been shaped by, and in turn had their effect upon, changes in international power relations and transformations in the global economy.

In terms of institutional development, the history outlined in the pages that follow explores some of the ways in which the Italian state has been re-organized in relation to changing understandings of the meaning of a nation in its global context; migration, after all, is one of the primary phenomena that lies at the foundations for the present wave of global integration. At the same time, I show the way in which these institutional developments have been linked to particular transformations in Italian political life, most significantly the Christian Democratic dominance during the early years and the return of fascist and neo-fascist parties to mainstream politics over the course of the past two decades.

My primary focus in the pages that follow is how images, ideas and narratives – a discourse – about both Italians abroad and Italy itself have provided impetus for, or obstacles to, particular kinds of institutional development. Thus, while this dissertation
gives considerable attention to institutional development (for example, international electoral districts and public service broadcasting), it is a history that stresses the need for greater attention to be paid to the context in which these developments have taken place. This has demanded that I draw on a variety of literatures in an attempt to capture what has remained an elusive object up to the present. Attention to the status of Italians abroad in law and policy without understanding how these laws and policy are articulated with cultural, economic and political factors will only produce an intellectual myopia about intent and impact of governmental discourse. The state does not simply act in the world of brute materiality, but is always engaged in an attempt to transform the discursive field in which its agencies and representatives operate. At the same time, consideration of the identity formations and community practices of Italians abroad without an understanding of how governmental and other forms of institutional intervention contribute to individual and group self-representation overlooks the way in which the Italian state has played a on-going role in shaping the lives of Italian who emigrated and their descendents.

My concentration on media and communicative practices has made the intersection between institutions and discourse particularly clear for two reasons. First, there is the central role that media play in the way that communities have been constituted and organized. In the case of Italians abroad (and even Italians in Italy, as my description of the election suggests), communications media provide the means through which geographically dispersed populations are able to imagine belonging to a shared community. Secondly, the explicitly stated role of the media as producers and distributors of images, information and narratives, make them a particularly interesting site in which to examine the way that institutions and discourse come together. Thus, there is a
recursive nature to the object of this study – what some might describe as performative – because the discourse Italian public broadcasters produce about Italians abroad cannot be separated from the discourse that helped to produce the state institutions that manage Italian public broadcasting internationally.

This dissertation is a contribution to discussions about the importance of communication media to the formation of the modern nation-state (Innis 1972; Anderson 1991). It might be read as an attempt to make sense of the way in which a national communications policy adapts to changing global context. For this reason, I think it is necessary to supplement the usual arguments about ‘imagined communities’ with a more general claim that both extends and historicizes work that stresses the connection between the nation-state and communications media. In many discussions of the formation of nation-state, the cohesion (or failure to achieve coherence) of the national community in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, typically organized around linguistically based identity, were supported and buttressed by a variety of other state institutions. These institutions, which linked an ethnic group to a discrete area of territory, ranged from those intended to guarantee the security of the nation itself (the military, the police, as well as immigration services) to agencies engaged in the production of national subjects (education and historical preservation) to the forms of administration that produce the nation-state as a coherent space for economic activity (central banks, treasuries and customs services) (Poulantzas 1980).

The emigrant, as a result of moving beyond the territorial boundaries of national sovereignty, is usually seen as falling beyond the jurisdiction of many of these institutions. The emigrant exits the national territory and enters the space of exile in
which the certainty of citizenship guaranteed by the nation-state is thrown into flux. By examining the history of Italians abroad in state discourse and practice, it allows us to look at the way in which imaginings of Italians abroad have been implicated with attempts to involve (or distance) these populations in the institutions of the state at a distance.\footnote{Beginning with the end of the second World War, a great deal of energy had been dedicated to organizing migration and ways in which migrants are connected to their countries of origin. Regional forums like European Intergovernmental Committee on Migration as well as international organizations like the International Labour Organization and the World Bank, have attempted to make sense of the flow of people and capital. The guiding principal of these meetings has usually been reciprocity between sovereign nations, meaning that each nation agrees to recognize the rights of other nations. Of course, as many critics have shown, this leaves unaddressed the question of refugees and other ‘stateless’ peoples that migrate every year.} The result of these negotiations around the edges of the nation-state has been the development of a system for the exercise of limited sovereignty – similar to what Ong calls ‘graduated sovereignty’ (Ong 2006) – in relation to Italians abroad.

The exercise of limited sovereignty gives a greater place to media and communications networks in the formation of members of the national community (whether citizens or not.) This is because, as will be shown in the chapters that follow, media occupy an ambiguous position in relation to the powers of the state. Even in the case of state-operated broadcaster, they are not always seen to be symbols of the state’s power. As a result, they become the conduit and at times the surrogate for other rituals on national belonging among emigrants. In some ways, this is an extension of the traditional mandate of public broadcasting that was oriented around mass education initiatives and deeply implicated in the formation of citizens. However, the kinds of citizens, which is to say the kinds of commitments to the nation and its institutions that migrants are imagined to have, are not the same as were imagined by broadcasters to exist among Italians in
Italy. It is precisely these differences that I hope to elaborate. Specifically, I am interested in the way that the international broadcasts of the Italian state broadcaster attempted to manage the political, cultural and economic engagements of Italian emigrants.

Making sense of these differences, I think it is helpful to view the exercise of this limited sovereignty (and the rights and recognitions associated) as being organized by means of a ‘nationalist economy’ around the process and consequences of migration. I borrow the term ‘nationalist economy’ from Wagman, who explains the term,

I use this term “nationalist economies” to refer to the production of the players, rules, legislation and administrative techniques to constitute an economy complete with notions of wealth, market, competition, employment, and productivity, directly affected by cultural policy decisions. (Wagman 2007)

Wagman uses the concept to trace the migration of concepts regarding national programs for economic development from the auto industry to cultural production; he is primarily interested in how the nation-state produces an economy that is limited according to the bounds of territory and national identity. I find the concept useful because it helps to bring to light the way in which questions of Italian migration are intuitively connected to the discourses about the nation-state and national belonging at same time as explicitly referring to the actions of institutions and the movement of people, objects and capital. At the same time, it does not require a monolithic unity of purpose, even within the interests of any single party.

The primary difference from Wagman in my use of the term is that I am explicitly trying to stretch this concept to include a group of individuals that are by definition beyond the bounds of the nation-state as a territorially defined entity (perhaps the only remaining given in the economy Wagman traces.) The nationalist economy of migration
that I am mapping follows the physical and conceptual limits of the nation as a social
formation. It is as a result of this liminality that the nature of the relationship between
emigrants and the nation-state has remained a subject of ongoing debate.

In its object of study and intent, then, this dissertation is an attempt to better
understand the transformations of the nation-state in the era of globalization. However, I
would like to avoid the common methodological pitfall that views ‘globalization’ as a
singular and unified object of study that has various local instantiations open to empirical
investigation. As Armand Mattelart (2002) reminds us, the term globalization in English
invokes two meanings of the world ‘global.’ The first refers to a spatial conception that
covers the entire surface of the planet, the globe itself. The second suggests a form of
universalitv, a kind of knowledge present and self-evident regardless of position or
situation.

For this reason, rather than simply reproduce practiced logics of the ‘global’, I
would like to make use of this case study to examine the affectivities involved in the
circulation of the understandings of the global. The ‘global’ is not merely descriptive of
changes in the ‘real’ world; it is productive. It is productive in the sense that it brings into
existence (and is brought into existence by) a set of knowledges, objects, scales and
agents. It is not simply the stage upon which these events unfold – a passive container –
but is rather an active component in shaping understandings of our contemporary
moment.

The remainder of the introduction will focus on two areas that are foundational to
this dissertation: first, the way in which the relationship between Italians abroad and Italy
has been imagined in recent history and, second, the status of public broadcasting and
media policy as a part of the state apparatus. The chapters that follow outline an argument that brings together both of these areas, therefore it is necessary to outline some of my initial assumptions before going any further. My implicit aim here, and throughout the project, is to argue that the evolution of the image of Italians abroad in government discourse and the development of Italian public broadcasting globally provide important insight into the history of Italy in the post-war period as well as its future development. This is a theme that I return to in greater detail in the conclusion.

*Italy and Italians abroad*

Judgments regarding the validity of the inclusion of Italians abroad in the electorate that surfaced during the election in 2006 were organized by two tropes. According to the first trope, the Italian migrant lived in permanent exile from Italy, isolated from their place of birth and unable to find a new home elsewhere. As part of this image of migration, the unfathomable nostalgia for friends and family left behind is often invoked along with the impoverished implements of migration (the cardboard suitcase, the worn clothes.) According to the second trop, which has circulated less frequently but still with considerable visibility, the migrant serves as the savior of a nation grown old and decadent. Related to these two ways of imagining the migrant are two very different understandings of the fate that befalls a member of the community upon leaving the territorial confines of the nation. In the first imagining of the migrant, nostalgia and the desire to return to the homeland are the defining characteristics of the individual who has left the country. The latter reverses this relationship. It suggests an ongoing relationship
that is not necessarily significant to the individual who left, but is essential to the
collectivity left behind.

Both of these ideas about migration must be thought about in relation to one
another if the history of the relationship between Italians abroad and media policy are to
be understood. But bringing these two images of the migrant together is a somewhat
unorthodox approach to the questions of migration in Italy, both popularly and in
scholarly discussions. In the case of the election, long held concerns among the parties on
the left that Italians abroad had little or no knowledge of Italy and were isolated from the
life of the nation were quickly replaced by the idea that they had returned to the electorate
in order to set right the nation. Not surprisingly, the parties of the right sometimes offered
a narrative that was the exact inverse of this (i.e. Berlusconi’s comments quoted above.)
But regardless of political position, the Italian living abroad is viewed as being either in
exile or the essence of the nation, hardly ever as both.

It is also possible to see the consequences of this conceptualization in discussions
of Italian migration among scholars more generally. Studies of Italian communities
outside of Italy have done a very good job of exploring the way in which Italian migrants
and their descendents negotiate between memories, traditions and other forms of local
knowledge and the new and sometimes strikingly different conditions in which they find
themselves. Take, for example, the recent volumes published by Donzelli on the history
of Italian migration (Bevilacqua, De Clementi et al. 2002). The volumes offer an
impressive overview of mass migration from the Italian peninsula over the past two
hundred years. They are invaluable tools for scholars in many different fields. However,
the two volumes – divided into “departures” (partenze) and “arrivals” (arrivi) – clearly
put forward a vision of migration that is linear in direction both spatially and cognitively. In such a schema, it is often the image of the migrant as isolated from the country left behind that dominates.

This dissertation attempts to expand this understanding of Italian migration in two ways. In the analysis of images, statements and discourses that follows, I show how the two ways of imagining Italians abroad have had the effect of simultaneously pushing populations away from the nation and drawing them closer and the role that media has played in this process. I show that the two ways of viewing migration are not separable from each other, but part of a single discourse about migration and the nation-state. By focusing on the ways in which the state “left behind” responds the issues of emigration, it becomes clear that migration in Italy has always involved more than departures and arrivals. The television programs, public statements and policy statements I discuss in the pages that follow show that it is perhaps more accurate to view migration as a series of encounters and engagements between Italians abroad and the Italian state that take place at various points in the life of the migrant. I do not mean to dismiss these studies of individual communities and the practices through which they create networks of transnational solidarity, but to expand the ground upon which further study into how ideas about Italians abroad have circulated in relation to one another in the post-war period in government discourse and practice.

A good example of the need for a broader perspective, returning to the beginning of the chapter, involves voting rights for Italians abroad. These are often seen as the foundational act of civic belonging, have remained as site of disagreement. Speaking to the constituent assembly in 1947 about the possibility of including the right of Italians
abroad to vote in the constitution of the new republic, Giuseppe Piemonte, a member of
the Italian Socialist party, observed,

Evidently the expression of a political vote is an act of sovereignty. Carried out in foreign territory, it might be considered as an act against the sovereignty of the territory in which the emigrant votes. This act might be more or less acceptable. It all depends on the state of the relations between the two countries…it might be greeted with condescension, indifference, tolerance, disappointment or hostility. (20 May, 1947)

Although Piemonte was in favour of extending voting rights, the concerns he cites were shared by enough members of the assembly to ensure that the right to vote abroad was not granted. Years later, such concerns were countered in the claims made by Mirko Tremaglia as part of his repeated attempts to have the vote extended internationally by claiming that these rights were guaranteed according to article 48 of the Italian constitution which granted all Italian citizens the right to vote (Innocenzi and Zoratto 1982). Similarly, in the 1980s there were questions about the legal status of committees put in place to represent Italians living abroad and whether they were indeed evidence of Italy’s sovereignty being exercised extraterritorially (and thus a matter that required greater diplomatic attention.) To this could also be added the statements quoted above that were made by Silvio Berlusconi in the wake of the 2006 elections which form part of the most recent debates about Italians abroad voting in political elections.

All of these examples are connected with what are often assumed to be the more ‘concrete’ aspects of state powers: sovereignty, electoral representation, and taxation. But each of these arguments draws upon a received set of images about Italians abroad and the experience of emigration that positions the migrant as either a member of the national community or irrevocably separated from Italy in order to support their claim. It is here
that discourses about Italians abroad, the volatile practices of culture, enter the picture as the terrain upon which the re-integration of emigrants into the nation as social and economic agents was struggled over. This dissertation offers another way of thinking about the development of Italy as nation since the end of the Second World War. The development of Italy has not simply been about the creation of institutions or economic reconstruction and growth, but a reconfiguration of national history and symbols.

In the process of attempting to rework the place of migration in order to understand the relationship between Italy and Italians abroad, it also became apparent that another gap in the study of Italy needed to be addressed. The work of Angelo Del Boca in Italian, but also a growing number of English language studies, have greatly expanded out knowledge of how Italy participated in the process of European colonization at the end of the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century (Andall and Duncan 2005). However, the legacy of this period in Italy remains almost completely absent from contemporary discussions of Italian culture and politics. It falls victim to the national amnesia that takes root in Italy that I outline in the second chapter and which haunts the rest of my dissertation. The amnesia is still intact in the present so that Angelo Del Boca, the leading historian of Italy’s African colonies, titled his latest study of these questions with the provocative questions: *Italiani, brava gente* [Italians, good people] (Del Boca 2005)?

Although I do not detail the collapse of Italian colonialism under Mussolini (nor do I look in any significant detail at the literature produced by the Fascist regime about Italians abroad), this dissertation is an attempt to outline part of the story of the emergence of the Italian nation in the post-colonial context. The push by far right parties
to have the rights of Italians abroad recognized in Italy cannot be separated from the program of historical revisionism that they have been engaged in since the end of the war. For this reason, the ‘re-integration’ of the emigrant that is constitutive of the nationalist economy of migration can perhaps be more accurately described as ‘integration’ since it is not simply about a return to a pre-constituted national body.

Cultural Industries and the State

If the argument that I am making in this project is about the nature of the Italian nation-state as a set of material and discursive practices, the relationship between public broadcasting and the state also need to be addressed. David Hesmondhalgh has argued that the divisions between media policy and cultural policy as well as those between media and cultural policy and public policy in general sometimes obscure the shared context in which policy development and government decision-making takes place. Noting that changes in the social, political and economic climate often affect one another, he writes,

Media and cultural policy share a certain amount in common with other aspects of public policy, and because of their shared concern with symbols and communication, they have a certain amount in common with each other too. They have often been seen as subsidiary to the “real” government action, which is taken to happen in areas such as economic, industrial, health, education, welfare and foreign policy…These hierarchies of status have not been significantly realigned in recent years, but nevertheless neo-liberalism, globalization and the rise of the cultural industries have provided a context in which, at the very least, attempts have been made in many countries to change perceptions among elite groups of the importance of media and cultural policy. (Hesmondhalgh 2005)
There is much in Hesmondhalgh’s argument that will find support in this dissertation. However, I disagree with his claim that the growing importance of media and cultural policy is a change that has only come about in relation to the rise of neo-liberalism and the increased reliance of the developed economies on cultural production since the mid-eighties.

The quotation above seems to suggest that the neo-liberal state is more concerned with symbols and communication that its preceding forms and, as a result, must pay greater attention to the way that media and culture are regulated through policy. This dissertation complicates Hesmondhalgh’s suggestion that it is neo-liberalism that has made the need to reconsider the importance of media and cultural policy a priority. While seductive, there are several aspects of such an argument that need to be developed further. The relationship between ‘cultural policy’ understood broadly and other areas of state intervention must be contextualized within the specific national and historical context. As the chapters two and three show, cultural policy has long been a significant factor in way that the Italian state managed questions regarding the movement of goods and people in and out of the nation. While the divisions Hesmondhalgh evokes may seem obvious to a reader in the Anglo-American context, they do not speak to universal hierarchies or periodizations.

In this regard, I have been inspired by others who have looked at the relationship between culture, state institutions and the formation of subjects. Lloyd and Thomas (Lloyd and Thomas 1998) is helpful for thinking about the place of culture in the art of governing. Explicitly structured as a response to Raymond Williams re-envisioning of the canon of English political writing (Williams 1983), Lloyd and Thomas suggest that
Williams’ elaboration of the ‘culture and society’ tradition is ultimately incomplete since it overlooks the central role played by the state in writing and thinking about culture. They outline the way in which cultural institutions were seen as central to the functioning of the ‘ethical state’ as “a set of practices that at once define and moralize the bourgeois public sphere” (Lloyd and Thomas 1998). The goal of these practices is to produce a population of citizens who are self-sufficient, yet able to see the totality of their differences reconciled in the state, as mediator of the chaos of civil society.

In Michel Foucault’s recently published lectures about the birth of the biopolitical, he offers a similar history of the emergence of political economy. In describing the transition from the absolutist state of the sixteenth century to the liberal state in the 18th century, he points to political economy as one of the central techniques through which the limits of state power are defined (Foucault, Ewald et al. 2001). If the absolutist state was organized around the problem of the legitimacy of the sovereign, the institutions of liberal state are primarily concerned with the question of how “to not govern too much.” In this period, political economy functions as “a general reflection on the organization, distribution and limitation of powers in a society” (Foucault, Ewald et al. 2001). Over the course of the lectures, Foucault argues that one of the outcomes of the deployment of political economy as a tool for regulating excessive governmental action is the production and maintenance of civil society.

What these histories of political economy and the use of culture by government through institutional and popular education make clear is that the deployment by the state of these knowledges was not always about direct intervention or what Hesmondhalgh calls “‘real’ government action.” Rather, both histories relate the emergence of indirect
forms of intervention as central to the governance of populations and territory. The name given to this space of indirect government was ‘civil society,’ but the names of the techniques and tools used to carry out these forms of intervention might variously be grouped together under the banner of ‘culture’ or ‘political economy.’ In both cases, a more manageable form of democracy was the ultimate goal of the exercise of these forms of knowledge, a democracy less prone to the instabilities caused by popular revolt or the excesses of the absolutist state. The knowledge and practices were intended to provide a way of aggregating and organizing the multiplicity of behaviors necessary to rearticulate state form and other institutions from feudal social organizations to the structures of industrial capitalism beginning to emerge.

It is important to note that the object of study in both Lloyd and Thomas and Foucault cannot be reduced to the understanding of ‘culture’ or ‘political economy’ that are most commonly used. Culture is more than just the space of representation and education and Foucault’s conception of political economy goes beyond simply describing the allocation of material and wealth. Both are amenable to the project of cultural studies, a project that looks at the intersection of representation, practice and power. However, given its emphasis on the state, this area of research is most often linked in the English-speaking world to the concept of ‘cultural policy’ and ‘cultural policy studies.’ The object of study and site of intervention is seen as the technologies of governance that produce and reproduce the population as a governable object.

It is governmentality that has become the central analytical concept in this approach. It is a term that arises in a lecture that attempts to describe these shifts in the
context of the transformation of state-form in Europe during the 18th century. Explaining its meaning, Foucault writes that in the turn to the ‘governmentalization of the state’, population comes to appear above all else as the ultimate end of government. In contrast to sovereignty, government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth longevity, health, and so on. (Burchell, Foucault et al. 1991)

Advocates of the turn to cultural policy take up the field of techniques outlined by Foucault under the concept of governmentality as the field of strategic struggle. As Cunningham explains, “the perspective afforded by a concept of governmentality allows us to plot the strategic nature of policy discourse more extensively” (Cunningham 1992).

The turn to governmentality is an appealing one for methodological reasons. Cultural policy studies, field of inquiry that has helped frame this dissertation, has done little to examine and challenge the divisions and hierarchies between the cultural, the political and the economic that grounded Hesmondhalgh’s argument. Consider Bennett’s statement that, 

People with the capacity to do sophisticated statistical and economic work have a major contribution to make to work at the cultural studies/policy interface – perhaps more than those who engage solely in cultural critique. (Bennett 1992)

While Bennett’s call for greater dialogue is admirable and has yet to be fully taken up, it does not fundamentally challenge the conceptual ground of critique. Perhaps this is not a problem when working within the frame of a single national or linguistic context, but I believe it begs further examination when dealing with transnational contexts that are less successfully mapped on to existing conceptual grids.
It is always necessary to contextualize. In Italy, the relationship between the state and civil society took a slightly different path than in either England or France. The role of media in this relationship was similarly unique to the context in which it emerged. While there is undoubtedly a longer history that could (and should) be written on the subject, the question of the place of symbol production and communication as part of state power can usefully be read in the context of debates about the relationship between politics and culture that have unfolded in Italy. In this dissertation, I show the way in which seemingly discontinuous phenomena worked together around the concept of migration to make culture something outside of politics and with an ambiguous relationship to the economy in the formation of post-war liberalism developed in Italy. And, in the second part of the dissertation, examine how these relationships have been changing in recent years.

The management of Italians abroad plays a key role in the development of the discursive terrain of political life in Italy generally because of their position at the intersection of traditional forms of national sovereignty and the relationship implied by this between the citizen and the state and new forms of social regulation. Extending these arguments, by exploring the nationalist economy of migration that developed in Italy since the end of the Second World War I believe it is possible to trace a reorganization of the way in which citizens are asked to participate in the national community. The development of techniques for governing Italians abroad have primarily emerged from the sphere of activities and practices commonly described as ‘cultural.’ In the case of Italians abroad, the ability of media to produce national subject within a delimited territory (i.e. the massive public education program that took place in Italy well into the
second half of 20th century) has moved beyond the bounds of a nation’s territory to produce national subject who share a common cultural identity rather than a common territory.

Chapter Summaries

The next two chapters focus on the figure of the migrant as constructed in the years between the end of the Second World War and the mid-to-late Sixties. These two chapters are an attempt to map government discourse about Italian emigrants that evolved as part of the emergent hegemony of the Christian Democratic party over the Italian republic. Elements of this settlement continue to circulate to the present day, but the absolute dominance of these positions in government policy and practice started to weaken during late-sixties and early seventies.

Chapter two is concerned with the cultural, political and economic settlement that emerged in post-war Italy. In particular, I argue that the role of migration in the national imaginary was far more central than has traditionally been argued. It is useful to recall that these are the years of the so-called “economic miracle” in which Italy was rapidly industrializing and working towards its reintegration following the Second World War. The role that media, particularly radio and television, have played in processes of modernization and national consolidation has been noted in many contexts. In the Italian context, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the importance of broadcasting, tightly controlled by a state-owned entity, in the production of the Italian people as a
single people, sharing both a culture and (perhaps most importantly) a language, from the mix of regional cultures and linguistic dialects that occupied the country.

Television and radio became important sites at which the movement of the country into industrial modernity was tracked and displayed for the Italian people to watch. The movement into industrial modernity surrounds a great deal of the programming produced at the time. Programs highlighting industrial production such as \textit{Made in Italy}, a series of fifteen-minute tele-films produced between 1958-1964 in which an Italian product is followed from raw material to the marketplace, were common. Even the language and literacy programs that occupied a great deal of Italian television’s early days (including programs such as the adult literacy initiative \textit{Non e’ mai troppo tardi} [It’s Never too late] and \textit{Telescuola} [Teleschool]) framed language and literacy in Standard Italian as the necessary prerequisite for entry into the brave new world of the twentieth century. Even the media themselves were viewed as the embodiment of modernity, bringing the future to the least accessible parts of the country.

In the chapter, I offer an analysis that brings to the fore another relatively prominent theme in early Italian broadcasting: documentaries describing the lives and fortunes of Italians around the world. Between 1954 and 1965 more than 100 telefilms were produced that followed the hundreds of thousands of Italians that left the country immediately following the war. Almost never discussed in studies of Italian migration in the post war period, I argue that the discourse about migration to which these documentaries belong is central to understanding the cultural, political and economic formation of the Italian nation-state in the years of the economic miracle. There the portrayal of the Italian migrant as the labour force driving post-war modernization
projects around the world, from the building of Sydney and New York to the great dams and hydroelectric projects of Ghana, Tanzania and Venezuela, formed an important adjunct to projects for national industrial and economic development in post-war Italy.

I argue that these documentaries, along with the statistical information gathered by various government industries and organized around “the problem of Italian labour abroad,” were involved in the process of explaining the position of Italy in the world community. More than simply holding a mirror up to the nation, this mapping was deeply implicated – perhaps more so than any other area of Italian cultural production in the post-war period – in the project of dealing with the legacy of Fascist Imperialism and the failure of Italian colonialism. These documentaries portrayed the Italian as labouring subjects as they revisited many of the sites where the most terrible atrocities of Italian expansion occurred (Ethiopia, Greece, Libya.) In the process, they attempted to write over the figure of the Italian as colonizer and replace it with the Italian as diligent worker and benevolent supervisor.

The third chapter extends the themes of the previous chapter, looking at the ways in which cultural policy and migration policy were twinned during these years. The years following the war were marked by the creation of a set of institutions that dealt with the needs of Italians abroad; these institutions were often concerned as much with areas relating to cultural development as with economic or political issues. Indeed, what are usually thought of as separate areas within the hierarchy of policy development and government action, a hierarchy that typically subjugates cultural policy to more ‘serious’ areas of concern like industrial development or foreign policy, can be more accurately described in the Italian case as a complex negotiation. Media and cultural policy,
typically focused on issues of information and education, were seen as essential for the construction of Italians abroad as a national population.

The purpose of the third chapter, then, is two-fold. At one level, it serves to outline the legal and institutional framework within which the management of migration developed in the post-war period, paying specific attention to its intersection with cultural policy. At the same time, it is an attempt to provide more insight into the role of cultural policy in the post-war period as Italy negotiated its position globally. As Ferraris notes in his discussion of Italian foreign policy, “For a country like Italy, culture – whether the remnants of the past or the present wealth – constitutes or should constitute an instrument of foreign policy, whether the diffusion of the products of our ingenuity or the diffusion of language.”

This chapter shows the ways in which government involvement with migration was not exclusively under the control of government agencies. Para-statal organizations like the Dante Alighieri Society were often the primary parties involved in maintaining relations between the Italian government and Italians living abroad. Taken together, these two claims show the permeability of state action at both the symbolic and institutional level. This suggests that clear cut distinctions between the state, the market and civil society as well as those between the ideological and coercive functions of the state are not given, but rather the product of a specific of power relations and institutional conditions.

Chapter four attempts to better understand the way in which the figure of the migrant was linked with the ideological conflict that divided Italy during the 1970s. These years, sometimes referred to as the ‘years of lead’ in reference to the explosion of
armed political conflict in Italy, were extremely turbulent socially and politically. They were marked by a weakening of the Christian Democratic occupation of the state apparatus and a growing sense of discontent among Italians generally. The role of Italian emigrants in these years, aside from a relatively small group of political exiles forced to flee a corrupt judicial system, has rarely been elaborated in detail. This chapter is an attempt to show the way that Italian emigrants were involved in these conflicts ‘at home’ and the way in which the politicization of Italians abroad was conditioned both by the Italian political scene and the international power relations.

The fourth chapter begins by looking at the way in which the relationship between memory and forgetting, the nation and its migrants outlined in the previous chapter crumbles in the late 1960s and early 1970s and is replaced by a period in which this matrix of issues are sites of open (sometimes violent) struggle. It is surprising that the end of the ‘economic miracle’ and the undeclared civil war that defined the ‘years of lead’ in the 1970s also coincided with the first attempts to organize the newspapers and broadcasters serving Italians living abroad. Taking up the history of the first of these organizations to be formed (the *Federazione Mondiale per la stampa italiana all’estero*) and it successors, I trace the way in which migrant communities around the globe became sites in which the ideological battles engulfing Italian streets were extended and transformed.

The Christian Democratic settlement in Italian cultural and political life was dominated by a kind of amnesia regarding the Second World War that functioned by means of a culpable silence, but the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the emergence of a re-articulation of the feeling of nostalgia common among the migrants who left Italy. This
chapter traces the long and complex relationship between Italian communities around the world and the neo-fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano [Italian Social Movement] that emerged from the ashes of Mussolini’s last stand at Salò. My intention is not to argue that the Italian communities around the world were transformed into fasci overnight, but to understand the way in which Italian neo-fascism was able to successfully position itself as the voice of Italians abroad. It is the story of the ‘war of position’ through which the Italian left (and the politics of labour that defined the 1960s) was displaced both ideologically and institutionally by the right and a reactionary identarian discourse.

This struggle was primarily waged through a variety of para-statal entities like the organizations and conferences representing Italian media overseas. Although wholly subsidized by the ministry of foreign affairs, these organizations were not under the direct control of the Christian Democratic political machine that maintained the parties hold on power in Italy. Within this institutional struggle, which would eventually see the executive of the largest union of Italian media outlets outside of Italy dominated by members and sympathizers of conservative and far-right parties, there was an ideological battle being waged at the same time. Through an analysis of a series of articles published in far right papers both in Italy and abroad, I trace the emergence of a discourse that both re-evaluates Italian history – claiming that Italian denial of its colonial engagement is a denial of the nation itself – and national identity in order to produce a conservative discourse that is no longer rooted in a moribund past (Mussolini and the rebirth of a Roman Empire.)

In Chapter five, I look at a series of events involving the international distribution of RAI International, the state-owned global satellite channel, and its relationship with
the Islamic investment bank Dalla Al Baraka. In the wake of the events of September 11th, 2001, newspapers and the Italian parliament were filled with stories about the possible connection between the bank and the Al Qaeda terrorist network. I show the way that these stories were part of an attempt to map the institutional and political economic relations that constitute the transnational networks within which cultural commodities circulate. They also invoked the relationship between Italians living abroad and the Italian nation as RAI International was positioned as the primary link between Italians outside of Italy. The interest in Prince Al Waleed, Dalla Al Baraka Investment Bank and Tarak Ben Ammar are intimately related to the vernacular geopolitical knowledge that has defined many aspects of everyday life in Europe in the wake of the events of September 11th, 2001. The media coverage (often invoking a hint of scandal) are grounded in the same discourses (and related anxieties) that frame the global ‘war on terror’ and popular panics about the coming (or, perhaps, already underway) ‘clash of civilization’ between the North Atlantic World and the Muslim world that circulate in Western Europe.

My goal in this chapter is to look at the way in which the ongoing story of Ben Ammar and Dalla Al Baraka have walked the line between the ‘official’ mappings of corporate relations and the functioning of state institutions and less legitimate popular understandings of international politics in the post 9/11 world.² In accounts of these events, these two kinds of knowledge have often been brought together, overlaid upon one another in the form of a single narrative. However, my primary interest is not to disentangle these two aspects of the narrative, producing a political economic mapping

² For an interesting discussion of the relationship between popular and official knowledge, please see Clare Birchall’s Knowledge Goes Pop (2006).
accompanied by an appropriately stern condemnation of the more ‘scandalous’ aspects of the story for being sensationalistic. Instead I would like to treat the narrative as an artifact produced by and attempting to describe the role of media in the context of neo-liberal Italy. Specifically, I examine the way in which media institutions, popular knowledge about financial markets and national myths have become entwined in the contemporary moment.

The sixth chapter brings to the story more or less to the present, to the months leading up to the elections in 2006. The 1970s and 1980s were characterized, on the one hand, by the emergence of an increasingly varied and fragmented group of media producers situated in Italian communities around the world and, on the other, by various failed attempts to co-ordinate and organize these media producers in relation to Rome. Technological innovation and shifts in the global media market radically changed the terrain in which international Italian media functioned. This chapter is primarily interested in the emergence of RAI International, the international branch of the public broadcaster. However, this chapter is also about tracing the consolidation of gains made by the Italian right outlined in previous chapters. In particular, the creation of a special ministry for Italians abroad under the first Berlusconi government and the successful campaign to establish direct representation for populations residing outside of Italian territory.

Prior to the arrival of Silvio Berlusconi on the Italian political scene, the Italian right was blocked from acceding to power due to the fact that it was never able to resolve its internal divisions that kept the secular (although implicitly Catholic) bloc of “normal” conservatives usually occupying the right-wing of the Christian Democrats from the more
extreme supporters of the far-right parties and movements gathered around the M.S.I (rechristened in 1994 as the Alleanza Nazionale [National Alliance]). This chapter explores the way in which ministry for Italians Abroad and RAI International became key sites in which this alliance was negotiated and eventually consolidated. If the first chapter sketched the post-war settlement in which the centre-left hegemony was consolidated around the concept of labour and the welfare state (taking care of hardworking Italians wherever they may be), in this chapter the emergence of a new settlement in which the relationship between identity, governance and capital are rearticulated around the market (making Italians work harder to take care of themselves wherever they may be.)

I take up the events surrounding the introduction of RAI International onto Canadian airwaves to explore the contradictory appeal of these developments. At its simplest, this might be understood as a turf war, a conflict over access to a broadcast market. It is about the attempts of the Italian state-owned broadcaster RAI to gain access to Canadian airwaves. Putting this situation into its broader cultural and political-economic contexts, this conflict also throws into relief the changing relationship between forms of regulation; cultural identity understood as ‘ethnicity’ and communication technologies at an international scale. This situation, commonly referred to as il caso canadese, brings together the economics of ‘global markets’ with demands for cultural recognition. However, it is my hope that this chapter will serve as more than just another field report from the frontlines of globalization. I would like to suggest that this situation is unfolding in precisely the sites and spaces that are often considered constituent of ‘global media,” and demands attention to the way in which the policy and everyday life are experienced.
Chapter Two

Migration is often cited as a significant factor in the reconstruction of Italy during the period following the end of the Second World War. It is common for discussions of the period to focus on the role of migration as a population ‘safety valve’ that allowed an overcrowded nation to rebuild after the widespread destruction caused by the war (Fontani 1962; Tomasi 1964). Furthermore, beyond simply reducing the population of underdeveloped parts of the country, remittances sent home by workers abroad were also of considerable importance to the Italian economy as a way of bringing foreign capital into the devastated national economy (Mini 1968). It was also during these years that migrants came to be seen as requiring monitoring and protection from governments (Sassen 1999; Ngai 2004). This was both because of their economic importance to the nations with high levels of emigration and in response to a greater concern about the unregulated movement of people in the wake of the Second World War.

This chapter and the next are situated at the intersection of the emergent regulation of migration and the circulation of information and images about migration in Italian media culture in the 1950s and 1960s. In order to better understand the construction of the migrant and migration in Italy during these years, these two chapters place these practices of regulation and representation in the context of the imagination of the new social order that was taking shape as part of the major cultural and economic
changes of Italy’s ‘economic miracle.’ I argue that the discourse around the migrant in Italy, particularly as a way of mediating the relationship between the state and its citizens, is an example of the new ways of exercising state power (and powerlessness) that developed as part of the emergent global political and economic position of post-war Italy. Thus, they belong to the post-war liberal settlement between government and civil society that was taking shape in Italy. At the same time, they were connected to the geopolitical pressures of the cold war.

In this chapter, I analyze these two aspects of migration as they were deployed in representations of migration produced and broadcast by the public broadcaster, *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI). The representations, on television and in print, helped to spread an image of migration that assuaged fears that prospective migrants might have. But beyond serving as propaganda, these representations of migration and the figure of the migrant produced by a variety of Italian state agencies were central for understanding how the emergent settlement at “home” was linked to the evolving economic and political order regulating the global movement of migrants and the flow of capital. The travels of Italian migrants on television screens plotted one course through the new geopolitical settlement of the Cold War, linking national industrial development programs and the reconstruction of the Italian state to the logics and languages of the post-war economic and political order. In the process, the nationalist economy of migration discussed in the introduction was constituted with the migrant, held up as a symbol of the way in which Italy might transform itself into a modern industrial nation, at its core.
At the same time, these representations were also a part of official state discourses that attempted to deal with the problematic legacy of Italian fascism and fascist colonialism in particular. A direct result of the post-war settlement between labour and capital was that images of the labourer and the migrant were presented in a way that made it difficult to acknowledge or speak directly about the twenty years of fascist rule in Italy (Andall and Duncan 2005; Del Boca 2005). As we will see, this forgetting was expressed with particular force in representations of migrants since they often returned to the very sites the fascist imperial project had occupied before the war.

However, it would be a mistake to believe that the official discourse outlined in these two chapters was accepted by Italians in Italy and abroad without dissent. Those who migrated had first hand knowledge of the discrepancy between the image presented in the state discourse on migration and their experience of life abroad. And most Italians (particularly in the South and in northern regions like the Veneto) would have had heard about the trials and tribulations of migration from family members or paesani who had left. The disjunction between the figure of the migrant in media discourses and the popular ‘awareness of migration’ (the ‘coscienza della migrazione’ to borrow a phrase from migration policy in these years) speaks to the limits of media for imposing particular meanings on the minds of viewers.

This is not to say that representations in media do not matter at all when it comes to the formation of opinions and feelings about the world, but that they cannot be viewed entirely in isolation. Contextualizing the discursive analysis of media texts that I offer in this way demands a shift in understandings of the place of media in techniques of governance that moves beyond traditional notions of ideological propaganda. This
chapter ends by examining the failure of the discourses outlined in the first part of the chapter to produce consensus. The failure of these discourses, often occurring at moments of crisis and catastrophe, gave space to voices of dissent and provide some evidence of the autonomy of audiences in relation to preferred interpretations of media texts. But, as I note in the conclusion, this dissent did not fall entirely outside the scope of the official discourse itself. I argue that the autonomy of international audiences was part of the emergence of the new techniques of liberal governance that were emerging in Italy during the post-war period.

*The Economic Miracle*

In the fifteen years following the end of the Second World War, almost every aspect of Italian life was significantly altered. At the end of the war, much of the nation’s transportation infrastructure had been destroyed including one-quarter of the railway system and more than ninety percent of port facilities (Ventresca 2004). Agriculture had been devastated and most people got by on less than survival wages, spending almost all their money on overpriced and increasingly scarce food supplies (Crainz 1996; Foot 2001). Yet, by the beginning of the 1960s, Italians would find themselves in the middle of one of the most rapid economic recoveries in modern history. This not only involved a return to economic prosperity, but a fundamental transformation in the way that Italians lived. As Crainz notes, “Italian society experienced over the course of a few years a profound break with the past: in modes of production and consumption, in ways of thinking and dreaming, of living the present and imagining the future” (Crainz 1996:vii).
The legacy of antifascist resistance and pressure from the occupying Allied powers meant that the transformation of Italy into a liberal democracy relied upon the incorporation of the Italian masses into the post-war economic and political project of industrial nationalism to a much greater degree than had been the case with either fascism or the pre-fascist monarchy. Along with greater involvement in institutional politics, large numbers of Italians who had previously belonged to the rural peasantry gained new forms of economic agency. However, the modalities and ideological tone of participation were very carefully shaped by the ruling Christian Democratic party so as not to cause significant changes to existing power relations in the country.

Central to the Christian Democrat project for cultural and political hegemony was the adoption and adaptation of the worker and labour \([lavoro]\) as central figures in Italian political discourse as well as in culture more generally. As San Giovanni has recently shown in his history of labour in Italian popular culture, the image of the labourer that is most prominent in this period is one which negotiates the volatility of more radical communist-inspired conceptions of workers with the more conservative images tied to the Catholic church and pre-war Italy (San Giovanni 2006). Much of the popular success of the Christian Democrat program for change was a result of its ability to adapt the language of labour that grounded the communist party’s popular appeal in a way that did not entail its revolutionary political program.

This process of negotiation and negation is similar to Antonio Negri’s reading of the Italian constitution (Hardt and Negri 1994). He argues that the ability of the state to mediate between the demands of industry and labour discontent, while avoiding paths that might have lead to more radical political and economic change, was central to the
social and economic order of the new Italian republic. He cites the first article of the constitution of the Italian Republic that declares that “Italy is a democratic republic founded on labour” as evidence of this process of mediation.\(^1\) Acknowledging that the inclusion of labour in the Italian constitution was a gesture towards the significance of the labour movement and socialist organizing in the country during the post-war period, Negri goes on to argue that this inclusion was not simply a victory for the rights of the proletariat. “Perhaps these principles, common to the socialist tradition, have been transfigured by the new reality in which they are situated and there, far from representing a subversive force, serve to ground and guarantee some of the primary needs of the economic and social development of the bourgeoisie” (Hardt and Negri 1994).

As noted above, migration played a central role in the changes taking place during these years as well. The number of Italians that migrated in the years after the Second World War was lower in absolute terms than during the first modern wave of migration at the beginning of the twentieth century, but it was still significant by any standard. And the possibility of leaving Italy remained an issue of interest to a large portion of Italy’s population throughout these years. Surveys from the period show that the number of Italians who desired to migrate was as high as 49.1% in 1946 and was still 30% in 1953 (Rinauro 2005). Millions of Italians from the Southern provinces and rural northern areas moved into the cities and a large number of Italians decided to follow through on their desires to leave Italy. Roughly 1.9 million people left Italy permanently while nearly a

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\(^1\) The debates in the constituent assembly support Negri’s claim. The phrasing of this article was an attempt to mediate between communists and more conservative members of the Christian democrats. The Communists had proposed that the first article read “Italy is a democratic republic of workers” while the more conservative factions had preferred “Italy is a democratic republic founded on rights of liberty and labour.”
million more lived outside of the country for some period of time between 1946 and 1957 (see Appendix B for migration figures.) This figure would increase throughout the 1960s to around 250,000 individuals leaving every year (with nearly 2 million Italians residing in Germany by 1973.) Immigration overseas was smaller numerically, but still of considerable size. The primary difference between European migration and non-European migration was the fact that by the mid-sixties, European migration had settled into a regular pattern of seasonal or short term cycles while most non-European migration proved to be long term, if not permanent.

_Early Television In Italy_

While a great deal has been written about the importance of television in the production of social and political consensus in these years, there is hardly any mention of representations of migration in these discussions. This is surprising since, in the ten years following the introduction of television to Italy in 1955, there were almost 100 documentaries produced focusing on the subject of migration that varied in length from fifteen minutes to an hour (see Appendix A). It was among the more frequently covered themes in the early days of Italian television. But it is important to place the portrayal of migration in the context of television and media culture in Italy as well as the political economic changes taking place in the nation more generally.  

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2 Undoubtedly, aspects of this discussion will seem familiar to those versed in the history of Italian post-war cinema (Landy 2000), but I hope this discussion shows that the moments of harmony with the postwar renaissance in Italian film – and its focus on everyday life and the adoption of the documentary technique and form – are twinned with
It is not difficult to see many similarities with other public service broadcasters as RAI sought to negotiate the educational mandates of public service handed down by government with the populist and commercial possibilities offered by the new medium. As already noted, the service played a central role in the state’s attempt to promote social cohesion. As Franco Monteleone (2003) notes in his history of Italian media:

Television, in the hands of moderate Catholic governments, played an extremely important function as the attentive and daily mediator of shifts that were unfolding in tumultuous and often contradictory ways. Rather than an agent of change, television was guarantor that the changes would take place without too much trauma.

However, unlike the BBC where cultural uplift and enlightenment defined the dominant programming goals (Briggs 1985), entertainment programming was central to the service from its inauguration. The public craze for the game show Lascia o Raddoppia? [Double or Nothing], which first went on air in 1955, was often credited as being the driving force behind public demands that television signal coverage be extended over the entire national territory. Grasso describes the impact of the program as nothing less than radical: “Lascia o Raddoppia? was able to succeed where The Divine Comedy failed…it gave Italy a national language” (quoted in Foot 2001).

Grasso’s comment sardonically points to another, equally prominent, part of early Italian television: educational programming, specifically adult language and literacy training. It was through these television programs (Non è mai troppo tardi [It’s never too late] and Telescuola [Teleschool] being the longest running) that the linguistically fragmented (and sometimes illiterate) populations of the country were integrated into the equally significant moments of tension in which Italian neo-realism’s more radical stylistic and political elements are mediated by the drive for industrialized modernization.
social and cultural life of the nation rather than various regional identities (Farné 2003). While variety shows and quiz shows (and the prizes they offered and advertised) were the means by which the Italian people were introduced into modern consumer capitalism, it was the language instruction programs (along with numerous other public education programs) that were the foundation of Italian television’s public service mandate. Both were involved in creating a common language that was shared by Italians.

Along with entertainment and education, the documentary took a prominent place in early schedules walking the line between these two poles. The documentaries about Italians living abroad were an important subgenre capturing the world outside of Italy. Most of these short documentaries were filmed as part of the series Viaggi del telegiornale [Travels in Television News] that was aired three times a week at 10:15 pm (before the late evening news), and were often given the generic titles of “Italians in…” or “The Italians of….” The expense of producing these programs meant that the documentaries focusing on Italians around the world were often produced in tandem with general interest telefilms about a particular country. For example, the documentary

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3 Anthropologists and journalists noted early on that television viewers in Italy often seemed more attracted to the advertisement inserted into programs than the actual programs themselves. Perhaps the strongest example of this was the importance of Carosello, a daily segment going to air just before 9 o’clock in the evening consisting of promotions for various things. It was a tremendously successful show and, De Rita (1962) notes that it marked the time when many Italian children were sent to bed.

4 Figures from the early fifties show that the level of illiteracy in Italy was much higher than other Western European nations, concentrated mostly in southern Italy. Approximately 13% of the country was unable to read, a figure that went as high as 25% in the South. In terms of spoken Italian, approximately 60% of the population primarily used various Italian dialects. As Farné notes “If it is true that the radio had already had an significant effect in making Italian more familiar, it is necessary to recognize that until the end of the fifties this language was for the majority of the population something relegated to limited use, reserved for formal or written uses only” (Farné 21).
*Italiani in Tanganika* [Italians in Tanganika] was produced by the same crew that made *Tanganika Oggi* [Tanganika Today]; the same establishing footage (shots of trees, cities and government buildings in the capital city) was used in both films.

Formally speaking, the documentaries adopted many of the stylistic features of news documentary common to the period (Curtin 1995). Visually, the documentaries often made use of extended medium-range shots, following a single activity for a long period of time (for example, a two minute shot of a worker on the Akisombo dam in Ghana searching for tree stumps in the newly-flooded river valley.) Interviews mainly consisted of fixed frame close-ups in which the speaker addressed the camera directly. While they were shot on location, there was relatively little ambient audio used in the productions. There was almost no dialogue from the participants; a single narrator whose voice was not recorded on location provided commentary. Even in interview sequences, answers were given to questions that were voiced over by the narrator in the studio.

The fixed shots and dominant narrative presence created a clear demarcation between the viewers “back home” (from whose position and for whom the narrator and host spoke) and “life on the frontier.” Indeed, the line between ‘home’ and ‘away’ was often incorporated into the documentaries themselves. It was not uncommon for the opening scenes to consist of footage showing the subjects of the films (typically laborers) or the television crew itself arriving on location, often with some ambient noise (the sound of planes or automobiles) in the background. The fixing of the camera in place (as opposed to handheld shooting) and the replacement of ambient noise with the studio-recorded voice of the narrator introducing the subject of the program signaled the arrival ‘on location’.
In terms of their approach to the subject, the documentaries fall into two categories. The first type looks at the daily life of Italian communities around the world, noting the way in which their way of life had been transformed by time and distance. The second type focused on the positive effects that Italian labour had on a new environment; this kind of program was often organized around major public works projects or agricultural development. In order to give a better idea of these two approaches to representing Italians abroad it is helpful to discuss two of these documentaries – one of each kind – in greater detail: *Italiani nel Quinto Continente* (1961) [Italians in the Fifth Continent] and *La Grande Diga sulla Kariba* (1957) [The Great Dam on the Kariba].

*Italiani nel Quinto Continente*, produced by Franco Prosperi and Fabrizio Palombelli, was one of a series of documentaries that attempted to capture the way of life among the small, but rapidly growing Italian community in Australia. It is an excellent example of the first type of documentary mentioned above: those that look at the lives of Italian communities around the globe. *Italiani nel Quinto Continente* begins with footage of man riding a donkey across the desert, while the slow lament of “La Ballata del Fiume” [The Ballad of the River] plays. As was common among many of these documentaries, it begins by re-enacting the arrival of a group of Italians in Australia by following them from the time they board the boat in Italy until they arrive in Sydney. In the narrator’s description of these migrants during the voyage, there is particular attention paid to distinguishing them from previous generations, contrasting their sense of hope and promise with the misery that drove earlier waves of travelers.

The next segment moves from Sydney to Melbourne, where the largest Italian community has settled. It shows the process through which the newly arrived migrant
settles in Australia. The segment begins with a few establishing shots of the city as well as scenes of Italian commerce and stores from other migrant communities (Greek, German.) We are then shown a simulated interview at the Italian consulate where the newly arrived migrant is asked by consular staff if they speak English and if they are or plan to get married. In the middle of the segment, the consul speaks directly to the camera and explains the importance of family ties for successful settlement and the difficulty of finding adequate lodging in Australia.

The third segment moves through Melbourne’s Little Italy, showing the development of Italian commerce in the city. There are interviews with the bookseller and baker. Along with shots of storefronts and people walking on the street, the narrator talks about the nature of Little Italies in general, the dangers of isolation and the importance of eventual assimilation. Moving past the storefronts, we are shown that while many of the goods are made in Italy, some of them are produced in Australia. Finally we are shown a couple on their wedding day and told once more about the importance of family. The narrator points out that it was an arranged marriage and that the couple had only met once in Italy before the ceremony took place. The final segment shows a representative of the Australian department of Foreign Affairs who stresses to the viewer that “Italians are still welcome in the country. The possibility of this place is enormous and it will welcome another 30 million.”

Turning now to the second kind of documentary about migration, a good example is La Grande Diga sulla Kariba [The Great Dam on the Kariba], produced by Giovanni Salvi; it is one of about a dozen documentaries that looks at Italian labourers in Central Africa, constructing major works projects in newly independent nations. Other
Documentaries of this kind include *Quelli di Akisombo, Italiani nel Venezuela* and *La Grande Diga sulla Zambesi*. Like the documentary about Australia, it also begins with the journey of the Italian worker to another country. In this case, it is the worker traveling to the worksite of a hydro-electric dam in what was then Rhodesia. He is asked how long he is going for, how long he went for last time and what he thinks of the weather in Africa? Seated with his wife on the plane, the couple also speaks about the birth of their child in Kariba.

In the next segment, we are taken on a quick tour of the worksite. In a voiceover, the narrator explains the make-up of the dam’s labour force; it consists of a couple hundred Italian and European workers and a few thousand African workers. The Italians are shown as the skilled labour that teaches the native labourers modern construction techniques. Shots of land movers as well as scenes of the Italian managers talking to workers and moving around the worksite give the viewer a sense of the size of the project and the labour involved. We are then shown the canteen where the Italians are able to find their ‘own’ foods prepared by the staff in the kitchen. There are a few shots of an African cook who we are told has learned to make pasta and other Italian dishes to suit Italian tastes. While we are shown many workers, there is no ambient audio on any of this footage; vaguely martial flute music is played in the background of the narrator’s description to complement the air of industry.

It is only at the end of the shot sequence, when we are introduced to the lead surveyor on the site, that the narrator cedes space. In the interview, the surveyor laments the image of Italians working abroad, complaining
Given that I have the chance, I want to say that we, here, are very annoyed by what people say about us. When they write that we are a band of heroes, it’s annoying. When they write that we’re a group of bums, it bugs us even more. Here in Kariba, you find that people are here to solve the problem of everyday life in a straightforward and honest way. You behave here as you would anywhere else.

After some interstitial shots of Italians and Africans working together on the site, we are shown a series of interview segments with Italian workers. A supervisor describes his position says: “As a labourer, wherever I go, I have to work.” An engineer, noting that the Italians had taken over where an American company had failed, describes Kariba as “An ugly airport, lots of trees, a river and, of course, blacks.” When asked his opinion of the locals, he responds, “They are a good, but poor people.”

In the next segment, we follow the path of the river from the dam to the ocean, tracing the impact of the construction on the region. This leads to an interview with a foreman who describes the size of the dam and the amount of materials that were used to build it. The interview breaks off in this middle as we are told that there has been an emergency on the work site: a flood. We are shown the response to the crisis. In the final scene of the program, we are once more told about the output of the dam, the number of workers and the importance of the project for the development of Africa. The narrator declares that the men in Kariba are models for Italians everywhere and that these men (and those like them,) should continue to work to improve the conditions of others around the world.

It is not difficult to see the way in which these two forms of documentary are articulated through longstanding understandings of the relationship between the west and
the rest (Hall 1996). However, they also speak to the ambiguous position that Italy was seen to occupy geopolitically in this moment. There were concerns about which of the emerging ‘three worlds’ Italy would belong to and these documentaries were one of a whole body of discourses that served to secure and defend its place in the North Atlantic, capitalist and liberal democratic world (Gundle 2000). Responding to Italy’s status as a defeated power in the Second World War as well as the Western European nation with the largest and most well organized communist party, these documentaries are part of the body of media images produced under the watchful eye of the Christian Democrat party that attempt to recuperate these social and political tensions into a stable image of the nation as a modernizing project.

In the case of the documentaries in which life in Australia and other settler nations is discussed (the United States, Argentina, Venezuela, Canada), there is a double movement in the way that Italian migrants are positioned. On the one hand, Italians abroad are seen as constantly threatened by the twin anxieties of total assimilation and longing for what they have left behind. Thus, there is a constant effort made to show that the Italians that left are still Italian in meaningful ways. In *Italiani nel Quinto Continente*, this is done through the extended shots of the goods and services that the Italian community in Australia imports and produces for itself in order to keep the homeland alive. In the case of a tour around New York’s little Italy’s in *La Mia New York*, we are taken to see the *bocce* courts and shown the thriving community that develops around them. (The guide in the program is Pietro Di Donato, author of the immigrant modernist novel *Christ in Concrete* (1939), who speaks a fractured Italian that is closer to dialect than the standard language.) In *Italiani in Canada*, the streets of Montreal’s little Italy are
toured, showing the variety of commercial and industrial enterprises that Italians have been able create. In each of these cases, in spite of the attractions that the new cultures offer to new arrivals, Italian culture survives and flourishes.

However, these documentaries are not simply attempts to capture the nostalgia of Italians living abroad for what they left behind. They are also about showing that the Italians who left Italy are at the same time members of a modern capitalist society that is still in the process of being constructed at home. This is particularly clear, for example in *Italiani in Venezuela* where the contribution of Italians to the social and cultural life of the country is paired with the construction of a factory for the production of steel. While often performing basic kinds of labour, the nostalgia of the workers abroad is tempered by desiring portrayals of industrial development in which Italian labour is central. In this way, the resignation of many of the interview subjects about the possibility of finding a new ‘home’ is recuperated into the project of Italian national development by suggesting that industrial and economic development offer the solution (whether in Italy or elsewhere) to the problem of migration.

In the documentaries filmed in Africa (as well as a few that were filmed in South America,) the nostalgia takes a back seat to the image of the Italian as productive worker. In these films, the Italian is portrayed as the worker and sympathetic supervisor. As already noted, the majority of these documentaries are focused on the construction of a major works project or agricultural development. In *La Grande Diga sulla Kariba*, it is a dam in Tanganika. The great dam at Akisombo, a centerpiece of Nkrumah’s development plans for Ghana, is also the focus of several documentaries. *Italiani in Kenia* and *Libia Oggi* both look at the role of Italian settlers in agricultural development. The pain of
migration is not cast in the light of nostalgia, but as a by-product of the technological and cultural advancement of the Italians. However, the weight of the past is not wholly absent from these documentaries, and it is useful to place them in the broader context of Italy’s relationship with the continent across the Mediterranean.

In the not very distant background of this portrayal is an attempt to overcome the legacies of Italian colonialism and the fascist dreams of empire of the pre-war period (Del Boca 2005). Brotherhood and international solidarity are invoked as the guiding principles of the encounter between Italian and African workers. The legacy of colonial brutality is explicitly invoked as what is being avoided in each of these sites by the new Italian migration. This is undoubtedly a part of the broader process through which Italian involvement in European expansion into Africa was forgotten or denied as the product of an earlier (and now dead) period. The Italian worker is transformed from being the colonizer into the good boss. The glory of the nation is served through the charity of these workers, willing to explain the miracles of technology to the less civilized people of the earth.

Although the positioning of the migrant differs in these documentaries, there are some common elements. Common to these portrayals, these representations show the migrant as the site in which the Italian state is present beyond its borders as a symbol Italy’s postwar economic and industrial development. The migrant is discursively positioned as the ideal national subject and a redemptive figure in the eyes of both the nation and the dominant powers of the globe. In this way, the migrant stands in for the integration of Italy into the post-war geopolitical space of the cold war as a peaceful and dutiful member of the North Atlantic block.
Furthermore, it should not escape notice that the documentaries discussed here are usually grounded in the figure of the family. Throughout the documentaries about Africa, it is the male working abroad for his family (who are either on site or back in Italy) that structures his position as the good boss. Similarly, in the case of the documentary about Australia (but also addressed in documentaries about New York and Argentina), it is the family that is central to maintaining the Italian identity at such a great distance. In an essay on Italian film in the years immediately following the war, Ruth Ben-Ghiat notes that the subject of masculinity is a recurrent theme across many different genres. She writes, “Military surrender and foreign occupation; the loss of Italy’s colonial empire; the emotional and political legacies of civil war; the eclipse of the male icon Mussolini; and widespread trauma and deprivation affected each individual differently but left a collective sense of shame and disgrace. The films of this era address these feelings of abjection” (Ben Ghiait 2005).

The figure of masculinity that is portrayed in these documentaries is one successor to the transitional figure that Ben Ghiat elaborates. No longer struggling with how to reconstitute masculinity within the framework of the family and the nation, these documentaries accomplish a recovery of masculine productivity (both biological and economic) but at the cost of an uneasy erasure of the trauma of the previous twenty years. In the process, they allow for an effortless passage through the same spaces once occupied by the Italian colonizer. The documentaries place masculine labour in the foreground as the symbol of migration, leaving women migrants behind as either absent
entirely from spaces of migration or as the passive (and silent) parties coming along in order to maintain the family structure.5

It is another aspect of what Tasca describes as the ‘average housewife’ in these years, writing: “Ironically, when the public virtues of the new republic were being negotiated, the majority of women assumed a solely private role in which they resumed [after the years of resistance] the familiar virtues of wives and mothers to legitimate them as citizens” (Tasca 2004). Ultimately, one sees the emergence of a figure of the family that is not distantly related in its form and significance to the familial model that Ginsborg would later argue as being at the centre of much of modern Italian history (Ginsborg 2003b).6 The gendering of the space of the Italian abroad is one that would remain importance up into the present and it will be an issue discussed in later chapters.

Training Migrants: Italiani nel Mondo and Guida per gli emigranti

An important adjunct to these documentaries was the body of educational materials diffused through television, radio and print. Guida per gli emigranti [A Guide

5 Similarly, in statistical accountings of migration in the era (particularly those focused on labour,) female labour is almost entirely absent. In the reports, the framing of migration around an understanding of labour that was focused of heavy industrial and construction labour, women were rarely counted in the main numbers. While it is likely that the majority of migrants during this period were men, the fact that this question is only rarely addressed (and only after the mid-sixties,) speaks to the degree to which assumptions about gender organized the states understanding of migration in this period.

6 We can see this family politics echoed in a memo outlining the internal disciplinary code for RAI programs from the mid-fifties we demands that all producers avoid programs which “in their subject-matter or in individual scenes or parts…bring the institution of the family into discredit or disrepute…describe or illustrate in a sympathetic light real or imagined events in such a way as to disturb the moral order or that of the family” (Quoted in Forgacs 1990.)
for Emigrants] (which would later be known as *Italiani nel mondo*,) broadcast on television bi-weekly between 1958 and 1965, was a fifteen-minute program intended to inform migrants about life abroad. An episode from 1961 consists of an introductory segment in which the Minister of External Affairs is asked about the current levels of migration to non-European destinations. The interview is mainly focused on the statistics and gives little space to other questions aside from very general expressions of positive sentiments toward Italians abroad. The main segment of the show involves a trip to an automotive factory in Cologne where 900 Italian workers live. The segment mixes shots of the plant with short interviews with the workers. The interviews deal with the basic of migration: How much do you make? Where do you live? How many in a room? What’s the food like?

Programs like this found their complement in publications intended to provide background for migrants thinking about leaving. Starting in 1945 and continuing until 1981, the bi-weekly magazine *Italiani nel mondo* was among the most prominent of these publications. While an ostensibly private publication, the majority of the publications operating costs were covered by a subsidy from the Ministry of External Affairs. The links between the Ministry and the publication were so extensive that for much of the magazine’s history, it occupied offices across the street from the ministry. In *Italiani nel Mondo*, the reader found the textual equivalent of the documentaries discussed above: profiles of Italians living abroad and the kinds of life they led. It also published the statements from government representatives on the subject of Italians abroad and summarized government reports on immigration and remittances.
In these programs and the magazine, the vision of the Italian abroad as industrious and part of a program for economic development was translated into an education program that was intended to assuage the fears of prospective migrants. The sacrifice of the migrant, recognized in the documentaries in terms of nostalgia and distance from home, were reworked in terms that made emigration one of the many forms of collective sacrifice that were necessary in Italy after the war. Along with providing basic information about how to emigrate and possible destinations, these programs also taught Italians that migration was a viable, and even noble, life choice. These programs were one of the sites in which the Christian Democrat program for national development was translated into a policy promoting emigration.

As life in Italy improved in the years over the course of the economic miracle, the portrayal of emigration took on increasingly celebratory tones. The problem was no longer simply convincing people to emigrate, but reminding Italians that those who had left were still important contributors to the nation’s economy. This is particularly clear given the way in which Italiani nel Mondo (the magazine) and Guida per gli emigrati contextualized migration. Upon the renaming of the program from Guida per gli Emigranti to Italiani nel mondo, the producer of the show outlined the new focus of the program. “The program,” he explained, “is no longer an overview of the search for manual labour beyond our borders, but a direct testimony of what Italians have done and continue to do in all of the world’s countries” (Barbicinti 1964). Henceforth, the show would consist of two kinds of stories. On the one hand, “information: participation in fairs, industrials shows, art exhibitions, the success of our films, our scientists, our success in art, politics and medicine” (Barbicinti 1964). On the other hand, it would
include new stories about great Italians from the past and present who had made a mark internationally. The framing was even broader in the case of the magazine *Italiani nel Mondo* where stories about the international impact of Italians abroad ranged from the present day to profiles of Christopher Columbus.\(^7\)

Central to this broadening context was a growing attention paid to the movement of Italian goods around the globe. The magazine offered extensive coverage of touring international trade shows like *Italia Produce* [Italy Produces] (C.M. 1957; del Giardino 1957) and design shows like *Italia Lavora* [Italy Works] at the Brooklyn Museum in 1961 (Baldi 1951). This connection was also made in a variety of sites on television where programs like “Made in Italy” (always in English) traced the development and manufacture of Italian products in much the same way that the movement of Italians working abroad had been followed in documentary. In the series *Gli italiani e l’industria* (1966), this equivalence was made explicit in the final episode dealing with Italians working abroad. As the series producer explained, these workers were “not understood in terms of migration, but as the presence of our country in the world, a presence that our products have affirmed and continue to affirm all over” (Ruffilli 1966).

The representations of the migrant in documentary and the educational and information programs that evolved were an element in the effort to contain and co-opt labour in post-war Italy and put it in harmony with the geopolitical and economic positions of Italy in the cold war. There were relatively few dissenting positions that

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\(^7\) These articles were also accompanied by considerable coverage of the space program. The magazine ran detailed articles covering the development of the space program in Argentina, Brazil, France, Japan, Spain, as well as the space superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union. The articles about space rarely made mention about migration directly, but one might suggest that the interplanetary exploration was meant to resonate in some way with the international journeys of Italians around the world.
circulated in the mainstream during these years given the tight control over television and the pressure that the Christian Democrats were able to exert through other media venues as well. Furthermore, the successful diffusion of communist positions on migration was also hampered by the growing pressures of the cold war which made any international campaigns organized by the PCI highly suspect in the eyes of the countries in which the majority of migrants settled.

In these programs, the migrant, laborious, nationalist, and invested in the project of capitalist industrial modernization, should be seen as part of a global vision that opposes the threat of communism while reaffirming the legitimacy of the Italian state. The containment of communism was a central concern of the Christian Democratic Party in dealing with migration. Mariano Rumor’s report to the third congress of the Christian Democratic Congress in 1959, a document that programmatically lays out the party’s positions on emigration, outlines in detail the limitations and failings of the communist approach to the issue. Instead of a revolutionary change transforming capitalism (which Rumor describes as just a rhetorical ruse on the part of state oligarchs), the Christian Democrats embraced the rights of the individual and the importance of the state in ensuring that the right and duty of the individual to work was protected and cultivated. Rumor’s statement is full of allusions to Soviet work camps and other forms of forced labour to which he contrasts the Christian Democratic policies of freedom and liberty.

This tendency would become more pronounced in the years to come, until the choice for migration eventually came to be described as one that was ultimately and entirely the decision of the individual himself (in contrast the discourses that circulated under fascism.) The role of the government was not to intervene directly in this decision,
but rather to support those individuals who decided to seek their livelihoods outside of the nation. By 1970, Aldo Moro, serving as Foreign Minister at the time, was able to make this clear in his introduction to the report on Italian labour of that year. “Full employment,” he writes, “represents the highest aim of every national society that wants to guarantee its dependents a decorous level of life. Such a goal does not exclude the search for work outside national borders which is no longer – as it once was – a consequence of necessity, but the result of a free and motivated economic choice” (Direttore Generale dell'emigrazione e degli Affari Sociali 1970).

The freedom of the migrant is an interesting analogue to the ceding of agency to the emigrant in a report on radio and television use among Italians in the United States. The report concludes that the goal cannot be to push the children of Italians to listen to Italian language programs for fear that this will become an obstacle to their assimilation into American society.

Perhaps the only thing to do it to wait for the Italian-Americans to complete the process of assimilation into American society, when they will probably have fewer immediate concerns and will have absorbed from the middle class certain cultural interests of a more or less authentic nature. With English language programs opportunely arranged I believe we can count on a public of distant Italian origin as well as one interested in Italian things. (Cadin 1964)

There is in this perhaps an acknowledgement of the utility of a gap between the realities of migration, both the hardships of the first generation and the slow assimilation of later generations, and life in Italy. The integration into the nation was intentionally partial, positioning the migrants and their descendants at the forefront of a much bolder world that had yet to arrive.
However, the Christian Democratic discourse on emigration was not able to completely define the portrayal of the subject. Crisis situations and catastrophes that afflicted Italians living abroad sometimes disrupted the discourse about migrants. These often involved industrial accidents like the mine collapse in Marcinelle, Belgium in which 136 Italian miners perished or the tunnel cave in at Hogg’s Hollow in Canada where a dozen Italian workers were killed while constructing subway tunnels. But political unrest, such as the coups in Venezuela during the late 1950s and the independence struggles in Africa during the same period, also gave rise to periods of crisis.

The deaths of workers or threats against Italian communities abroad showed that the sacrifice of worker could not always be reconciled with the national modernization project. At these moments, the grounding of this discourse in the political project of the Christian Democratic party became apparent. As a commentator from the pro-DC *Italiani nel Mondo* of the period wrote,

> Only when confronted with a tragedy like Marcinelle or the revolutionary events in a Latin American republic do they race to make inquiries and ask question soaked in commonplaces and false rhetoric in order to claim them for their party and their name. (Felletti 1958)

Comments like this were common and highlighted the sense that the political class, particularly those that formed the government, was unable to adequately address the problems that confronted Italians abroad.
Foot and Dickie state in the introduction to their anthology on the role of disasters in Italian history, “There is no European society whose modern history has been more deeply marked by disasters than Italy’s” (Dickie and Foot 2002). They go on to note that study of disaster in the English-speaking world has traditionally focused on the ways in which natural or human-caused calamity has lead to the unification of social forces through civil institutions by externalizing the threat and orienting energies towards the solution of particular ‘problems.’ However, they note that the Italian experience of disaster supplements this dynamic with a critique of the state’s role. “The state’s weakness and lack of legitimacy,” they write, “provide part of the explanation for military defeats as they do for terrorist bombs. And these events in turn provoke a widespread questioning of the state’s right to rule” (Dickie and Foot 2002). Thus the unity of the Italian people, the production of solidarity among geographically and economically disparate groups in the wake of the crisis, is not resolved by the state. Instead it results in a shared critique of the state’s ability to intervene on behalf of the people.

The crises that involved Italians abroad are similarly important for understanding the way in which relationship between Italian citizens abroad and the state developed during these years. However, the social consequences of these disasters follow a different dynamic in translating between the event and collective response. The aftermath of these disasters often involved the incorporation of the migrant into the national project through the apotheosis of the absolute sacrifice of these workers. This was not uncommon to most disasters in which soldiers killed in battle and other citizens who died in disasters were
memorialized as symbols of the ability of the national community to survive and persevere.

However, what distinguished these crises involving Italians abroad is that, at the same time as they are made symbolic of the nation as a whole, the autonomy of migrants as individuals who made particular – albeit difficult – choices was clearly restated. The relationship between crises and the de-legitimization of the state is not the same as Foot and Dickie suggest in their approach to disasters on Italian soil or even those involving the activities of the Italian military internationally. Condemnations of the incompetence of state action in protecting its citizens were tempered when dealing with Italians abroad by the recognition of the limits of the ability of the state to intervene. This was the case even in those disasters that are the result of human action, due to the limits of national sovereignty. The result was an ongoing tension between the responsibility of state and the liberty of the emigrant to control their own actions.

In discussing the significance of crises in the government of Italians abroad, the mining disaster in Marcinelle, Belgium in 1956 was particularly important and continued to resonate in discussions about migration throughout the decade and beyond. While there were many events that brought attention to the dangerous working conditions and poor living situations of Italian migrants, the collapse of the mine at Marcinelle defined the way in which disasters were discussed. Its memory would continue to define the approach to Italians abroad to the present day as the primary event around which the sacrifices and hardships of Italian migrants are commemorated. Tragedies that took the lives of Italian workers both before and after the events in Belgium were likened to the
mine’s collapse, creating a ‘Canadian Marcinelle’ (Hogg’s Hollow), an ‘American Marcinelle’ (Monagh) and so on.

At the time, the response to the event attempted to address the terrible conditions experienced by emigrants and called for greater government oversight in migration. Politicians were hesitant to lay blame at the feet of the Belgian government or the mining companies and offered a more idealized of the sacrifice made by the miners. The President of the Republic, Giovanni Leone, commemorated the dead, describing them as “figures as noble as they were poor who found death in the depths of the earth while conducting the most difficult labour that a human being can bear” (Cecchini 2006). While Giuseppe Saragat, at the time vice prime minister, noted that “nothing is more unjust that death at work, which strikes human beings in the midst of their acting in the interests of society as a whole” (Cecchini 2006). These statements are clearly framed by the image of the laborious migrant and his importance to the social order that defined the discourse of migration during these years.

However, an editorial published shortly after the tragedy in the *Corriere della Sera* is more explicit in drawing attention to the problems of Italian labour abroad.

> Italy can export workers, but not slaves. If foreign employers and the egotistical attitude of labour unions of those countries force our men to work under conditions of extreme and continuous danger, it is necessary to intervene in their defence both politically and diplomatically because the excellent relations between Italy and Belgium cannot result in suffering. (*Marcinelle* 1956)

While still framed by the conception of the migrant as labourer, the distinction between workers and slaves invoked in the first line draws attention both to the kind of work (extremely hard) but also the relationship to this work. It can be difficult, “the most
difficult a human being can bear” in the words of the President, but it cannot be forced. Thus, even at the moment of its greatest failure, the moment when the state’s promises about migration seem most empty and meaningless, the individual autonomy of the migrant remains at the forefront of the discourse.

A letter from a miner who worked in Belgium sent to the Italian Labour Congress (CGIL) shortly after his return from working abroad in the 1950s takes up this discourse of individual autonomy and inverts it in order to show the consequences on workers. The letter reads,

The Italian government has abandoned emigrants to their own devices; it has left them to die in the mines of Belgium and other countries. The ones that return are often invalids, yet still very young. The Italian government has always paid special attention to remittances and hardly any to the re-entry of the emigrants.

I am from Pergola [in Southern Italy] and I can say with certainty that there are many like me who have paid for the closing of the mines in Cabernardi [in central Italy] (where there worked around 2000 workers) with emigration. This was the liberty that we were able to enjoy. The Montecatini [Mining Company] was free to close the mine and we were free to emigrate. (Cecchini 2006)

In this letter, the rhetoric of the free choice of the migrant is turned on its head and shown to be a way of covering over the pro-emigration policies of the Christian Democratic government regardless of the costs to individuals and their communities.

Marcinelle was, however, only one of a series of events that effected Italians abroad in the 1950s and, while its symbolic significance increased over time, it is important not to separate it from the context of events in which it took place. The overthrow of Marcos Perez Jimenez in Venezuela in 1958 was another event that gave rise to concerns about the status of Italians abroad. Perez Jimenez played a major role in
opening Venezuela to Italian workers. As political tensions rose, it became apparent that Italians (who had received preferential treatment in the labour market) were in the process of losing these privileges as a result of the popular rebellion going on.

Parliamentary debates in Italy at the time show the failure of Italian consular service to address these problems and acknowledge the lack of any formal agreement between the two nations regarding the status of Italian workers (non-citizens) in the country. The talk around the political unrest in Venezuela followed the same contours as other crises, recognizing the shortcomings of the Italian governments powers, the horrendous conditions in the destination country and the noble sacrifice of Italians workers abroad.

However, the primary consequence of the unrest was the production of a series of statements reminding (or calling for) migrants to avoid political activity in all forms. An article from the period makes this explicit,

The facts of Venezuela have once more confirmed the truth and taught us that Italians, whatever their economic and social position, should participate in the life of their country of immigration, but rigorously abstain from every form of political activity. ("Gli italiani" 1958)

The dangers of politics were reiterated in a variety of ways and a variety of contexts. Often this was part of a Christian Democrat program to limit the involvement of Italian workers in labour unions and other organizations where the Communist Party held greater influence. But this can also be seen as ensuring that the image of the migrant as productive worker did not translate into a more threatening political force, either in Italy or elsewhere.

The disasters and individuals who suffered through them were recuperated in particular ways. Speaking to popular cynicism about the value of the government’s
attempts to improve the situation that was common in these periods, these moments of crisis were recuperated by means of a rhetoric that acknowledged the constructed nature of the discourse even as the discourse itself was deployed. The other, however, was to make clear the kind of migrant that was being imagined and supported. In this way, even in its moments of failure, the discourse about migration positioned the migrant as a powerful representative of the nation, but a representative that possessed only limited forms of agency. These forms of agency were primarily those that coincided with the project of industrial modernization at the core of the ‘economic miracle’ as imagined by the Christian Democrat party.

Ultimately, the disaster at Marcinelle did not resolve the question of the relationship between individual freedom and the state’s responsibility to migrants; rather it constructed it as an insoluble problem through which the responsibility (and liability) of the state was limited at the same time as limiting the demands which the emigrant could make upon his home country. Forty years after the tragedy at Marcinelle, the comments of Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, then President of the Republic, show the way in which the solidarity of the national community is mixed with the individual choices of the migrant. Speaking at Marcinelle in 2002, Ciampi reminded his listeners that at the time of the disaster,

We were all aware that it was poverty, unemployment, desperation combined with the hope of ensuring conditions for a better life for their families, children and wives that pushed these men to confront risks of working in a mine. We all felt responsible. (Ciampi 2002)

The statement is noteworthy for the way in which it weaves together individual action, social conditions and collective knowledge of the problem. The responsibility that was
felt by all clearly had its limits since it only pushed some to leave, making clear that the poverty, unemployment and desperation was not a truly collective experience. In this way, Ciampi’s description of the moment might stand as a final statement on the collective production of individuality that circulated in Italy during these years.
Chapter Three

In September 1960, the offices of RAI Corporation opened in New York City on Fifth Avenue. The mission of the new company, incorporated in New York State but wholly-owned by RAI in Rome, was to produce radio and television programs about the Americas for Italian audiences and to manage the distribution of Italian radio and television content in the United States and eventually throughout the world. Six years later, a second RAI Corporation office was opened in Montevideo. This was an acknowledgement of the high demand for Italian language radio programming in South America but was also justified at the time as a sign of the Italian government’s commitment to ‘developing nations’ ("Una iniziativa" 1965).

The creation and development of RAI Corporation must be made sense of in the context of the new realities of the post-war world: the geopolitical pressures of the cold war; the development of media technology; and the Italian government’s campaign to redefine in the relationship between emigrants and the Italian state that was discussed in the last chapter.

Taking the creation and evolution of RAI Corporation and Italy’s international broadcasting during the 1960s as its primary example, this chapter outlines the way in which the set of institutions charged with providing information to Italians living abroad
developed in the post-war period. It further elaborates the emergence of the post-war liberal formation that was taking shape around the governance of the migrant. The development of Italy’s international cultural policy in these years is the institutional counterpart to the representation of the migrant outlined last chapter. Both elements are central for understanding the shape of the modernization program unfolding in Italy during the two decades immediately following the Second World War and the ways in which the project of national reconstruction was articulated to the global political and economic context. Central to these developments is the transition to indirect forms of social control and intervention in order to avoid the forms of direct control used under fascism. This led to the positioning of international cultural policy as an effective tool for producing and maintaining community among Italians abroad through a shared national identity.

The chapter develops in three sections. The first part discusses the creation and development of RAI programming for international distribution and consumption in the years immediately following the end of the war. The creation of RAI Corporation and the production of a number of broadcasts and programs for international audiences were part of a new set of institutions and initiatives that provided information to Italians abroad and worked to maintain their identification with Italy. The new institutional structures that developed negotiated between the traditional national project of public broadcasting in the formation of national subjects, the pressures of international power relations and the problem of extra-territorial sovereignty.

The specific details of this process of negotiation become more apparent in the second part of the chapter where I compare RAI International broadcasts with two
organizations that were significant in the international promotion of Italian culture both before and after the war: the Dante Alighieri Society and the network of Italian Cultural Institutes. These two organizations were forced to reformulate their mission, their practices and their relationship to the Italian state because foreign governments viewed them as overly compromised due to their previous identification with the Fascist regime. In the conclusion, I bring together the institutional profiles from this chapter and the representational practices discussed in the last chapter in order to provide a more synthetic view of the way in which the new form of Italian liberalism advocated by the ruling Christian Democratic party governed the international circulation of Italian culture as part of the creation of the nationalist economy of migration.

International Italian broadcasting

The provision of information for Italians living abroad in the post-war period is first mentioned in the 1947 law outlining the reconstruction of Italy’s radio broadcast infrastructure. However, the evolution of the international distribution of Italian radio and television was a piecemeal process that developed over the next two decades. International radio broadcasts had been of great importance to Mussolini, and the Fascist-era state broadcaster EIAR had covered the Mediterranean starting with the first broadcasts to Greece in Greek and Italian, and North Africa in Arabic and Italian, in 1933 (Monteleone 1976). By 1941, the Italian broadcaster was producing informational bulletins and musical programs in 32 languages for broadcast on short and medium wave frequencies. As tensions increased between European powers, Italy’s relationship with
Germany and its increasingly aggressive foreign policy in the Mediterranean basin meant that many nations were suspicious of the claim that these broadcasts were exclusively vehicles for mutually enriching cultural exchange and started to treat them primarily as Fascist propaganda. When the tide of the war turned against Italy, ongoing conflict in the peninsula meant that international radio broadcasts became increasingly difficult and ultimately impossible after 1943. This culminated in the destruction of the Imperial Radio Centre at Prato Smeraldo and the theft of most short and medium wave transmitting equipment by German soldiers prior to retreating further north (Grasso, Buondonno et al. 1992).

Once hostilities had ceased, the occupying forces maintained control over all broadcasts as part of the armistice agreement signed between Italy and Allied powers. The destruction of the short and medium wave broadcast facilities meant that most international broadcasting was an impossibility, but the Allied forces did commandeer a few smaller radio stations near Italy’s northern borders and along its southern coastline as part of its information campaign in the region (Monteleone 2003). There were also a few programs broadcast in the early days of the new Italian government for prisoners of war and other displaced people both inside of Italy and in immediately adjacent territories.

As stipulated in the armistice agreement, the control over many areas of government, including radio broadcasting, were to be returned to Italy after a period of two years. Italian broadcasts for international audiences resumed in the middle of 1946 and a questionnaire completed for UNESCO in 1948 (while the broadcast centre at Prato Smeraldo was still being rebuilt) states that nine hours of programming were being produced daily for international broadcast (RAI 1948). The programming is described as
being a mix of news bulletins (notizario) and musical programs (programma musicale) varying in length from 15 minutes to 30 minutes produced in Italian, Arabic, Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, French, German, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Norwegian, Somalian and Swedish.

As the rebuilding of broadcast facilities progressed, the expansion of international broadcasting was marked by the folding of Italy’s radio programming into the larger geopolitical dynamics of the cold war. In 1948 alone, programming initiatives were started in Turkish, Greek, Romanian, Chinese, Czech, Polish, Russian, Slovak and Hungarian. All of these were languages used in countries that were seen to be particularly susceptible to communist subversion or sources of communist propaganda. Writing in 1980, an historian of Italy’s international broadcasting noted that, unlike other areas of Italian broadcasting, “the schedule for journalistic transmissions in foreign languages has remained stuck in the era of the Marshall plan, in open contrast to the Italian politics of the last fifteen years” (Casalini, Davilla et al. 1980).

Along with the foreign language services, Italians abroad were cited as the other motivation for the international programming. The issue of Italians abroad was of central importance to the development of the Italian international radio service and they were mentioned specifically in the preface to the 1947 law allowing for the reconstruction of the destroyed radio facilities at Prato Smeraldo, where it is written that

The government has need of a shortwave radiophonic centre that allows for the simultaneous broadcast of one or more programs intended to spread Italian art and culture and to maintain in this way the links between Italy and all of its children dispersed (sparsi) around the world. (Premesso, DDL 1132)
The existence of Italian communities outside of Italy had also been the grounds upon which Italy argued for a share of the shortwave spectrum at the meetings of the Organisation Internationale de Radiodiffusion at Montecarlo that same year. Giovanni Spataro, president of RAI from 1946 until 1951, complained in a letter to the Italian Prime Minister, that these issues were not being taken seriously enough by the major powers. Calling for diplomatic appeals to be made to the British and American governments, he wrote

> It is clear that the OIR is more favorable [in allocating the spectrum according] to those criteria that favour the colonial nations (whether great or small) and those that are particularly large (such as the Soviet Union), ignoring the ethnic considerations that would favour the national minorities abroad that are so important to Italy. (Monteleone 2003)

Eventually granted three shortwave frequencies, International broadcasting in Italy developed around the dual mission of contributing to ‘international understanding’ through communication, a project that quickly became subservient to the cold war’s information war, and serving Italian communities around the world. These commitments lead to an increase in the number of broadcast hours during the 1950s from 3000 hours in 1948 to about 10 000 hours produced for international broadcast annually by the mid-fifties (4000 of these hours were in languages other than Italian.)

Given concerns about the dangers of political interference in the broadcasts, they were considered part of Italy’s foreign policy. For this reason, even though RAI was given control over the physical broadcast technology, the law did not grant the broadcaster the power to produce programming for abroad. Those powers continued to be held by the office of the Prime Minister until 1962 when they were ceded to RAI by agreement. The result of this division of authority between RAI and the Prime Minister’s
office was the separation of news staff from other personnel working on international programs, a divide that would continue even after international news programming had been formally transferred to RAI. The ambiguous autonomy of broadcast media for international territories from the government in the post-war period that this agreement made apparent was an issue that would continue to be an issue in Italy for the next sixty years (Casalini, Davilla et al. 1980).

The desire to allay concerns about government involvement is equally apparent from both the language used to discuss the services and the institutional structure that evolved. From the outset, the phrasing of broadcasting law during this period uses “arts and culture” instead of the fascist-tainted language of civiltà when talking about cultural promotion. And there was a concerted effort during these years to ensure that Italian broadcasting outside of national territory remained isolated from any political influence – whether from the left or the right – that did not coincide with the interests of the major western European powers. The information bulletins produced in languages other than Italian did not include any international news that did not directly related to Italy itself, and Italian-language news was vetted by censors in the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister’s office before it was broadcast.

However, the division between informational programming and other broadcasts did not prevent RAI’s international programming from following the general trend in Italian radio that increased the amount of music broadcast. Over the course of the decade there was an increase in the number of hours devoted to ‘light music’ (musica leggera) at the expense of both ‘serious music’ (musica seria) and general interest programming (varietà e di categorie). The culmination of this process was the consolidation of the
overnight musical and informational programming schedule under a single title, *Notturno dall’Italia*, beginning in 1952 (Annuario 1953). *Notturno* was described as including musical selections interspersed with news updates in Italian, French, English and German. It was broadcast from midnight to seven in the morning, six nights a week. Prominent among the music played were selections from Italian opera, and a news story from 1959 (Tibalducci 1959) reports the following segments of more contemporary popular music: *Canta Napoli* [Naples Sings], *Ritmi d’altri tempi* [The Rhythms of Other Times], *Grandi orchestre e piccole melodie* [Big Orchestras and Small Melodies], *Solisti Celebrati* [Celebrated Soloists], *Folklore internazionale* [International Folkore], *Cocktail di successi* [Cocktail of Hits], and *Appuntamento con il jazz* [Appointment with Jazz].

Along with the programming of popular and classical music there was an emphasis on the artistic and cultural patrimony of Italy, but producers often made statements in the press that made it clear that the international service remained free of any politically contentious material (which meant anything that did not coincide with the platform of the Christian Democrats.) Instead of explicitly promoting a political ideology, as a RAI report from 1953 explains, the program hoped to

increase listener’s knowledge of Italy, not only in the usual terms of a country rich in artistic treasures and beautiful landscapes, but also in terms of its structure and its status as a modern nation. (Annuario 1953)

The program’s effectiveness as a tool for increasing international interest abroad was supported by RAI through the publication of letters in the weekly television guide, Radiocorriere, from non-Italian international listeners who often expressed their appreciation along with a desire to visit Italy (Calcagno 1962). In this way, the programs can also be seen as part of the emergent relationship between the Italian state, media and
tourism. Furthermore, the audience of Notturno Dall’Italia in Europe was imagined to be the shift workers who were awake in the early morning, but who were not necessarily Italian. An article describing the program notes that 5 percent of Europe works during the night and goes on to imagine truck drivers searching for something to listen to (Tibalducci 1959).

At the same time, however, Notturno dall’Italia was also seen as speaking to Italians that had migrated overseas (since the range for shortwave broadcasts was roughly 5000 kilometers.) For this reason, many of the program’s segments – for example, profiles of regions of Italy – were seen to have a double function for audiences outside of Italy. The programs were intended to inspire interest and hopefully tourist investment among non-Italians, while Italians would listen to the programs with nostalgia for the places they had left or heard about from family members (Pasqualino 1960).

However, perhaps the most successful program on the international service, Tu Sei del Mio Paese [You are from My Town], was almost exclusively produced for Italians abroad. Broadcast around one hundred times a year (twice a week), Tu Sei del Mio Paese would answer letters from homesick Italians by producing a program that toured around the town they had left behind, interviewing their friends and family members. The program gathered together the desires of the Italians abroad that want to hear their own towns speak…the person being addressed, that today lives in Peru or Australia can hear the church bells of their hometown, the voice of the mayor, the priest. When there are friends or family there, they hear the news that’s happened since they left and, in this way, find themselves at home for ten minutes. ("Tu Sei" 1959)
Indeed, nostalgia was the mode that dominated many of the programs targeting Italians abroad. As a report from 1953 notes, for Italians abroad

the function of the radio is maternal. It is the voice of somebody who loves them, that finds the right words to lessen the bitterness of their forced exile, that renews the hope of a not too distant return, that keeps alive their dearest memories, that gives them the strength not to let themselves be trampled, to feel and continue to feel, always, Italian.
(Annuario 1953)

Unlike the programs discussed in the last chapter, which were produced for distribution in Italy, where nostalgia was tempered with the potentiality of industrial modernization, the overwhelming affective modality of broadcasts for Italian abroad was an impossible nostalgia of both time and space.

This approach to the broadcast seemed to satisfy a primary interest of the audience for the service as outlined in a report entitled Annotations on programs and the public for Radiotelevision in the United States from 1964. Surveying the correspondence regarding Italian radio and television programming targeted to overseas audiences, the author notes

The majority of correspondence seems to come from elderly people, mainly women. Sometimes a son writes on behalf of his mother, obviously the Italian is not correct. In the nostalgia of these people, the place from which they came and the time in which they lived there have become one, place and customs are notably idealized through distance. In this respect, I found an interesting letter from a woman (1960) who was looking for arguments with which to combat her Italian-American friends that, after recently visiting Italy, were left extremely depressed. (Cadin 1964)

The prominence of nostalgia in radio programs is all the more interesting given how few hours were dedicated to the education of Italians living abroad in marked difference from the development of radio and television in Italy. Piccoli e grandi uomini, which had the
goal of “showing Italian children around the world the most significant events in our history and the great figures that have honoured Italy in its history”, was one of the few educational programs broadcast on short or medium wave and it was targeted to children rather than adults who had migrated.

The emphasis on nostalgia and the absence of educational programming in radio is quite different from the kinds of programs that would develop as television expanded during the 1960s. Perhaps this is due to the different possibilities that the technology allowed for at the time. Whereas radio broadcasts had been highly centralized, television brought a different set of technical demands owing to the limited range for video signals. To resolve the technical issue, two types of solutions were adopted. For territories where geography and political factors allowed for the direct reception of signals, transmitters and relay towers were constructed in order to extend the range of the national signal. For example, audiences in Malta, Tunisia and parts of Libya were able to receive both radio and television signals directly from Italy by the early 1960s. However, the international broadcasting of the domestic programming schedule was less common than the development of a series of programs that were distributed using film and later video recording technology to countries where geography or regulations made the reception of Italian signals impracticable. These programs were often combined with local programs.

The creation of RAI Corporation is perhaps the best example of this hybrid model. As a private corporation rather than a section of the government, its first president was Giorgio Padovano, a broadcaster who had previously served as the director of the Voice of America’s Italian language broadcast during the Second World War. The government was very careful to make clear that the purpose of RAI Corporation was not
to collect profits, but to be part of a non-commercial network of exchange that was particularly focused on the developing world. Indeed, it was this developmental project that was cited as the primary reason that RAI Corporation opened a second set of offices in Montevideo, Uruguay ("Una iniziativa" 1965).

RAI Corporation took charge of distributing programs in Italian and other language for radio and television in the Americas as well as producing programming for syndication on English language radio ("Inaugurata" 1960). In the early 1960s, a series of programs in English were produced for the North American market including _Rassegna della stampa italiana, Cultural Program_ (later _Italian Art Magazine_), _City Portraits_, _Newsletters from Italy_, and _Almanac_. In 1961, there were 224 cultural programs and 567 musical programs in total produced by RAI Corporation under these titles (Annuario 1962). There was also a weekly program entitled _Roma-New York-Roma_ that was produced for the Italian market and featured an Italian DJ playing American songs and an American DJ playing Italian songs ("New York - Roma" 1960).

For the most part, television production for international markets was focused on art and high culture, programs “designed to illustrate the beauty of Italian art and the Italian landscape as well as being dedicated to our greatest artists including Verdi, and D’Annuzio” (Annuario 1963). The most successful of the films produced was a documentary on the _Palio_ in Siena. There were also a series of agreements made with American networks for the broadcast of Italian programming. In 1961, an agreement was signed with NBC for a week of programming from the RAI vaults to be shown in the afternoon, and a longterm agreement with NET (National Educational Television), forerunner of the American PBS network (Annuario 1965).
Similar initiatives were undertaken in Europe. Beginning in 1965, a program called *Un’ora per voi* [An Hour for You] was produced in Switzerland as a collaboration between RAI and the Swiss Italian broadcasting service targeting Italian workers ("Un’ora" 1964). This format was based on the model of radio programs that incorporated taped material sent from Italy and locally produced segments called *Aria di Casa* [An Air of Home] that had been produced for Italian workers in Belgium and Germany starting in the early 1960s. The Swiss program expanded on this model to include musical numbers, humorous sketches that explained the laws, customs and history of the Swiss as well as a segment entitled “Saluti Dall’Italia” in which workers received greetings from family members and various locales in Italy were profiled.

However, there remained the problematic issue that the international service remained under the control of the Prime Minister’s office until 1962 and under the office’s indirect control even after that. The emergence of international television mitigated concerns about interference by the Italian government in the local affairs of another nation by involving local partners and even other national governments in the production of programming. For example, *Un’ora per voi* was described as a co-operative project between both countries, produced by an Italian journalist named Chiodi who was in “constant contact with the proper Swiss authorities, our [Italian] embassy, and the Italian community itself” ("Sucesso" 1965). While this was a gesture to the sensitivity of the broadcasts and their significance as a foreign policy issue, it was still something that needed to be addressed.

Ultimately, the link maintained by media that emerged between the state and Italians abroad showed a very different understanding of the relationship between the
migrant and the mother country than was common before the war. It was no longer about
the absolute absorption of populations into the national community, but the maintenance
of a particular kind of distance, a distance that would allow for greater flexibility when
confronted with the question of how to deal with migrants. In much the same way the
disasters and other crises affecting Italians threw into relief the limits of government
power and showed that particular kinds of connections (cultural and economic) were
preferred over others, these institutional formations showed how different institutions
could manage populations of citizens without invoking the full responsibility (which is to
say sovereignty) of the nation-state.

Precisely how different this relationship was from the pre-war understanding
becomes more apparent when looking at how institutions that existed under Fascism were
confronted with the problem of adjusting to a new way of thinking about Italians abroad.
Both the Dante Alighieri Society and the network of Italian Cultural institutes were
functioning before the war, but the changed reality of Italy after the fall of Mussolini
meant that there were many things about the traditional mandates of these organizations
that needed to change.

*The “Dante” and the problem of reinvention*

While opposed to most forms of migration and imposing strict controls on
movement within Italy, the Fascist government developed an extensive bureaucracy for
dealing with Italians abroad. A great deal of this bureaucracy was focused on promoting
and managing migration to Italy’s colonies in Africa. However, the fascist government
also created agencies for political, cultural and economic development abroad in the name of promoting Italian civiltà [civilization]. While not exclusively targeting Italians who had migrated, the Italian Cultural Institutes and Chambers of Commerce organized cultural and economic promotion in major cities around the world. In the political sphere, the Fascist party devoted considerable energy to the construction of fasci all’estero among Italian communities abroad (Franzina and Sanfilippo 2003) as well as organizations like the Comitati d’azione per l’universalità di Roma [Action Committees for the Universality of Rome] (Cuzzi 2005) which brought together fascists sympathizers whether of Italian origin or not. These organizations occupied and later extended the already established network of Embassies, Consulates and Case D’Italia set up at the end of the 19th century.\footnote{1 The Case D’Italia were usually part of the embassy or consulate itself and had traditionally served the needs of the local Italian community with little concern for broader issues of cultural and economic promotions; in many locations they played the role of de facto community centres.}

The fascist investment in these institutions was as influential at home in changing the way that migration and the international image of Italy were thought about as they were of use for Italians abroad. Migrants (emigrati) were transformed into “italiani all’estero” or “italiani nel mondo,” representing the nation wherever they went; they were no longer seen as cast offs, symbols of the failure of the Italian nation to care for its population at home. As Gaspari notes, “Fascism tried, and succeeded – at least in the eyes of the majority of the public – in transforming emigration from being a sign of social crisis, if not political confrontation, into a sign of power and the success of the fascist government” (Gaspari 2002). At least rhetorically, the Italians abroad became identified with the heights of Italian civilization and culture and were seen as the basis for the new Roman Empire that Mussolini promised his supporters.
After the war, the *fasci all’estero* and the operations of the *comitati d’azione* were disbanded as part of the conditions of the armistice agreement strictly limiting Italy’s political propaganda (although fascist sympathies and symbols continued to circulate in Italian communities around the world.) The most vocal fascist supporters who served in the existing consular network were purged from the diplomatic corps and efforts were made to distance Italy from the legacy of Mussolini. The need to re-establish embassies and regular consular services was seen as an important step in normalizing Italy’s position in the international community. However, it was quickly apparent to the Italian government that the re-integration of Italy into world affairs would require significant educational and information activities to change the image of Italy both among Italians abroad and others.

The expansion of the network of Cultural Institutes during the 1950s was an important part of this education and information program. And the Institutes gained new prominence and autonomy in this period in line with their new stature. Prior to the war, the network of Cultural Institutes had been integrated into the consular apparatus, but after the war they developed into a separate institution. The twelve independent cultural institutes in operation before the war, expanded to include 29 new institutes in cities throughout Europe, the Americas and the Middle East. However, as Carrera notes, even in the post-war period, some traces of the fascist roots of the cultural institutes remain,

It is not mistaken to say, and without fear of offending Italian democracy, that some traces of the propagandistic intent with which they were born has survived into the post-resistance and republican era. In spite of the best intentions of the directors and the ministerial personnel, it must be noted that Italy is the only great Western democracy that has its international cultural image managed by a ministry that has precise political goals. (Carrera 2002)
Indeed, the law regulating these institutes did not change from the time of their establishment in 1926 until the early 1970s when a series of minor adjustments regarding the procedures for hiring personnel were introduced.²

However, this is not to say that the function of the institutes did not change. Prior to the war, the Cultural Institutes had primarily served to promote Italian culture among the elites of nation (more popular forms of outreach were left to the network of *Case D’Italia*.) Part of this included the promotions of political programs, although this was rarely specifically mentioned; rather, as Carrera observes, cultural promotion served as a Trojan horse for political propaganda (Carrera 2002). After the war, the language of national pride was softened with a language of international community, drawing metaphors from international harmony and religious life.

While the Institutes remained most closely associated with the kinds of cultural promotion that had been common before the war (museum exhibitions, lectures, and art shows), the meaning of culture was slowly expanded beyond the fine arts to include the sciences and elements of popular culture. A report commissioned by the Prime Minister’s office compiled in support of Italy’s admission to UNESCO, states:

> It is necessary to ensure that culture is used and respected for what it is and it is no longer submitted to political ends. In this way, it is necessary to remember that, when thinking of international collaboration, culture not only consists of language and literature, but also law, art and the sciences. (Bartoli 1980)

Furthermore, in keeping with this new orientation, the name of the institutes changed from the *Istituto di cultura Italiana* [Institute of Italian Culture] to *Istituto Culturale Italiana* [Italian Cultural Institute], a change that shifted the emphasis from ‘Italian

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² The first major reworking of the Italian Cultural Institute did not take place until 1991, when the Institutes were given an updated and more clearly articulated mandate.
culture’ exclusively towards cultural activities more generally that are supported by the Italian government.

The reconstitution of the cultural institutes in the post-war period was, therefore, done with an eye to maintaining clear divisions between the kinds of political agendas that had defined Fascist cultural policy and cultural promotion. It was expressed by means of a new language, which foregrounded the role of culture in the maintenance of international peace, that was common to international organization such as UNESCO. The separation of culture in foreign policy from other areas in international relations is analogous in many ways to the construction of the emigrant as a cultural and economic agent, but not as a political one.

The promotion of Italian culture was, however, only part of the mandate of the Cultural Institutes. As outlined in the 1926 law establishing the institute as an independent entity, their purpose was to involve the promotion of both culture and the Italian language. The government’s programs in information and education were to be brought together within the cultural institute. However, education remained a secondary concern for the cultural institutes since most education was managed either by Italian schools that had been established at the end of the 19th century (the scuole regie which were another branch of the consulate or embassy) or operated by chapters of the Dante Alighieri Society, a private organization dedicated to the promotion of the Italian language.

Formed in the 1890s to support the still young and highly fragmented Italian nation, the Dante Alighieri Society was a para-statal organization that played a central role in the diffusion of Italian culture and Italian language education around the world.
from its inception. Very early on in the society’s history the question of Italians living abroad came to play a central role; however it was not primarily the mass migrations from the south that were of concern. It was the extension of the national territory to include various border regions under the control of the Austrian empire at the time. The Dante was one of many irredentist organizations that called on the Italian government to take a harder line in negotiations over territory, particularly in regard to the city of Trieste.³

Over the course of the early twentieth century, this concern for a ‘whole’ Italy also spread to include communities of Italians living overseas as questions of territory expanded to include the Italian communities more generally. However, in keeping with the political and aesthetic concerns of the organization, the primarily role of the Society was advocacy and support for Italian language education outside of Italy. The society argued that the language, and therefore unmediated access to the works of Dante and other products of the Italian national genius, were the right of every Italian no matter where they lived. Seeing that the Italian government was uninterested and unable to provide many of these services to Italians living abroad, the society stepped in and began to organize chapters and schools in cities around the world.

A statement outlining the society’s mission from 1915 makes this clear.

Wherever our language is spoken, wherever our civilization has left its traditions, wherever our brothers are, the risk is greater that because of particular conditions in the places where they live they may lose not only the knowledge and use of the Italian language but also the consciousness of their homeland, the greater is out duty to go to their aid. (Totaro-

³ It was an issue that would reassert its importance to the society after the war as the border city was once more taken from Italy and divided between the two Western European and Soviet power blocs.
While ‘la Dante’ predated the rise of Italian fascism, the organization’s interest in the promotion of national culture, focused around the cult of Dante, was one that could easily be adapted to the fascist national project. In the words of a statement made at the 1934 national meeting of the society, at which it was repeatedly state that the Fascist government provided the ideal climate for the society’s action: “The function of the society under a regime like Fascism, in which apoliticism is not an option…can be summarized as being part of the nationalizing function in Italy and the universal expansion of Italian civilization abroad” (Caparelli 1985).

However, in spite of the programmatic attraction between the Society and the Fascist government, there remained some tensions. Initial proposals that the society should be absorbed into the network of fasci all’estero were rejected in keeping with its claim that its work was beyond the politics of the day (Caparelli 1985). Nonetheless, with the rise of fascism, it became increasingly involved in the promotion of fascist agendas overseas. This connection led to growing concerns about the Society’s intentions and its eventual expulsion from both the United States and England in the mid-1930s.

The end of the war put the Society in the difficult position of explaining its relationship to the Fascist party and justifying its right to carry on with its cultural and educational responsibilities. The following quotation from a well-known Italian American historian of the mid-twentieth century, Giovanni Schiavo, speaks to many of the ideological and political tensions the Society was trying to negotiate in the wake of the war. Speaking of the fate of the Dante in America and its ties to fascism, he writes,
The Italians of America have always loved Italy with a profound love. If instead of Fascism, Italy had been ruled by communism and if communism had done what Fascism did up until 1940 in the name of Italy’s international prestige, the Italians of America would have supported the work of the government regardless of its political faith. (Caparelli 1985)

As the quotation makes clear, it was essential for the Society to separate its activities from the Fascist party and align it with an understanding of the nation that was not explicitly totalitarian in nature. The cult of the nation had been so thoroughly absorbed into Fascist ideology that the very mention of Italy struck some at the time as dangerous.

As a result, the Society went to great pains to make clear that its interest in the Italian nation was not inherently fascist. In spite of the installation of V.E. Orlando, who served as prime minister of Italy during the pre-fascist era, it was a difficult distinction to make. Echoes of this can be found in Orlando’s statement lamenting the closure of the Dante’s American branches under pressure from the U.S. State Department, made after he was reconfirmed to the presidency of the Society in 1952,

I am not the xenophobe that some would make me appear: I rebel first, now and always, against the excessive power of the foreigner, but my soul is open to every kind of harmony between peoples. (Caparelli 1985)

The Dante was forced to confront the tensions between Mussolini’s legacy, the concept of the Italian nation, and the new political landscape that was emerging both at home and abroad. As Orlando’s statement shows, this was a difficult position to advocate coherently given the contradiction between the nationalist framing of the Dante’s mandate and the language of harmony through cultural exchange that was the norm of the period.
It would, however, be a mistake to think that this meant the Society was isolated by the Italian state. Even in the years immediately following the war, when anti-fascist parties were most diligent in pursuing fascist collaborators, the Society was still in charge of managing a network of Italian language schools around the world and was receiving roughly ten percent of its annual operating budget from the Ministry of External Affairs. In time, due in part to the ongoing negotiations surrounding the sovereignty of Trieste and other territories, fear of nationalism in Italy lessened. By 1966, President Giuseppe Saragat was referring to the Dante as the “consular body of Italian culture abroad” (Caparelli 1985). But the acceptance of the Dante was also a result of a reframing of the Society’s educational mandate to one almost exclusively targeting Italians abroad and their descendents. In the process, the Society worked to diffuse suggestions that its existence was a residue of Italy’s colonial ambitions.

The biggest shift in the mandate of the Society (similar to what was occurring at the cultural institutes) was the increasing concern for questions of popular culture. The Dante was an organization rooted in an aristocratic understanding of culture and society. Its roots lay with members of the Northern aristocratic class that had been central to the unification of the nation in the 1860s. In the post-war period, and with the growing emphasis on the importance of Italian workers living outside Italy, it became clear that it was necessary to refocus the organization. Indeed, it is fair to say that the new focus of the Dante is one that is in harmony with the kinds of representations and initiatives developing at RAI, namely a renewed focus on popular education as a means to ensure
the reconstitution of the nation.\textsuperscript{4} This was one of the main interests of Aldo Ferrabino upon his election as President in 1958, noting that it was “necessary to approach cautiously and intelligently the world of labour” (Caparelli 1985).

The Dante emerges from the post-war period as a decentralized organization in which the branches around the globe come to possess considerable autonomy in their conduct. The central office of the Society in Rome continued to be of considerable importance as the point that brokered between the Italian state and the branches, but the top down organization that had been in place before the war had been dismantled. In other words, the Dante was remade into a hybrid organization that was both regionally based and centrally controlled in much the same way that the international operations of RAI had developed. The expansion of the Society’s purview to include ‘the world of labour’ and popular education must also be seen as part of the transformation affecting Italy’s international cultural apparatus during these years.

\textit{Counting Italians abroad}

Up to this point, I have been suggesting that the vision of the migrant that emerged in government discourse during the 1950s was meant to develop cultural and economic relations while diffusing political forms of agency. However, the effects of this discourse were limited to areas explicitly linked to culture and cultural production. It is useful to look at the way in which this discourse manifested itself in the procedures for

\textsuperscript{4} One sees an analogous moment occurring in the field of design as well in which legacy of Renaissance art and contemporary folk art are brought together in the understanding that “Made in Italy” as a brand name in fashion and industrial design. Accompanying this shift to the popular was also an a
accounting for the activities of Italians abroad as economic agents. I will concentrate on the statistics emerging from the Department of External Affairs in the form of a series of reports looking at the *Problemi del lavoro italiano all’estero* [Problems of Italian Labour Abroad.] These reports were the primary tabulation of the world of the Italian migrant, focusing – as their title suggests – on the migrant as a labourer, a productive agent.

While there was a concern for the needs of migrants, all of these issues were structured around Keynesian economic policies advocating ‘full employment,’ reducing the nature of migrant agency to its economic aspects. This theme was made clear from the introduction to the first statistical report on Italians abroad that surveyed the years from 1951 to 1954. “Reality attests that in Italy a policy of ‘full employment’ cannot be pursued if the efforts of productive investment internally are not accompanied by the possibilities deriving from the projection of our labour market abroad” (Ministero degli Affari Esteri 1955). If the television documentaries about Italians abroad provided a symbolic vocabulary for linking Italian migration to the national modernization project, the statistics gathered provided a way of accounting for these symbols in the form of numbers. The bringing together of goods and migration show how the figure of the migrant was able to combine an economic, a political and a social narrative about the nature of Italians and the meaning of Italy on the world stage.

There is a long history of attempting to count and monitor Italian migration. Donna Gabaccia, in her history of the Italian diaspora (Gabaccia 2000), notes that the earliest attempts started at the turn of the century and a concern on the part of the Italian government to regulate the social and economic shifts that mass migration might cause as well as lessening the influence wielded by mutual aid societies and organs of the catholic
church hostile to the still young Italian nation. With the rise of fascism, taking account of Italians around the world took on an even greater importance. Even though Mussolini was opposed to mass migration (or preferred targeting migration to Italian colonies in Africa), he saw the opportunity of claiming the millions of Italians around the world for Italy as an important step to constituting a modern Italian empire. This meant considerable investment in counting and attempting to organize communities around the world though the creation of *fasci all’estero*.

After the fall of Mussolini, with most state institutions destroyed or being managed by foreign, there was relatively little research being done in the late 1940s and 1950s. When it came to immigration, the Italian government was primarily occupied with re-opening the channels of migration that had been restricted in the 1920s and 1930s and completely closed during the war years (Romero 1993). Very little knowledge about migration and the realities that greeted migrants upon their arrival was available. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the first surveys that the government commissioned in the post-war period (conducted by Doxa, the first Italian institute for the study of public opinion) was primarily concerned with finding out how many Italians were considering migration, and where they were planning on going if they did commit to this decision (Rinauro 2005). However, there was very little information about migration itself.

It is only with the early 1950s and a renewed interest in the migration across Europe and globally that there was concerted effort to count and measure migration. As already noted, the primary impetus for this came from the need to account for the large population movements taking place immediately following the war. It also came from a realization that the country would need the capital being generated by these migrants if it
was to complete the reconstruction process. It is precisely for these reasons that the category of the migrant is transformed into the figure of the labourer abroad. It is labour that links the movement of people to the return flows of capital. It is, however, also the figure of labour that stands at the core of the Italian state’s ability to intervene on the part of migrants.

While the end of the war saw an opening of borders for the first time in more than a generation, most countries open to migration did not allow the unfettered migration that had characterized the period before the First World War. In order to prevent massive migrations out of countries devastated by the war, a new system for managing the movement of people was developed. Most significantly, this meant the negotiation of a series of agreements between sending and receiving countries that outlined the kind of labour needed and the duration of the visas migrants would be able to hold. While countries like Australia, Canada and much of Latin America allowed migrants to settle permanently, European nations like Switzerland and countries in the Middle East enforced strict limitations on the amount of time Italians could stay, periods which were usually connected to the terms of specific work contracts.

At the heart of this system is the conceptual complex of migration, remittance and policy tied together by the concept of labour. It is immediately apparent in the 1954 report (Ministero degli Affari Esteri 1955), where the cover of the report notes the number of employed (1.5 million), the amount of capital returned to Italy in the most recent year (150 Billion Lire) and, quite significantly, the number of agreements for labour signed in the past five years. Following the first report covering the years between 1951 and 1954, the report was published annually. The framing of the report changed
little in the next decade. In 1970, the preface of the report begins by declaring: “Full employment represents the aim of every national society that wants to guarantee its members a decorous level of life. Such an objective does not exclude the search for work beyond national borders” (Direttore Generale dell'emigrazione e degli Affari Sociali 1970). As was noted at the end of last chapter, the primary difference in later reports is the claim that the choice to migrate is no longer grounded in necessity but by a “free and engaged economic choice.” As the years passed, the reports would also give greater space to Italian industry, counting the number of Italian construction and oil companies carrying out major contracts around the world and where these contracts were located. This marked the question of migrations transition from being primarily demographic in nature towards one that addressed the position of Italy politically and economically as a liberal democratic and capitalist country in Western Europe.

This transition is strikingly expressed in these reports in the way they contextualize the information they present in terms of larger geopolitical and historical issues. It is this contextualization that locates them within the same discourse about Italian migration as the documentaries. In the concluding paragraph of the prefatory remarks of the 1954 report, Dominedò notes that

Italy, while it serves its national interest [through supporting migration], believes that it is also partaking in an initiative that responds to the needs of human progress: after the period of mass immigration and after the colonies, the circulation of Italian workers abroad constitutes the peaceful form of expansion of a civil people, looking to bring together the energy of man and the richness of nature. This is the new and suggestive language that democracy can speak to its people. (Ministero degli Affari Esteri 1955)
In this formulation, the migration of Italians abroad becomes the manner in which Italy integrates into the international community. However, it is also the way to atone for previous excesses since it is a “peaceful expansion” rather than the forced and military expansion of fascism and colonialism. A magazine article from 1945 shows the way in which the interests of the nation and its position in the international community are combined in the figure of the migrant. Writing of Italians working in the oil fields of the Persian Gulf, the author notes: “The spirit that informs their actions can only valorize them in the eyes of both our nation and in the considerations of the victorious allied nations”\(^5\) (Spadaro 1945).

In the preface to a report from the fifties, the value of developing a policy that supports migration is described along three axes:

- **socially**, it responds to the goal of ‘full employment’,
- **economically** it contributes through remittances to the equilibrium in the balance of payments,
- **politically** it is a part of the complex of international relations that are nourished through the flowering of our miraculous communities abroad. (Ministero degli Affari Esteri 1955)

What is of particular interest in this quotation is the relationship that emerges between the nation and the migrant. It is perhaps the most explicit articulation of the practices through which the social and economic interests of the citizen remained tied to Italy, while political agency is diffused’. The de-politicization (or rather the turning of migrant

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\(^5\) This break becomes doubly apparent when it is noted that the statistical reports make very little mention of migration from before the war. The tables begin in 1946 and the descriptions of migration, even when dealing with territories like Libya and Tunisia, remain vague or silent on the origin of the communities present. For example, in 1970, the same year that Gheddafi expelled twenty-thousand Italians from Libya in order to break with the history of Italian colonialism (on what Italians would call the ‘day of the vendetta’), the reports on Italians abroad makes no mention of this. Indeed, only the number of inhabitants and the fact that a new hospital has opened are noted.
population’s political energy towards ‘international communities’) is central to understanding the nationalist economy of migration and should be seen as the product of Christian Democrat policy and their hegemony over discourse regarding migrants during this period.

*Nationalist Economy of Italian Migration*

In my discussion of the discourse of migration up to this point, I have attempted to outline the way that practices of representation and cultural institutions played a role in the constitution that I described in the introduction as a ‘nationalist economy of migration.’ Part of the utility of this conceptual framework is that it brings together cultural policy and practice with concepts that are usually thought to fall outside the realm of culture (i.e. economic development, foreign relations, etc.) In other words, it serves as a way to bring together the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ knowledges that structure the phenomenon of migration in Italy. Moreover, it allows for a way to talk about how the nation-state as a discrete sovereign entity operated in spaces beyond its borders by means of a complex set of practices and institutions that monitored and managed the movement of goods, people and capital.

The elaboration of the nationalist economy of migration that emerged in Italy in the post-war period has brought to light an imprecision in the concept as initially discussed. Or, to be more precise, it has become clear that there are two aspects of the concept of economy within the notion of nationalist economies as initially discussed. On the one hand, there is the notion of the economy that is defined by the objects with which
it deals and the concepts around which it is organized. In the case of migration, this would be the relationship between migration, remittances and Italian economic development. It is complimented by the connection made between migration and the export of goods. This understanding of the economy is defined in terms relating to the exchange and circulation of labour and capital. On the other hand, there is a notion of economy that refers to the way in which objects are distributed in the world. It is, as Agamben has recently shown, an understanding of economy that has roots in theology and develops a notion of allocation without centralized intention. Historically, concepts of the ‘market’ are the most common example of this as discussions of the development of political economy offered by Rosanvallon and Foucault have shown. In English, this understanding of the management of people and things has often been linked to the term ‘governmentality.’

In the case of migration in Italy, the relationship between the free decision of individuals and the movement of people that became central to official descriptions of migration can be seen as embodying this latter logic. Ultimately, the idea of nation, the feeling of *italianità*, bound together these two notions of economy – its objects and techniques – through the state discourses and practices that I have discussed in this chapter and the last chapter. The interest of the Italian state in the field of information and representation was to develop a means of organizing the already existing desires of Italian labourers as nationalized subjects. The resolution, as shown in the emergence of RAI Corporation, was the production of a series of institutions and the representation of images that were part of the construction of a new liberal subjectivity in Italy. The migrant as a figure in Italian media and the institutions charged with providing
information to populations of Italians abroad were a part of this settlement between the
state, civil society and the individual. It was a settlement that allowed for Italy’s
reintegration into the international community on the side of the United States and
Western Europe.

For the Christian Democrats, the migrant came to be posed as the subject that
allowed for the separation of cultural life from political life, divorcing identity from
agency in order to produce subject that could function in the post-war liberal economies.
Governing the migrant was a matter of policy, rather than politics, which is to say
management rather than partisanship. But it should be noted that the absenting of the
political apparatus, its replacement with a set of para-statal agencies that straddled the
border between the state bureaucracy and civil society, also involved a greater emphasis
on popular culture in the practice of governance. After all, the documentaries discussed in
the first chapter as well as the actions of RAI Corporation as part of Italy’s commitment
to ‘development’ are both framed in the language of popular education initiatives. It is
the politics of non-politics that emerged during these years around the migrant that I
outlined in these chapters.

The focus of the next chapter traces the way in which representations of Italians
abroad and the institutions for providing these groups with information became a site of
political struggle. This is not to say that there were not always different interests that
sought to make use of Italians abroad as both possible voters and as ammunition against
their opponents in debate, but that beginning in the 1970s these struggles became both
more intense and had a greater effect on the development of policy and institutional
development.
Chapter Four

This chapter maps the re-articulation of the discourse about migrants discussed in the first two chapters in relation to conservative and neo-fascist parties in Italy. The previous two chapters traced the contours of the relationship between Christian Democratic hegemony in Italian society during the 1950s and the emergence of the liberal form of governance organized around the concept of the Italian migrant. This chapter is concerned with the struggles that arose as the dominance of the Christian Democrats started to fracture.

The chapter begins by looking at the changing discourse around migration that gained visibility at the end of the 1960s and its relationship to a new generation of organizations that advocated for the rights of prospective migrants and Italians abroad. This is usually, and correctly, seen as a project driven by left-leaning organizations of Italian workers abroad, the large trade unions in Italy and, to a lesser extent, the Italian Communist Party. However, the primary goal of the reforms, greater autonomy from the government for Italian workers to organize themselves and more input in Italian migration policies, were only partially realized. Fears about communist subversion in Italian communities around the world, particularly in the Americas and Australia, meant
that progressive policy reforms were initially blocked or reabsorbed into the system of patronage organized by Christian Democratic Party.

In the second part of the chapter, I show how the procedural and institutional reforms of existing migration policy that were taken up as part of government policy and practice became central to the way in which neo-fascist parties and the most conservative factions of the Christian Democrats were able to use emigration as an issue from which to build a centrist base. Specifically, I outline the attempts by the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) – the direct descendant of the Mussolini’s Fascist Party – to organize Italians abroad, and segments of the Italian population at home who were sympathetic to Italian migrants, within a conservative nationalist political coalition. Central to these attempts was the use of newspapers and magazines published for Italians abroad as well as international organizations that sought to bring together the international Italian language press.

At the end of the previous chapter, I argued that media and cultural policy became the primary means of establishing and maintaining relations with Italians abroad in the post-war period. I also argued that central to understanding the significance of culture in the management of emigrants was the declared separation of culture from politics at the heart of Italy’s post-war liberalism. This chapter brings together the debates about culture on the Italian right with the institutional struggles that were unfolding around Italian media abroad in order to show the way in which the institutional and ideological fields were transformed during these years.

FUSIE and the International Press Subsidy
Unlike the network for the international distribution of Italian television and radio broadcasting, Italian language newspapers and magazines abroad did not evolve as a large state bureaucracy (Briani 1977). The roots of the Italian language press outside of Italy lay in the 19th century, and there had always been publications that provided space for opinions that were hostile to the government in Italy. This aspect of the press had only become more pronounced under Fascism, as newspapers outside of Italy became magnets for exiled intellectuals and political activists. Although the fascist party funded and tried to blot out unruly sections of the press, they were never completely successful in instrumentalizing the press as a tool for propaganda or even as an efficient means for the distribution of its message (Deschamps 2002). Even after the transition to democracy, members of the republican parliament (on both the left and the right) lamented their inability to transform the network of newspapers into a more efficient system for distributing the government’s message. However, they proved no more successful than their totalitarian predecessors.

Indeed, the unruliness of the Italian press abroad was a source of frequent dismay given that the state provided subsidies for these publications using funds that were distributed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For example, Fernando Santi, a leading socialist, lamented the lack of influence over the Italian press abroad during the political instability in Venezuela in 1958. Commenting: “I have no need to mention that the Italian press published abroad had completely escaped the control of consular authorities, even though these newspapers receive direct support and financing from the Foreign Ministry.”
The inability of the Italian state to bring the network of Italian newspapers abroad into line was part of the motivation for the formation of series of organizations, beginning in 1956 with the *Federazione della Stampa italiana* (Bertagna 2005). The early organizations, founded as a result of the initiative of Giuseppe Caron, were directly linked to the ruling Christian Democrat party and were seen at the time as “one of the instruments which best allow for maneuvering of the press” by supplying them with material for publication (Gorresio 1958). However, the groups very quickly took on activities that went beyond the mandate of government control. The groups assumed a dual purpose. One the one hand, they served as a conduit through which the government might communicate more effectively with the tangle of newspapers, bringing unruly papers into line with the promise of financial support. However, they also came to serve as forums for representing the needs of Italian newspapers abroad to the government in Rome.

The history of these organizations, which were mostly occasional until the early seventies when the *Federazione Mondiale per la Stampa Italiana all’Estero* (FMSIE) was formed, is difficult to trace (Bertagna 2005). The *Federazione della stampa italiana all’estero* or FSIE came into existence in 1956 and held meetings in that year as well as 1958 and 1959 in Rome. Not satisfied with the Rome-centered approach of FSIE, it was followed by the *Associazione Nord Americana della Stampa Italiana*, which was formed in Chicago with the goal of helping to preserve the Italian-language press in the United States; the Italian press in the USA was in process of collapsing as the number of Italian speakers aged and assimilated. The ANASI disbanded shortly after and the 1960s witnessed the creation of a series of regional groups. These included FEDEUROPA,
which served Italian language newspapers in Western Europe, which was created in 1965 at an international meeting of Italian language newspapers. Shortly after groups were formed representing newspapers and magazine in North America (Stampa Italiana Nord America) and Latin America (Federazione Stampa Italiana della America Latina.)

It appears that the allegiance to the governing Christian Democrat Party was maintained through the various organizations (Gorresio 1958; Fortier 2000). The executives of the organizations were exclusively drawn from the ranks of politicians within the DC cadres. And, as Bertagna notes, the membership mainly consisted of papers that were sympathetic to the Christian Democratic Party. The early meetings show no involvement from either communist or fascist newspapers or even papers that showed no political allegiances to Italian parties. Indeed, a significant number of editors at the early meetings were members of religious orders or editors of church affiliated publications. Commenting on the usefulness of the group Stampa Italiana nel Mondo, a precursor to FMSIE as a network for distributing news stories, an editor from North America commented that the materials provided were “perfectly pitched to fit with the political positions of my newspaper, which is to say catholic and anti-communist” (Benozzo 1965). The eventual constitution of the FMSIE, which brought together the various regional organizations under a single umbrella group, was still under the auspices of the Christian Democrat party, albeit the most conservative elements of that party.

The mission of these organizations was, as already noted, twofold. On the one hand, they were supposed to provide a vehicle through which Italian newspapers abroad might find a common voice in the search for recognition in Italy as legitimate news sources and economic resources from the Italian government. At the same time, the
organizations often served to diffuse information and stories from Italy, primarily regarding the government, around the world. While the effects of this latter function lay beyond the scope of this chapter, it is fair to say that the greatest success of these organizations was their role in the creation of a formal subsidy system for Italian newspapers abroad in 1981.

Prior to that date, the subsidies were distributed in a haphazard way through the Ministry of External Affairs with considerable discretion being left to ministerial personnel and the consular staff in individual constituencies. The new law of 1981 allocated one billion lire each year to help with publication and distribution costs. The amount given to each newspaper would be determined according to “their diffusion among Italian workers abroad, their informative nature and quality as well as their attention to knowledge about Italian events and the problems of Italian labour abroad.” The language of this bill was a continuation of the discourse of labour in Italian migration that has already been discussed in the previous chapters. However, the law as designed continued to reserve considerable discretion for the government in the allocation of funds.

The entire network developed into a system for rewarding those groups that were seen to support the mission of the Christian Democrats and promised to help maintain their control over the network of newspapers abroad. In spite of the fact that every group representing Italian newspapers claimed to respect the autonomy of the member newspapers and the need for a diversity of opinion, there emerged indirect forms of control in these organizations. The mix of state subsidies with arguments about the need to maintain the independence of the individual members is analogous to the system that
emerged around RAI’s international television productions. Their significance was the ability to both maintain control without running into the complications that might arise from accusation of Italy’s meddling in the media of other countries.

However, the system developed by the Christian Democrats was under pressures that lead to its eventual breakdown. At home political unrest was leading to increasing levels of violence among extra-parliamentary groups and discontent among the general populace. Abroad, there emerged a new generation of advocates for Italians living abroad who were less indebted to the Christian Democratic system of patronage. The ideological and institutional transformation of the Italian press abroad during these years must be put in the broader context of the changes in the way that migrants were advocated for in these years.

FILEF and Italians abroad

By the late 1960s, discourse about migration that had developed during the 1950s under the Christian Democratic government came increasingly under fire from critics on both the left and the right of the political spectrum. There were two main critiques of the existing approach to migration. First, there were challenges to the idea that high levels of emigration were essential or even beneficial to the economic development of Italy (Cinnani 1971). Second, there was a call for greater interest from the Italian government in the needs of Italians living abroad (Battiston 1999). Both of these critiques spoke to the new economic and social realities around migration in Italy that started to develop in the late sixties. The period of economic reconstruction and rapid growth that had
characterized the immediate post-war and ‘boom’ period had come to an end and the effects of de-population on areas of the country became apparent. It was no longer seen as beneficial to send large segments of the labour force out of the country. The seamlessly virtuous economy of emigration for remittances that had been promulgated as part of the ‘economic miracle’ lost its ability to persuade people. This coincided with a change in the demographics of emigration. Levels of migration were dropping and an increasing proportion of those who did leave Italy after 1965 were children.¹ This suggested that the exportation of Italian labour was transforming from a temporary solution to the employment crisis into a more permanent situation involving families.

The critique of the relationship between emigration and development led to a series of meetings and conferences during the first half of the 1970s that attempted to shift the focus in discussions of migration away from treating it as a ‘safety valve,’ or ‘necessary evil’ (Ciuffoletti and Degl'Innocenti 1978). At these meetings, migration was no longer viewed as something that enabled the development of the Italian economy. In its place, the view that migration was a result of the failure of previous national development initiatives took root. Between the spring of 1969 and summer of 1970, the CNEL (National Council for Economic and Labour), a research institute sponsored by the Italian government, established a committee looking into the question of migration and its effects on the Italian economy. The report issued by the committee, Osservazioni e proposte sui problemi dell'emigrazione [Observations and Proposals on the Problem of Emigration] (Ciuffoletti and Degl'Innocenti 1978), repeated an argument that had been

¹ Between 1964 and 1969, children under the age of 13 constituted 20 percent of Italians that left the country. The figure for the previous five years (1958-1963) had been only 11%. The only other age group to increase it share of the migration out of Italy in these years involved people over fifty.
circulating in leftist circles for more than a decade (Napolitano 1954). It suggested that high levels of emigration in Italy had a deleterious effect on the national economy since the contributions of a worker who stayed in Italy were greater than what was sent back through remittances. The council called for higher levels of employment in underdeveloped parts of Italy and an end to pro-emigration policies in Italy.

During more or less the same period (1969-1971), the Italian parliament initiated an *indagine conoscitive* (parliamentary hearings) on the subject of migration in response to pressure from the large labour unions. Like the CNEL working group, the focus of the hearings was also on the effects that the exportation of workers was having on the Italian economy. It similarly concluded that the pro-emigration policies of the previous twenty years could no longer be supported if the Italian economy was to continue to develop. In many ways, this orientation in the hearings work was apparent from the outset. The proposal for the creation of the committee stated that “emigration can no longer be fatalistically accepted, but should be confronted as an abnormal situation to be corrected and eliminated through the balanced development of all social and territorial areas of the country” (Ciuffoletti and Degl'Inocenti 1978).

These challenges to the discourse about migration, established by the Christian Democratic government over the previous two decades, should be seen as part of what Ginsborg describes as the ‘era of collective action’ (Ginsborg 2003a). These years were marked by widespread social unrest that involved most sectors of Italian society. While protests started among university students, it was soon accompanied by both authorized and wildcat strikes of factory workers in northern Italy. The protests culminated in the ‘hot autumn’ of 1968. These public manifestations of popular discontent suggested that
the ability of the Christian Democratic Party to reconcile the drive for reforms from labour and the pressure for economic development and growth from industry started to fray; this weakened their dominance in civil society. These actions, and the popular support they initially enjoyed, put social movements and unions in a strong position from which to call for reforms. The CNEL report and the parliamentary hearings were both the result of advocacy by the unions.

In keeping with the general call to self-organization that were circulating in Italian society at the time, there emerged a variety of groups based both in Italy and abroad whose primary concern was advocating for the rights of Italian migrants in Italy and protections against unsafe and exploitative working conditions abroad at the same time as calling into question the necessity of migration for Italian economic development. Often linked to Italy’s large trade unions (particularly the CGIL and UIL), this new generation of advocates for the interests of emigrants sought to garner greater attention for the issue of migration in government action and public debate than had been possible since the end of the war. The new approach to the issue marked a sea change in the way that emigrants were discussed, including the very language of migration itself. Italians abroad were no longer discussed as lavoratori [workers] or lavoro [labour] but as emigrati (emigrati), an attempt to move beyond the image of the Italian abroad as just an issue of employment and remittances.

One of the most visible organizations pushing for this new approach to Italians abroad was the Federazione Italiana di lavoratori emigrati e famiglie [Italian Federation of Emigrant Workers and Their Families]. The organization was founded in December 1967 by author and politician Carlo Levi and saw as its mission changing the way that
migration was thought about in Italy and giving Italians abroad greater input in the policies that affected their wellbeing. The mission statement of the organization, entitled Non più cose, ma protagonisti [No longer things, but protagonists], states that the organization seeks to break through “the hypocrisy of good intentions of state paternalism and the false nationalist myths of Italy and Italian labour” (Levi 1968). The roots of the organization were among members of the Italian communist party and other independent leftists (like Levi) who saw the need to “awaken the revolutionary consciousness” of Italians abroad and break the “conspiracy of silence” that enveloped the lives of Italian workers regardless of where they lived (Levi 2004).

Although its executive included members of the communist party (including senators and members of parliament), the organization maintained an independent existence, seeing the need to concentrate its activities on issues relating to migration rather than the entire range of concerns the PCI confronted (Battiston 1999). However, the collaboration between the party and FILEF was longstanding and extensive. Shortly after FILEF was founded the Communist Party established an Emigration Office (1968), which would act as the intermediary between the party executive and organizations such as FILEF. Furthermore, the communist members of parliament and representatives of FILEF prepared joint reports and shared research to present to both the committee on migration at CNEL and the parliamentary hearings on the subject (Volpe 1980).

The federation broke with the established structures of providing for Italians abroad, which placed the migrant in a position of weakness and need unable to advocate for themselves. As Battiston writes, “FILEF was to provide migrants of working- and peasant-class background with an organization umbrella under which they could
represent themselves before the Italian authorities and those of the countries they were living in” (Battiston 1999). As part of this program of self-organization among Italians abroad, chapters of FILEF were started in Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, Australia and in parts of Latin America.

However, these efforts at self-representation need to be put in the context of the communist parties attempts to use FILEF international branches as tools for convincing Italians abroad to join labour unions and, where possible, the party itself. In countries that were too far from Italy to return for votes, the PCI often sent out letters to members of FILEF and other leftist migrant organizations asking members to contact their family in Italy and tell them to vote for the communists in the next election. One such letter read: “We emigrants want a government that will finally confront the problems of Italian workers, whether in Italy or abroad. We want a government that no longer forces workers to look for work in a distant lands” (Battiston 1999).

Internationally, FILEF was most successful in Europe where it served as a bridge between Italian unions and the PCI, and local unions and other socialist parties. In jurisdictions where Italian emigrants had voting rights, FILEF encouraged its members to become politically active. Outside of Europe, the development of FILEF was more variable. The ban on communist parties in some countries, like Argentina, meant that representatives of the group were under constant threat of prosecution. This severely limited the ability of the group to advocate for the rights of Italians in the country, and the organization in Italy had little success in using its relationship with the PCI to allow greater political freedom for Italian communities abroad. In Canada, the group remained at the margins of other larger groups representing Italian workers that had stronger ties to
local unions (for example, the Italian Immigrant Aid Society.) In the United States, there was no official section of FILEF opened, possible due to concerns among the general public about the activities of a communist affiliated organization.

The example of Australia is particularly interesting, both because it was a national context in which FILEF was successful in organizing Italians and because it shows the limits of FILEF in the period. Early on, FILEF was driven by sentiments among many Italians who felt that existing community organizations did not understand the difficulties they were experiencing in Australia. FILEF was also active in developing a media infrastructure and cultural programs through which it could communicate with Italians. The newspaper *Nuovo Paese* in Melbourne, founded by FILEF members, became a platform for challenging the official information outlets in the Italo-Australian community. In Sydney, the local FILEF branch started a radio station. It produced programming intended for Italian workers, but also sought to speak to second generation Italians and other Australians about the rights of workers. FILEF-Australia was also engaged in gathering oral histories from Italian migrants and putting on various cultural events including fairs, plays and art exhibitions. In many ways, these activities were extensions of the cultural programs the communist party was engaging in back in Italy (Gundle 2000).

However, the success of the organization was limited by its identification with the Communist Party in Italy. As Battiston outlines in detail, the group was under pressure from more conservative groups in the Italian community as well as conservative politicians outside the Italian community who used the group’s political positions to stoke concerns about the political activities of immigrants. In 1975, for example, the
Melbourne based paper *The Age* published a sensationalized exposé of FILEF with the title: “Italian Communists Move In.” A few months later, Ignazio Salemi, a organizer for FILEF, applied for permanent residency under an immigration amnesty that was in place at the time. His application was rejected in spite of Salemi’s satisfying all of the criteria necessary. Given that no information about the reason for the rejection was ever given, it was suggested that Salemi’s involvement with FILEF and the communist party had been the deciding factors.

The success and collapse of FILEF in Australia is almost exactly co-terminous with a fundamental change in the Italian institutions intended to serve Italian emigrants that took place in the early 1970s. The CNEL commission on emigration and parliamentary hearings were the start of a series of policy changes that sought to rectify the separation of government policy on migration from the lives of emigrants. In 1971, far-ranging reform of Italian language schools for Italian workers and their children were made law. The law increased the funding allocated to Italian language schools in order to provide workers with greater access to education, a policy that was the international equivalent to worker education initiatives in Italy.

That same year, the *Comitati Consultivi degli Italiani all’estero* [Consultative Committees of Italians Abroad], a counsel created to link consular staff with local Italian communities, were reformed. They would no longer be constituted exclusively with diplomats and politicians in order to give Italians abroad a greater say in the activities of their local consulates and embassies. They were also to provide a channel through which to express their opinions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The culmination of these reforms was the National Conference on Emigration held in Rome in early 1975 that
brought together representatives of the government with organizations from Italy and around the world concerned with migration issues.

Each of the institutional and policy changes had been strongly advocated by FILEF, the trade unions and members of the communist party along with other independent leftist members of parliament. Thus, it was one of the great tragedies of the opening up of the debate around migration that the groups that played the biggest role in creating a space for dialogue and change were unable to take full advantage of institutions that had been created due to the concerns about communist infiltration abroad. The result was that the committee and procedures put in place to represent Italians abroad were either marginalized by consular staff (who were not required to consult the committees before making decisions) or used as tools through which to support members of the committee sympathetic to the Christian Democrats. Communists were present on the committees, but were very rarely in a position to take control of these forums. It was, instead, Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI), a neo-fascist party that had long existed at the margins of Italian political life, that was able to make best use of these new institutions in order push itself towards the centre of the debate about migration.

*The Movimento Italiano Sociale and Italians Abroad*

The MSI emerged from the ruins of the *Repubblica Sociale Italiana* in the years immediately following the Second World War (Chiarini 1995; Ignazi 2003). While its meetings were initially clandestine, it declared itself publically before the first elections held in Italy after the war. Never having completely solidified its place as dominant party
for the far right in Italy, the party spent much of its history negotiating with various conservative and neo-fascist groups and extra-parliamentary factions that felt the MSI was too restrained (or not restrained enough) in terms of its strategies or its acknowledgment of its fascist history. In histories of the party, these factional conflicts are often taken as constituting the entire history of the right in Italy to the exclusion of many other pertinent issues (Ignazi 1989). While it has rarely been treated in detail, the question of the party’s commitment and support for Italians abroad remained both constant and widely shared among a wide range, if not the entire spectrum, of groups that identified with the MSI from the end of the Second World War onward.

It was out of the party’s fascist lineage that the longstanding commitment to Italians abroad developed. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the MSI felt that the Italian government acquiescence to the peace settlement at Yalta, which had stripped Italy of its colonies in Africa and the region surrounding the city of Trieste, was the first of many acts through which the new Italian government betrayed the Italian nation. According to the party, histories of Italy, which the MSI categorized under the terms “official”, “of the regime”, and “anti-fascist,” made the mistake of taking the nation’s moment of greatest shame – intervention in Sicily and the southern peninsula by the Allies and the armistice that followed – as the cornerstone for the reconstruction and reformation of Italy (Tremaglia 1987). In the language that would dominate the MSI up into the 1990s, the government and the Italian state were described as the ‘regime’ that blocked out the truth. The complicity of the major political parties with the will of the Allied powers was a sign of their allegiance to foreign governments, the Soviet Union in the case of the PCI and the United States in the case of the DC.
A steady stream of articles were published in *Secolo D’Italia* – the party newspaper of the MSI – beginning in the immediate aftermath of the conflict and continuing for decades, that argued that the Italian colonies in Africa were necessary for the survival of Italy (and Africans) and that the decision of to strip the country of them should be reconsidered ("La Libia di Papa" 1960; Basile 1960; La nostra presenza," 1967). At the same time, the paper often argued that the Italians that remained in the former colonies had been forgotten. Mirko Tremaglia, who would later become the Minister for Italians abroad, wrote a series of pieces for *Secolo D’Italia* about the ‘heroism’ of Italians living in Asmara, Eritrea and their struggle to maintain a hospital for the Italian community there. Deploying the discourse of unwarranted exclusion of ‘true patriots’ (read Fascists) from Italian public life, he lamented that the story would never be told outside the pages of the party’s newspaper because of the desire of “Official Italy, it’s limitations and responsibility for a policy of liquidation and self-destruction, to humiliate and keep down Italy and Italian labour around the world” (Tremaglia 1966). Italians living abroad became a symbol for the M.S.I. of the failure of the Italian nation to remain strong and protect its citizens in the post-war era.

The film *Africa Addio* (1967) could be seen as a figurative bridge between this reading of Italy’s post-war situation and the issue of Italians abroad. A film that often served as a reference in articles praising the work of Italians abroad and lamenting the end of European colonialism; it was even shown at meetings on the subject organized by party members ("Pornografia di regime" 1966). The film focused on the years of decolonization in Africa. In its style, it alternated between the standard shots and narrative voiceover of informational film and television documentary and horrifying
images of human beings and animals being tortured and killed intended to shock the audience. The film extended the work of the directors in their earlier films in the *Mondo Cane* series, which featured shocking footage from around the world. In many ways, the film is the immediate descendant of the films about Italians living abroad discussed in chapter two. Both Jacopetti and Prosperi had worked for RAI in Africa and elsewhere during the 1950s and early 1960s. Prosperi had produced documentaries about Italians living in several African countries along with Stanis Nievo, the production manager on *Africa Addio*.²

Although its authors positioned it as an autocritique of the ‘dogmatic’ left in Italy, *Africa Addio* came to stand as one of the first and most widely circulated attempts to express the foreign policy positions of the right in Italy (Razza 1966). The film’s argument that Africans had not been prepared to govern by their former colonial rulers echoed almost exactly the positions taken by conservatives in Italy defending the nation’s right to maintain colonies is Africa in the years following the treaty of Yalta. Although it makes no mention of Italians living abroad and was not produced by a government agency, the film *Africa Addio* should be seen as an important document, both in its production and reception, in the evolution of media representations and cultural policy oriented towards Italians abroad.

Issues relating to Italians abroad very quickly came to play a determining role in the way that the MSI viewed the field of foreign policy. The *Comitati Tricolore per gli Italiani All’estero* [Tricolour Committees for Italians abroad] were started in 1968 as the international arm of the MSI (Innocenzi and Zoratto 1982). This was the same time that

² In the recent film profiling their career, Prosperi still describes himself as performing a role similar to a journalist.
FILEF and other organizations were forming around the communist party, and the spirit of protest and social advocacy very much informed the group. Indeed, the rise of leftist politics in Italy, and the communist party specifically (seen as a sign of Soviet provocation in Italy), was cited in the call for the organization of the CTIM. The first paragraph of the statement, issued in October 1968, read:

The dramatic events that had shaken Europe, especially in the last few months, with the advance of Soviet imperialism and the continuous and dangerous concessions to communism in Italy, have made necessary a more effective action to ensure that Italians around the world (sparsi nel mondo)…can have their say. (Innocenzi and Zoratto 1982)

However, unlike the semi-autonomous relationship between FILEF and the Emigration Office of the PCI, the CTIM eventually came to replace not just the extra-territorial branches of the MSI but the foreign policy office itself. The question of Italians abroad became synonymous with the party’s foreign policy. This is apparent in a pamphlet from the mid-eighties outlining the foreign policy of the MSI. It begins with the need to overturn the treaty of Yalta and culminates with a call to defend the rights and interests of Italians abroad.

However, it is important to note that there were many things in this ensemble of elements that were held in common with other ways of talking about Italian migration and its relationship to history. By its own admission, Italiani nel mondo saw the recognition of the contribution of Italians to African colonies as its primary function in its early years. Furthermore, the skepticism about the validity of official sources of information about migration was, as already discussed in relation to the tragedy in Marcinelle and the political upheaval in Venezuela, another common theme in discussion about Italians abroad. The primary difference in the early years was that the Christian
Democratic party linked these sentiments of recognition and disbelief to the politics of the market and the idea of individual choice and sought to bury Italy’s fascist history. The MSI and others on the right of the spectrum saw both the market and the notion of absolute individual choice as illusions, ways of covering up the weakness of the Italian state after the fall of Mussolini.

If the editorial staff of *Italiani nel mondo* (intimately linked with the executive of the Christian Democrats) saw recognition of Italian colonists in Africa alongside the irredentist movement as central in the early years after the war, they saw the need to modify this position as time passed, concentrating on economic and cultural rights rather than questions of territorial sovereignty (Felletti 1954). The extreme right, however, saw no need to modify their initial position since the passing of time only made the sacrifices of the Italians living abroad appear greater. The neo-fascists saw the nation as it existed, which was presented as the site that reconciled the labour and sacrifice of the migrant with the community, as a ruse perpetrated on the Italian people by leftists and Americans.

Only the MSI, as the true inheritors of the Italian national essence, was capable of reincorporating Italians abroad. As a message from the branch of the MSI in Uruguay on the eve of the election in 1972, stated:

> The nation (*la patria*) is sacred and immutable for us, we love it with passion and devotion. From so far away yet spiritually close… it unites us… moral rectitude, patriotic sentiments above political factions, and the desire for a nation on the road towards civil progress, a progress that before being techno-scientific is moral. (May 8 1972, Secolo)

Given the immutability of the nation (and its people by association), it is possible to understand the various policies suggested by the MSI in these years targeting Italians abroad.
Perhaps the most significant policy advocated by the MSI in parliament was the proposal to grant Italians living abroad the vote. First proposed in 1955, the idea of allowing Italians abroad to vote was proposed eight times in all before it became law in 2001. “They are afraid of the migrants,” an article published in *Secolo D’Italia* in 1972, brings together the image of the migrant as reworked in the MSI party literature (at the time named the National Right) and pushes to grant Italians abroad electoral representation:

They [the government] are afraid of having to make accounts with these Italians, mistreated, forgotten, condemned to perpetual immigration. They are afraid of the drastic and definitive decision that our workers abroad will make about the policies followed up until now. They are right to be afraid. (Innocenzi 1972)

But there were also numerous proposals for increased spending on Italian language schools and hospitals for Italians abroad. It was along these lines that the ideology of groups like the Dante Alighieri and the MSI often connected around questions regarding the formation of Italian subjects abroad. It was also in these areas that the MSI found allies among the more conservative elements of the Christian Democratic party.

But perhaps the greatest difference from the discourse discussed in the last chapter is that, while mainstream images of Italians abroad mediated nostalgia and loss with economic productivity to produce the ‘free’ emigrant, the MSI continually drew upon images of exile and isolation when discussing Italians abroad in order to propose the nation itself as the moment of salvation. A speech by MSI leader Giorgio Almirante to an audience in Stuttgart in 1982 makes these themes even more explicit when he declares
You are the people of God. You are the people of God forced into the houses of strangers, often in hellish and unfortunate climates, the people of God put to the test. The people of God who remained on their own land, their own because they had to abandon their own land. The people of God who love their own Nation with hope, only because their own Nation has proven to be cruel. (Almirante 1980)

This is very much keeping in line with Furio Jesi’s study of myth in Italian neo-fascism. Jesi notes that myth and tradition were extensively deployed in Italian fascism as a means to mobilize and orient members of the group to produce an understanding of tradition that attempted to position fascism beyond the quotidian into the realm of the transcendental (Jesi 1979). However, the particular tone of myth in fascism was predominantly what Jesi describes as the ‘religion of death,’ namely the apotheosis of individual sacrifice. In this respect, it is important to note that it was primarily those aspects of the mainstream discourse of the migrant that dealt with loss and nostalgia that were taken up by the extreme right.

The policies of the extreme right with regard to Italians abroad were not a radical break from the more mainstream representations, but a reworking of many of the same themes and images present in such venues as RAI. Unlike the communists, who often emphasised the structural factors that determined migration, the far right position could be articulated to the personalized images of the migrant that were circulating in mainstream Italian culture. However, the calls for more direct intervention in the lives of Italians living outside of Italy were unable to challenge the model of indirect governance focused on cultural and economic exchange that we have already explored. What emerged was a disjunction between the stated goals of the party and the strategies and practices being used.
While the MSI called for and embraced a model of strong state power and expanding national sovereignty, the nature of the party itself was considerably different from these positions. Organizationally, the party was haunted by the loss of the extensive network of *fasci all’estero* that had been established under Mussolini, but had been disbanded by the Allied powers after the war (Franzina and Sanfilippo 2003). There were tentative initiatives to organize sections of the MSI around the world. Given their advocacy for Italian colonies, it is not surprising that the party was initially very successful in the former Italian colonies. The first sections were organized in Libya and Ethiopia (Innocenzi 1972). Laws against fascist political groups in much of Western Europe meant that the party was less successful in these areas, but Latin America (where a large number of Fascist leaders had gone into exile) proved another fruitful space for recruitment. However, these early attempts remained highly fragmented due to popular anti-fascist sentiment, which ensured that the international base of the movement remained limited in size and power.

The creation of the CTIM in 1968 was more successful in producing a united front under which members of the far right in Italian communities around the world could organize themselves. This was because it combined traditional forms of political organizing with the characteristics of voluntary organizations common in Italian communities. The name itself, *Comitato Tricolore*, had its roots in the irredentist movement and had been adapted by Tremaglia to serve the new purpose. This made it more difficult for the organization to be closed under law prohibiting fascist political activities (such as existed in Germany and other Western European nations). The
organization, which was really a collection of individual local committees, was semi-autonomous from the party itself.

Thus, in spite of the continued advocacy of a strong centralized state, neo-fascism in Italy in the post-war period developed by means of a relatively de-centered and heterogeneous network. This was also the case when it came to the development of a system for the diffusion of information through media. In Italy, the fascist parties made use of an extensive network of newspapers and journals linked to various political organizations and groups in order to circumvent their exclusion from mainstream media. The system that developed internationally to spread the positions of the MSI among Italians abroad was an extension of this network. The CTIM were often linked to publications, whether newsletters, publishing houses, or newspapers. The first meetings in Brazil were organized by the editors of the Tribuna Italiana, whose publisher, Piero Pedrazza, served as vice president of the local CTIM. Similarly, in Germany, Bruno Zoratto (whose career will be discussed in greater detail below) was a founding member of the CTIM in Stuttgart as well as the editor of Oltreconfine, a newspaper which also published books and magazines for Italians abroad. While in Chile, L’Eco dei Calabresi played an important part in organizing both the local CTIM as well as conservative segments of the Italian community against the Allende government.

*Bruno Zoratto and the turn to the right*

Fascist publishers abroad often occupied a somewhat contradictory position. Abroad, papers that were sympathetic to the far right (in some cases sponsored by fascist
leaders in exile) were able to garner a significant readership in certain communities. This was particularly true in Latin America, which had a long history of Fascist organizing and where large numbers of Fascist exiles had settled after the war, and in the United States, where the far right’s hard line against communism was able to win many adherents. There had always been concerns about the involvement of Fascist publications in groups representing Italian newspapers abroad. Speaking at the inaugural conference of the FMSIE, Giuseppe Baiocchi, a conservative but anti-fascist journalist, stated in his address to the Congress,

In the migrant press, the fascists have a strong influence. Their direct or indirect control of periodicals dates back to the time of Fascist rule, especially in South America where different titles were created and financed by the regime at the time. (Bertagna 2005)

In Italy, these publishers were initially excluded from mainstream discussions about migration, particularly those that involved government funds. The same was true for radio and television broadcasters that rebroadcast some of the programming produced by RAI.

However, the exclusion of these broadcasters and publishers from the mainstream of Italian network abroad was only a temporary situation. Caslini disapprovingly notes at the end of her survey of Italian media abroad that

It is work remembering that a great deal of the material produced by the government is sent to a fascist station in Sydney that had the emblematic name of “La Fiamma”. It is run by a certain Mamma Lena, who is also the publisher of a newspaper with the same name. (Casalini, Davilla et al. 1980)

The transformation of the Italian language fascist media outside of Italy from pariahs to members of the mainstream community of representatives of the emigrant experience is
worth tracing in greater detail. It offers insight both into the way in which media was central to the turn to the right in discussions about Italian migration during these years and the development of the support structures put in place to provide information for Italians abroad.

However, it was not simply an organic drift to the right that lead to the eventual shift in the structures that represented and governed the Italian press abroad. The shift was a result of a scandal involving the executive of the FMSIE and their connection to a political plot in Italy (Bertagna 2005): the discovery of the P2 masonic lodge.

The public history of the P2 (which stood for Propaganda 2) masonic lodge begins on 4 July 1981 when Italian customs agents found two documents in the false bottomed suitcase of Maria Grazia Gelli, the daughter of Licio Gelli who would later be accused of being the leader of the lodge. The documents, entitled “Plan for Democratic Rebirth” and “Memorandum on the Italian Political Situation,” seemed to outline a political program that called for the overthrow of the Italian government and a radical reorganization of Italian society. The documents were accompanied by a list of members, which included high-ranking members of the Italian military, conservative politicians, leading members of Italian industry and commerce and prominent newspaper editors. The discovery of the documents, and their links to powerful figures across Italian society, created a series of scandals that culminated in an official government investigation to determine the extent to which the lodge had affected the governance of Italy (Guarino 2001).

In many ways, these hearings might be seen as a precursor to the tangentopoli corruption hearing in the early nineties that exposed the network of bribes that had
shaped Italy for decades. Years later, Licio Gelli would claim that the rise to power of Silvio Berlusconi (a member of the lodge) was nothing other than the execution of the plans laid out by the lodge nearly a decade before. While much of the history involving the P2 lodge falls under the category of *cronaca nera*, which is to say unconfirmed rumour or speculation, and remains hidden in the mists of speculation and conspiracy theories, it is worthwhile recounting these details since they play a key role in the evolution of the FMSIE in the early 1980s as well as offering a glimpse into the way that the Italian media abroad were viewed by a segment of the ruling class.

The executive of the FMSIE was deeply involved in the scandal over the P2 Masonic lodge. The revelation that Umberto Ortolani, the president of FMSIE, and one of his vice presidents, Gustavo Selva, were high-ranking members of the lodge shocked the membership (Bertagna 2005). Some claimed that Ortolani had been the second-in-command of P2 (Guarino 2001). This discovery gave support for concerns on the part of Italian newspaper publishers around the world that the press organizations were tools for instrumentalizing Italian newspapers abroad by political forces in Italy. While the outcome of the scandals in Italian society in general were limited, the accusations against Ortolani forced him to step down after 10 years as the president of FMSIE and twenty years as the head of a regional organization representing Latin America. Surprisingly, Gustavo Selva was similarly forced to leave the executive of FMSIE, but was made the president of RAI Corporation in 1981.

There had long been tensions within the FMSIE between the more left-leaning members of the group and executive. A good example of these tensions occurred at the FMSIE annual congress in 1972 where Ortolani was questioned about the responsibility of
newspapers to their communities, citing the example of Italians who were disappeared in Argentina during military rule (Federazione Mondiale della stampa italiana all'estero 1973). A representative from the Instituto Nazionale Confederele di Assistenza, the international arm of the unions belonging to the CGIL (Italian Labour Council), noted the shortcomings of the newspaper coverage of the political unrest in Argentina which still solicited more workers even while it became increasingly dangerous on the ground. Pointing out Ortolani directly, the representative commented:

Just think, the Corriere degli italiani didn’t write a word on the detention and deportation of the brother of the paper’s own editor. If a newspaper like the Corriere degli italiani is so heavily conditioned, what hope is there for the situation of the simple undefended worker?

Ortolani replied “as a matter of personal reputation” in order to “observe that the newspaper in question maintained a responsible attitude keeping in mind the general interests of our co-nationals.” Ortolani went on to reiterate the importance for Italian newspapers abroad of maintaining a cautious distance from the political affairs of the nation.

In this exchange, it is possible to note the transition between the discursive and institutional structures put in place by the Christian Democrats who sought to maintain a strictly depoliticized relationship with Italians abroad and the emergent understanding regarding the political nature of Italians abroad. Granted, these are tensions that had long existed within organizations tending to the needs of Italian migrants, but they become more pressing over the course of the decade. The collapse of FMSIE in 1981 and the formation of FUSIE opened a path to a series of debates within the organization that
involved the production of a new consensus about the relationship between Italians abroad, the Italian government and the media that tied the two together.

The expulsion of the executive and accusations of complicity with the antidemocratic plan lead to the collapse of the organization in late 1981. The membership was reconstituted as the *Federazione Unitaria della Stampa Italiana all’estero*. The primary difference was that the strength of the Christian Democrats in the organization had been greatly weakened. This lead to greater openness to political positions that had previously been excluded, positions on both the left and the right. In the years that followed, the group merged with the left-leaning *Confederazione Internazionale Della Stampa Italiana all’estero*, and allowed in members of the far right that had previously been excluded. It was an example of the way in which both the left and the right were able to co-operate over their opposition to the politicking of the Christian Democratic Party. Over the next three years, FUSIE consolidated its position as the only major organization representing Italian newspapers internationally.

It is not simply that the government and the conservative wing of the Christian Democrats lost control of the organization in the wake of the P2 scandal. There were two, seemingly opposing, trends that emerged. There was the diversification of the political perspectives within the organization. Factions from both the left and the right were able to become more visible on committees and benefited from the system of subsidies. However, the agreement to abandon the policy that the welfare was not a political issue can be seen as the first step in a trend that would integrate Italians abroad more directly than previously. As noted above, communists and other leftists often suffered scrutiny and persecution in emigrant communities. This allowed for the emergence of an alliance
between the more conservative elements that had been aligned with the Christian Democrats and the MSI around an increasingly nationalistic (rather than labour-based) vision of Italian abroad.

The career of Bruno Zoratto, the founder and editor of *Oltreconfine* newspaper based in Stuttgart, is emblematic of the changing relationship between the extreme right and the Italian press abroad that took place in the wake of the P2 scandals. Born in 1946 near Udine, Zoratto left Italy for Germany in 1964 to work in the factories of Mercedes-Benz. While in Germany, he was active among workers, organizing them on behalf of the MSI and in 1968 he launched the newspaper *Oltreconfine*. Over the next three decades, *Oltreconfine* developed into one of the most prominent Italian language newspapers in Germany and was probably the most well known paper on the right. Contributing to this reputation was the publishing house with which the paper was associated, that published pamphlets and books about Italians abroad in Italian and German.

The success of Zoratto’s publishing ventures was partly due to their situation in Stuttgart. The city had a high concentration of Italian workers, but it was also a city where right-wing politics had been able to establish a prominent position within the community of workers due in part to a regional government that did not enforce the strict ban on fascist and nazi propaganda and political activity. As noted above, Zoratto’s publications had been intimately involved with the creation and expansion of the *Comitati Tricolore per gli Italiani nel Mondo* from early on.

Over the next decade, Zoratto became the most prominent spokesperson in the neo-fascist press about the interests and needs of Italians abroad, publishing regularly on the problems that Italians encountered abroad. These article, published for the most part
in the party newspaper *Secolo D’Italia*, are significant because they formed the main source of information around which the party structured its policies on Italians abroad. At the same time, the *Oltreconfine* newspaper and publishing house initiated a series of attacks against the failings of the consular system, but also the established system of media. Given that the MSI was still a marginal party in the political system at this time and that the newspaper *Oltreconfine* never reached levels of circulation equal to more mainstream publications in Germany, it is fair to say that Zoratto’s impact in these activities remained limited.

What makes Zoratto’s career in Italian media abroad and his links to political organizing in both Germany and Italy important is the amount of energy and the level of success he had in his involvement with various organizations representing international Italian media and Italians abroad more generally. The 1970s had primarily been marked by complaints about the exclusion of fascist groups from the institutions representing Italians abroad, the complaints about the politics of the ‘regime.’ But it had also witnessed the emergence of a theory of institutional struggle, of hegemony in the Gramscian sense, that the collapse of the hegemony of the Conservative Christian democrats in the early 1980s allowed to come into effect. Thus Zoratto is not of significance for his understanding of Italians abroad; in this sense he operated on the same discursive terrain discussed earlier in the chapter. He is of significance because he was able to wed this discourse about Italians abroad to a practical theory of institutional engagement.

‘*Culture of the Right*’
The institutional and discursive transformations that were effected in the relationship between the far right and Italians abroad must be placed in the context of the evolution of ideas about the role of culture in political life among Italians abroad. As will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter, the consequences of this shift (of which issue of Italians abroad were only a part) were significant for understanding the way in which the political spectrum in Italy would be reconfigured in the early 1990s as well as marking a fundamental transformation in the way the state imagined and governed its subjects.

In the post-war period the relationship between politics and culture in Italy was primarily seen as an argument between the centre and the left of the political spectrum in Italy. The neo-fascist and extreme right parties in Italy were excluded from these debates both practically and conceptually. The debate about the relationship between politics and culture was a way of working through the question of the relationship between power and discourse in the context of a highly developed bureaucratic state that was coming to grips with the potential of electronic forms of communication. The autonomy of culture from the political realm – part of the new liberal settlement in post-war Italy – was a product of the hegemony of Christian Democrat party who used the figure of the labouring subject (whether as worker or migrant) to reorganize Italian society. Given that the MSI and other fascist parties were excluded from what was called the ‘constitutional arc,’ the struggle for cultural hegemony was a losing game on the right since these groups were not even allowed to play.
Ideologically, the concept of culture as an operative space for the parties on the right remained absent, remaining wholly subsumed by ideas about tradition. This was somewhat surprising given the longstanding and extensive involvement of the fascist party in the cultural life of Italy. Partially this was the result of the political shifts that occurred in the wake of the war. While the memory of fascist rule prevented many from even considering the party, the formation of the Christian Democrats had meant that many conservative Catholics had joined that party and eliminated the links between Catholic morality and culture that had been significant in the development of popular culture under fascism.

As a result, the primary ideological grounding of the MSI for many years was the conflict between the social fascism of the *Repubblica Sociale Italiana* and the mystic traditionalism that had developed out of the writing of Julius Evola and his critique of modernity. The former tendency, headed by party leader Giorgio Almirante, former vice-minister of popular culture (i.e. propaganda) in the republic of Salo, was committed to making use of media as a means to expanding the parties influence. But, according to the latter tendency – which ultimately came to hold sway over the conceptual grounding of the Movimento Sociale during 1970s- the very framing of the question about the relationship between culture and politics was seen as vulgar and degrading by a large portion of the party who saw culture as wholly separate from such worldly and mundane matters as politics or the economy.

It was, therefore, often claimed by those on the right and the left that there was no such thing as a *cultura di destra* [culture of the right] – a phrase adapting the often cited and Togliatti-derived concept of the ‘culture of the left’ – since the cultural landscape of
fascism was seen as being more of a spiritual question than something that should involve a political party. However, the influence of Almirante – who in spite of proving weak in ideological battles had tremendous control over party strategy – lead to a series of attempts over the course of the party’s history to take back the struggle for cultural hegemony from the centre-left and develop a more robust understanding of the right’s attitude towards contemporary culture, an understanding that went beyond simple dismissal. Moreover, as Furio Jesi argues in his study of the question of neo-fascist culture in Italy, this absence of culture was primarily a rhetorical device that was itself constitutive of the way in which culture – and modern popular culture in particular – was understood. According to Jesi, it was part of an ongoing ritualization of myth that served to both root the MSI in tradition while attempting to destabilize the more established positions of the other parties.

In the previous chapters, the figure of the migrant played a dual role in state-produced media discourses during the two decades following the end of the war. The representation of the migrant’s travels, the rituals of daily life and the fruit of their labour, was a way in which Italy’s new position in the emergent geopolitical relations of the cold war could be mapped, linking it to the liberal democratic politics and development projects of Western Europe. The migrant also served as a way of reincorporating the dangers of labour unrest, a response to the rebirth and rapid growth of the communist party in Italy, into the national development project in such a way that did not threaten the stability of the state infrastructure. Central to this was the imagination of the migrant as an independent, laboring subject that was an agent and symbol of the modernization project of Italian post-war development, yet also a member of the national community.
The transformation in the discourse about migrants that has been traced in this chapter and the related institutional struggles mark the way in which culture and politics were reintegrated. This reintegration was not simply a return to the social integralism that characterized Italian fascism in which the political subsumes all other aspects of society, but the emergence of a new kind politics. Initially, this involved a populist and egalitarian project that sought to empower Italian migrant workers through new forms of representation. But, the anti-communist context in which many Italian communities were living meant that these goals were separated from their grounding in labour rights and proletarian revolution and rearticulated in terms of an increasingly exclusionary vision of the nation and ethnic identity.
Chapter Five

This chapter and the next trace the relations between the state, media and citizenship that evolved around Italians abroad since the early 1990s. These two chapters develop two different aspects of a common conjuncture and should not, therefore, be taken as temporally sequential. Their relationship to one another is similar to that between the second and third chapter of this dissertation. This chapter is primarily occupied with the changing institutional structures that provided information to Italians abroad and how these structures were implicated in broader issues regarding transformations in the political economy of global media. The next chapter focuses on the way in which individual and collective forms of identification among Italians abroad were performed in relation to the global expansion of Italian public television.

Specifically, this chapter looks at the ways in which the relationship between RAI and private capital has been negotiated since the creation of RAI International, a global satellite radio and television service established in 1994. In the first part of the chapter, I examine the debates and decisions that shaped the creation and evolution of RAI International. I show that the relationship between global capital and nationalizing institutions like public broadcasters involved a series of negotiations in which the demands of producing and propagating national identity, often seen as being part of
RAI’s mandate as a ‘public service,’ were reconciled with the pressures and constraints of global markets. I show the way in which these two goals, initially seen as being incompatible with each other, were reconciled within a discourse of ethnically centered capitalism that took shape as part of the rise of the post-fascist *Alleanza Nazionale* in Italian politics.

The final part of the chapter explores a series of events that took place over a period of five years beginning in late 2001. They outline the public questioning of RAI International’s distribution agreement with Dallah Al Baraka Investment Bank, an investment fund accused of being implicated in the attacks of September 11, 2001. These events show the way in which the manifestation of cultural identity as part of traditionally economic spheres became particularly acute in the wake of the attacks on the New York City and Washington D.C. and the ensuing ‘war on terror.’ I suggest that the public debate about RAI International was marked by a conflict between two competing versions of ethnically centered capitalism. The defensive practices associated with each of these formations became more pronounced as the relationship between RAI and its Arab partners were linked to the so-called ‘clash of civilizations.’

The conjuncture outlined in these two chapters, tracing the most recent discursive construction in government discourse around Italians abroad differs from earlier organizations of what I have been calling the nationalist economy of migration. It is both more deeply ingrained with global flows of capital and more assertive in its expression of rigid forms of national identity. This is partially a consequence of the changing demographics of Italian migration. As noted in the previous chapter, emigration declined during the 1970s and the emphasis in communities of Italians abroad was transferred
from workers on limited-term contracts to permanent residents. By the 1990s, almost two decades had passed since the communities of Italians abroad had experienced the last major wave of migration. Thus, it was no longer simply an issue of advocating and protecting the rights of temporary and mobile workers. Instead, the issue of producing and maintaining links with communities of Italians abroad focused on the development of a particular vision of ethnically defined cultural identity, which was sometimes referred to by the term *italianità*.

As is more explicitly apparent in the next chapter, this turn to cultural identity coincided with the maturation of multicultural policies in many of the countries that had received large numbers of Italian emigrants in previous generation (the United States, Canada, Australia.) The maturation of multiculturalism often involved the transformation of cultural identity, the grounds upon which appeals for rights and protections had been made to the state since the 1970s, into the basis for the identity-based organization of consumer capitalism. In these chapters, I am less concerned with these developments as they took shape in Australia or the Americas (although the next chapter offers a case study from Canada) than I am with the way in which Italian broadcasting adapted to these trends as manifested in global media markets. Both chapters show that the rise of economic multiculturalism in the largest and wealthiest portions of the global media market coincided with a hardening of ethnic nationalism in Italy.

*The Creation of RAI International*
While RAI had been a member of many international initiatives to develop satellite technology for broadcasting (Eutelsat, Intelsat) through its participation in Telespazio SpA (created in 1961 and jointly-owned with Italcable) (Maraldi 1961; Mondini 1963), the use of satellite technology for the distribution of media remained limited in Italy until the 1990s. Short and medium wave broadcasts continued to dominate in radio, supplemented by the use of recordings on tape that were distributed through the consular network or the offices of RAI in New York and Montevideo for use by local broadcasters (see chapter three). Videotape was the primary mode of distribution for international television content and used a similar network to radio for distributing material. The only use of satellite for distributing RAI’s services abroad was a fledgling venture developed by RAI Corporation in the United States during the 1980s known as RAI USA (Serafini 1996). It broadcast two and half hours of programming weekly (mandated by Italian law), a mix of locally produced news programming and video sent by RAI on tape to the New York office, for use by ethnic broadcasters across the country and in Canada (Milana 2003).

It was not until the early 1990s that RAI sought to take advantage of satellite technology’s development into a viable commercial distribution platform for use by consumers (Milana 2003). Among the factors pushing RAI’s move into satellite was the example of the BBC’s global television and radio services, which had adapted to the new possibilities of satellite technology with the launch of the news-oriented BBC World and general interest channels such as BBC America (Morrione 1998b).1 The more limited

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1 The BBC had long stood as a model to the Italian broadcast system. Antonio Ciampaglia (in Milana 2003), a veteran of Italy’s international broadcast services since the mid-seventies, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary the first shortwave
successes of German public broadcaster Deustche-Welle (DW-TV) was also seen in Italy as a possible model for reforming existing services and developing an international Italian broadcast service that would increase the prestige of the nation and provide a new way to recoup the production and operation costs (Morrione 1998b). Thus, RAI’s attempt to go international starting in the early 1990s was often viewed as an attempt to catch-up with trends in the evolving global media markets by people both inside and outside of the broadcast industry (Morrione 1997).

An international Italian satellite television service was first proposed in 1992, but never launched. It was to be named RAI USA and there were plans to inaugurate the service on the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus’ voyage to the Americas (Milana 2003). However, the Italian government, in the midst of the bribery and corruption scandals of Tangenteopoli, was unable to allocate sufficient funds to operate and distribute the channel internationally. While the proposal for a new service went nowhere, all three of RAI’s national channels were uplinked to the Eutelsat Hotbird satellite and distributed across Europe. The details of the agreements behind this arrangement remain unclear, but RAI would continue to state that it received little or no monies from these markets. It created the contradictory situation that, while RAI possessed no official international presence in satellite television, its services were among the most widely distributed across Europe.

Three years later, RAI and the Italian government made another attempt to develop a unified plan for international television broadcasting with the launch of RAI broadcasts. He begins his reminiscence about his years at RAI, writing: “Babuino (the street on which RAI’s headquarters were located) as Strand Street, Rome as London, RAI as the BBC, an international channel that carried the voice and image of Italy to the world.”
International. The new network was created in 1995 as part of the reforms of the Italian public broadcasting system put in place by the first Berlusconi government (Monteleone 2003). The motivation for creating the network was to gather together the various international services operated by RAI (RAI Corporation, the international radio and television services operated by the Direzioni Esteri, RAI’s satellite operations and some parts of RAI’s international licensing office) within a single division in order to increase its efficiency and improve the distribution of Italian media outside the national territory. While still maintaining and managing the shortwave broadcasts that had been established in the immediate post-war period (they would continue to operate until September 2007), the primary focus of the new division was satellite television and international program licensing. Guided by Letizia Moratti, a member of Berlusconi’s Forza Italia and cabinet minister in Berlusconi’s second government, the reforms were a response to the confusing tangle of initiatives that had been launched in previous years (Morrione 2003).

The pressure to increase efficiency was one that had been growing at RAI and within government circles for several decades, but the collapse of the Christian Democratic Party in the corruption scandals in the early nineties energized plans for reform (Ginsborg 2003b). The rise of Silvio Berlusconi and his Forza Italia movement did much to shape the popular desire for reform in terms of a belief in private enterprise and neo-liberal doctrines about market supremacy (even though the turn to markets more often than not meant ceding to the will of Berlusconi’s business interests) (Stille 2006). Along these lines, the issue of whether or not RAI should be privatized was the subject of
a referendum that passed with a sizeable majority in 1995 (Brogi 2005). Thus, the creation of RAI international must be seen in the light of internal pressure to convert all of RAI into a profitable entity that could be self-sustaining and eventually garner private investment.

The consolidation of international services was one of the efforts made towards this goal since it would both decrease duplication in service and allow for a more efficient management structure. However, there were more than simply issues of management and duplication of services that needed to be addressed. The divisions that had developed from the 1950s to the 1970s were based upon a model of broadcasting in which state-owned corporations were the dominant European players. They existed in a world where, aside from the shortwave broadcasts, most Italian language media outside of Italy were owned and operated by small, independent broadcasters oriented towards a particular local community. The consolidation in the media industries globally and the push to privatize public broadcasters across Europe, which lead to the dismantling of state monopolies during the 1980s and 1990s, meant that the creation of a state-owned network like RAI International was faced with the problem of negotiating a globally integrated and highly capitalized international media market (Raboy 1996; Papathanassoupoulos 2002).

Given the growing emphasis on profit in transnational broadcasting, it is not surprising that the driving force of the new initiative was primarily the development of new international markets for Italian radio and television productions. This involved a

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2 While the referendum passed, the actual process by which RAI would be privatized would be debated over the next several years. It remains a topic of discussion. Indeed, it is more accurate to view the referendum as one of several attempts to reform RAI during these years, rather than the ultimate say of the people on the subject.
transformation in the traditional mandate of Italy’s international broadcasting, particularly its role as conduit between Italy and Italians abroad. As was discussed in chapter one, RAI’s role in maintaining the connection between Italians abroad and the Italian nation had its roots in the global extension of the traditional mission of the public broadcaster’s role in the popular education and formation of national citizens. Even its non-Italian programming were isolated from market forces and linked to public diplomacy initiatives. The new mission given RAI International at the time of its creation, to raise the profile of Italian radio and television globally, drew primarily on the logic of global media markets rather than concerns about maintaining national identity among emigrants and their descendents (Morrione 1998a). This reformulation of the mandate is hardly surprising given that Italians abroad were of only marginal importance to Prime Minister Berlusconi (or, rather, they retained their importance primarily as possible markets to be developed), during whose first government the initial project for RAI International was formulated.

However, this did not mean that the established role of the international broadcasters disappeared entirely. The mandate of RAI International given during the early years of the network expresses the tensions between the push to transform RAI into a global brand and the traditional functions of public service broadcasting. The dual mandate of the network during its early years is apparent in the first report to the Bicameral Committee overseeing the operation of public broadcasting by the president of RAI International, Roberto Morrione. Speaking of the purpose of RAI International, he explains: “We have a dual mission to carry out abroad: to spread Italian language and culture in the world and to position RAI at an international level” (Morrione 1997). He
goes on to note that the first of these missions is part of the longstanding function of
RAI’s international broadcasts, citing the conventions between RAI and the Office of the
Prime Minister from both 1962 and 1975. He also indicates that the second goal of RAI
International, the improvement of RAI’s status internationally, was one that was given to
him by the Committee itself at the time of his appointment to the presidency 14 month
previously.

At a later hearing of the same committee, he quotes the instructions given him
upon assuming the directorship of the network by the RAI board of directors in full:

The necessity of strategic and operative certainties in the international
positioning of the company, both with regard to programming for our co-
nationals abroad and for other markets, the organizational and production
mechanisms as well as the distribution policies, are at the centre of the
new role of RAI International. This involves bringing together in the best
way the informative function of the public service, which is oriented to
our community in the world in order to enrich its cultural patrimony and
national identity, with an active presence in evolving markets. (Morrione
1998a)

In spite of the pressure to bring the two missions together, there remained a divide
between these two functions for RAI International. Although the nature of the divide was
most often manifested in comments regarding the failure of RAI International to fulfill
one of these mandates, the language of these two missions continued to be the way that
the network was described.

The dual mandate as articulated in the first years of RAI International can be seen
as the first attempt to resolve the tension between the network’s role as an division of the
public broadcaster and an extension of the government’s service for Italians abroad, and
the push to capitalize on Italian media productions. These two pressures, toward market
efficiency in one direction and extending its role as producing nationalized subjects, can
be seen as emerging from the articulation of multicultural social policies to the integration of national economies and the expansion of transnational media markets. The dual mandate was a failed and incomplete attempt to bring these two dynamics together and, in the case of RAI International, it would be replaced after less that two years.

International Broadcasting, Language and Ethno-capitalism

As noted above, the attempt to bring together these two goals as part of the network’s dual mandate drew extensively on the example of the British Broadcasting Corporation’s international services. However, unlike the mission of the BBC world service, language became a central issue. The success of the BBC model relied on the reputation of the service as an information source of quality, but it was also a product of the legacy of empire as well as the global diffusion of the English language that imperial conquest had helped facilitate. Another model suggested by the development of a satellite news and information channel by the German broadcaster DW-TV was more promising for the Italians. DW-TV adapted its editorial content in German for the international market (primarily business travelers) by producing an extensive schedule in both English and Spanish.

Questions about how to mediate public service with market efficiency became debates about national identity and its relationship to national language as constitutive of

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3 Another model, used by the most affluent members of the Francophonie, focused on the creation of a single international channel from French-language public broadcaster. TV5 was a Belgian, Swiss, French and Canadian joint venture. However, given that Switzerland was the only other nation in which Italian was an official language of state, this was not a viable way forward.
the mission of RAI International. Thus, in the debate about whether RAI International should target a general audience or Italians abroad and their descendants, the issue was resolved overtime by reaffirming the importance of retaining Italian as the dominant (if not exclusive) broadcast language (Morrione 1998c; Zaccaria and Morrione 1998; Alla ricerca 2001).  

It is important to recall that the emphasis on the Italian language is not present in the agreements between the Prime Minister’s office and RAI that govern international broadcasts. As outlined in the second chapter, the international broadcasts since the 1940s included a significant number of hours of non-Italian language broadcasting. This remained a part of the conventions between RAI and the government that were signed in 1975 and 1995 and 2002. However, the practice that developed with the creation of RAI International in 1995 placed increasing emphasis on the importance of maintaining Italian as the dominant language. Thus, unlike the models offered by DW-TV or BBC, RAI International produced programs in Italian and supplemented these with language education programming. Interestingly, the translation of programs, whether through subtitles or dubbing (the principal activity of the RAI Corporation office in Montevideo), was not given a prominent place in the new service. This made clear that knowledge of the Italian language was to serve as the gatekeeper to the international audience that was imagined. By 1998, RAI International was asked to drop the dual mandate by the Italian parliament and concentrate on its public service obligations to Italians abroad (GRTV 1998; Mele 1998).

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4 The closest analog from the other examples cited was the importance of the French language to the TV5 project, although the service was transnational and thus extremely different from RAI International.
The decision to develop the service in this way should be seen in part as a result of the prominence of the *Alleanza Nazionale* in debates about Italian broadcasting and Italian political life in general. The *Alleanza Nazionale*, which brought together the old M.S.I. with conservative factions of the now defunct Christian Democrat Party,\(^5\) sought to realign RAI politically as part of an overall plan to reform Italian political life (Sacchi 1994; Guzzanti 1997). Unlike Berlusconi’s push for market efficiency, the AN’s drive to transform the politics of public broadcasting in Italy did not focus on privatization. Instead, it revolved around increasingly vocal challenges to perceived leftist bias at RAI in favour of greater ‘pluralism’ (Meli 1994; Gravagnuolo 2002). This meant purging the public broadcaster of employees that were seen as being too closely connected to the centre-left and communist party. The strong language policy of RAI International can be seen as an extension of popular fears about the health of the Italian language\(^6\), linked to other concerns about the nation’s health such a declining birthrates and the growing number of immigrants. Among the initiatives promoted by the AN while in power was a week celebrating the Italian language, in which RAI International played a central role (Pitari 2003).

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\(^5\) The M.S.I., renamed and reorganized into the AN between 1993 and 1995, reworked its relationship to its fascist history and mainstream Italian culture. It joined Berlusconi’s coalition for the 1994 elections and garnered 13.5% of the vote (making it the second largest party in Belusconi’s coalition). The formal inclusion of the AN in the governing coalition was seen by many as the final stage in the undoing of the post-war anti-fascist settlement that had dominated Italy for the previous four decades. While not belonging to the governing coalition, the M.S.I. had played an important role in previous governments. In the early sixties, the suggestion of bringing the M.S.I. into government nearly caused the sitting Prime Minister to lose power. In the early 1970s, the M.S.I. were essential for the right wing of the Christian Democratic Party maintaining control.

\(^6\) The *Alleanza Nazionale* made three attempts to have Italian declared the national language. These attempts have failed because opponents on the left see this as part of the AN’s xenophobic nationalist agenda, and opponent on the right (in the Northern League) see this as a way of crushing non-Italian regions and local dialects.
The possibility for this campaign to transform Italian media was a result of the *Alleanza Nazionale*’s central role in the centre-right coalition that evolved around Silvio Berlusconi’s *Forza Italia* party (Andrews 2005). However, very quickly after coming to power, fascist dogmatism gave way to a project for gaining and maintaining institutional power. During Berlusconi’s government, this meant holding several important ministries, including the Ministry of External Affairs. But even after the collapse of Berlusconi’s first government, members of the AN were able to retain important seats on parliamentary committees. This was perhaps most significant in the case of Francesco Storace, a close ally of AN leader Gianfranco Fini. Nicknamed *epuratur* for the purges he carried out against leftist state employees, Storace sat as the chair or vice-chair of parliamentary committees in charge of oversight, including that in charge of broadcasting (Gr 1996; M 2000). It was Storace, as head of the oversight committee for broadcasting, that pressured RAI International to drop the dual mandate in order to concentrate exclusively on Italians abroad (GRTV 1998).

For this reason, these changes at RAI International must be seen as one of a series of actions driven by the AN that sought to reorganize the way that Italians abroad were treated by the government. Most importantly, the election of the centre-right led to the creation of a minister for Italians abroad (*Italiani nel mondo*), a transformation in terminology and intent from previous governments. Previously, issues regarding Italians abroad had been handled by a ministerial secretary within the department of Foreign Affairs as part of the portfolio for migration. This shift initiated a move of Italians abroad out of the ministry into a separate division of government. It also gave new energy to the campaign to grant Italians living abroad the vote, an issue that, as mentioned in the third
chapter, had been at the core of the M.S.I.’s platform since the early 1950s. These institutional changes were supported by a campaign to increase the party’s say in Italy’s foreign policy, raising the profile of Italians abroad. For example, Mirko Tremaglia, who served as the Minister for Italians in the World in the second Berlusconi government, was particularly effective in establishing himself in Italian parliamentary committees on foreign affairs as a powerful and relentless voice advocating a strongly nationalist policy towards Italians abroad.

However, the election of Berlusconi’s coalition did not simply mean the return of long-time fascists to the house of parliament after a fifty-year ban. It also involved the ideological recalibration of the far right in Italy. Whereas the MSI had often put forward its nationalist and corporatist policies at the expense of all other concerns, the AN (guided by the careful negotiations of leader Gianfranco Fini) developed into a far right party that was able to make peace with global capital. When asked if anti-capitalism and state corporatism where too deeply embedded in the deep structure of the party for it to change, Fini remarked in an interview in 1994,

Those who would suggest such a thing are misinformed or speaking in bad faith. We are not anti-capitalist, nor are we statists. Liberty must be preserved for individual men, also in the field of economics. There cannot exist a market that is not a free market; there cannot exist a state that wants to interfere with the market through totalitarian regulations. (Francia 1994)

The position outlined is considerably different from the traditional stance of the party, which described the influence of big business and foreign investment on the wellbeing of the Italian nation.
The opening to liberal capitalism on the right also affected the way that Italians abroad were discussed. The nationalism of previous years was wed to a greater openness to markets and capitalism; in the process Italians abroad were increasingly viewed as business communities (communities of Italian business people) and potential markets for Italian goods (Tremaglia 2002). Italians abroad were no longer viewed exclusively as a source of remittances (which had been in sharp decline for more than a decade), but as “an immense economic and cultural power” (Tremaglia 2002). In the words of the final document of the Conference for Italians Abroad that was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held in late 2000, an event that was the culmination of this new approach to Italians abroad,

In the growing process of globalization, economic and more, Italy has a concrete interest in valorizing the network of Italian presence that already exists and which more powerful countries than Italy do not possess. (Conferenza 2001)

The legacy of migration was transformed from a history of loss and exile into a source of pride and economic power.

The valorization (both economic and moral) of Italians abroad followed the contours of the ethnocentric capitalism that now defined the Alleanza Nazionale. Their new prominence in the mainstream of national politics was crucial in shaping the way in which Italians abroad were conceived as ‘resources’ for the Italian economy and the national conscience. Beginning in the mid-1990s, the discourse around Italians abroad marked out a position that ensured a very particular understanding of the relationship between the tropes of nostalgia and loss common to discourse about Italian migration.
since the 1950s and global capitalism in the era of neo-liberalism. The words of Mirko Tremaglia, long serving minister for Italians abroad, are an excellent example of this:

> Time and destiny have forged the blood and sacrifice of our immigrants over the years to the point that they have become a powerful instrument of development and progress. Long ignored and misunderstood by political leaders, Italians abroad are fully a part of Italy constitutionally, politically, and culturally as well as what is more properly called economically. (Tremaglia 2002)

In this discourse, blood and capital are woven together, marking out a territory that moves from the niche markets of lifestyle consumption to the spiritual reunification of the national body through global economic and information networks.

This made RAI International the link that maintained the practical and spiritual link between Italy and Italians around the world as well as one of the sites in which nationalism negotiated with the demands of global markets. The comments of Massimo Magliaro, a member of the AN appointed head of RAI International in 2000, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of RAI’s international service, are indicative of how older discourses about migration were linked to contemporary global capitalism:

> Today there are sixty or seventy million men that have distant and ancient roots in the most beautiful country in the world. RAI for abroad was born to allow us to continue to speak with these distant brothers. It had changed name…it has changed its skin, but it has not changed its vocation or nature: speaking to these millions and millions of co-citizens. These co-citizens that have left behind their cardboard suitcases and have become influential, always more influential, in their new countries. They have become parliamentarians (there are more than 350), entrepreneurs, financiers, merchants, distributors, artisans, people that created and create for themselves and others wealth and culture. (Milana 2003)

Magliaro’s statement is interesting because it draws heavily upon the language of migration that was adapted by the MSI during the 1960s and 1970s, but it pairs this
language of loss and distance with its return to the mother country by means of economic productivity. RAI International’s function as a public service was not opposed to its involvement in circuits of global media distribution and the capitalization of Italian communities around the world as was the case during the early years of the network’s existence. Instead, the two were part of the same project for transforming the relationship between identity, citizenship (note Magliaro’s expansive use of the term), and economic agency.

*Distribution and the Problem of the International Italian Market*

While these transformations were taking place at RAI International around the nature of programming and the network’s mandate, the fundamental institutional structure of the network remained unchanged. The limitations that had plagued the first proposal for an Italian satellite channel in the early 1990s did not disappear with the launch of RAI International. A stable network for international distribution remained the primary problem for the service. As a result a distribution agreement was signed with Arab Digital Distribution, a division of Dallah Al Baraka investments, for the global distribution of the RAI International signal. The distribution agreement, a ten-year commitment signed in 1994, continued regardless of which party was in control.

Funded by Saudi capital, Arab Digital Distribution was founded in Rome in 1994. ADD, along with its production arm, the Arab Radio and Television (ART) Network, was the result of a partnership between Dallah Al Baraka Investment bank, an

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7 For a discussion of ART and Dallah Al Baraka, please see Scheifer (1998).
investment firm with a wide variety of interests founded by Sheikh Saleh Kamal, and the
Saudi Prince Al Walid Bin Talal. Kamal was a pioneer in the development of satellite
broadcasting for Arab markets, having previously been a partner in the Middle Eastern
Broadcast Corporation and worked with the BBC in launching its short-lived Arab-
language news channel in the mid-1990s.

In January 1994, Arab Digital Distribution started offering packages of channels
to satellite subscribers in North Africa and throughout the Middle East. The package
consisted of four Arab language channels produced by ART and international services
like RAI, broadcast from the Telespazio Center in Fucino Italy to ArabSat. For a brief
time, political and economic reasons made Fucino and the suburbs of Rome the centre of
global Arab television (Schleifer 1998).

The inclusion of RAI on the packages offered by ART meant that the service
received relatively comprehensive distribution throughout North Africa, the Middle East
and parts of Asia. These were hardly the markets in which to reach large numbers of
Italians or Italian speakers (although parts of North Africa had long been watching Italian
television.) In these areas, the agreement was primarily beneficial to ART since the sports
coverage and live soccer games on RAI International were a cheap alternative to more
expensive sports offerings from broadcasters like SKY. However, the primary motivation
for the agreement from RAI’s point of view was the access that ADD was able to gain on
satellite platforms in the Americas (Serafini 1996). ADD, under the auspices of its parent
company Dallah Al Baraka, negotiated the inclusion of RAI International (along with
ART’s channel bouquet) on the Echostar platform in the United States and the Galaxy
platform in Latin America.
The agreement, however, was not received positively in Italy. Members of RAI’s executive often complained that that profits gained by the global distribution of RAI International were not passed onto RAI (Zaccaria and Morrione 1998). The weaknesses of the agreement with ADD and its apparent failure to return profits to RAI meant that RAI International was the object of attacks from two sides. Those who saw the service as uncompetitive because it was a public enterprise that relies of government allocations, following the line of Berlusconi and others in favor of privatization, argued that the network paid little attention to the wants or needs of its audience. The fact the there was nothing to be gained or lost was seen to be further supported by the fact that RAI was willing to give away its international service, paying little attention to the realities of the global media market and the interests of its viewers. At the other end of the spectrum, following more nationalist critiques, there were others who saw the relationship with ART as a symbol of the way in which RAI, and the Italian government in general, had misunderstood the value of Italian culture and mismanaged it to the detriment of the people of the nation. RAI International was just another example of the way in which Italian heritage had been sold to foreign interests.

In order to better understand the nature of RAI’s relationship with ADD and its negotiation of global media markets, it is useful to contrast the development of RAI International with other services that were orientated towards Italians around the world, that were taking shape during the same period. Unlike RAI International’s, which was maintained and eventually concentrated on the public service obligations to Italians abroad and their descendents, the new services struggled to create a product that was not necessarily limited to an Italian-speaking audience. Indeed, the different paths followed
by the private services help to show the degree to which RAI International’s evolution was conditioned by the influence of far right’s ethnic nationalism.

Starting in 1997 with the travel-themed Marcopolo, SitCom Spa started to develop themed channels for distribution on the Telepiù satellite platform in Italy and quickly sought to extend their distribution internationally (Bellinzona 2006). Expanding operations to include three more channels in 2000 (Leonardo, cooking-oriented Alice, automobile channel Nuvolari), the company deployed a franchise method through which the channels were licensed to other national markets and dubbed into the required language. Agreements of this nature were signed in Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe. The goal of taking advantage of the ‘Made in Italy’ brand without limiting the audience to Italian speakers also lead to the development of a series of formats that were easily adapted to foreign markets; the programs rarely involved interviews and were driven by visuals and voiceovers (Bellinzona 2006). Unlike RAI’s services, the channels operated by SitCom made a concerted effort not to be identified with a particular ethnic market; hence they could easily move beyond a particular linguistic market.

SitCom, however, is a very different kind of company from RAI. It is a much smaller company and its operations function on much smaller budgets oriented towards niche markets. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Mediaset, the media empire owned Silvio Berlusconi which owns three of the private national networks in Italy (Stille 2006), was never able to successfully launch a satellite channel of its own despite two attempts. The first of these was in 1998, through a partnership with a cable distribution company based in New Jersey; it was to be called the Italian American Broadcasting Association ("Mediaset Prepares" 1997; "Mediaset International" 1997; Mediaset Sets
Eyes" 1997). Ultimately, the channel was unable to build strong enough interest in the test market around New York City to convince the Mediaset executives that it would be a profitable operation (Carini 2006). A similar initiative was launched in Argentina in 2000, but was cancelled in the wake of a downturn in advertising reviews that took place in the wake of the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York ("Berlusconi to reach" 1995). While current Mediaset president Pier Silvio Berlusoni still cites the launch of Mediaset International as a possibility in the near future, there have been few resources directed to the project in recent years (Serafini 2003).

The push to generalize the *italianità* of the SitCom channels beyond a linguistically or ethnically limited audience and the reluctance (and failure) of Mediaset to develop an international service suggest that the operation of RAI International is very much contingent on the Italian government’s ability to operate the service that only breaks even or even operates at a loss. It is this relationship that lay at the heart of the agreement between RAI International and their global distributors Arab Radio and Television. Indeed the question of profiting from the service has been a major one in recent years. As much as there are complaints about the failure of Dallah Al Baraka to pass its profits onto RAI, the agreement is more often criticized for licensing the distribution of an Italian public service to a private company that has attempted to make a profit from its distribution.

The aversion to profit is one of the peculiarities of the way in which RAI International has developed in international media markets and come back to the network’s status as a public service. The main issue around which anxieties about the profitability of the service were expressed was whether or not a public service like RAI
should be charging its citizens for access to the service. This was intimately linked to the debates about whether or not the services should use any encryption technology (Leoni 1998; Zoratto 1998). Both raised issues about access and what it meant for a public service to operate in a profit-driven broadcast platform.

The origins of the encryption issue lay with the fact that RAI’s national services were initially broadcast directly throughout Europe. This meant that Italian broadcasts were made available in territories where the rights for broadcast were owned by other parties; this was especially common with sports programming ("Favorire un accordo" 2002). The decision was made to encrypt the signal and remained that way. However, Italians abroad often pressed to have the encryption removed (Tremaglia 1999; Comites del KwaZulu-Natal Sud Africa 2000). Bruno Zoratto, in a letter to Francesco Storace from 1997, formally requested that the Italian government intervene:

> With this letter, I ask your formal intervention so that the encryption of programs sent via satellite in Europe is ended. It is intolerable that a public entity like RAI puts issues regarding the payment of copyright fees for programming before this problem when their wasteful spending is known to everyone. (Zoratto 1997)

Zoratto’s letter is typical in the way that it brings together claims about access with criticisms of the wasteful use of the profits earned by RAI’s international service. These debates were particularly acute with regard to the games of the Italian national soccer team. As Zoratto and others pointed out, the right to watch the national soccer teams game over free-to-air television was guaranteed by law which, they argued, meant that the encryption of these games in Europe was a violation of the rights of Italians living abroad.
Discussions about encryption, most pronounced in Europe, found their counterpart elsewhere in the world in debates about the proper amount that subscribers in the United States and parts of Latin America could be charged. The argument was that the payment of a fee for access to RAI International was the equivalent of paying the annual license fee in Italy for the use of a television. In the year-end report for 1997, Morrione states that many Italians agree to pay the subscription fee in order to stay in touch with Italy (which he then explicitly compares to the fee paid by Italians.) In Australia, Marco Fedi (who later served as the first representative in the Italian parliament from Australia), arguing that more needed to be done to support local Italian media, complained about “the total monopoly enjoyed by RAI, who block any reduction in subscription fee” (Fedi 2000). He complained, noting the changing demographics among Italians in Australia, that distributors charged “an often prohibitive cost for a community like the Italians, who are growing older and working less, who see their wages drop day after day” (Fedi 2000). A similar set of concerns surrounded RAI International’s introduction into the Canadian market, a context that will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

The debates about encryption and subscription fees for RAI International are about the way in which the rights of Italians abroad as a subset of the national population mediated by the exigencies of the global media market. On the one hand, they offer a vision of public service broadcasting and the responsibility of public broadcasters to their audiences as citizens and members of a national community (since the audiences were often imagined to include the descendents of Italians abroad as well as Italian passport holders). On the other hand, the global media market demanded that RAI negotiate
international property rights regimes and partner with companies whose primary goal was profit rather than public good.

An interesting example of how these two dynamics were brought together early on in the history of RAI International, drawn from the history of failed international Italian television services, was the suggestion in 1996 that RAI and Mediaset might join together to create an international television service for Italians abroad. The argument came in the face of concerns that foreign companies, specifically Canal+, were planning on launching such a service (Serafini 2003). The motivation behind the proposal was to maintain a ‘truly’ Italian presence in international television. While nothing ever came to pass, the proposal itself speaks to the way in which transnational television was seen as an issue of national importance in Italy during these years.

Framing all of these demands and debates was the ethnically centered capitalism that emerged as part of the growing influence of the Alleanza Nazionale, and that proved to be the most successful frame for mediating between the demands of public service and the pressures of global media markets. Increasingly, RAI came to function according to traditional understandings of public service broadcasting but within a distribution context defined by private, for-profit broadcasting. As will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter, the alignment of RAI International with a public service mandate was increasingly linked to the demands of Italians abroad as the rights of citizens. The dissipation of the profit motive, even to the point of operating at a loss, was one of the peculiarities of the nationalist capitalism that was being put forward. It functioned as a way of putting in check the pro-market elements of the centre-right coalition to which the
AN belonged. At the same time, it mitigated the implications of being involved with non-national partners for distribution.

*Tarak Ben Ammar and the Clash of Ethno-Capitalisms*

These concerns would become particularly pointed in the aftermath of the attacks on the United States in September 2001. For the remainder of the chapter, I would like to examine briefly a case study in which the implicit ethnically centered alignment of Italy’s international broadcasting was articulated to imaginings of the global conflict between Islamic extremism and Western liberalism. After the attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001, RAI International’s agreement with Dallah Al Baraka came to be viewed increasingly through the optic of the so-called ‘clash of civilizations’ (Huntington 2003). It is an interesting example of the way in which two forms of ethnically-centered broadcasting that were previously able to co-exist became polarized to one another in the wake of global events.

It is worth noting that the relationship between RAI International and its distribution partner had never been completely supportive, but they co-existed reasonably well. The primary source of income of Dallah Al Baraka Investments, the parent company of Arab Digital Distribution, was Islamic Banking. Sheikh Saleh Kamal publicly stated that he tried to operate his entire business empire in accord with the laws of Islam. This claim was tested when it came to his dealing in television, particularly the distribution of programming that might be seen as contradicting Islamic law regarding the presentation of women and talk about religion. When asked about his decision to
distribute programming that might be seen as blasphemous by devout Muslims, Kamel responded by saying that they were only involved in distribution and not the production of content. It was the decision of individuals to watch or not watch the channels. He might try to influence the content of broadcasters, but he would not intervene or censor directly (Kamel 1998). As already noted, there were several critics in Italy who felt that the alliance with a foreign partner was a sign of the decline of Italy and another indication that nation’s heritage was being sold to foreign companies. However, these concerns were mediated by the mutual necessity that each party had for the other. However, this situation was disrupted in the aftermath of the attacks on September 11th, 2001.

On 9 November 2001, the New York correspondent for the Roman daily Il Messaggero, Stefano Trincia, published an article describing a meeting between Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Saudi Prince Al Waleed. The main topic that was discussed at the meeting involved Berlusconi’s plans to privatize Italy’s state-owned energy company ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi), but the implications drawn by the article went well beyond this particular business deal. Drawing on information recently made public in The Wall Street Journal, the article explained that Al Waleed was under investigation by the FBI and the CIA for his possible involvement in the financing of the recent attacks on the World Trade Center.

The article also recounted the refusal by the mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani, of a donation of ten million dollars to be used for recovery efforts from Al Waleed on the grounds that it might be tainted by his alleged relationship to Al Qaeda. It was in the context of these investigations and the emergent war on terror that the article detailed the Saudi Prince’s long-standing relationship with Italy – and with Berlusconi in
particular – that included numerous agreements relating to Italian television – specifically the fact that it was Prince Al Waleed who had agreed to purchase Berlusconi’s shares in the Mediaset television networks in order for the Prime Minister to avoid contravening conflict of interest laws (Jaafar and Guider 2004).

Three days later, an article was published in the small daily newspaper *Libero* outlining the extensive ties between RAI, Italy’s public broadcaster, and Dallah Al Baraka Investment Bank. At the heart of the story was the distribution deal signed between RAI and Arab Digital Distribution for the global distribution of RAI International. Similar to the story about the Saudi Prince, the story was told against the background of ongoing investigations into the involvement of the bank in the financing of the attacks on the World Trade Center. In many ways, it was the same story since the other major investor in Arab Radio and Television was Prince Al Waleed, who owned 30% of the company. At the time, there was concern in the media and in the public more generally about the implications of these relationships between Italian media and Saudi capital ("RAI e Mediaset” 2001). An inquiry to the Minister of Communication filed in parliament the following week by a member of the Green Party asked “if the government did not feel it urgent and necessary to clarify the relationship [between RAI and Dallah Al Baraka], avoiding all suspicion, given the ongoing global campaign against terrorism led by Bin Laden.”

RAI responded to the story with a press release later the same day which sought to eliminate suspicions against Dallah Al Baraka while maintaining its distance from the company. The press release read: “In reference to news linking Dallah Al Baraka to an investigation into terrorist financing in the United States, nothing has yet come to RAI’s
attention that suggests the involvement of Dallah Al Baraka in such activities. Let it also be made clear that Dallah Al Baraka’s contract with RAI from 1995 only involves the distribution of the signal and no other involvement from RAI. Furthermore, in recent years there have been disagreements that have obligated RAI to ask for the termination of the contract” ("Precisazione" 2001). However, the investigation did not turn up any serious evidence and the contract with RAI International was not terminated.

In 2003, these events returned to the public eye when a lawsuit was filed in New York against Al Baraka Investment and Development Bank for its alleged involvement in the financing of the attacks on 11 September 2001. The lawsuit once more gave rise to suspicions about the investment bank. In Italy, these suspicions were again linked in media coverage to the relationship between Al-Baraka and RAI. The questions were similar as well. Should the Italian government have an agreement with interests that are under suspicion of being involved in terrorist activities? Should the government not be particularly sensitive to this issue given that RAI International was a particularly important state institution, being the primary conduit between Italy and the millions of Italians living abroad? In Canada, for example, this information was circulated by the network’s opponents who used it to suggest that the Italian service was politically compromised while RAI International was in the midst of negotiating direct access to the Canadian market with regulatory agencies.

In January 2006, the details of the relationship between RAI and Saudi finance made another, more elliptical appearance. In the lead up to the Italian election, Silvio Berlusconi complained to the press that he was tired of hearing accusations about a conflict of interest between his business interests and the public responsibilities of his
office. There were, he explained, many on the left who were also guilty of similar kinds of behaviour. Specifically, he noted the involvement of senior members of centre-left parties in advocating for the bid made by UNIPOL, an insurance company with ties to Leftist investment co-operatives, for the Banca Nazionale di Lavoro over other offers from foreign investors. Berlusconi also indicated that this was only the beginning of what he knew about the left’s dirty dealings. Although the accusations never led to any serious investigations (whether because there was, as Berlusconi claimed, “nothing actionable” in what he knew or because he was afraid of the trouble it would cause for both the right and the left in Italy,) one name in particular seized the spotlight, that of French-Tunisian businessman and longtime Berlusconi associate Tarak Ben Ammar.

It was Ben Ammar who was the source for the information that implicated leftist politicians in the banking scandal. Finding him more interesting than yet another scandal bringing to light collusion and corruption between Italy’s political and financial elites, the papers were very quickly filled with profiles of this mystery man who seemed to be at the heart of the intrigue enthraling the Italian electorate that week. The articles recounted his youth in Italy as the son of a Tunisian diplomat (and nephew to former Tunisian president Habib Bourguibab) raised in Italy in Catholic schools (in spite of his Muslim heritage) and an illustrious history in film production (including, most recently, Mel Gibson’s The Passion of the Christ.) Central to the details of his career was his long-term relationship with Silvio Berlusconi. In particular, readers were reminded that it was Ben Ammar that had helped Berlusconi sell 25% of his Mediaset Empire to Saudi Prince Al Waleed in order to comply with regulations governing conflict of interest. (The articles insinuated that it was this deal that had aided his recent ascendancy to the board of directors of
Italy’s oldest and largest investment bank, Mediobanca.) The articles also recounted Ben Ammar’s central role in negotiating the distribution agreement between RAI and Al Baraka Investments for the distribution of RAI International.

As much as these stories help us to map the institutional and political-economic relations that constitute the transnational networks within which cultural commodities circulate, they are significant for other reasons as well. The interest in Prince Al Waleed, Dallah Al Baraka Investment Bank and Tarak Ben Ammar is intimately related to the vernacular geopolitical knowledge that has defined many aspects of everyday life in Europe in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. The media coverage (often invoking a hint of scandal) are grounded in the same discourses (and related anxieties) that frame the global ‘war on terror’ and popular panics about the coming (or, perhaps, already current) ‘clash of civilizations’ between the North Atlantic world and the Muslim world that circulate in Western Europe.

The ongoing story of Ben Ammar and Dallah Al Baraka walks the line between the ‘official’ mappings of corporate relations and the functioning of state institutions and less legitimate popular understandings of international politics in the post 9/11 world. In accounts of these events, these two kinds of knowledge have often been brought together, overlaid upon one another in the form of a single narrative. However, my primary interest is not to separate these two aspects of the narrative, producing a political economic mapping accompanied by an appropriately stern condemnation of the more ‘scandalous’ aspects of the story for being sensationalistic. Instead I would like to treat the narrative as an artifact produced by and attempting to describe the role of media in the second Italian

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8 For an interesting discussion of the relationship between popular and official knowledge, please see Clare Birchall’s *Knowledge Goes Pop* (2006).
republic. There are many interesting insights that come to light by following this approach into how parts of Italy have linked up with global financial and information networks and the way in which knowledge about these networks circulates through the media.

The media coverage of the relationship between RAI International and Al Baraka Investments was about more than simply noting a series of business arrangements. They were framed by the cultural and political context that emerged in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. At the same time, they show the profound differences that have existed, and continue to exist, on the right in Italy. The difference between Berlusconi’s embrace of private business and global capital come into conflict with the nationalist politics of the Alleanza Nazionale. The result is consensus around what I have been calling ethnically centered capitalism in Italy. Therefore, it is not enough to map these relationships as a set of economic or legal obligations. Or rather, a broader frame is necessary if the significance (both economic and cultural) of Al Baraka is to be understood.

In many ways, the figure of Ben Ammar (and the media’s coverage) is the embodiment of the tensions that were initially focused on the role of Dallah Al Baraka in Italian broadcasting. The nature of the business deals he has been involved in can hardly be surprising to any person who follows Italian economic and political events. What is more interesting about this story is the fact that the reporting of the events – the banking deal, but also the media agreements between Berlusconi, Kirsch and Prince Waleed – all habitually involve the recounting of Ben Ammar’s past and of his transnational political and cultural identity. This is most clear in the continual citation and recitation of his
Muslim roots and catholic education. If the events in the wake of September 11th gave rise to a feeling of terror that the other was already inside, the stories around Ben Ammar replay these same tensions at the level of continual suspicion: the insider who can never wholly be assimilated, brought into the community as a full member.

But the attention given to these events also speak to a broader issue about the relationship between cultural identity and economic activity. This case is an example of the way in which the economic had become increasingly significant as a symbolic space for the determination of cultural identity. In the case of Al Baraka and Italy, it is the political economy of RAI’s international channel (a channel that could not be seen in Italy itself) that came to signify issues of cultural identity and national unity. The economy was the site through which the national population identified itself as having something in common. There was, after all, no suggestion that the relationship with Al Baraka was affecting the programming on the channel. It was simply distributing the signal.

This example and the preceding discussion about the ethno-capitalism of the *Alleanza Nazionale* show the ways in which that the economy itself has become a site for the reproduction of cultural identity. In this regard, we might set this sequence of events alongside a wide variety of other phenomenon ranging from the relationship between national pride and the fluctuations of currency in international markets, to the relationship between the rise and fall of populist political movements and the flow of financial capital, or even the proliferation of business news in the past decade. One might even consider the parallel development of Islamic banking and finance practices since the 1970s as part
of these developments. And, in Italy, it cannot be separated from the emergent ethno-capitalism of the Alleanza Nazionale discussed in this chapter.

The involvement of Dallah Al Baraka in the development of RAI International asks us to consider the ways in which the borders around Italy are drawn. The public pressure placed on RAI about its relationship with Dallah Al Baraka can be seen as an attempt to work out the contradictions between the drive towards an ethnically homogenous imagination of capitalism. However, these pressures – which I have located as part of the acceptance of neo-fascist political parties in the mainstream of Italian politics – are mediated by the necessities of global markets. Thus it is not simply that economics or culture are wholly determining, but rather that there are continual negotiations between a variety of factors. In this case, the relationship between public institutions and global media markets have been negotiated and articulated to the vernacular geopolitical knowledges that structure everyday life in the aftermath September 11th.

An analogous example in which the drive for national solidarity and global media markets intersected lays at the heart of the case study analyzed in the next chapter. In that context, the involvement of a Canadian broadcast company, albeit an Italian Canadian company, as the distributor of RAI’s programming was deemed to be insufficient in its ability to serve the needs of Italian communities in Canada. In that example, it will become apparent that the anxieties and desires of national solidarity that were mobilized around the imagined radical difference that circulated in the discussions of Dallah Al Baraka and Tarak Ben Ammar are no less virulent when the differences are perceived to be less profound. In this sense, the absolutist tendencies that are manifested in these cases
become crucial for understanding the ways in which emerging understandings of Italy as a political, cultural and economic space at the beginning of the 21st century.
Chapter Six

In this chapter, I lay out the details of a conflict between representatives of the Italian and Canadian governments, the Italian public broadcaster RAI, a privately-owned Canadian cable network, and members of the Italian Canadian community. From one point of view, this is a turf war. It developed around the attempts of RAI International to win a license for distribution on digital cable and satellite platforms in Canada. A Canadian-based Italian-language broadcaster, the Telelatino Network, opposed this license because of concerns that RAI International would destroy Italian-language broadcasting in Canada by over-saturating the market. From another point of view, this conflict was about two different understandings of how media regulation and policy, cultural identity understood as ethnicity, and transnational communication networks are linked to debates about the rights of citizens. The primary function of the Canadian regulatory system in broadcasting is the maintenance of national sovereignty in cultural production. This mandate came into conflict with the vision of global ethnic affiliation among Italians that has become increasingly prominent in RAI’s international activities.

This chapter brings together these two ways of looking at these events by showing how the rights of citizens were positioned by both sides as constitutive of particular understandings of media markets and economic viability. Building upon the earlier
argument about the changing relationship between identity politics and global capital, this chapter provides more evidence that many of the givens in traditional discussions of cultural policy and media industries (the nation, the distinction between public and private, the rights and needs of citizens, the desires of the audience) no longer stand on solid ground. At the same time, the argument in this chapter opens the way to some of the issues explored in greater detail in the conclusion about the relationship between Italy’s role in supporting the recognition of the identity and rights of Italians around the world and the exclusionary formation of Italian identity that has gained prominence in recent years.

I begin this chapter by examining two programming philosophies adopted by RAI International at different moments in its history. Each of the philosophies imagined the viewer as belonging to the globe as a space of community, albeit in very different ways. Contrasting the two, I argue that the viewer imagined by RAI International has become increasingly linked to legal and political conceptions of citizenship, a development that cannot be separated from the extension of voting rights to Italian citizens living outside of Italy. I show how the rise of the concept of informazione di ritorno [return information] in descriptions of RAI International’s programming philosophy – a development that coincided with the (re)turn to RAI International’s ‘public service’ mandate discussed in the previous chapter – was the catalyst for the transformation of the imagined audience for RAI’s international broadcasting (and, by extension, the Italian state’s vision of Italians abroad) into a community of citizens rather than just spectators.

The introduction of RAI International into Canada, and the controversy that surrounded it, provides a concrete example of how the changing vision of RAI
International’s role as the international voice of Italian public broadcasting has been implicated in broader debates about the place of Italians abroad government policy and the globalization of media. As I argue below, I believe this controversy marks a transitional moment from an earlier period (documented in the first two chapters) to the new set of political, cultural and economic relations I started to trace in chapters three and four. This new set of relations can be characterized by the increasingly rigid forms of national identity shaped campaigns for the institutional recognition of Italians abroad as political subjects by the state. The transformation of RAI International was an important element of the campaign orchestrated by the Italian far right, a campaign whose effects in the management of the political economy of broadcasting were traced in the previous chapter.

In the second part of the chapter, I examine how the controversy around RAI International’s entry into Canada offers an opportunity to consider the complex relationship between nationalism and cultural diversity in the context of contemporary globalization. In its discussion of Canada and Canadian broadcast regulation, I draw attention to the way in which policies that are intended to foster multiculturalism and support cultural diversity within the frame of a single nation-state encounters difficulties when confronted with some forms of national and ethnic identification that have developed in conjunction with the expansion of transnational communications network.

This chapter extends the preceding discussion of the way in which talk about the economics of ‘global markets’ and the potential of transnational media networks for maintaining community have been linked to demands for collective rights by (but more often on behalf of) Italians abroad. The controversy around the licensing of RAI
International in Canada brought together two different understandings of the relationship between the rights of citizens, transnational media and the economics of global media. The ethnically centered model of transnational media that developed in Italy in the late 1990s came into conflict with the nationalist protection of cultural production that organizes Canadian media policy and regulation. Tracing this conflict brings to light the way in which individuals and state institutions have been figured in government discourse in the imagination and enactment of policies meant to foster individual and collective identification with the nation.

*Mega-Events and Return Information*

Eighteen months after its creation in 1995, RAI International was re-launched. This decision was partially due to a change in government (which also meant a change in the executive and staff), but it was also a response to the perceived failure of RAI International to garner an adequate international audience (Morroni 1997). As discussed in the previous chapter, this re-launch involved the re-organization of the network’s mandate to include both information services for Italians abroad as well as programming that would increase the profile of Italian media internationally. In the previous chapter, I described this as the “dual mandate” that the network was asked to fulfill by the Italian parliament.

The 1997 re-launch replaced founding director Angela Buttiglione with Roberto Morrione. Both were longtime employees of RAI, but Buttiglione’s connection to Berlusconi’s *Forza Italia* (her brother was among its founding members) made her position as the head of the network less tenable than Morrione’s, a supporter of the new
centre-left government (Padovani 2005). However, the most significant change in the executive of the network was the appointment of Renzo Arbore, a well-known singer and bandleader, to the position of artistic director. At the time of Arbore’s appointment, the responsibilities of the artistic director at the network were ill defined, but he very quickly transformed the position into the ‘face’ of RAI International. Arbore began appearing on a weekly program in which he responded to letters and comments from viewers (a role he described as being the network’s *testimonial*), as well as planning and executing major programming events. In an interview from 1998, Arbore explains his role at the network as follows: “I’m the artistic director, which means I’m in charge of the programs that have any kind of artistic content. Also, I’m the so called “testimonial”, which is to say I do propaganda for the network, I’m the soul of RAI International” (Affatato 1998).

The most often discussed aspect of the programming on RAI International during Arbore’s tenure as artistic director was the energy and resources dedicated to events that put the spotlight on the global reach of the service itself and the possibilities that satellite distribution gave for simultaneous exchange between locations around the world. It was these ‘mega-events’ (Garofalo 1991), in spite of constituting only a small portion of the programming schedule, that were often seen as defining RAI’s “new way” of creating international programming (Milana 2003).

*La Giostra* [The Merry Go Round], broadcast live on New Year’s Eve 1996, is often cited as the launch of the network’s new approach to its mission. Lasting 20 hours in total, the program was hosted by Arbore. As Morrione described it recently,

The ‘mother of live shows’ was the *Giostra* of New Year’s ’97 where Arbore was live in the studio for 20 consecutive hours, with many guests and segments from the Pole, Peking, Moscow, Berlin, Jerusalem, San
Paolo, Buenos Aires, New York and Los Angeles. It was memorable enterprise without precedent and never to be duplicated. It was made possible when a sizeable amount from the previous year’s budget was found and it needed to be spent. There was also the need to push RAI International out of the anonymity in which it seemed imprisoned. And so RAI International exited from the ghetto and gained attention and respect; from that moment on, it was no longer the Cinderella of the RAI networks. (Morrione 2003)

Central to La Giostra’s role in pushing RAI International out of anonymity was the foregrounding of the simultaneity that satellite broadcasting allowed for in the form of segments from major cities around the world. This simultaneity was used to communicate RAI International’s legitimacy as the international ‘voice’ of RAI (and no longer the ‘Cinderella’ of the family) and a respected participant in global media markets. In La Giostra, the ability to broadcast live from multiple locations around the world at the ‘same’ time operated as a metonym for the way in which RAI International was able to serve a global audience.

The presentation of television as a global medium in La Giostra draws upon the relationship between live broadcasting, satellite television and conceptions of globality that has developed since the 1960s as part of what Lisa Parks describes as ‘global presence’ (Parks 2005).¹ It belongs to the genre of television programs described by Dayan and Katz as ‘media events’ (Dayan and Katz 1994). According to Dayan and Katz, media events are broadcast live from remote locations around the globe. The content they

¹ According to Parks, the sense of ‘live’ simultaneity in satellite broadcasts was produced in the 1960s through a foregrounding of the technology itself (Parks 2005). Its ‘liveness is organized in part as the visualization of the signals real-time generation and movement’ through the infrastructure of satellites, ground stations, and cables. While there remained some elements of La Giostra that highlighted the technological aspects of the broadcast (for example, frequent references to satellites linking guests from around the world), the techniques for communicating the globality and liveness of the program were more directly borrowed from new broadcasts. For example, text on the screen was used to communicate locations and the segments ‘live’ status.
broadcast is preplanned (the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana is one their most often-cited examples), but it interrupts normal programming. Thus, the media event is scripted, but not part of the quotidian rhythms of television. *La Giostra* fulfills all four of the criterion laid out by Dayan and Katz. And, following Dayan and Katz, *La Giostra* can be seen as making use of these qualities to fulfill the ‘ceremonial’ or ‘ritual’ functions that major televised events play in the life of the nation or among international viewers. It was designed to bring together an audience united primarily through their spectatorship of the program.

However, in keeping with the dual mandate of RAI International, the audience that *La Giostra* was intended to constitute was not entirely homogenous in nature. The lines between the ‘national’ audience, which is to say Italians abroad, and the international audience involving a broader spectrum of viewers were often blurred, but are still apparent. This can be seen in the locations to which *La Giostra* traveled, locations that might be seen as a mirror of the places to which the broadcast might be received.

On the one hand, there are a series of locations that speaks to a global humanism, many of which were framed by the symbols of the cold war and the ensuing triumph of global capitalism. The South Pole, Moscow, Beijing and a reunified Berlin can be seen as representing this understanding of the globe. These cities highlighted the scope of the network, reaching cities previously cut off from Italy behind the iron curtain (or, in the case of the Pole, the extreme of geographic isolation.) The presence of Jerusalem contributed to this mapping of the planet with an ecclesiastical but ecumenical accent.

However, Sao Paolo, Buenos Aires, and Melbourne (not mentioned by Morrione, but the
first international segment in the program) also mapped the world of Italian communities around the world. New York, not surprisingly, did double duty as both the cultural capital of the United States and home to the largest community of Italian Americans.

It is striking how closely the map of the globe offered by *La Giostra* follows the description of the prospective audience for RAI International that Morrione gave in November 1996 upon his appointment as director. After having outlined the network’s reception in the Americas and Australia, where there are large communities of Italians who needed to be served, he goes on to note the importance of Asia: “China, India, Japan, and Korea, where there aren’t large communities of Italians, but where “made in Italy,” the image of Italy, the culture and art that separate us from others, are highly respected resources” (Morrione 1996). Ultimately, *La Giostra* served as a container that held together a vision of the globe that is centered around Italy (particularly Rome, *caput mundi*) through the presentation on screen of the various geopolitical alliances as well as the economic and migratory connections which link Italy to the world. Given this orientation in the network’s programming philosophy, it is not surprising that Arbore, speaking of his activities as Artistic director, stated that his goals were to produce shows that would be accessible both to those that spoke very little Italian as well as those that were highly cultured (Arbore 1999).

These two mappings of the globe brought together within the frame of the 20-hour broadcast and statements about the network’s prospective audiences suggest that two different ways of watching RAI International were often overlaid over each other. On the one hand, the segments spanning the planet stood as a sign of RAI International’s ability to produce programs at a global scale. On the other hand, there was an attempt to
speak directly to communities of Italians abroad. The first vision of the planet offered by the program suggests a mode of watching more common among disinterested, cosmopolitan viewers belonging to a relatively homogenous global media market, while the second vision of the planet was explicitly rooted in the international family of Italians constituted through the broadcast.

But, as their contiguity in La Giostra and the statements of Morrione make clear, it would be wrong to treat these as two totally separate imagined audiences. As Michael Curtin argues in his discussion of global television, the purpose of international broadcasts (the Olympic Games, for example) is the organization of difference (Curtin 2001). La Giostra, like the ‘dual mandate’ discussed in the previous chapter, can be seen as an attempt to bring together the nationalist mission of the network with its attempts to improve its position in global media markets. It was an attempt to unify what seemed two very different kinds of audiences: Italians abroad and non-Italians, Italian speakers and those who spoke almost no Italian. It was also an attempt to unify two very different ways of understanding global broadcasting: public service on the one hand and the profit-oriented goals of building a global brand.

In its attempt to bring these divergent practices and imagined audiences together, La Giostra can be seen as part of a vision of globalization rooted in the euphoria of the early nineties in which distance and cultural differences were reconciled through communications technology and virtuous transformation of ethnicity into niche markets. However, this approach to programming started to fracture and fail after a short period. The particular balance between the ethnic and the economically ecumenical mappings of

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2 It is interesting to note that as time passed, the language of raising the profile of Italian broadcasting internationally has dropped from descriptions of La Giostra, leaving it to be described as a program that allowed for Italians around the world to celebrate New Year’s together for the first time in history.
the globe present in *La Giostra* proved to be as short lived as the ‘dual mandate’ at RAI International that underwrote its conception.

The mega-events that Arbore organized came under increasing criticism from the parliamentary committees overseeing RAI’s activities as well as the RAI executive who saw them as both extremely expensive to produce and of questionable value in the fulfillment of RAI’s mission as a public broadcaster (GRTV 1998). They were sometimes described as *mispatti televisivi* [televised misdeeds] (Arbore 1999). The model of the televisual mega-event was increasingly targeted towards speaking to Italians abroad, dropping broader notions of the audience. This was not an overnight change, but part of the process discussed in the last chapter through which the goals of the network were refocused towards ‘public service.’

Morrione, speaking before the parliamentary committee overseeing RAI’s activities, describes an evening dedicated to a celebration of the Italian flag which exemplifies this trend:

The minister of Foreign Affairs asked us to prepare a *Tricolore* (the Italian flag) evening – that would go on air in the month of January – that we would call *White, Red and Green* (not the most imaginative name, but effective enough.) It would include international connections with Argentina, where there exists one of the oldest *case d’italiani* [Italian community centers], built shortly after the events of our *Risorgimento* and where they have an ancient *Tricolore*. We would also connect with Reggio Emilia, where the *Tricolore* was born and where they are celebrating the anniversary this year. Segments would also take us to the Vittoriano Museum in Rome for a series of testimonies. (Morrione 1997)

Similar to *La Giostra*, the global reach of RAI International was used to create a sense of simultaneity among the dispersed communities of Italians around the world (including the population of Italy itself.) The festival of the Italian flag was similarly deeply
implicated in the rituals and patterns that bring together an audience and, at another level, a people. However, in the celebration of the Italian flag, the notion that such a spectacle might be of interest to those outside of a global “Italian” community has disappeared.

Like *La Giostra*, programs of this kind are intended to constitute an audience, a collectivity that would not exist were it not for the common space provided through television spectatorship. The celebration of the Italian flag is part of an attempt to produce a sense of global community organized by a shared sense of ethnic identity as expressed through the common temporality of a live broadcast. Italians around the world were part of the same Italian community not because of their shared history (even when this was the stated subject of the program as was the case with *Red, White and Green*), but because they co-existed by means of their experience of the mediated event. Through these events, the shared national history is produced out of the simultaneity of the common present and not, as the discourse around Italian identity presented in these programs would have it (for example, the narratives around the origin around the flag), the other way around.\(^3\)

However, this connection between the global television event broadcast live and national belonging raises questions about the kind of participation they facilitated in the national community as expressed through state institutions. This became a particularly salient issue with the election of the second Berlusconi government and the successful campaign to grant Italians living abroad the vote, a campaign that was lead by the *Alleanza Nazionale*. For this reason, it is useful to contrast the mega-events that

\(^3\) The turn to increasingly nationalist themes for the programs suggests that these programs can be seen as an extension of idea that the nation is produced by means of an experience of a common present, represented in the 19th century by the newspaper but adaptable to electronic communication (Anderson 1991).
developed under Renzo Arbore with another model that came to prominence with the appointment of Massimo Magliaro, a longtime member of the *Alleanza Nazionale*, to the presidency of RAI International in 2000.

With the arrival of Magliaro at the head of the network in 2000, the concept of *informazione di ritorno* [return information] became increasingly prominent in descriptions of the service. The phrase was frequently used, along with *tv di ritorno* (Tremaglia 2000), by the Minister for *Italiani nel Mondo* during the second Berlusconi administration, Mirko Tremaglia, and became a central theme in the projects envisioned for the service. The concept of ‘return information’ – not quite a neologism in Italian, but certainly an uncommon expression – was a two-pronged, and never fully implemented, initiative. Primarily it was a policy that sought to further integrate RAI International into the system of RAI’s national television networks. This involved both improving the ability of RAI International to distribute information about Italy to communities of Italians abroad as well as developing strategies for the eventual use of programming produced by RAI International on the main national networks as a way of raising the awareness of Italians in Italy about the lives and beliefs of Italians abroad. Finally, it was

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4 The concept had circulated previously, but it was not given the same emphasis that it would gain after Magliaro’s appointment. In an interview from 1996, Morrione is asked about his commitment to the policy of “so-called” return information. He answers the question by commenting in support of producing a ‘return image’ (*imagine di ritorno*), but never uses the phrase (Morrione 1996). Similarly, Arbore, in an interview from 1998, is also asked about ‘so-called’ return information, but also never uses the term himself (Affatato 1998). This suggests that its circulation was limited up until the late 1990s.

5 The programming produced by RAI International was never successfully integrated into the schedules of the other national networks. As recently as 2007, during the negotiations between the Prime Minister’s office and RAI about a new convention governing RAI’s international service, this issue remained a issue that had yet to be resolved.
also a way of talking about ways to use RAI International as a means for allowing Italians abroad to speak to one another by means of the network.

This is not to say that there was a dramatic shift in the kind of programming on the network accompanying the change in programming philosophy. There had always been elements of these new goals in the programming produced exclusively for RAI International. The longest running program on the network, Sportello Italia [Information Desk Italy], provided information to Italians abroad about changes in Italian law that effected Italians abroad as well as changes in bureaucratic practice generally. It often focused on issues such as the voting rights of Italians abroad, questions about receiving pensions and similar issues. It was joined by a series of in-house productions that primarily consisted of news and information programming whose roots were in the new division in charge of radio and television broadcasts since the sixties. These programs could be seen as the descendents of the various collaborative programs outlined in chapter two, such as Un’ora per voi in Switzerland.

The primary change was the elimination of large-scale programs, aside from those relating to the Italian national soccer team and the Pope, due to budget restrictions. This was part of a larger shift in the way that the service was envisioned and its repositioning as the primary conduit between Italy and Italians abroad. Speaking in 2000, Magliaro explained this as a change in the network’s priorities from ‘entertainment’ to ‘information’:

There will be a larger dose of information and less space for entertainment. Informational programming will be the privileged product in which we will invest the majority of our financial and human resources, both on radio and on television. Providing information means both telling
Italians abroad about Italy and allowing public opinion in our country to find out about Italians around the world. (Morgia 2000)

Magliaro’s statement suggests that there is a direct connection between the changing way of conceiving of ‘global’ Italian television and the mandate of RAI International. The spectacles of the mid-nineties, implicitly characterized by Magliaro as ‘entertainment,’ were as much about gaining the attention of those who did not speak Italian or watch Italian television as speaking to Italians abroad. The kind of participation in the nation that these events solicited were limited in that they did not move beyond a relatively passive experience of that nation as community brought together through the diffuse and distracted experience of ‘entertainment’.

The rise of informazione di ritorno was a discourse that offered a particular conception of Italians abroad who were more directly involved in the affairs of the nation. Return information posited a different kind of viewer, a viewer whose actions were explicitly and intimately linked to their rights as citizens. It is not surprising that Magliaro prefaced his comments about the transformation of RAI’s mandate and programming priorities by acknowledging that the extension of the vote to Italians abroad demands a different kind of broadcaster.

The new editorial policy of RAI International is motivated from the incontrovertible fact that Italians abroad will have the right to vote in a few months…In terms of the product that we are developing, aimed at adequately responding to the new demands created by the vote…”(Morgia 2000)

The granting of the vote to Italians abroad meant that the forms of symbolic communion that were produced through the mega-events needed to be supplanted by a policy that
allowed for a more direct link between the ritual aspects of global media and the institutions of the Italian state.  

These changes were the culmination of the institutional reforms traced in the third chapter that developed around Italian language newspapers in the 1960s and 1970s. At one level, they involved the expansion of rights granted to Italians abroad. Most explicitly this involved voting rights, but it also included greater rights to representation on RAI International. At another level, it marked the last phase in a shift away from the kind of relations that had taken root in the 1950s, an organization of institutions and

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However, it is important to keep in mind that the change in the way that RAI International was positioned was much more clearly pronounced in statements made by politicians and RAI executives about the network than it was in the reorganization of programming priorities. Cooking shows like Prova del Cuoco [Kitchen Challenge], programs about tourism such as Bel Paese [Beautiful Country] and variety shows including Domenica In [Sunday at Home] along with other ‘entertainment’ programs (such as dramas) made up a much greater proportion of RAI International’s schedule than news or information programming. There are two points that should be made relating to this silence about these other kinds of programming. First, the emphasis on information and Italians abroad that have marked RAI International’s programming in recent years should be linked to the growing prominence of Mediaset in the national television market. The connection between information and Italian identity that emerges at RAI is one form which distinguished its from Mediaset’s emphasis on entertainment and American imports. The presence of this in statements about RAI International can be seen as echoes of arguments about the necessity of public broadcasting that focused on its differences from commercial offerings, a part of the (re)turn to ‘public service.’

Secondly, these other programs (unlike news and soccer games) spoke to different kinds of viewing practices and constructed the home as a different kind of viewing space. Rather than an electronic piazza, these programs brought to bear that the site of viewing was usually a domestic space. In this sense, the constitution of RAI International’s mission as a public institution remained tied to the gendered imaginings of the Italian abroad that had first emerged in the 1950s. The mandate of the network, by remaining silent or increasingly dismissive of other ways of using the service, maintained the gendered construction of relations in public life as mediated by media among Italians around the world. Thus, the turn to informazione di ritorno was both continuous with earlier discourses about Italians abroad while marking a profound break with the role that television and other media played in the relationship between the Italian state and Italians around the world.
representations that sought to solicit cultural and economic participation in the nation while diffusing political energies elsewhere. At the same time, the new mission of the network could easily be linked to the ethnically centered vision of capitalism discussed in the last chapter that was gaining prominence in connection with broadcasting. The expansion of the network globally was justified, even required, because of the intimate relationship between the rights of the citizen abroad and media.

The transition between these two approaches to global television in Italy is important for understanding the events that unfolded around RAI International’s arrival in Canada. While this was a conflict over the right of RAI International to broadcast in Canada, the language of the debate revolved around questions of sovereignty and the rights of citizens. What kind of television service did Italians abroad deserve as members of the nation? What kind of television service did Italians abroad need?

Il Caso Canadese

On November 17, 2002, Massimo Magliaro, the Director of RAIDUE and acting director of RAI International delivered a keynote address at the Columbus Centre, an Italian Canadian community centre in Toronto, on the occasion of the second national meeting for italiani all’estero (Maglio 2002). The speech was a strident call for solidarity amongst Italians around the world. The key point, which Magliaro repeated several times, was the importance of ensuring the direct distribution of RAI International in Canada.

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7 In this regard, it is interesting to note that one of the main influences on the mega-events produced on RAI International in the 1990s were global concerts like Live Aid, events which were more successful in soliciting donations from audiences than they were in producing sustained political engagement (Garofalo 1991).
rather than the re-broadcasting of its programs through Canadian proxies. “You will have RAI!” was the refrain that punctuated his comments (Magliaro 2002).

In language evoking a reversal of the transcontinental journey made by hundreds of thousands of Italians to Canada in the previous century, the arrival of RAI International offered the possibility of a reunion with the ‘seeds that were sown long ago’ – the Italian diaspora reconstituted digitally (Magliaro 2002). Canada was described as a ‘black hole’ and a ‘lost continent.’ While acknowledging that Italian speaking Canadians were currently served by Toronto-based Telelatino Network as well as numerous local broadcasters – all of whom carried RAI programming – Magliaro lamented that Italian Canadians remained divided from Italy and the ‘Italian brotherhood’ by the small-minded self-interest of Canadian broadcasters and a wall of short-sighted government regulation designed in the distant past.

Citing the recent efforts made by the Italian government to reach out to Italians abroad, ranging from conferences such as the one he was speaking at to the extension of the vote to non-resident Italian citizens in 2001, he argued that RAI International was a necessity for Italians living in Canada. Bringing together the right to vote and the need for RAI International, Magliaro explained,

You will have RAI because it’s the right thing to do. You are citizens of Serie ‘A’. And it’s not enough that we say it, it’s time that we do something about it. You cannot be recognized as Serie ‘A’ citizens without the benefit of a public broadcasting system that includes both radio and TV from the country of origin, in this case, Italy. A country that allows you to vote in its elections must be able to provide you with information about those elections. (Magliaro 2002)

He went on to argue that the renaissance of the sense of community among Italians around the world provided a provocative and inescapable example of the way in which
political, social and economic boundaries have faded away. RAI International, and the
Italian nation itself, must learn to exist on the waves of information flowing around the
world if they are to survive.

Magliaro’s declarations should be placed in the context of the statements he was
making at the same time about the network’s new emphasis on informazione di ritorno
and the need to develop stronger ties through media with Italians abroad. The language of
recognition and equality that Magliaro used while speaking in Canada finds its
counterpart in the image of the deprived audience for RAI International that often
circulated in Italy when discussing information services for Italians abroad. The equality
of Italians abroad, their rise to “Serie A” citizenship, was what informazione di ritorno
would bring.

Moving from Magliaro’s statements in Toronto to an article published in the
Italian news weekly L’espresso seven months later, a very different version of the Italian
broadcaster’s interests in Canada is offered. Denise Pardo, the magazine’s media critic,
recounts the details of a meeting between the president of Telelatino, Aldo Di Felice, and
Massimo Magliaro on July 4, 2003 in Rome. According to a fax sent to Pardo one week
after the meeting, Di Felice claimed that Magliaro had arrived at the meeting “speaking
and acting very aggressively” (Pardo 2003). Magliaro’s distaste for Di Felice reached its
height with some ‘friendly advice’ to the television executive. Paraphrased in Di Felice’s
letter, Magliaro is reported to have said,

If you continue in this way, you won’t just be dealing with the power of RAI
International, but also RAI Italia, the Italian government, and the Vatican. In
five years, you won’t be able to walk the streets of Canada. (Pardo 2003)
Attempting to limit the damage resulting from the story’s circulation (picking up on the
title of the article’s subtext – “First we cut your programming and then we break your
legs”), Magliaro phoned into a Toronto-based Italian language radio talk show the day
after the story was published to defend himself saying: “Those who know me, know that I
am not a mafioso” (Magliaro 2003)

Di Felice’s letter to Pardo describing Magliaro’s behaviour was only a part of a
broader campaign launched by Telelatino in opposition to the move by RAI International
into Canada. Making use of its ability to access members of the Canadian public directly,
a series of informational announcements of various lengths were produced for broadcast.
The longest of these, entitled *The Future of Italian Television in Canada*, ran 30 minutes
in length and featured various ‘experts’ from the Italian Canadian community
interviewed by Telelatino on-air personality Alf De Blasis, best known as host of the
network’s Sunday morning coverage of Italian soccer.

One of these experts, Professor Francesco Guardini, who also serves as a member
of the Committee representing Italian citizens residing in Toronto (Comites – Toronto),
summarized the situation as follows:

RAI through its representatives has defined TLN as an incompetent
institution. From their standpoint, obviously this is the reason for
announcing its divorce and making its case for a totally independent channel
24 hours a day. I think it would be a dangerous situation because the power
would be in the hands of somebody who doesn’t have a real interest in the
Italian Canadian community but perhaps an interest in political votes or
commercial interests. It wouldn’t look good for Canada. This isn’t the Wild
West after all. We are a country with governmental rules and regulations. If
RAI didn’t like the way TLN has broadcast their programs, they could have
asked for changes. If the divorce must happen, let it happen. (Telelatino
2003)
At the heart of Guardini’s retelling of the conflict between RAI International and Telelatino and Di Felice’s recounting of the meeting with Magliaro in Rome is an appeal to order and decorum. The outrageousness of RAI’s behaviour is likened to the Wild West against which Canada – the Canadian state specifically – is positioned as the sheriff, a necessary protection for good citizens like Telelatino against external dangers.

As the debate spread across the pages of Canada’s Italian-language press in the months that followed, these narratives proved their ability to marshal feelings of belonging as a tool to repel threats deemed exogenous to the community. Social club meetings turned into shouting matches. Demonstrations were organized and petitions were circulated (Riondino 2003). Very soon after RAI International made the decision to break off its ties with Telelatino, the Toronto-based Italian-language daily Corriere Canadese started to publish article in support of the action, continually referring to the arrival of the vote for extraterritorial citizens and the important educative function of the channel as necessary for the preservation of Italian culture in Canada. According to the editorial line presented by the Corriere Canadese, the continued absence of RAI from the Canadian broadcast universe was structured as the equivalent of cutting the Italian Canadian community from its lifeblood (Riondino 2003).

The story as picked up by the English language press was closer to the telling presented by Telelatino (perhaps a result of the networks closer ties with the Canadian media outlets.) Comment pieces ran in Canada’s two largest circulation dailies – The Toronto Star and The Globe and Mail - that concentrated on the incursion by a foreign power into Canada and the possibly dangerous effects this would have on Canada and its multicultural mosaic (Caldwell 2003; Ricci 2003; Zerbisias 2003). Antonia Zerbisias
concluded her article in *The Toronto Star* with the following, unpleasantly nativist note:

“People, please check your ethnic, tribal, territorial, partisan, religious and assorted other conflicts at the Canada Customs door. Canadian culture rules. Otherwise ask yourself this: Why did you come here in the first place?” (Zerbisias 2003)

It is helpful to place the positions taken in the conflict by RAI and Telelatino in relation to discourses about ‘global media’ more generally, understood as the play between the homogenizing impact of integration and the assertion of difference. As a tale of domination in the age of ‘global media’, it is a conflict between two media organizations seeking to maximize their access to audiences (and profit) by attempting to control the flow of resources (programming.) In both cases, the line between ownership and authenticity to the ideals of the community were called in to question in such a way that each side’s accusations reinforced the view that Italian culture in Canada was in the process of being hi-jacked. In the case of RAI International, this authenticity was performed through the repetition of a history, linking present day viewers physically to Italian soil. For supporters of Telelatino, this connection was made through the invocation of a community in Canada whose existence depends in important ways on the broadcaster’s support. At the same time, these stories are tales of resistance. These issues pose important questions about the nature of community and the forms of belonging constituted through mediated communication within and beyond national territories.

I believe that the disagreement represented in these versions recounts the same story in different registers – they are narratives about the drawing of borders around communities. The primary difference between them revolves around a disagreement over the meaning of cultural homogenization. For Magliaro, the struggle against
homogenization means resistance to English-language global dominance. For Di Felice and Telelatino, this same struggle is about absorption into centrally controlled Italian cultural space coordinated by Rome. As De Felice commented to The Ottawa Citizen in late 2003: “I think the question is, is Italian-Canadian culture or Italian-Canadian media going to be run from Rome or is going to be run from Canada” (Lofaro 2003)?

Because of the seemingly intractable tensions in this conflict, it is perhaps more useful to see these events as the result of tensions emerging between two different models of transnational television coming into conflict with one another. There is a certain homology between the position outlined by Telelatino and the earlier programming practices of RAI International. The philosophy behind large-scale programs that spoke to Italians abroad as well as audiences more broadly, that attempted to reach both Italian speakers and non-Italian speakers, were part of an earlier moment in transnational broadcasting. This earlier moment can be seen as the last stage in the management of international broadcasting that emerged in the post-war period and was extremely wary of interfering in the cultural sovereignty of another nation. However, the reorganization of RAI International was not the only source of the controversy.

RAI International’s desire (and demand) to expand into Canada, a consequence of a new understanding of the network’s role in the lives of its audiences as citizens, developed during a transitional moment when Canadian broadcast policy was moving between two ways regulating transnational broadcasting in Canada. A time in which the Canadian system was moving away from the strong model of cultural sovereignty in which the needs of Canadian media industry trumped all other concerns towards an
approach to broadcast regulation that allowed for a greater role to be played by international broadcasters in the development of competition on Canadian airwaves.

I do not mean to suggest that one caused the other, but both must be seen as part of a general change in the context of transnational media and national regulatory regimes. It is not surprising, then, that the event that set the public debate in motion was the decision of RAI International to end the agreement with Telelatino that provided programming in excess of the two hours daily required by Italian law. The motivations for this decision were never clearly articulated, but they need to be read against the background of the newfound interest in Italy in maintaining direct control over RAI International’s distribution and the distribution of Italian television globally which was discussed in the last chapter. At the same time, RAI’s decision to break this agreement in order to apply for carriage on digital distribution platforms in Canada speaks to the new possibilities for transnational television that were opening up in Canadian broadcasting in this period.

_Cultural Diversity in Canadian Broadcasting_

The regulation of transnational television in Canadian broadcast policy can be seen as developing in three stages. It cannot be separated from the acceptance of multiculturalism as a guiding concept in Canadian cultural policy, a concept that has its roots in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and was officially adopted as government policy in 1971 in response to the conclusions of the _Royal Commission on Biculturalism and_
The first stage of broadcasting develops between the mid-1960s and the early-1980s. In these years, the majority of ‘ethnic’ broadcasters were small, independent entrepreneurs who had little relationship with mainstream English or French language media in Canada. In radio, this often involved the granting of limited range broadcast licenses to members of a particular community; in television, the pattern more often involved the leasing of time from local broadcasters for the production and broadcast of a program in a language other than English or French. A few stations, such as CFMT in Toronto and CJNT in Montreal, were granted licenses as multicultural programs, often broadcasting 60-minute or half-hour programming blocks in different languages.

In the Italian community, the case of Johnny Lombardi and CHIN Radio is exemplary. Lombardi, a Canadian-born member of Toronto’s Italian community, moved into broadcasting as a way of advertising his grocery store in the city’s Little Italy. Initially leasing a few hours on weekends for Italian programming sponsored by his commercial interests, he applied and was granted the license for CHIN Radio in 1964. Lombardi quickly moved beyond broadcasting for the Italian community to include non-English programming in numerous other languages, but he never expanded beyond the local market. His forays into television, the weekly variety program *Festival Italiano*, never transformed into an independent broadcast entity, but rather remained a programming block leased from Toronto-based CityTV.

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8 During the years that Pierre Trudeau served as prime minister, the policy of ‘multiculturalism in a bilingual nation’ became a central tenant of Canadian Cultural Policy. The adoption of multiculturalism was made law in 1988 through the *Multiculturalism Act* that formalized the state’s recognition of the diversity of Canada’s population and regulated government support for this diversity.
Beginning in 1984, the second stage in the translation of Canadian multiculturalism into broadcasting coincided with the expanded capacity that cable distribution allowed for and resulted in the granting of national cable licenses to ethnic, or third-language, broadcasters. In the first round of these licenses, Telelatino (or Latinvision as it was known at the time of its initial application) was approved as a joint Italian and Spanish language network and the other third-language license was granted to a Chinese language service (Chinavision, which would later come to be called Fairchild Television.) The early period in the development of ethnic media in Canada was firmly focused on local, primarily urban, markets such as Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver. The move to cable networks with the licenses granted in 1984, marked an effort on the part of regulatory authorities (since both stations were still owned by ‘independent’ parties rather than major media companies) to integrate ethnic media into the national media market.

The most recent stage in the development of ethnic television in Canada one more coincided with the expansion of capacity, this time resulting from the transition to digital distribution (Fraser 1999; Grant and Wood 2004). This resulted in hundreds of services being approved for distribution in the Canadian market. It as part of the transition between the second and third stage of ethnic broadcasting that the conflict between Telelatino and RAI International fits, in the transition between two different understandings of broadcast licensing and it relationship to spectrum scarcity.

The frame for all of these developments is the strong links between media and cultural production and Canadian identity and cultural sovereignty that have defined Canada’s approach to broadcasting since the 1920s (Raboy 1990). The primary objective of Canadian broadcast policy has been to protect Canadian cultural producers from being
overwhelmed by larger competitors from other countries, specifically the USA (Collins 1990). The result of this has been that Canadian broadcast authorities (the CRTC) have placed a much greater emphasis on the “Canadian-ness” of broadcasters. At the same time, the CRTC has traditionally played a major role in organizing competition in Canadian broadcasting, ensuring that Canadian companies are given preferential treatment over other services. In terms of ethnic broadcasters, this was not a serious issue in the early days since local broadcasters, as long as they were operated by Canadian residents, were tied to specific communities and had limited broadcast ranges.

This understanding of ethnic media was complicated with the increasing emphasis on third-language television, culminating with the cable licenses that were granted in the mid-1980s. Unlike radio or local television programs, the national networks were reliant to a much greater degree on international sources for programming. The model that emerged adapted the relationship between Canadian broadcasters and international programming that was already in operation at mainstream English-language networks, where the re-broadcasting of American programming was central to their sustainability. They survived by garnering revenues for advertising that were placed in programming they licensed from the major American networks.

The roots of this arrangement laid in the technical limitations of broadcasting across Canadian territory and the scarcity of broadcast frequencies, but the growth of cable in Canada (among the highest rates of cable in the world) made these arguments sound increasingly hollow. However, the system remained in place because it was believed that in order for Canadian television broadcasting to remain a viable enterprise, Canadian broadcasters had to be allowed to re-broadcast foreign programming (mainly
American in origin) and gain the profits from advertising. These profits, after the licensing fees for the Canadian market had been paid to owners of the programs, would then be channeled into the production of Canadian television. In order to ensure this, a quota for “Canadian content” (roughly 30%) was implemented requiring broadcasters to program Canadian-produced television.

The relationship between the Canadian broadcaster and non-Canadian content producers was similar for third-language producers. Although, in the case of Telelatino, the standard levels of Canadian produced content were reduced in recognition of the difficulties involved in producing enough content in Italian and Spanish given the limited revenue from advertising that could be generated given the relatively small size of their prospective audience. Thus, much of Telelatino’s Italian content was taken from RAI’s International services. A portion of the programming was taken from the 700 annual hours that were provided free to broadcasters around the globe (roughly two hours a day), but an agreement was signed that allowed the Canadian broadcaster to supplement these hours with more programming at a fixed amount. However, the motivation for the policy regarding third-language programming (like its English and French counterparts) was to eventually develop a more robust broadcast industry (which would produce a larger share of its own programming), weaning it off of a dependency on international content sources.

The transition to digital cable in Canada made agreements like the one between Telelatino and RAI seem increasingly anachronistic. Arguments about protecting Canadian television and radio interests based on scarcity and technological limitations could no longer be made by either broadcasters or regulatory authorities. Moreover, cable
and satellite distributors became increasingly vocal advocates for the need to increase the amount of programming available in Canada (threatening the dissertation of Canadian television viewers to ‘grey market’ satellites picking up American signals.) At the same time, however, the nationalist orientation of Canadian broadcast regulation meant that the relationships between foreign networks and their Canadian partners could not change in any fundamental way. What resulted was a new perspective on regulating broadcasting in Canada that focused on the national integrity of distribution rather than an attempt to shape content through policy.

After all, the language about RAI International being directly available to Canadian viewers was not entirely accurate. Rogers Television, one the largest media companies in the country and a dominant player in cable television, sponsored the application for RAI International’s carriage on digital cable. Rogers’ role in the partnership was, however, primarily as a distributor rather than a re-broadcaster. It did not have the same sort of relationship to goals for the development of media production in Canada as the relationship between Telelatino and RAI had.

In this regard, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that the application sponsored by Rogers was actually the second time that RAI International had applied for a digital cable license in Canada. In 2000, as part of the initial round of applications for digital services in Canada, Telelatino, its parent company Corus Entertainment and RAI International had agreed in principal to develop a digital cable network carrying primarily programming from RAI International that was to be called RAI Canada. The application for RAI Canada was approved, but the agreement between the programming partners fell apart before the channel was launched. RAI Canada can be seen as a partial step between
Telelatino’s model of third-language media in Canada and the model of the second application. In the case of RAI Canada, the profits would still be funneled (albeit less directly) to a Canadian broadcaster.

However, the second time that RAI International attempted to gain access to Canadian digital cable, the approach was different. The CRTC had moved away from emphasizing the development of ‘local’ production as the goal of broadcast policy towards one that was focused on the development of a distribution infrastructure and the maintenance of the integrity of the national media market. Proposals for the licensing of a foreign service to be included as part of a digital cable platform no longer needed to include any reference to questions of Canada-based production. They still required a Canadian partner, but these partners were no longer broadcasters. They were cable or direct-to-home satellite companies engaged in distribution rather than production.

Revising Multiculturalism

The initial proposal for RAI International was filed by Canadian cable company Rogers Media was rejected by the CRTC on the grounds that it would damage an already existing Canadian-owned service, Telelatino. It kept with a long history of decisions preventing international interests from broadcasting in Canada (Raboy 1990). However, pressure from community leaders as well as cable and satellite companies increased on the government to overrule the decision of the regulatory authorities. These efforts were ultimately successful. Almost a year after the initial application of RAI to the CRTC in 2003, the governing Liberal Party of Canada, convinced that the RAI International
decision had become a potentially explosive situation among Italian Canadians (long an important source of financial support and votes in both Toronto and Montreal), decided the issue was important for retaining power in parliament in the upcoming election. In response to these concerns, Canadian Heritage Minister Liza Frulla commissioned a report in the summer of 2004 on the status of third-language broadcasters in Canada from a three-person committee chaired by Quebec MP Clifford Lincoln entitled *Integration and Cultural Diversity* (Lincoln, Tassé et al. 2004).

The conclusions of the report acknowledged that the present system of regulating ethnic television was no longer sufficient in an era defined by the potential of digital distribution and the proliferation of broadcast services. To bring the existing policies up to date, the panel called for a more balanced approach in which existing Canadian services would not always be given preferential treatment. The new regulations replaced the previous concentration on the development of Canadian services with greater interest in the development of competition. It also recommended a new definition of ‘public broadcaster.’ No longer tied to state ownership, the term was instead used to refer to any broadcaster that was the ‘principal broadcaster’ in its country of origin. After these suggestions were accepted and became the policy for regulating third-language television in Canada, RAI International’s license was granted in less than two months. Soon after Minister Frulla described these changes in a speech to a gathering of Canada’s private broadcasters as “opening the door to progress” (Frulla 2004).

As already noted, what emerged was the replacement of a partnership model that had the goal of moving toward greater broadcast independence by a series of partnerships in which Canadian companies (often cable or satellite distributors themselves rather than
broadcasters) would become nominal partners of foreign broadcasters. These licenses included minimal or no requirement to produce local programming. Through this shift in policy, the Liberal government believed it would be able to shore up its support among ridings dominated by Italian community groups around Toronto and Montreal. But more importantly for this discussion, these developments revealed the new way in which the discourses about cultural diversity and the globalization of media were situated within understandings of the relationship between culture, economics and the nation in Canada.

The assertiveness of RAI International coincided with the reorganization of the national development project at the core of media policy in Canada. Falling back to a position described as ‘technological nationalism’ (Charland 1996), the new policy separated the production of content from the provision of services. The role of regulatory authorities was no longer the development of a communications infrastructure (one of the impetuses behind the creation of Telelatino), but the preservation of the national broadcast market. The new policies embrace of competition and the redefinition of ‘public broadcaster’ as ‘principal broadcaster’ speak to the changing ground of third-language media in Canada. That RAI International would succeed given these conditions is especially apparent in the documents submitted to the CRTC.

Telelatino – a product and supporter of the older understanding of the relationship between culture and economic development – argued that the Canadian audience for Italian television (including both those that did and did not speak Italian) could not support more than one broadcaster. This was coupled with evidence of its role in supporting ties between Italians and their descendents across the country. Telelatino emphasized its centrality to the Italian community in Canada. It is on this theme that
Telelatino’s plea for protection from foreign competition concludes. It is repeated in many of the interventions filed on behalf of Telelatino and spelled out most clearly in the letter sent from the National Congress of Italian Canadians – Thunder Bay Branch,

Telelatino makes a tangible contribution to our community on a grassroots level, something RAI International has yet to commit to and will most likely be unable to do given the sheer scope of its broadcast audience around the globe. While the arrival of RAI International will bring more Italian programming to our community, it will ultimately do so at the expense of local content and culture.

It is the community in Canada that must be protected and damage to Telelatino would ultimately result in damage to the community. Furthermore, it is the bonds of community, and Telelatino is a significant part of those bonds, that lessen the gap between those Italians that speak Italian and those that do not.

In the RAI International proposal, there was little question about the viability of the market for two Italian-oriented television services (although this was tied to their more expansive definition of the prospective audience for the channel.) Instead, the majority of arguments about economic viability were structured around the claim that it was only the addition of services like RAI to cable packages that would reduce the number of Canadians watching illegal satellite feeds from the United States. The importance of the vote abroad, given such emphasis by Magliaro, is given relatively little emphasis. The primary demand of Canadian citizens is not the development of their ‘own’ cultural industries, but the ability to choose between broadcast services.

Both of these arguments about the Canadian market for Italian-language television in Canada are folded into narratives about the organization of the nation. It is not simply that RAI International provided a more viable business model or more valid
cultural mandate, but that the relation between economic globalization and cultural
diversity offered in the proposal for RAI International was in tune with the contours of
the emergent Canadian broadcast policy. And, more generally speaking, it could be
effectively articulated with shifting understandings of the relationship between economic
development and multiculturalism as part of the project of Canadian nationalism that was
taking shape. This is not to suggest that the relationship between national identity and
transnational broadcasting that animated RAI International’s reorganization was an
irresistible force, but that the two together speak to the pressures and allowances that
organize both global media and the contemporary organization of the nation-state.

June 5th, 2006

The official launch of RAI International in Canada took place on June 5th, 2006.
The service had originally been scheduled to launch on June 3rd, the day on which the
birth of the Italian republic is celebrated, but had been delayed until the weekend. The
launch of the service was greeted by many as the successful end to a long struggle to
receive RAI in Canada. To celebrate the Canadian launch, a special edition of the Sunday
afternoon program L’Italiana was held at locations in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.
For the most part, the program was an unremarkable series of statements from notable
Italian diplomats and Canadian politicians. Neither the minister of Italians abroad,
Tremaglia, nor the Prime Minister were able to make the journey to Canada and their
messages were read from a podium by RAI International president, Massimo Magliaro.
Al Bano and Umberto Tozzi provided the musical entertainment at the celebration; they
were two performers that were popular during the years when immigration from Italy to
Canada was still high.

The program was a complex mix of nostalgia, partisan politics and satellite
technology. It simultaneously celebrated the immediacy of satellite broadcasting, joining
together Italian communities from across Canada and broadcasting them to Italians
around the world, and memorialized the sacrifice that Italian communities abroad had
made in the name of Italy and in the service of their country of adoption. In this sense,
*L’Italiana* from Canada was a televisual expression of the ideology pioneered by
Mirko Tremaglia and other members of the *Alleanza Nazionale* that brought together the
sacrifices of Italians abroad, the nation unified through ties of blood and the potential of
the information society. At the same time, it was an interesting hybrid of the spectacular
events of an earlier era at RAI International and an example of ‘return information.’ The
fact that most of the people on stage had flown over from Italy and would return there
shortly afterwards did not figure in the reports.

Shortly afterwards, Telelatino became known among both English and Italian
speaking audiences as the ‘Home of the Sopranos’ as it replayed the first five seasons of
the American-produced series. It also added *Everybody Loves Raymond* (broadcast in
English, Italian and Spanish) to the schedule. Its Italian programming was drawn from a
variety of sources, including SkyTV and SitCom Spa (discussed in the previous chapter.)
The audience and advertising revenues of the network increased as a result of its turn to
more ‘mainstream’ (which is to say, English-friendly) programming. Some members
have been critical to Telelatino’s abandonment of its mission to ‘serve’ the Italian
Canadian community, but the executives at Telelatino have defended their actions by claiming that it is necessary for ethnic media to change as their audience changes.

It is difficult to say that there is less Italian media available to Canadians and that previous periods in the development of ethnic media were preferable without falling into a restrictively nationalist language. However, in the emerging differences between RAI International and Telelatino, it is possible to see how Italian identity in Canada is dividing. There are Italians in Canada, who often have the rights of citizens in both Italy and Canada, and Italian Canadians who identify with Italy and *italianità* in more ambiguous ways. Ultimately, this division shows both the limitations of the vision of Italian identity that now guides RAI International as well as the impoverished understanding of multiculturalism and citizenship that has developed in Canada as the concept of ‘diversity’ has become equated with commercial choice. It is these limitations in the midst of an abundance of Italian media available globally that I will discuss in greater detail in the conclusion.
Chapter Seven

This dissertation began with my retelling of the events that unfolded on the night of the Italian election in 2006. That night, members of parliament were elected to represent Italians living abroad for the first time. I have shown the way in which this election, as well as the institutional and cultural changes of which it was a part, belong to a longer history in which the relationship between Italians abroad and the Italian nation-state have evolved. I wanted to document how the evolving relationship between Italians abroad and Italy since the end of the Second World War is crucial for understanding the direction that the country has taken in recent years. The trajectory that I have traced has involved institutional transformations, like the granting of the vote abroad and the creation and evolution of RAI International, as well as cultural shifts involving the hardening of Italian national identity. I do not believe that these two elements can be separated, and I have made an effort show the way in which they have been, and continue to be, intertwined.

By way of conclusion, it is appropriate to consider the way in which the history of Italian migration and the role of media in its governance traced here might speak to broader concerns about the future of Italy democracy. I have found it useful to draw upon the insights in Alan Milward’s history of European Integration, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Milward 2000). In that text, Milward describes how histories of the EU
treat its creation and development as though it was the necessary and absolute heir to the
nation-state. This approach to the creation of the EU claims that the signing of the treaties
of Rome has set a process in motion that must ultimately, and inevitably, result in the
passing of the nation-state as the dominant form of social and political organization.

While European federalism is a viewpoint that has lost some of its appeal in
recent years, it still circulates in both its conservative-paranoid iteration (“Europe will be
the end of us all…so, for the love of God, Save our Pound!”) as well as its progressive-
utopian forms (for example Mark Leonard’s rainbow-coloured ode to Europe’s will-to-
power.) Milward, however, sees this viewpoint as limited when it comes to understanding
the way in which the European Union evolved into its present state. He argues that there
is no essential opposition between the rise of the supranational institutions in Europe and
the nation-state. In fact, the emergence of the supra-national institutions has allowed for
nation-state in Europe to survive and reinvent itself in the post-war period.

In line with Milward’s argument, I believe that much of what I have explored in
my dissertation is organized around something that might be called ‘the diasporic rescue
of the nation-state.’ I am not arguing against Milward’s claims, since much of my work is
historically coterminous with his. Instead, I want to suggest that the dynamics that he
outlines are somewhat impoverished because they overlook the importance of cultural
and symbolic life for maintaining the existence of the nation. His study is primarily a
political-economic and institutional history of the nation-state’s reinvention in a
supranational context; its references to cultural policy and the media are limited to
gestures towards what he calls ‘national myths.’
The previous chapters have shown how imaginings of Italians abroad, from exiles to saviors of the nation, have been linked with and articulated to the institutions of the nation-state. There is evidence of the way in which certain understandings of national identity have continued to be powerful forces in the processes of social organization and subject formation. I believe that the ‘diasporic’ rescue of the nation-state, a turn that is becoming increasingly widespread both in Europe and beyond, forms the cultural complement to the supranational support for the economic and security legitimacy that Milward discusses. This dissertation brings to light how the emergent structure of political and social organization as articulated through the nation-state in the global era has developed in Italy.

This is not to suggest that these shifts in media and cultural policy are merely symptomatic of changes in other areas of state intervention. This would be to repeat those arguments, addressed in the introduction by Hesmondhalgh, that relegate media and cultural policy to a secondary position in relation to the more serious areas of government action. Instead, my dissertation shows the way in which media and cultural policy have long been significant, and they have only become more important for understanding the broad range of shifts in practices of governance in Italy both internally and internationally. In tracing these changes, the concept of a ‘nationalist economy of migration’ has guided my understanding of these various and seemingly disparate phenomena. It unworks the concept of the nation-state as a given conceptual and territorial object even as it holds onto the historical legacy of the concept of the nation as it had been received in the West.
There is, however, a broader issue that needs to be addressed, namely the way in which the nationalist economy of migration and its relationship to global circuits of capital, symbols and migration maintains the traditional function of the nation-state as a means of categorizing and dividing people and things. The nation-state’s traditional role as the arbiter of citizenship continues to allow for the delineation of citizen from slave, stranger from familiar, and friend from enemy.

The elaboration of the possibilities and limitations of a European citizenship elaborated by Etienne Balibar provide a useful way for thinking through how these divisions continue to be produced and maintained through national formations. In his recent writings, he develops the idea of the border as the site through which to interrogate the logic and the limits, both literally and philosophically speaking, of the nation and ethnic communities (Balibar, Jones et al. 2002; Balibar 2004). Through a detailed analysis of the way in which national identities and state apparatus are implicated in the production of community through processes of inclusion and exclusion, his approach also allow for greater attentiveness to the ways in which global or transnational media are implicated in national projects.

At the heart of Balibar’s critique of the ‘border’, understood as a clearly expressed dividing line between two discrete units, there is also a profound critique of sovereignty and identity (or nationality when understood in the terms of the nation-state.) Furthermore, as Balibar shows, to trouble the certitude of borders is to trouble the very foundations of the modern subject as it has developed in Western Europe and North America. We are all, as Balibar notes quoting Fichte, ‘internal(ized) borders’. However, the urgency of Balibar’s project arises from more than just the inevitability of European
unification. It is also related to the increased circulation of people, information and goods.

The disjoint between traditional notions of the absolutely sovereign nation and the reality of increasingly integrated world economic and cultural systems has resulted in sets of relations that have come to instantiate a kind of ‘global’ apartheid (Balibar 2004). This is a world in which two different but interrelated systems (with two distinct logics of circulation), corresponding to those who enjoy full rights of citizenship and those who do not enjoy any (e.g. les san-papiers in France), exist at all times in all places, with the former dominating the latter. Balibar’s intervention, therefore, attempts to find a way out of the increasingly violent manifestations of state-form (such as police intervention both at ‘home’ and abroad; the economic violence of the constitution and consolidation of international markets) through the positing of a new logic of inclusion, a logic based on the radical undecidability of the border as both a space of division and site of encounter - in his words, “a dialectic between ‘constituent’ and ‘constituted’ citizenship” (Balibar 2004:77).

To bring communications technology and symbolic production into the discussion would not simply mean the extension of borders by means of communications technology (Balibar 2004), but a critique of the ways in which the borders that delimit a community are drawn. In my dissertation, the extension of the vote abroad by the Italian state and the rationalization of extraterritorial markets for the state broadcaster according to an ethnically centered understanding of capitalism can be seen as the separation of the concept of filiation through blood and national identity from its grounding in territory.
These developments can be seen as a limited critique of borders that preserves the social and economic inequalities currently in existence.

The extension of the vote abroad and the increased availability of Italian information services have generally been treated as the recognition of rights long denied to citizens living abroad. I think this is mostly right, but it has also shown the way in which the modern nation-state, through media, institutional and economic recognition, has reconfigured the lines between citizens and others. Balibar powerfully describes this process, writing

"Sometimes noisily and sometimes sneakily, borders have changed place. Whereas traditionally, and in conformity with both their juridical definition and “cartographical” representation as incorporated in national memory, they should be at the edge of the territory, marking the point where it ends, it seems that borders and the institutional practices corresponding to them have been transported into the middle of political space. They can no longer function as simple edges, external limits to democracy that the mass of citizens can see as a barrier protecting their rights and lives without ever really interfering with them." (Balibar 2004)

Ultimately, media matters in the Italian case because it is one of the places in which these divides are put into practice. There is a disturbing symmetry between the Roman living in Toronto who votes in Italian elections for the Left Democrats in the hope of ousting the neo-fascist National Alliance from the governing coalition and the Albanian living in Rome who falls victim to the draconian immigration policies of fortress Europe. It is difficult to ignore that the surfeit of rights enjoyed by citizens of the most developed nations finds its mirror image in the absolute denial of rights to an increasing percentage of the population of the globe.

This dissertation contributes to research that brings to light the disjoint between the functioning of sovereignty through the state form and the increasingly integrated
world economic and cultural systems. It is not simply by chance that in many cases it is the same populations that once suffered the violence of colonialism that are now on the front line of globalization’s destructive aspects. It is important for us to see how the rights granted to some citizens can be brought into line with the politics of multiculturalism in ways that do not increase tolerance and openness. This was the argument underlying chapters four and five.

In both cases, the institution of a ‘global’ understanding of the role that communication technologies and media production and consumption play cannot be allowed to simply re-instantiate the practices of exclusion already in circulation, but something new must be imagined and enacted. It is the radical indeterminacy in every invocation of community that must be acknowledged and the necessity of continual struggle for openness against exclusion. To ignore this project and bury oneself in either the joy or despair of a global perspective stripped of its particularity is not an option. The line between internationalism and new forms of colonialism, while contorted, is nonetheless direct and uninterrupted.

However, the possibilities for greater democracy and communication that transnational media allow are considerable, and they should not be ignored, but they are not absolutely beneficial to all. It is precisely this complex terrain – a terrain that I hope I have described as one of struggle rather than despair – which is at the centre of this dissertation. I find many of these themes, both what I find most hopeful and what I find most worrisome, condensed in a monument recently constructed in Santo Domingo in the Dominican republic. The monument, designed by Egidio Ambrosetti, was commissioned to commemorate the contribution of Italians to the Dominican Republic from the arrival
of Columbus to the present. Paid for by the town of Fiuggi, the hometown of the majority of Italians who settled in Santo Domingo, it stands as another example of the communication circuit between government bodies in Italy and communities of Italians abroad (Garibaldi 2006a).

*Proposal sketch of monument in Santo Domingo (E. Ambrosetti)*

In the words of the Secretary General of the town of Fiuggi, the monument was meant to capture the full breadth of the relationship between Italy and the Dominican Republic over the past five centuries. In an email to the planning committee, later published in a local newspaper, he explains the meaning of the monument:

The artist has put Italy on the right with the national flag above it and the Dominican Republic on the left, with its national flag above it. From boot departs a path which slowly widens and on which there stands an
anonymous Italian arriving in the Dominican Republic. Having given the monument the title from the discovery to the re-discovery, the artist has also portrayed a small ship of Columbus and a typical Caribbean beach. Above the ship, there is a satellite that is a sign of the contact between Italy and Santo Domingo and a sun that, in a certain sense, might represent the light of investment. (Garibaldi 2006a)

The monument and the description given speak to many of the themes addressed in this dissertation. The monuments aligns Columbus’ journey, satellite television and the ‘light’ of investment in the process bringing together memory, communications media and capital. The language of national and ethnic belonging is offered is perhaps the clearest example of the nationalist economy of migration I can imagine.

Moreover, the monument is as significant for what it does not acknowledge as for what it does. The discovery and re-discovery of the Dominican Republic leave the colonial implications of Columbus’ journeys or even the contemporary journey made by tourists to ‘typical Caribbean beaches’ unaddressed. For this reason, it is also worth noting that in the monument as finally constructed, the satellite had disappeared from view and been replaced by a single sun in the centre of the plaque (Garibaldi 2006b). This might be seen as a symbol of the way in which technology and media, unless dragged into the forefront, has a tendency to seem a more than natural part of our daily lives. Perhaps such details do not appear under the light of investment.

But this monument reminds us that the sea continues to stand as a powerful marker of the experience of migration in Italy. And it is on this theme that I would like to conclude.

As I was researching this dissertation, there was a story in the Italian papers that fifteen migrants attempting to enter Italy had been dumped in the middle of the Strait of Sicily when the captain of the vessel they were traveling in feared that immigration
authorities had discovered them. Not telling his passengers that the coastline was still several miles away (they were at the limit of international waters), and the sea was barely above freezing, nearly half of the fifteen perished. The press was horrified, and the dead added to the tally of those who did not survive the journey.

Occurring at the extreme limits of Italy, both geographically and politically, it is precisely such situations that need to be brough into the discussions about the history, recognition and commemoration of Italians abroad.

This is not simply a question of changing the representations of migration in Italy by moving toward some sort of abstract equivalence between migrant ‘then’ (us) and migrant ‘now’ (them.) But it should serve as the material context from which to think about the intersection of the institutional, representational and historical movements through which Italy has been produced and continues to be projected into the future as both a guarantor of rights and a perpetuator of violence towards these marginal populations.

Derek Walcott once wrote, “The sea is history.” Perhaps it is also our future. Nowhere is this more true than in the Mediterranean basin, where ancient currents continue to deliver ships to shore carrying both the promise of a better life and people who have come to seek the source of that promise; where sometimes its waters hold the cold of illegal transit in the dead of night; where sometimes it is the space of ever more comprehensive military and police surveillance; and where sometimes it is the space in which new communities that are neither national nor international are in the process of coming together. Perhaps it is the sea, then, that deserves our attention as the material instantiation of the complex mixture of promise and catastrophe of the present moment,
marked by the past, yet continually moving towards the future. This would be to propose a different kind of model for Italian cultural studies, one less clearly tied to the imagined borders of national culture and territory. And perhaps this is not entirely surprising, since, as Walcott also writes - taking us to the shore itself – it is “in the salt chuckle of rocks/ with their sea pools, there was the sound/ like a rumour without any echo/ of History, really beginning.”
Appendix A: RAI Telefilms about Migration, 1956 – 1965

The list of films listed below was compiled after my research at the archives of RAI in Rome. I used both the database of programs that were available in the RAI archives as well as working through issues of RAI’s weekly television magazine, *Radiocorriere*. I was able to screen a large number of these programs (many of them are now available digitally for researchers at the RAI archives at RAI’s headquarters on Viale Mazzini.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program Title</th>
<th>Producer(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Italiani a Londra</td>
<td>Valentine Selsey</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Giovanni Salvi</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Gli Italiani nel Canada</td>
<td>Giovanni Salvi</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Rhodesia d'oggi</td>
<td>Giuseppe Lisi, Franco Lazzaretti</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Piccola Italia di New York</td>
<td>Gian Gaspare Napolitano</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>La Grande Diga Sullo Zambesi</td>
<td>Giuseppe Lisi, Franco Lazzaretti</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Italcable</td>
<td>Andrea Pittiruti, Armando Pizzo with BBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Tutto il mondo e' Paese</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Il mondo e' piccolo</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Gli Italiani di Tanganika</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Tempo Libero</td>
<td>Sergio Spina</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Citta' tra due mondi: Hong Kong</td>
<td>Antonio Cifariello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Gli Italiani in Brasile</td>
<td>Ugo Gregoretti</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Fattorie Italiane nel Paese Dei Kikuyu</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>Italiani nel ecutatore</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>Gli Italiani In Uganda</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>Oggi nel Kenia</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>Oggi nel tanganika</td>
<td>Properi, Franco/Palombelli and Nievo</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Arriverderci Italia</td>
<td>Ugo Zatterin, Enzo Trapani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Gli Stranieri Ci Guardono</td>
<td>Giuseppe Lisi, Giuseppe Sala</td>
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<td>1963</td>
<td>Dio Nere, Diavolo Bianco</td>
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<td>Antonio Cifariello</td>
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<td>Bruno Ambrosi</td>
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<td>Nkrumah: storia e leggenda di un capo dell Africa nuova</td>
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Appendix B: Migration Statistics, 1946 – 1970

These figures are taken from the volume *Problemi di lavoro italiano all’estero*, 1970.

The numbers are those offered by ISTAT, the Italian statistics agency. There is some debate about these figures though, but they give the reader a general sense of the number of people that left Italian during these years. I stop in 1970 as this is the year in which Italians returning started to outnumber those that were leaving, a signal that the post-war wave of migration was coming to an end.

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Emigration</th>
<th>Total Repatriations</th>
<th>Emigration to Europe</th>
<th>Repatriation from Europe</th>
<th>Emigration outside Europe</th>
<th>Repatriation from outside Europe</th>
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<td>110,286</td>
<td>4,558</td>
<td>103,077</td>
<td>3,958</td>
<td>7,209</td>
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<td>254,144</td>
<td>65,529</td>
<td>192,226</td>
<td>55,420</td>
<td>61,918</td>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>308,515</td>
<td>119,261</td>
<td>193,303</td>
<td>101,691</td>
<td>115,212</td>
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<td>1949</td>
<td>254,469</td>
<td>118,261</td>
<td>94,959</td>
<td>97,680</td>
<td>159,510</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>200,306</td>
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<td>54,927</td>
<td>38,377</td>
<td>145,379</td>
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<td>1951</td>
<td>293,057</td>
<td>91,904</td>
<td>149,206</td>
<td>53,441</td>
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<td>1952</td>
<td>277,535</td>
<td>96,900</td>
<td>144,098</td>
<td>72,151</td>
<td>133,437</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>224,671</td>
<td>103,038</td>
<td>112,069</td>
<td>71,463</td>
<td>112,602</td>
<td>31,575</td>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>250,925</td>
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<td>108,557</td>
<td>76,183</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>296,826</td>
<td>118,583</td>
<td>149,026</td>
<td>86,344</td>
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<td>344,802</td>
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<td>207,631</td>
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<td>341,733</td>
<td>163,277</td>
<td>236,010</td>
<td>127,977</td>
<td>105,723</td>
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<td>1958</td>
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<td>383,908</td>
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<td>174,210</td>
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<td>232,421</td>
<td>187,939</td>
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<td>200,919</td>
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<td>158,462</td>
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<td>57,251</td>
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<td>168,000</td>
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<td>4,350,488</td>
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Net Migration: -3,140,268, -1,413,309, -1,622,912
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