

TRANSNATIONAL RADICALS



**Italian anarchist networks in southern Ontario and
the northeastern United States, 1915-1940**

By Travis Tomchuk

**TRANSNATIONAL RADICALS: ITALIAN ANARCHIST NETWORKS IN
SOUTHERN ONTARIO AND THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES, 1915-
1940**

by

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Abstract

Previous studies of the left have tended to focus on groups or movements within the confines of national boundaries. Yet the adherents of these organisations were often migrants who travelled to and lived in multiple states. The Italian anarchist movement emerged during the latter half of the nineteenth century during the process of that country's unification. As the need for cheap labour in the industrializing nations of north-western Europe and North and South America grew, a mass exodus of migrants left Italy. Among those migrants were anarchists who established networks that spanned continents and the Atlantic Ocean. Wherever Italian anarchists settled they began to publish journals, engage in anarchist activism, and re-create the radical culture that had its roots in Italy. This dissertation examines a portion of the transnational anarchist movement that existed in Canada and the United States between 1915 and 1940. The themes explored in this work include the formation of these transnational anarchist networks, the divisions within the Italian anarchist movement and their repercussions, how transnational activism was conducted, and the culture these transnational radicals created.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|---|
| ACS | Archivio Centrale dello Stato |
| AdR | L'Adunata dei Refrattari |
| AAFNA | Alleanza Anti-Fascista del Nord America |
| ACWU | Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union |
| AFL | American Federation of Labour |
| CCF | Co-operative Commonwealth Federation |
| CFS | Canadian Federation of Students |
| CGDCF | Comitato Generale di Difesa Control il Fascismo |
| CGL | Confederazione Generale del Lavoro |
| CNR | Canadian National Railway |
| CNT | Confederación Nacional del Trabajo |
| CPC | Casellario Politico Centrale |
| CPC | Communist Party of Canada |
| CPR | Canadian Pacific Railway |
| CPUSA | Communist Party of the United States of America |
| CS | Cronaca Sovversiva |
| CSC | Correctional Service of Canada |
| DKP | David Koven Papers |
| EGPP | Emma Goldman Papers Project |
| FA:EGP | Federico Arcos: Emma Goldman Papers |
| FAI | Federazione Anarchici Italiana |
| FIOM | Federazione Italiana Operai Metallurgica (Italian Metal Workers' Union) |
| FLQ | Front de Libération du Québec |
| FSI | Federazione Socialista Italiana |
| IISH | International Institute of Social History |
| ILGWU | International Ladies Garment Workers' Union |
| IM | Il Martello |
| IWMA | International Working Men's Association |
| IWW | Industrial Workers of the World |
| JGP | Jacques Gross Papers |
| JLCP | Jacob Lawrence Cohen Papers |
| LC | Labadie Collection |
| NDP | New Democratic Party |
| OBU | One Big Union |
| OFI | Ordine Figli d'Italia (Order of the Sons of Italy) |
| OGPU | Ob'edinennoe Gosudarstvennoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie |
| OND | Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (National Afterwork Organisation) |
| OPCCA | Ontario Progressive Conservative Campus Association |
| OPIRG | Ontario Public Interest Research Group |
| OVRA | Opera Volontari Repressione Antifascista |
| PNF | Partito Nazionale Fascista |
| POI | Partito Operaio Italiano (Italian Worker's Party) |
| PSAR-FI | Partito Socialista Anarchico Rivoluzionario – Federazione Italiana |

| | |
|-------|--|
| PSI | Partito Socialista Italiana |
| RCMP | Royal Canadian Mounted Police |
| SFI | Sindacato Ferrovieri Italiani (Italian Railway Workers' Union) |
| SIA | Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista |
| SLP | Socialist Labour Party |
| SLRSI | Società dei Legionari della Rivoluzione Sociale Italiana |
| SM | Social Movement |
| SOPF | Save Our Prison Farms |
| SPA | Socialist Party of America |
| TSM | Transnational Social Movement |
| UAWMF | Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers |
| UIL | Unione Italiana del Lavoro |
| UMWA | United Mine Workers of America |
| USI | Unione Sindicale Italiana |

Introduction

In 1920, Attilio Bortolotti left his hometown of Codroipo in the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia at the age of sixteen. Having witnessed firsthand the brutality and senselessness of the First World War, he was determined to avoid the service in the Italian military mandatory for males beginning at the age of eighteen. His experiences during this conflict also led him to question the religious beliefs of his parents. After he and his mother Maria discovered dead soldiers in a ditch, the young Bortolotti asked, “If there is a God, why does he allow wars and killing like this if he is so powerful?”¹ Bortolotti, who had an older brother, Guglielmo, living in Windsor, Ontario, decided he wanted to go to Canada. When he arrived in Windsor that July, Bortolotti was able to find employment through his brother as an assistant to a blacksmith who worked for a public works contractor. Bortolotti had experience in this trade. As a youth he had apprenticed to a blacksmith in Codroipo and, after the local blacksmith relocated to Bologna, became the town smith. During his time working and living in Windsor, Bortolotti attended night school to learn English and become a machinist. His training in the latter led to a new position as a lathe operator at the same business. Though Bortolotti was making headway at work, his days in the shop were plagued by the racism of his supervisor, who never called Bortolotti by name – only “wop” or “dago.” After nearly two years of abuse, Bortolotti was at the end of his rope. One day, while he was being berated by his supervisor for not repairing the shop’s generator fast enough,

¹ Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 178.

Bortolotti threw a hammer at the supervisor's leg, knocking him down. This ended Bortolotti's employment with this particular firm.²

Bortolotti spent his spare time at the Windsor Public Library studying astronomy and the history of religion. He was also reading the works of the naturalist Charles Darwin and the sociologist Herbert Spencer. Bortolotti and his brother Guglielmo would also get together with Italian friends and discuss themes such as religion. The friends would congregate at the apartment of a local grocer, possibly Fortunato Mariotti, an anarchist originally from Fano, Friuli-Giulia Venezia.³ This personal study and group discussion helped to solidify Bortolotti's anti-religious position and led him to declare himself an atheist in 1921. However, it was not until the following year that Bortolotti became interested in anarchism. He had read a pamphlet on the arrest and incarceration of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, the two Italian anarchists arrested for their supposed involvement in a payroll heist that occurred in Braintree, Massachusetts, in April 1920 that had left the payroll master and a security guard dead. Both men were found guilty and sentenced to death. The pamphlet explained that the two men were innocent of the charges of robbery and murder, and had been convicted on the flimsiest of evidence. At this point Bortolotti had never heard of Sacco and Vanzetti or anarchism. He wanted to find out more about the two men and the political philosophy to which they adhered, and was given a few anarchist newspapers and some pamphlets by notable anarchist writers Errico Malatesta and Sébastien Faure to read. It took him half a year to fully understand the material but it had a long-lasting influence. The next time he was

² Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179.

³ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179; G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console, Toronto, to Consolato Generale d'Italia, Ottawa, 7 July 1933, Fortunato Marriotti, busta 3075, Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC), Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome.

among friends, Bortolotti stated that he was an anarchist opposed to all government and authority. Two anarchists, most likely Giulio Ghetti and Giuseppe Tubaro, came over to Bortolotti and shook his hand.⁴

Bortolotti's becoming an anarchist coincided with Fascist Benito Mussolini's march on Rome and he was actively involved in antifascist activism in both Windsor and Detroit. Around this time, he met a Friulian bricklayer who had been living in the United States and who had been recently hired by Bortolotti's brother in Windsor. The bricklayer was an anarchist and asked Bortolotti to hand deliver a letter to a comrade in Detroit. The letter was addressed to Fortunato Cernuto, the Sicilian-born owner of a candy store located on Rivard Street.⁵ The store also served as an anarchist meeting place and radical library for *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari,"* a local anarchist circle aligned with the New York-based anarchist journal L'Adunata dei Refrattari. After Bortolotti delivered the letter, Cernuto invited him to peruse the anarchist literature and he took some pamphlets. This was Bortolotti's first introduction to *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari,"* and would mark the beginning of his involvement with these Detroit anarchists. From that point on he would travel to Detroit every Sunday morning to attend meetings. However, Bortolotti continued his interaction with his Windsor comrades and was present for weekly fund-raising dances or performances.⁶

In the oral histories conducted with Attilio Bortolotti, he does not elaborate on the specific antifascist activities he and others were involved in during the early 1920s in

⁴ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179; Attilio Bortolotti and Rossella Di Leo, "Between Canada and the US: A Tale of Immigrants and Anarchists," Kate Sharpley Library, <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/8pk1h4> (accessed 18 July 2010); Attilio Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream: A [sic] Oral History with Art Berthelet," *Kick It Over* 17 (Winter 1986/1987): 1.

⁵ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179-180; Prefetto di Messina, Messina, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 5 Dec. 1912, Fortunato Cernuto, busta 1257, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁶ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179-180; Bortolotti and Di Leo, "Between Canada and the US: A Tale of Immigrants and Anarchists."

Windsor other than his mention of “fight[ing] the Fascists.”⁷ Bortolotti believed that his difficulty in finding work in Windsor was a direct result of his antifascism which led to local Fascists seeking to blacklist him. Bortolotti was able to find employment as a mason with brother Guglielmo, who by this time had relocated to Detroit and was constructing houses.

Regardless of whether Bortolotti was living in Windsor or Detroit, his anarchist and antifascist activities continued uninterrupted. And, even while living in Detroit he maintained close contact with comrades in Windsor who would notify him about antifascist actions in that city. For example, Bortolotti was present when the Italian Consul to Canada visited Windsor in 1926. At that meeting, Bortolotti raised his hand to speak but the chairman⁸ would not recognize his right to speak. As Bortolotti recalled,

I called him [the chairman] what he was – a coward. On the platform one of fascist leaders in Windsor said, ‘If you have the guts, come here and speak.’ I got up as fast as I could and in five seconds I was there. I told the consul what they [the fascists] were – a bunch of killers, liars, and the rest. At my shoulder was a picture of the [Italian] king [Vittorio Emanuele III]. I tore it off the wall, crumpled it in my hands, and threw it in the face of the consul. That started a melee. In less than a minute the whole audience was fighting each other. The fascists retreated into one corner. My brother came over with a couple of comrades and said, ‘Tilio, let’s go.’ We could hear the police sirens coming.⁹

In early 1927, Bortolotti was again living in Windsor after United States immigration officials began to monitor his brother Guglielmo’s work sites in Detroit.

⁷ Bortolotti, “Guardian of the Dream” 1.

⁸ The chairman of this meeting was actually a former boss of Bortolotti’s by the name of Luigi Merlo, a prominent member of Windsor’s Italian community. Merlo came to Canada in his teens and later established companies in construction and land development among others. He was involved in the Separate School Board, was a member of Knights of Columbus, in addition to two golf and country clubs, and “a loyal Liberal Party supporter,” ostensibly after his involvement chairing fascist meetings. Susan Petkovic, “Italians in Windsor: The Development of the Erie Street Community from Ghetto to Via Italia,” MA Thesis, Queen’s University, 1992, 64-65.

⁹ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 181.

Still unable to find a job in Windsor, Bortolotti was having difficulties paying rent. He was still active politically and had come to the attention of Windsor police. One day while at home, two police officers visited Bortolotti and took him to see the chief of city police for a talk. When Bortolotti arrived at the police station, he saw a number of anarchist pamphlets that had been translated from Italian to English lying on the chief's desk. The police chief told Bortolotti to leave Canada or he would face criminal charges. Again Bortolotti was forced to return to Detroit where he found work as a machinist for the Ford Motor Company and resumed his anarchist activities with his Detroit comrades.¹⁰

One of Bortolotti's activities included the distribution of leaflets to commemorate the two-year anniversary of Sacco's and Vanzetti's judicial murder. A comrade with American citizenship did not think it safe for illegal migrants, like Bortolotti, to be involved in the leafleting campaign because of a city by-law that had made the practice illegal. Even though Bortolotti was aware of the risk he was taking, he began to hand leaflets to workers as they exited a General Motors factory. A police car happened to drive by and Bortolotti was arrested. Found guilty of distributing anarchist literature and working in the United States illegally, in addition to admitting he was an anarchist in court, Bortolotti was ordered deported to Italy. Italian comrades were able to raise the \$3000 bail – an enormous sum in 1929 – to secure Bortolotti's release from jail. Raffaele Schiavina, then editor of the anarchist journal L'Adunata dei Refrattari, arrived in Detroit shortly after bail was secured and counseled Bortolotti to forfeit his bail. As Bortolotti recalled, '[Schiavina] said to me, 'Tilio, your life is worth more than \$3000. Go back to

¹⁰ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 182; Bortolotti and Di Leo, "Between Canada and the US."

Canada and get lost.¹¹ Taking Schiavina's advice, Bortolotti returned to Windsor but, because of his previous run-in with local police, made his way to Toronto.¹²

The Argument

In many ways, Bortolotti's experiences were representative of Italian migrant anarchists. He was part of the mass migration from Italy, one that began in the late nineteenth century. This exodus was due to two important and overlapping factors: the need for unskilled and semi-skilled labour in industrializing nations, and the unification of Italy, known as the *Risorgimento*, whose leaders had promised but failed to deliver improvements to the daily lives of labourers and peasants. For Bortolotti, the Italian state only offered mandatory military service. Though Bortolotti did not identify as an anarchist prior to leaving his hometown of Codroipo, anarchist ideas had begun to circulate among Italians during unification and had quickly led to the emergence of a movement. As Italian anarchists migrated to different parts of the globe in search of work, to escape repression because of their political activities within Italy, or to avoid military service as did Bortolotti, they established sites of anarchist presence in the urban and resource extraction centres not only in Europe and the Americas, but also in Northern Africa and the Middle East. Often anarchists did not remain in their first location of settlement and lived in multiple states before finally settling permanently. As anarchists left Italy they continued to stay in contact with comrades who had yet to migrate. This created transnational links among those anarchists still living in Italy and those living abroad. Thus, when it came time for an anarchist to migrate, a system of networks – a

¹¹ Avrich, *Anarchist* Voices 183-184; Bortolotti and Di Leo, "Between Canada and the US."

¹² Avrich, *Anarchist* Voices 184; Bortolotti and Di Leo, "Between Canada and the US."

form of anarchist migration complex – was already in place which provided an important means for settlement within their political and cultural *milieux*. The existence of these anarchist migration networks also provided someone like Bortolotti, who was new to anarchism, access to a pre-existing community of activists. Yet at the same time, those Italian-born anarchists, many of whom did not become naturalized citizens of the countries to which they migrated, were in a precarious position as migrants and as anarchists. Bortolotti's experiences demonstrate these difficulties. When his anarchist activities affected his ability to find work in Windsor, he was forced to seek employment in Detroit. His illegal status in the United States meant having to avoid immigration authorities who regularly visited worksites for the very purpose of policing immigrants. Similarly, Bortolotti's inability to claim Canadian or American citizenship made it possible for authorities to expel the anarchist from their respective countries.

Considering that the transnational Italian anarchist movement in which Bortolotti and others were involved was comprised almost entirely of skilled and unskilled workers – people who spent the majority of their time engaged in waged labour – its cultural and political output was significant. Literally hundreds of Italian-language anarchist papers were established by anarchists living in Europe and South and North America during the 1870-1940 period, with about one hundred of those newspapers originating in the United States alone. An unknown number of anarchist pamphlets and books were also published by anarchists in their spare time.¹³ Italian anarchists wrote their own plays and organized *filodrammatiche* or amateur drama groups to perform them. In place of religious and state holidays, anarchists created their own – replacing Easter with May Day, for

¹³ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 54.

instance. Dances, dinners, picnics, and other social functions were other important aspects of Italian anarchist culture. And it was through this culture that anarchists were able to promote their distinctive values and demonstrate their opinions on a whole host of social and political issues, ranging from capitalist society to marriage, to a wider Italian audience.

This study contends that the success of the Italian anarchist movement was due to several factors. First, its transnationalism, born of the migrant or migrant exile experience, laid the groundwork for a global movement. These various sites of anarchist presence were in constant contact with people, ideas, publications, and correspondence continually traveling these networks. Though these networks were heavily based on personal relationships – meaning that a rupture between groups or comrades could lead to the breakdown of parts of the complex – this form of organization was remarkably resilient. Not only were Italian anarchists able to maintain their networks despite the difficulties within the movement, but its transnationalism made it more difficult for a state or states to destroy autonomous groups that were spread across wide geographical spaces. This is not to suggest that national borders were insignificant in the lives of anarchists, who, because of their political commitments, were philosophically opposed to nation-states. During the early twentieth century, national boundaries were becoming increasingly defined. Just as crossing a national border could aid an anarchist fleeing political persecution or avoiding military service, the border could also act as a very real physical barrier. And, as nation-states began to police borders more heavily and access to citizenship acquired greater importance, migrant anarchists could find themselves at the mercy of governments and immigration authorities. Emma Goldman, the well-known

Russian-born anarchist, who will be discussed in greater detail later in the thesis, was deported from the United States to Russia in 1919 for her political activities. Unwilling to live in Bolshevik Russia and unable to return to the United States, Goldman spent the remainder of her life moving between France, England, Spain, and Canada. In the case of the latter, she was only able to reside in Canada because of her marriage to the Welsh anarchist and miner James Colton which had made her a British citizen.¹⁴ Of course, someone as notorious as Goldman was not going to be able to quietly slip back into the United States. This posed less of a problem for Italian anarchists. As the experiences of Attilio Bortolotti demonstrate, Italian radicals without Canadian or United States citizenship were vulnerable. Though some Italian anarchists were deported from these countries, a few found their way back illegally to continue their activism. Even with a more security-conscious Canada-United States border, Italian anarchists continued to enter these countries illegally with fake or borrowed passports or no official paperwork of any kind. And, in some cases, smugglers were hired to get anarchists across national boundaries. In some cases, such drastic measures were the result of a lack of options – anarchists could remain in Europe and face repression or take a chance trying to enter Canada or the United States. But one also gets the sense that for some anarchists the border acted more as an inconvenience to be worked around than an impenetrable barrier.

The second successful factor involved in the success of the transnational Italian anarchist movement was the formation of a strong anarchist identity informed by class, ethnicity, gender, and the influence of particular leaders and specific interpretations of anarchist doctrine. Third, the development of anarchist culture, such as plays,

¹⁴ Theresa and Albert Moritz, The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 25-26.

“holidays,” and various social events, led to movement retention, reinforcement of movement values, and movement expansion. Fourth, the existence of a well-developed anarchist identity and culture made it possible for the mobilization of the transnational movement and its resources during times of crisis. The transnational movement that formed as a result of these processes was responsible for a militancy that is hard to identify among most other contemporary anarchist groups especially in North America. I am not trying to romanticize the past nor am I suggesting that the Italian anarchist movement of the late nineteenth and early to mid twentieth centuries did not suffer from serious problems, ones I will discuss in the following chapters. On the contrary, the aim of this study is to learn lessons from the development of militancy among Italian anarchists in the past that would be useful in building serious anarchist movements in Canada and the United States today.

It seems to me that there is quite a large historical disconnect between contemporary anarchist movements in North America and those of proceeding generations. Many active in the movement today may have read some general histories of anarchism or the writings of long-deceased anarchist theorists, but have less of a sense of the rank-and-file movements of these earlier periods, the debates that occurred among them, the different approaches they took regarding anarchist struggle, or the culture that they created and celebrated. This may be due to several factors: little understanding of anarchism in a historical sense, a general disinterest in the past, and the belief that previous anarchists and their activities are irrelevant in the present. Perhaps contemporary anarchists are simply too busy fighting the good fight to read up on anarchist history. However, it is imperative that today’s anarchists have a sense of those

who identified as such in the past and the activities in which they engaged. If we can learn valuable lessons from those who came before us, and I believe that we can, it would mean not having to begin our activism from scratch or utilize tactics that have already proved to be inadequate in an earlier period. Certainly there are differences between the early twenty-first and early twentieth centuries, but many of the same problems that anarchists in the past confronted are still being struggled against today. Those who profit from the capitalist system continue to kill the earth with their wars and environmental disasters, enslave the majority of the world's population in low wage labour, allow commodities to move more freely than people, and jail or imprison those who resist these policies. How did anarchists active during the early twentieth century respond to these problems? Did certain tactics work better than others? Are there methods of struggle they used that could be beneficial to us in the present? It is no secret that anarchists of earlier generations did not succeed in ridding the world of capitalism and the states and their institutions that protect this economic system. Still, these anarchists were able to draw on large transnational networks in times of crisis to successfully prevent the deportation or imprisonment of comrades. How then were these networks created and mobilized, and can we build our own? If we are serious about putting an end to capitalists and their exploitative and hierarchical economic system, then it is important to draw upon all past knowledge to help us with this endeavour.

In addition, it is important for scholars to think transnationally when studying radical movements. As the above experiences of Attilio Bortolotti demonstrate, transnationalism was a key component of the Italian anarchist movement. The continent- and ocean-spanning networks that anarchists created meant that their activism was not

tied to one particular nation-state but occurred in many. With transnationalism such a prominent feature of this movement, a study focused solely on a particular country would tell us only part of the story. In the case of Bortolotti, for example, how could a project on anarchism confined to Canada effectively address his activism in both Windsor and Detroit, his links with L'Adunata dei Refrattari, or his multiple movements across the Canada-United States border? The Italian anarchists provide an important opportunity to study transnational forms of political activism. Though Italian anarchists active during the interwar period in the United States have received some scholarly attention, their transnational networks have not.¹⁵ And up until this point, there have been no studies dedicated to Italian anarchists in Canada. Thus, this study will contribute to the growing literature on anarchist and transnational history, Italian radicalism, and the left in Canada and the United States.

To that end, this research will focus mainly on the transnational Italian anarchist movement and its activities in the following six cities: Sault Ste Marie, Toronto, Windsor, Detroit, Newark, and New York City. I have chosen these locations for several reasons. First, the most influential Italian-language anarchist newspapers were based in New York City – a city that also had a substantial anarchist presence. New York City

¹⁵ See Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988); Jennifer Guglielmo, Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945 (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of a Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 217-246; Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Nunzio Pernicone, "War among the Italian Anarchists: The Galleanisti's Campaign against Carlo Tresca," The Lost World of Italian-America Radicalism: Politics, Labor, and Culture, eds. Phillip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003) 78-97; Nunzio Pernicone, "Luigi Galleani and Italian Anarchist Terrorism in the United States," Studi emigrazione 30.111 (1993): 469-488; and Robert Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta, "Virgilia D'Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile," Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 299-326.

acted to a certain extent as the movement's theoretical centre. Second, the anarchist circles in cities such as New York and Detroit in the United States had links with those in Toronto and Windsor, Ontario. Sometimes these links were physical – in other words, Italian anarchists moved between these sites in order to find employment, take part in anarchist activities, or escape legal prosecution even though the changing realities of the border were such that these patterns became increasingly circumscribed. At other times they could mean financial contributions to an anarchist publication or political cause. Third, due to time and financial constraints, it made sense to focus on a handful of cities as opposed to writing a history of the transnational anarchist movement in a truly global sense – a project that still needs to be undertaken. However, the focus on central Canada and the north-eastern United States will not lead to an erasure of Italian anarchist circles in Europe which play an important role in this study.

In addition, this study will examine the transnational Italian anarchist movement between the years 1915 and 1940. This periodization was chosen for the following reasons. First, it was during this period that the anarcho-syndicalist Il Martello (The Hammer, 1917-1943) and anti-organizationalist L'Adunata dei Refrattari (Call of the Incurables, 1922-1971)¹⁶ newspapers appeared. These journals were important focal points for the dissemination of anarchist activity and local and international news analyzed through an anarchist lens. They also chronicled the antagonistic relationship between the respective publishers of Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari. This rift often led to the alignment of various anarchist circles in Canada and the United States with one or the other of these newspapers. Second, the interwar period is an important

¹⁶A translation that appears on the masthead of L'Adunata dei Refrattari reads "Call of the Refractaires" which is a mix of English and French. The choice of the French *refractaire* may have been a result of the difficulty in translating *refrattari* into English.

era for the study of transnational Italian anarchists in North America because of the social and political events of that time. Between 1915 and 1940, Italian anarchists felt the full force of the Canadian and American states during the Red Scare, witnessed the rise of fascism in Italy and within their own neighbourhoods in the urban centres of North America, and mobilized to support the efforts of Spanish anarchists against Franco's coup in the late 1930s. In such historical circumstances they set themselves the task of building an effective movement.

Methodology and Sources

In Red November, Black November, historian Salvatore Salerno describes the challenge of researching the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), one of the most famous of the radical movements of the early twentieth century:

there is an overwhelming lack of information regarding the activities and way of life of the IWW's artists and worker intellectuals, the floaters and rebel tramps of the jungle, and the activities of the mixed locals when its members were not engaged in strikes or related conflicts.¹⁷

Researching Italian anarchists has not been an easy task either. Anarchists do not make a habit of keeping records about members and sympathizers, and the information that does exist on them and their activities can be found in archives all over North America and Europe. The anarchist groups upon which this study is focused had to be pieced together from various sources. I am indebted to the work done by historian Paul Avrich, especially in his Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America.¹⁸ His

¹⁷ Salvatore Salerno, Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) 13.

¹⁸ Paul Avrich's invaluable books on first wave anarchism in the United States include Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005); The Modern School Movement:

interviews with Italian radicals who were active in the north-eastern United States and southern Ontario have allowed me to flesh out the individuals involved in anarchist groups such as *Circolo Volontà* in Brooklyn, New York, and *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* of New York City and Newark. The single most important oral history was the one Avrich conducted with Attilio Bortolotti which gives details on anarchist activities in Detroit, Toronto, and Windsor, Ontario. Helping me identify other important anarchist groups were Federico Arcos and Libera Martignago Bortolotti. Arcos is a Spanish-born anarchist who migrated to Canada in the early 1950s and worked in Windsor where he still lives. Owing to the fact that no Spanish anarchists were active in that city and demonstrating the transnational aspect of the anarchist movement, Arcos went to Detroit and joined a Spanish group there. During that time he became acquainted with the city's Italian anarchists of *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari,"* and was able to provide me with names of members of that circle. In addition, he was close friends with Italian anarchists Attilio Bortolotti and Pietro Beduz, who lived in Toronto and Windsor, respectively, and, though hesitant to speak of others, did provide personal recollections of the two men. Federico was also kind enough to put me in contact with Libera Martignago Bortolotti, herself the daughter of migrant Italian anarchists and partner of the late Attilio Bortolotti. She spent her childhood living in Sault Ste Marie and was able to name a number of individuals active in the local anarchist circle in which her parents took part. Interviewing people about the past can have its limitations. Subjects can make errors when recalling events that happened long ago and gloss over particularly difficult periods in their lives.

Anarchism and Education in the United States (Oakland: AK Press, 2005); Sacco and Vanzetti: *The Anarchist Background* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); *Anarchist Portraits* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); and *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

However, the interviews with Arcos and Martignago Bortolotti allowed me to gather the names of Italian anarchists active during the periodization of this study and to get a sense of these individuals to assist my research. These invaluable conversations, along with Avrich's previous research, helped me decide to focus on particular cities and circles.

The personal information I had gathered on roughly seventy Italian anarchists from the above-mentioned sources helped facilitate my work with the *Casellario Politico Centrale* (CPC) files which are housed at the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato* in Rome. The CPC was created by the Italian government in 1894 as a means to surveil those it "considered dangerous to public order and security." This collection spans nearly fifty years and includes more than 150,000 files on republicans, socialists, communists, antifascists, and anarchists.¹⁹ As much as I personally despise the surveillance of leftist activists by governments, without the CPC files a project of this sort would be even more challenging. This resource allows researchers to follow the movement of their subjects as they travel from Italy to other parts of the world and trace their involvement in anarchist circles abroad. In many cases, the information contained within the CPC files gives important insights into the activism of Italian anarchists that may not appear in movement newspapers or existing oral histories. Of course, one has to be cautious when using security files that have been created and maintained by those who are diametrically opposed to anarchism. It may have been in the interest of the Italian government to have its security apparatus keep the most up-to-date and verifiable information on anarchists around the world, but there is no guarantee that informants were correct in their reporting. They may have been purposely misled by those they were spying upon, or held back

¹⁹ "L'Archivio," Archivio Centrale dello Stato, <http://www.archivi.beniculturali.it/ACS/cpcarchivio.html> (accessed 21 May 2010).

information for various reasons from superiors. Whenever possible I have referred to other sources to verify the contents of the CPC files.

CPC files can be located with the help of an online database that allows the researcher to search by name, place of birth, place of residence, political persuasion, or *busta* (folder) number if known.²⁰ For the Canadian-based subjects of this study I entered the terms “anarchist” and “Canada” into the database and was given a list of thirty-nine names, thirty-six of which I was able to access while in Rome. A link for each name opened a page that listed the *busta* number (necessary for ordering files on site), the dates the file was active, as well as personal information on the subject such as place and year of birth, place of residence, and occupation. A general database search for anarchists living in the United States resulted in a list of more than 5000 persons, too great a number to sift through for this project. It then became necessary to search the database for the names of specific subjects who were involved in the anarchist circles of Detroit, New York City, and Newark. Through this method I was able to obtain forty-five security files on Italian anarchists who had lived in America.

CPC files come in a light brown cardstock folder with a file number in blue in the upper left-hand corner. The subject’s name is written in pen across the top of the folder. Below the subject’s name appears the Ministry of the Interior, which oversaw the CPC files, followed by the various sub-departments within the ministry responsible for security matters. These included the General Directorate of Public Security and the Reserved and General Affairs Division. Below this last appears *Casellario Politico Centrale* followed by a series of columns. The two columns of the left side of the folder were reserved for inputting the dates of each report while a third column on the right with

²⁰ My thanks to Davide Turcato for bringing this valuable online resource to my attention.

the heading “*Richiamo ad altri fascicoli*” (Refer to other documents) had information on the subject’s political persuasion and whether they lived in Italy or abroad. The right column on the front of Windsor, Ontario’s Egidio Artico stated that he was an anarchist who lived in North America, was considered *pericoloso* (dangerous), and went by the name “Jack.” If a subject had died, “*Morto*” was stamped in red on the front of the file folder. On the inside cover of the folder was listed Artico’s full name (Egidio Domenico Artico), the names of his parents (Giovanni Artico and Carrissima Flumiani), his place and date of birth (Mereto di Tomba, Udine, on 3 September 1906), his vocation (worker), his place of residence (North America), and his political identification was listed once again.²¹ Below this was a section titled “*Connotati*” or Distinguishing Marks. This section of Artico’s file was left blank but there were three columns beginning on the left side that allowed for a very detailed physical description of the subject including their height, build, hair (colour, style, and thickness), face (complexion, shape, and dimensions), forehead (shape, protrusion, and dimensions), eyes (shape, dimensions, and colour), nose (shape and dimensions), ears (shape and dimensions), moustache (shape, thickness, and colour), beard (shape, thickness, and colour), jaw, chin, wrinkles, mouth (shape and dimensions), neck (length and width), shoulders, legs, hands, feet, gait, countenance, usual clothing, and identifying marks (scars, tattoos, deformities, etc). Below “*Connotati*” there was space for a photograph and most files usually contain at least one of the subject. The pictures could be a mug shot showing front and side profiles or a studio portrait. The appearance of the latter in these files leads me to believe that the parent or parents of anarchists were approached by Italian security for this purpose. In some of the files I examined a picture of the anarchist’s wife was also included, as was

²¹ Egidio Artico, busta 202, CPC, ACS, Rome.

the case with New York City's Donato Carrillo whose file contained a picture of his partner Agata Pesce.²²

Personal information on subjects was sometimes compiled into a hand-written or typed biography describing the personality of the individual in question. The authors of these biographies, often the prefects of the anarchists' hometowns, commented on their subjects' educational backgrounds, familial relationships, run-ins with the law, and so on. A description of Vincenzo Capuana, who was born in the *commune* or municipality of Fezzano in the Liguria region and migrated to the United States in 1924, provides an example:

[Capuana] has a bad public reputation, has little [formal] education, has a shrewd intelligence, [and is] of mediocre cultivation. He is a weak worker. [Towards] his family he behaves badly. He is frequently in the company of subversives and previous [criminal] offenders. He is a member of the anarchist party and no evidence exists to show that he had belonged to any other parties. He has taken part in all subversive gatherings and meetings of the anarchists. During his time in Spezia he engaged in propaganda among comrades at work. He had never held an administrative position in the movement. He collaborated with subversive newspapers and maintained correspondence with subversives abroad. He holds little reverence for authority. He is of a hard-headed and impetuous character. He served in the military and during WWI was declared a deserter two times. He is a persistent antifascist and dangerous element who is watched attentively.²³

These biographies also traced the activities and movements of their subjects as the information was gathered by the Italian state's security apparatus in Italy and abroad.

Below is an excerpt from Dulio Giorgini's CPC file.

18 Jan. 1909: Took part in a meeting held in Fano by the noted anarchist Cesare Naldini, where he was side by side with Naldini during his stay there.

²² Donato Carrillo, busta 1116, CPC, ACS, Rome.

²³ All translations are my own except where otherwise noted. Il Prefetto di Spezia, "Biografia di Vincenzo Capuana," 12 Dec. 1925, Vincenzo Capuana, busta 1055, CPC, ACS, Rome.

28 Feb. 1910: Because of previous conduct and because he is considered dangerous, Giorgini is being surveilled.

26 June 1910: Giorgini leaves Fano for unknown destination in search of work.

31 July 1910: Giorgini found at Cattolica where he found work with the builder Pio Basetta.

22 Aug. 1910: He returns to Fano from Cattolica.

23 Aug. 1910: Giorgini leaves Fano for Rome to look for work.

2 July 1911: He returned home to interact with his family at Fano, where stays now.

20 Feb. 1912: Supplied with a passport for Canada he leaves for Genoa from where on the night of the 23rd he will board the steamer "Duca D'Aosta" direct from Napoli to New York.

14 Apr. 1912: On 7 Mar 1912 Giorgini arrived in New York and then was found living with Oddo Ghiandoni in Sudbury, Ontario.

17 June 1928: Giorgini immigrated to Canada in 1912.

8 Aug. 1929: Giorgini still believed to be living in Canada but exact whereabouts unknown because he has not written to his relatives in many months.

25 Feb. 1931: The house of Giorgini's mother, Rosa Carradorini, was searched in order to confiscate letters from her antinational son or to ascertain his address. Nothing was found.

29 May 1935: [Giorgini] resides in Detroit, Michigan. He is still [an] anarchist but limits his involvement in political activity. He takes part in an antifascist league in Detroit.²⁴

As this excerpt indicates, Giorgini was watched attentively by Italian security while still living in Italy. Authorities also knew his departure date to Canada and what steamship he was going to take. After Giorgini's arrival in Sudbury, Ontario, in 1912, there is a sixteen-year gap in his file. This absence may be due to Italian security losing track of Giorgini, a lack of resources for surveillance in Sudbury, or Giorgini being of low priority for Italian authorities. It does appear, however, that once the Fascists came to power in Italy in the 1920s, locating and reporting on Giorgini's activities became

²⁴ Prefetto di Pesaro, Pesaro, "Biografica di Dulio Giorgini," 20 July 1908 to 25 Feb 1931; and Prefetto di Pesaro, Pesaro, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 29 May 1935, Dulio Giorgini, busta 2429, CPC, ACS, Rome.

important once again – so much so that local police paid a visit to the anarchist’s mother in an attempt to discover a current address.

CPC files can also contain correspondence between anarchists. Nicola “Nick” Di Domenico, the manager of L’Adunata dei Refrattari, corresponded with his nephew Giuseppe De Luisi, also an anarchist, who was imprisoned at Pozzuoli near Naples.²⁵ The majority of correspondence in these files, however, is between consul generals in various North American cities and the Ministers of the Interior and Foreign Affairs in Rome. The contents of these letters included the most recent addresses and political activities of their subjects. The files also included mailing lists for certain anarchist publications, reports on interactions between different anarchist circles, the events they held, and sometimes provided the names of anarchists involved in a particular group.

The amount of information contained in each CPC file depends on who the subject was and where that person lived. For instance, the file of Raffaele Schiavina, editor of New York City’s L’Adunata dei Refrattari contains 304 pages while that of Domenico Moscardelli of *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, only has eleven pages.²⁶ As a result, some CPC files are more complete than others. However, even in the files of anarchists who did not generate a great deal of paperwork important information can be found. These sources do not record the experiences of Italian anarchists as migrants, the racism they may have encountered, or the exploitation they faced as workers. Instead, I have had to rely on existing oral histories and

²⁵ Nick Di Domenico, Newark, to Giuseppe De Luisi, Pozzuoli, 13 Mar. 1936; De Luisi, Pozzuoli, to Di Domenico, Newark, 7 Sep. 1937; and De Luisi, Pozzuoli, to Di Domenico, Newark, Nov. 1937, Nicola Di Domenico, busta 1781, CPC, ACS, Rome.

²⁶ See Raffaele Schiavina, busta 4690; and Domenico Moscardelli, busta 3435, CPC, ACS, Rome.

interviews in order to flesh out the migrant experience of Italian anarchists. Though holes do exist within these sources, general conclusions can be drawn from them.

The picture that emerges from these sources reveals a largely male movement that ranged in age from the mid teens to the mid forties, with the majority in their twenties and thirties. Most of those who migrated to Canada tended to come from the northern and central regions of Italy whereas those who came to the United States often originated from both northern and southern Italy. Why did so many migrate? Their reasons included poverty, military conscription, political persecution – and various combinations of all three. Italian anarchist migration was often facilitated either through familial migration or anarchist networks. Regardless of the exact channels, Italian anarchists settled in areas where previous anarchist migrants had already established themselves. Some anarchists did not remain in the same place indefinitely. For example, those who originally came to Canada may have crossed into the United States for better employment opportunities. And, in contrast with the majority of Italian migrants, most anarchists in this study were trained in some kind of trade whether as bakers, bricklayers, electricians, or typographers, to name but a few.

Where the CPC collection leaves a gaping void, at least within the North American context, is in regards to the lack of files on women in the anarchist movement. This absence could be due to the nature of Italian migration, since it often entailed single men crossing the Atlantic, which in turn was reflected in the gender composition of the Italian anarchist movement in Canada and the United States. It is also in part due to my reliance on Avrich's Anarchist Voices to provide names for Italian anarchists, especially in the United States, when the majority of Italians he interviewed were men. He did

conduct oral histories with Concetta Silvestri, Jenny Salemme, and Catina D'Amico Willman, but could have gone much further. For example, during his interview with Dominick Sallitto, a Sicilian-born anarchist who was almost deported from the United States in 1934, Avrich mentions the presence of Sallitto's partner Aurora Alleva who provided the men with lunch. Alleva was an anarchist militant in her own right, speaking publicly and writing articles for L'Adunata dei Refrattari, but, possibly because he was unaware of this fact, Avrich did not record Alleva's reminiscences. Curiously, Sallitto does not mention his partner once in his interview.²⁷ Studies by historians Caroline Merithew and Jennifer Guglielmo have further demonstrated that the Italian anarchist movement was not exclusively male.²⁸ The existence of CPC files on women anarchists such as the New York City-based poet Virgilia D'Andrea and Maria Vecile of Sault Ste Marie's *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* shows that Italian authorities were aware of women as political actors.²⁹ If the Italian state was so concerned with the surveillance of anarchists living in North America, then why did it focus predominately on the movement's men? Guglielmo has stated that it was typical for anarchist *circoli* or circles to be largely male in composition while women were more likely to form their own women's groups.³⁰ Male migration numbers aside, it seems that a gender bias on the part of Italian authorities can also explain the dearth of CPC files on women.

²⁷ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 166-167.

²⁸ See Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 217-246; and Jennifer Guglielmo, Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

²⁹ Maria Vecile's CPC file was actually listed as "Mario" Vecile by Italian authorities. See Mario Vecile, busta 5399, CPC, ACS, Rome.

³⁰ Guglielmo, Living the Revolution 154-155.

A second important source for this project has been the Italian-language newspapers L'Adunata dei Refrattari and Il Martello, which were both published in the United States and are readily available on microfilm. Not only do these publications provide the researcher with articles explaining different anarchist theories and viewpoints on local and international events, but they also track the activities of anarchist circles. Each issue of these respective papers had a single page dedicated to listing events and printing the names of groups and individuals who contributed funds to a particular paper or cause. For example, if Detroit's *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari"* held a benefit for comrades persecuted in Europe, they would advertise this event in the "*Comunicazioni*" section of L'Adunata dei Refrattari. Once the event had taken place, *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari"* would place another notice in the paper listing their costs in putting on the event, how much money was raised, and the total to be donated after expenses. The movement of individuals can also be traced in this way since it was common for names of subscribers and their city of residence to be published.

The personal papers of many anarchists are located at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. Two collections in particular were useful for this project. First, the papers of the Swiss anarchist Jacques Gross, who was a close friend of many prominent first wave anarchists, contains correspondence with Luigi Galleani during his time living in Montreal.³¹ The second collection of note is the David Koven Papers. During the 1940s, Koven was a member of the New York City-based anarchist group Why? that later became known as Resistance. His involvement in the movement led to friendships with a number of Italian anarchists of an earlier generation some of

³¹ "Biography," Jacques Gross Papers, International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, <http://www.iisg.nl/archives/pdf/10749476.pdf> (accessed 14 June 2010).

whom he eventually interviewed.³² Another invaluable source of personal correspondence is the Emma Goldman Papers Project (EGPP) at the University of California at Berkeley. Goldman wrote many letters to family, friends, and comrades throughout the world. The EGPP has been particularly helpful in providing information on the Toronto anarchists with whom she worked during her visits to the city in the 1920s and 1930s. I also consulted the Goldman letters deposited in the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor by Federico Arcos. The majority of the letters were written between 1939 and 1940 and chronicle the efforts of Goldman and the Italian anarchists to prevent the deportation of two comrades from Canada to fascist Italy, the subject of my final chapter.

Conceptualising the Era: Classical vs. First Wave Anarchism

Anarchism is a leftwing political philosophy that appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. It opposed (and still opposes) hierarchy and inequality in all its social and economic forms including capitalism, the state, and private property. Anarchism seeks the end of these institutions through global class struggle, one that would be horizontally self-organized by workers, peasants, and others at the bottom end of the class system. In the place of a hierarchical capitalist society, anarchism envisions one that is stateless, socialist, and self-managed, characterized by cooperation, democratic decision-making processes, and social and economic equality. An anarchist society is imagined to be one organized as a form of federations that would ensure that

³² Avrich, Anarchist Voices 461-463.

everyone's needs were met. Anarchism recognizes the importance of individual freedom – but that freedom is to be tempered by social responsibility.³³

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to explain the conceptualization of anarchism from 1915 to 1940, a period commonly known as that of “classical anarchism.” However, the term “classical anarchism” has begun to fall out of favour. As theorist and historian Jason Adams has argued, part of the problem with this term is its emphasis on a few “great white men” from Europe. The genealogy of “classical” anarchist thought has focused on the European thinkers William Godwin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, and Max Stirner, with the perhaps inadvertent effect of erasing such non-European theorists such as Japan's Kotoku Shusui and Mexico's Ricardo Flores Magón. As a result, “classical anarchism” is a misleading term because it does not incorporate all anarchist theorists during the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.³⁴

Another flaw of the classical definition, according to Adams, is the false impression it gives that anarchist thought and practice has undergone a progression from its beginnings to its present. This is not to suggest that anarchist theory and praxis have remained static, but rather, that the term “classical anarchism” also denotes a break in anarchist thought as though the ideas of anarchist theorists in the past have nothing to offer in the present. This is hardly the case. For example, in the early twentieth century the German-born Jewish anarchist Gustav Landauer called for the creation of socialist institutions and economies, which would undercut those of the existing capitalist system,

³³ Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt, Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism (Oakland: AK Press, 2009) 71-72.

³⁴ Jason Adams, Non-Western Anarchisms: Rethinking the Global Context (Johannesburg: Zabalaza Books, n.d.) 6.

thus eventually rendering the latter obsolete with no need for violent revolution.³⁵

Landauer's insistence on building socialism alongside capitalism has gained currency among some anarchist theorists today.³⁶

In place of "classical anarchism," Adams has divided the history of anarchism into three waves – the late nineteenth century, the late 1960s, and the late 1990s – though the periodization of each wave has no specific beginning or end.³⁷ The reason for such purposefully nebulous historical stages, explains Adams, stems from the difficulty in placing disparate anarchist movements from around the world into a universal period. For example, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution may have caused a decline in the anarchist movement in some European countries, but had the opposite effect in China in part due to the mistaken belief that what had happened in Russia was actually an anarchist revolution.³⁸ Avoiding hard-and-fast periodizations, and here I am building upon Adams's idea, also allows us to take note of continuities in anarchist thought from one period to another. By declaring, *à la* George Woodcock, that a particular era of anarchist history and theory came to an end following the defeat of the Spanish Republic in 1939, we effectively erase the experiences and activities of those who continued in their anarchism well into the later twentieth century.³⁹ Since my study focuses on the years

³⁵See Gustav Landauer, For Socialism, trans. David J. Parent (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1978).

³⁶See Richard J. F. Day, Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2005). It may seem a contradiction to problematise the term "classical anarchism" because of its inherent link to European thinkers and use Gustav Landauer as an example of the styles of anarchist thought which are, in a sense, being rediscovered. However, I must stress that the classical anarchist canon refers specifically to the handful of thinkers mentioned above. Landauer, despite his European origins, is not considered a part of this special club, and, thus, I see no contradiction in acknowledging him to make my point.

³⁷Adams 4.

³⁸Adams 4-5; Arif Dirlik, Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 2.

³⁹George Woodcock, Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004) 7, 404.

1915-1940, it is focused on first wave anarchism, but it does not assume this political formation came to an abrupt postwar end.

Adams's conception of first wave anarchism is useful as a critique of classical anarchism but because of the breadth of his focus – the non-Western world – and the various forms of anarchism his research has uncovered, it is difficult to draw many general conclusions from his work. This lends itself to the point he is trying to make – that anarchism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was as ideologically diverse as it is today.⁴⁰ One commonality that does stand out is the role of global migration, brought on both by capitalism and imperialism, in leading to the spread and development of anarchist ideas and movements in North and South America, the Middle East, Asia, and the northern and southern coasts of Africa. The prominence of sojourning European, Asian, and South Asian labourers to European colonies around the world led to a predominantly proletarianized movement. Whereas the first wave grew out of the global migrations of the working class from such states as Italy and China, Adams contends that second- and third-wave anarchism was based on the emergence of counter-cultures. In the late 1960s this was due to growing resistance to American foreign policy and the export of American culture globally.⁴¹ Likewise, the emergence of third-wave anarchism was a result of an increasingly politicized internationalist punk movement, which Adams credits with rebuilding the anarchist movements of Brazil, Israel, and South Africa. The 1994 Zapatista rebellion in Mexico was also a significant development during this period.⁴² Adams's focus is on first-wave anarchism and he quickly glosses

⁴⁰ Adams 27.

⁴¹ Adams 25. One could also argue that the apparent resurgence of anarchism in the late 1960s was due in part to disillusionment with Soviet-style communism. However, Adams remains quiet on this point.

⁴² Adams 26.

over second and third wave anarchism without explaining what exactly he means by these later waves or how they came to be – he simply alludes to some historical events that occurred during the second- and third-waves. This is unfortunate because his vague definitions, which could be the result of theorization in progress, leave the reader with a great deal of skepticism. Yet, it is still necessary to situate the study of anarchism into some form of periodization to provide historical context, and this is where the concept of the “wave” becomes useful. And, even though the waves of anarchism do not have hard-and-fast boundaries or periods, they can still be located temporally albeit in a general fashion.

But is not this dissertation positioned in the “classical” period because of its focus on Italian anarchists who originated in southern Europe? As mentioned above, the classical anarchist canon is often written about so that it is implicitly limited to a handful of individuals identified as the main theorists of anarchist thought and practice. As Adams suggests, in addition to the term “classical” negating the contributions of anarchists living in Asia, Africa, and South America, it has also tended to downplay the theoretical contributions of anarchists active in the states of southern Europe, such as Italy.⁴³ This marginalization of Italian anarchists in certain treatments of anarchist history may also stem from the peripheral position of Italy, especially its southern regions, with regard to the rest of Europe. The northern parts of the Italian peninsula have generally been considered more European than the regions to the south which were and still are seen as inferior and backward.⁴⁴ Thus, the written work of Italian anarchists

⁴³ Adams 3.

⁴⁴ Antonio Gramsci, The Southern Question, trans. Pasquale Verdicchio (Toronto: Guernica, 2005) 33.

such as Luigi Galleani and Errico Malatesta have often not received the same attention as “northern” English, French, and Russian theorists.

Anarchist Historiography

The first histories of anarchism were written by members of the anarchist movement. Austrian-born scholar Max Nettlau is considered anarchism’s first historian. He began to write historical articles on the subject for anarchist publications as early as the 1890s. His A Short History of Anarchism originally appeared as a series of pamphlets, later collected together in book form during the 1930s. Nettlau’s work provides a solid history of first wave anarchism from a unique perspective – not only was he an anarchist but also a contemporary of and in correspondence with many of the subjects about whom he writes. A Short History of Anarchism traces libertarian thought from the Greek Stoic Zeno to utopian socialist Charles Fourier and then proceeds to chronicle anarchist thought throughout Europe. Well-known thinkers from the anarchist canon such as Bakunin and Kropotkin and the anarchist movements of Europe receive the most attention. However, Nettlau also introduces the reader to the more obscure anarchist activists like the Belgian Émile Chapelier and the Argentine Alberto Ghirardo and provides some information on anarchism in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America. Nettlau is surprisingly candid and critical about his subject. He evaluates the anarchist movement, explaining the mistakes he believed were made regarding the anarchists’ inability to effectively agitate against the First World War, the ill effects of

sectarianism, and the numerous questions, such as the free love debates, which Nettlau saw as distracting for revolutionary anarchist activists.⁴⁵

The Russian anarchist communist and geographer Peter Kropotkin wrote a brief history of anarchism that appeared in the eleventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, published in 1911. In this article, Kropotkin explained the central tenets of anarchism and quickly traced the roots of anarchist thought from the ancient Greek and Chinese thinkers through to British political philosopher William Godwin who in his Enquiry Concerning Political Justice argued for a stateless society. From there he discussed the anarchist thought of Proudhon, Bakunin and his role in the International Working Men's Association (IWMA), and the individualist anarchist tradition.⁴⁶

Rudolph Rocker's Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice is another early history of anarchism though he dedicates only one chapter to this subject. His condensed version borrows heavily from Nettlau's work. After explaining what anarchism is, Rocker traces the history of the labour movement, early attempts at syndicalism, and the objectives, methods, and evolution of anarcho-syndicalism as a strain of anarchist theory and practice. He describes the anarcho-syndicalist movements of Europe, Latin America, and the United States up to the late 1930s when his book was published. Rocker's history is more narrative than analytical and, with regards to the theoretical development of anarchism, focuses mainly on what came to be known as the European canon of anarchist theorists. In addition, Anarcho-Syndicalism is not as wide-ranging geographically as A Short History of Anarchism. Still, Anarcho-Syndicalism is an

⁴⁵ See Max Nettlau, Short History of Anarchism (London: Freedom Press, 1996).

⁴⁶ Peter Kropotkin, Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets, ed. Richard N. Baldwin (New York: Dover Press, 1972) 283-300.

important attempt at synthesizing the international anarchist movement and some of its theorists.⁴⁷

In the late 1950s non-anarchist academics, some of them Marxists often critical of anarchism, brought out works devoted to the subject. Marxist historian G. D. H. Cole's History of Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism, 1850-1890, originally published in 1954, explored the relationship between Marxists and anarchists during and after the period of the first International. Not only does Cole clearly demonstrate the hostilities between Marxists and anarchists over the issues of authority, the role of the state, and the path to revolution, he also shows how influential anarchists were in the International, a fact that remains largely obscured by the ascendancy of Marxist thought. Though Cole is not an anarchist, he is quite sympathetic to this political philosophy. While this volume does not focus on anarchism specifically, it is an example of academic interest in anarchist history and explores the influence of Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin on socialist thought.⁴⁸

Another Marxist historian, E. J. Hobsbawm, was far more critical of anarchism. In his Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries, which appeared in 1959, Hobsbawm devotes a chapter to the Spanish anarchists, whom he describes as members of a millenarian movement comprised of "backward peasants." As such, according to Hobsbawm, they lacked organization and a serious plan for the realization of an anarchist society, and instead opted for a "religious"

⁴⁷ Rudolph Rocker, Anarcho-Syndicalism, (Oakland: AK Press, 2004).

⁴⁸ G. D. H. Cole, History of Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism, 1850-1890, vol. 2 (London: MacMillan, 1957).

faith that one day anarchism would magically come to fruition.⁴⁹ Hobsbawm then goes on to relegate “the unrelieved failure” of anarchism to the dustbin of history by stating that it was “defeated for ever [sic]” following fascist General Francisco Franco’s victory in Spain in 1939. Hobsbawm’s observations were largely borrowed from Gerald Brenan’s The Spanish Labyrinth and a few sources from Brenan’s bibliography; Hobsbawm did no primary research of his own.⁵⁰ Since the appearance of Primitive Rebels, many historical works on Spanish anarchism have been researched and written that demonstrate the movement’s theoretical and organizational sophistication, thus disproving Hobsbawm’s claims.⁵¹ Hobsbawm’s characterization of anarchism as a millenarian failure was reinforced further in Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements by Canadian writer George Woodcock and British historian James Joll’s The Anarchists, both of which appeared in the early 1960s.⁵²

Anarchism has become a very influential book. It was here that Woodcock elaborated in greater detail on the lives and political thought of the European canon established by Rocker in Anarcho-Syndicalism while including the Russian pacifist and Christian Leo Tolstoy. The second half of Anarchism explores anarchist activity in Europe with less detailed discussions of anarchism in Latin America and the United States. Woodcock’s later chapters on the history of anarchist movements in France, Spain, and elsewhere laid the groundwork for further studies. One could argue that

⁴⁹ E. J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1959) 82, 90.

⁵⁰ Hobsbawm 74, 92.

⁵¹ For exceptional histories of anarchism in Spain, see Martha Ackelsburg, Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women (Oakland: AK Press, 2005); Murray Bookchin, The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years, 1868-1936 (San Francisco: AK Press, 1998); Sam Dolgoff, The Anarchist Collectives: Workers’ Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution, 1936-1939 (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1974); Abel Paz, Durruti in the Spanish Revolution (Oakland: AK Press, 2007); and José Peirats, Anarchists of the Spanish Revolution (London: Freedom Press, 1990).

⁵² Woodcock 407; James Joll, The Anarchists (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964) 12-13.

Woodcock anticipated the renewed academic and political interest in anarchism when he wrote Anarchism in the early 1960s. However, Woodcock's focus is very Eurocentric. Not only does he limit his discussion of anarchist thought to European-born men, but his geographical scope is largely confined to Europe. In some ways Woodcock's portrayal of anarchism as a millenarian movement laid to rest in Spain is more surprising than his omissions since he identified as an anarchist and had edited the London-based anarchist journal Freedom during the 1940s. To his credit, Woodcock did reassess his position on the early death of anarchism in the 1986 edition of Anarchism. He recognized anarchism's re-emergence during the later decades of the twentieth century.⁵³

Joll's The Anarchists is far more limited in scope than Woodcock's history of anarchism. Again the focus is on Europe with some discussion of anarchism in the United States but little mention of it elsewhere. In this study, Joll concluded that anarchism was a form of utopianism that eschewed technology and promoted a return to agrarian and artisanal modes of production.⁵⁴ Though Joll stood by his appraisal of anarchism, he at least admitted, seven years later, that it was "a living tradition."⁵⁵ No such reassessment was ever offered by Hobsbawm.

State Focus vs. Transnational Approach

More recently, the study of anarchist history has experienced a renaissance. Much of it has been written either by anarchists or by those sympathetic to the philosophy. Instead of dismissing the struggles of anarchists, as Hobsbawm, Woodcock,

⁵³ Woodcock 9, 414.

⁵⁴ James Joll, The Anarchists (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964), 276-277.

⁵⁵ James Joll, "Anarchism – A Living Tradition," Anarchism Today, eds. David E. Apter and James Joll (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1971) 225.

and Joll tended to do, contemporary historians have attempted to rescue these generally forgotten histories from obscurity. Recent anarchist histories can generally be divided into four different forms: general history, biography, focus on a particular event, or a study of a national movement.

Peter Marshall's Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism is a well-researched and in-depth study of the history of anarchist thought and practice, written not only to demonstrate the existence of a "profound anarchist tradition" but also to show that this political philosophy "offers many ideas and values that are relevant to contemporary problems and issues." The breadth of the book is impressive. Marshall begins with the Taoists of ancient China and ends with contemporary forms of anarchism such as the green anarchists of the late twentieth century. In Demanding the Impossible, Marshall outlines the key tenets of anarchist philosophy, traces the history of European and American libertarian thought, and discusses the theorists who tend to populate the anarchist canon such as Godwin, Stirner, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, as well as a few others – Reclus, Malatesta, and Goldman – who usually do not make the cut. Marshall then proceeds to explore the anarchist movements in Europe, the United States, Asia, and Latin America, and explores the continual development of anarchist thought in the second half of the twentieth century from Paul Goodman to John Zerzan.

But as is the case with most general histories of anarchism, the focus of Demanding the Impossible is on Europe and the United States. In a book of over 700 pages of text, there are roughly thirty pages dedicated to regions outside of Europe and America, those being Latin America and Asia. Part of this problem is due to a lack of English-language sources on the anarchists and their movements in China, Korea,

Argentina, and Brazil. In light of the ever-increasing number of studies on anarchism and its importance in these typically ignored regions, Marshall could have struck a better balance between Europe and the United States on the one hand and the rest of the world on the other.⁵⁶

In contrast, Jason Adams challenges the Eurocentric approach to anarchist history in his Non-Western Anarchisms: Rethinking the Global Context. Here Adams has attempted to write a short history of first-wave anarchism that explores the movements that existed in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He provides interesting, if cursory, descriptions of anarchists and their movements in Korea, Turkey, and South Africa and explores the roles that European and Asian migrants played in the spread of anarchist ideas globally. Intertwined with his interest in non-Western anarchisms is a re-conceptualization of the historical periodizations of anarchist history into three different waves, which I explored above. It is understandable that Adams would want to examine only those anarchist movements that existed outside the countries of Europe and North America, which have already received so much attention. Still, a more complete and balanced global history of anarchism would be equally as helpful in understanding further the relationships between anarchists globally during the first wave.⁵⁷

Michael Smith and Lucien van der Walt have come close to a project of this very sort with Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism. Instead of tracing the genealogy of anarchist thought from ancient times to the present, they argue that anarchist thought and practice can be traced to adherents of Bakunin

⁵⁶ Peter Marshall, Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism (London: Harper Perennial, 2008).

⁵⁷ See Adams.

active during the time of the IWMA. Further, Schmidt and van der Walt are explicit in their definition of anarchism as a revolutionary leftwing and class-based movement that seeks an end to hierarchy and oppression in all its social and economic forms. As a result, their interpretation of anarchism dispenses with a great deal of the “traditional” anarchist canon including Proudhon – the first to call himself an anarchist. According to the authors, Proudhon cannot be considered an anarchist because his political and economic ideas, though influencing anarchist thought, supported private property. Moreover, he came out against revolutionary tactics, and his mutualist economic system was more beneficial to small landowners and artisans than peasants and factory workers. When discussing aspects of anarchist theory, the authors incorporate the views of Bakunin and Kropotkin with those of Japan’s Hatta Shuzo and Mexico’s Ricardo Flores Magón, giving a more internationally balanced perspective than most previous histories on anarchism.⁵⁸

A second form of anarchist history is the biography. Two narrative biographies on the anarcho-syndicalist Carlo Tresca examine the syndicalist and antifascist movements in the United States, especially in New York City where he lived. Both biographies, written by historians Dorothy Gallagher and Nunzio Pernicone respectively, are generally similar with the exception that Pernicone was able to make use of Italian-language sources. Both chronicle Tresca’s activities in the labour movement, his pragmatic approach to activism, his work on the Sacco and Vanzetti defence, and his

⁵⁸ See Schmidt and van der Walt.

struggles with fascists, communists, the mafia, and other anarchists such as Luigi Galleani.⁵⁹

An example of an event-focused study can be found in Avrich's Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background, which explores the railroading of Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti by American authorities for their supposed involvement in a payroll robbery and their subsequent execution for the death of the paymaster and his guard in 1920. This narrative also traces the activities of the defence committee struck to advocate the case of the two men and the wider anarchist movement to which Sacco and Vanzetti belonged.⁶⁰

The Tresca biographies and Avrich's work on Sacco and Vanzetti are excellent examples of historians rescuing forgotten or neglected histories, and provide a strong starting point for further study of these individuals and the movements in which they were active. These studies, however, are narratives that tell a story and do not theorize the issues they raise. Both Gallagher and Pernicone provide the vivid accounts of the rift between Tresca and Galleani. Were anarchists more prone to such factionalism than other groups on the left groups? A broader consideration of the left in the 1910s to the 1940s might have prompted a more sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of such

⁵⁹ See Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) and Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁶⁰ See Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). For the wider literature on the Sacco-Vanzetti affair see Herbert B. Ehrmann, The Untried Case: The Sacco-Vanzetti Case and the Morelli Gang (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1933); Ehrmann, The Case that Will Not Die: Commonwealth vs. Sacco and Vanzetti (Boston: Little Brown, 1969); Brian Jackson, The Black Flag: A Look at the Strange Case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981); Louis G. Joughin and Edmund M. Morgan, The Legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1948); Eugene Lyons, The Life and Death of Sacco and Vanzetti (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970); Robert H. Montgomery, Sacco-Vanzetti: The Murder and the Myth (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1960); Francis Russell, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Case Resolved (New York: Harper and Row, 1986); and William Young and David E. Kaiser, Postmortem: New Evidence in the Case of Sacco and Vanzetti (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985).

sectarianism. Similarly, in Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background, Avrich explores the use of political violence by some of the Italian anarchists in the late 1910s and early 1920s. He gives the reader a very detailed account of the bombings carried out against various judges and capitalists who jailed anarchists and sent soldiers against striking workers, respectively. Although his stories about political violence might have opened the door to an analytical treatment of the benefits and limitations of violence and to a wider discussion of the debates within anarchist circles about such tactics, Avrich leaves these questions largely unexplored.

The fourth type of anarchist study is the analysis of a national movement. For instance, there are studies on the English, French, and Italian movements among others. National studies of anarchism are generally driven by an overarching argument and are often more theoretical than some of the above-mentioned biographical works. Again, these histories are important contributions to the study of anarchism and have either begun the process of historical inquiry into anarchist formations or built upon them. The nation-state does provide a neat boundary to encapsulate a movement's formation and activity, but this kind of approach has also generated analytical problems of its own.

One issue rising from such national studies is that they tend to focus on native-born anarchists while excluding the contribution of anarchist migrants. Labour historian Marcel van der Linden, for one, has critiqued the assumption such scholars often make "that 'societies' (social formations) are geographically identical with nation states" when no "single bounded society [can be found] in geographical or social space."⁶¹ David Berry's A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917-1945 exemplifies this

⁶¹ Marcel van der Linden, Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labour History (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 7-8.

problem. While examining the French movement's reaction to the Bolshevik Revolution, its relationship with the national labour movement, and its mobilization during the Spanish Civil War, Berry notes the existence of sizable Italian and Spanish anarchist communities in France and the founding of the Russian-language anarchist paper Dielo Trouda (The Cause of Labour) in Paris in the 1920s. However, he does not dwell on the activities of these groups or their relationship with the French movement in any significant manner. In one instance, Berry begins a chapter with a quote by Ernesto Bonomini but one would have to read the footnote to know that this Italian-born anarchist spent eight years in prison for assassinating a well-known Paris-based Italian fascist leader in 1924, later fought in Spain, and was a member of the Proofreaders' Union in Paris.⁶² As a result, Berry's approach gives the impression that the only anarchist movement of note in France was led by the French, omitting the role and influence of Italians, Spaniards, Russians, and others on the movement in this country. This omission of non-nationals not only excludes some noteworthy activists from the record but also in essence misrepresents the anarchist phenomenon, since so many of its adherents were people who had no secure state identity.

Taking a different approach, Matthew Thomas's 2005 study Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880-1914 likens British anarchists to a political and social sub-culture instead of a movement. Whereas past histories sympathetic to anarchism tended to focus on organizational histories of anarchist movements, Thomas argues that this strategy is limited because it leads to a discussion of "small sects" of anarchists that flourished briefly and then disappeared with discernable little impact beyond anarchist

⁶² David Berry, A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917-1945 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002) 181, 188.

circles. Instead, Thomas chooses to measure the success of anarchists not by their numbers, but by their ability to influence public conceptions on issues ranging from women's rights, educational reform, and labour unrest to the cooperative movement and the general challenge they posed to Victorian and Edwardian social mores. Thomas has written an engaging study that convincingly demonstrates the importance anarchist ideas can have within a society where a large-scale anarchist movement is not present. However, one issue that crops up due to the national focus of Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880-1914 relates to the creation of national anarchisms in states where the movement was comprised of both native-born and migrant anarchists. Thomas acknowledges the existence of Jewish and Italian anarchists among others within this anarchist counter-culture, but these different groupings of anarchist ethnicities all fall under the rubric of "British anarchism," a problematic term which tends to assimilate non-Anglophone anarchists into a wider nationalist identity, not to mention the various strains of anarchism this term is supposed to encompass.⁶³

A third critique of a national approach focuses on the tendency to divorce an anarchist movement within the confines of national borders from the wider transnational movement with which it is part. Mathieu Houle-Courcelles's Sur la trace de l'anarchisme au Québec, 1860-1960, which differs from the Berry and Thomas studies because the "state" in this book is actually a province, attempts to examine anarchist thought and activity in Quebec. Houle-Courcelles, an independent researcher, has amassed a great deal of information on his subjects and written an intriguing book on anarchist traditions in the province. He begins by exploring anticlerical thought in Quebec and the

⁶³ See Matthew Thomas, Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880-1914: Revolutions in Everyday Life (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005).

province's role as a destination of refugees from the Paris Commune of 1871. Houle-Courcelles also discusses visits to Montreal by prominent anarchists such as Emma Goldman and examines the role of the Knights of Labor, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and the One Big Union (OBU) in the province. He then examines the formation, politics, and activities of the autonomists, a group of young artists influenced by libertarian ideals, which took shape in the late 1940s. However, because of the difficulty in tracing this history, and the apparent lack of an explicitly anarchist movement in the province, only brief glimpses of anarchist presence are given. When discussing Jewish anarchists in Montreal, for example, Houle-Courcelles focuses on their activities in that city while excluding their role in a larger movement that spanned Canada, the United States, and beyond. One leaves Houle-Courcelles's study with an impression of groups that were small, ineffectual, and isolated.⁶⁴

This leads to a fourth and final problem with state-centred studies: they promote the idea that anarchist movements go through periods of proliferation and dissolution. This is apparent in Nunzio Pernicone's Italian Anarchism, 1864-1892 where he asserts that the Italian anarchist movement, as it existed within the boundaries of Italy, went through a series of resurgences in the late nineteenth century, which, each time, was met with severe state repression.⁶⁵ But, as historian Davide Turcato has argued, a study with a national emphasis cannot effectively examine the realities of movement "continuities and organizational resources." In other words, if one is to explore the rise and decline of the Italian anarchist movement in Italy over a long period of time it is important to take

⁶⁴ Mathieu Houle-Courcelles, Sur les traces de l'anarchisme au Québec (Montréal: Lux Éditeur, 2008).

⁶⁵ Pernicone lists the periods of apparent anarchist resurgence in Italy as follows: 1884-1885, 1889-1891, 1892-1894, and 1897-1898. Nunzio Pernicone, Italian Anarchism, 1864-1892 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) 7.

into account the number of its adherents active beyond the boundaries of Italy. As Turcato remarks, "... Italian anarchism is best analyzed as a single movement stretching across the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean." Examining the Italian anarchist movement through a transnational lens, then,

reveals forms of continuity and organization unavailable to analyses of national scope, and by broadening our perspective on the anarchist movement it compels us to look for more sophisticated interpretations of the movement's dynamics.⁶⁶

Historians on the Transnational Approach

Transnational studies originated within anthropology, and it was anthropologists who coined the term "transnationalism" to describe "a way of life that connects family, work, and consciousness in more than one national territory."⁶⁷ Scholarly works on migration history have incorporated a transnational approach as a means of tracing the movements of migrants from their country of origin to an area or areas of settlement. Previous migration research had tended to focus on "immigrants" and their experiences assimilating or resisting assimilation within the host society.⁶⁸ These studies are invaluable sources for examining immigrant lives in various locations and tell us a great deal about the racism of host societies and the pressures immigrant communities faced

⁶⁶ Davide Turcato, "Italian Anarchism as a Transnational Movement, 1885-1915," International Review of Social History 52 (2007): 410-411, 444.

⁶⁷ Donna R. Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000) 11.

⁶⁸ For example, see Guido Barbini, "The Friulian Community in Canada: Between Integration and Assimilation," An Italian Region in Canada: The Case of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1998) 45-62; Franca Iacovetta, Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Julius Molinaro and Maddalena Kuitunen, eds., The Luminous Mosaic: Italian Cultural Organisations in Ontario (Welland: Soleil Publishing, 1993); Antonio Pucci, "Thunder Bay's Italian Community, 1880s-1940s," The Italian Migrant Experience, eds. John Potestio and Antonio Pucci (Thunder Bay: Canadian Italian Historical Association, 1988) 79-102; and Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880-1930 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).

while trying to eke out a livelihood. But, as the shift towards transnationalism began, migration historian Frank Thistlethwaite recommended use of the term “migrants ... to treat the process of migration as a complete sequence of experiences whereby the individual moves from one social identity to another,” instead of speaking of “immigrants” or “emigrants.”⁶⁹ In addition, Rudolph Vecoli declared that “[m]igration history by its very nature demands a transnational perspective.”⁷⁰

Transnational migration among Italians has had a long history and the reasons for these sojourns were many and various. Among peoples from the Italian peninsula, long-distance travel for work was a way of life already in existence as early as 1500 with peasant families seeing migration as a normal and necessary element in their struggle for survival.⁷¹ By the end of the nineteenth century migration was generally seasonal and temporary. Some would migrate to urban centres within Italy or to other countries to find work in the winter when agricultural work was less necessary or perhaps unavailable, and return to their home villages in the summer to resume working in the fields. Migrants worked all types of jobs; they were waiters, laundresses, and porters. They were also employed as agricultural workers in South America during the southern hemisphere’s spring and summer and would return to Italy in time to work their own fields. As Franco Ramella has argued, such migration acted as a bridge between “the scarcity of local resources and the needs of the population” and thereby supplemented the incomes of those engaged in subsistence farming. As a result, migration was not an extraordinary

⁶⁹ Frank Thistlethwaite, “Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 22.

⁷⁰ Rudolph J. Vecoli, “Introduction,” A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 2.

⁷¹ Gabaccia 3; Vecoli 8; Bruno Ramirez, On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991) 95.

occurrence that Italians undertook only out of necessity. Nor was migration responsible for family disintegration or the severing of social ties. Instead, it was a typical practice which “structured the family and social organization of the community in which it developed.” In addition to supplementing incomes, migration could also allow families to avoid reliance on one specific source of income, meaning economic crises could be endured more easily. Migration, then, was a way in which families expanded their economic opportunities and, in turn, improved their social position.⁷²

Political developments provided other reasons for migration. As both Donna Gabaccia and Antonino Spada have shown, the *Risorgimento*, which I will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter, was followed by mass migration from Italy. This was prompted by the socio-economic hardships suffered by the workers and peasants, who had been promised a very different future. However, once Italy was created, a promised republican prosperity never materialized.⁷³ Another important political event in Italy was Fascist Benito Mussolini’s rise to power in 1922. His royal invitation to form a government led to increased attacks on the Italian left forcing many antifascists to leave the country. Migration from Italy during the Fascist years was a fraction of the migration totals in the four decades following the *Risorgimento*. But, considering the restrictions on migration put in place by the Fascists in addition to the social realities of the Great Depression, which led many migrant-receiving countries to seriously diminish intake numbers, out-migration was still considerable. From 1876 to 1915, 14,037,531 Italians

⁷² Franco Ramella, “Emigration from an Area of Intense Industrial Development: The Case of Northwestern Italy,” *A Century of European Migrations, 1930-1930*, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 265, 269, 271; Robert F. Harney, “Men Without Women: Italian Migrants in Canada, 1885-1930,” *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s-1960s*, eds. Franca Iacovetta with Paula Draper and Robert Ventresca (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 207; Ramirez, 63-65.

⁷³ Gabaccia 2; Antonino V. Spada, *The Italians in Canada* (Ottawa: Riviera Printers, 1969) 75.

left Italy, while during Fascist rule (1922-1943) only 3,070,048 did so.⁷⁴ In general, rates of return migration hovered around fifty percent. In Samuel Baily's study of Italian migration to Argentina and the United States, he found that on average forty-nine percent of Italians who migrated to Argentina during the period from 1871-1910 returned to Italy while forty-seven percent of Italians returned to Italy from the United States between 1881 and 1910.⁷⁵ Focusing specifically on the United States from 1905 to 1920, Donna Gabaccia places the number of returnees to Italy at forty-nine percent.⁷⁶

Migration was not only a response to economic concerns and political developments. As immigration historians have shown, personal circumstances could also be a determining factor. Failed courtships, pregnancies out of wedlock, remarriage, a death in the family, and the avoidance of military service could and did cause Italians to migrate.⁷⁷ In addition, as Bruno Ramirez has demonstrated in On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914, one of the motivating factors for out-migration from the Molise region in southern Italy was the environmental damage caused by deforestation and the resulting soil erosion. Trees had been harvested to help construct railways as well as satisfy the demands of private citizens to increase the amount of arable land in the region. The deforestation was so widespread that it had a devastating effect on the local ecosystem causing soil erosion and floods which in turn created propitious conditions for the spread of malaria.⁷⁸

Hoerder also asserts that "discontent" – arising from low wages, poor tenant farming

⁷⁴ Gabaccia 2, 134.

⁷⁵ Samuel L. Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) 59.

⁷⁶ Gabaccia 72.

⁷⁷ Dirk Hoerder, "International Labour Markets and Community Building by Migrant Workers in the Atlantic Economies," A Century of European Migrations, 1930-1930, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 79, 91-92; Ramirez 60.

⁷⁸ Ramirez 52-53.

conditions, abusive employers or landowners, and, I would add, persecution for radical political activities – prompted migration. Radicals also moved to different regions or countries where conditions were more favourable for work and political struggle.⁷⁹

Immigration historian Rudolph Vecoli, on the other hand, cautions against ascribing too much agency to migrants. He argues that the nation-state, the class structure of host countries, and the developing capitalist system seriously limited the choices open to them.⁸⁰ Seeking a middle ground, Samuel Baily acknowledges that migrant agency was influenced by structural realities, such as economic, social, and political events, over which migrants had little or no control. Within these structural realities migrants “creatively coped” with their situations. They decided on when to migrate, with whom to associate, whether to join immigrant or host associations, and how best to spend their earnings.⁸¹

Chain Migration, Migration Networks, and Diasporas

Scholars of Italian migration have different ways of explaining the transnational links among migrants. Franc Sturino, for example, sees the process as “chain migration.” This term describes the importance of relationships between prospective migrants with those who have already migrated abroad. Earlier migrants were important sources of information regarding news of employment opportunities, accommodations, and transportation. Often these migrants were family members but they could also be *padroni* (literally patrons) who were responsible for the facilitation of Italian migration,

⁷⁹ Hoerder 79, 91-92.

⁸⁰ Vecoli 11-12.

⁸¹ Baily 12.

especially before the First World War.⁸² In contrast, Baily opts for the term “network migration” to describe this process because the chain metaphor “implies a sequential linear relationship between individuals.” He argues that the relationships between migrants and prospective migrants were far more multidimensional than linear. According to Baily, migration networks were gradual extensions of already existing personal networks formed in the various communities of Italy and played a significant role in a migrant’s decision on where to migrate. These networks, once established abroad, provided potential migrants with information regarding beneficial places to migrate, travel routes, employment opportunities, housing, and whether *paesani*, people from the same town or region, had settled there. As well, family members could migrate to different parts of the world. For example, Baily’s study of the Sola family has some relatives moving to Buenos Aires while others migrated to New York City, which complicates the chain migration metaphor.⁸³

Donna Gabaccia, in contrast, describes migration networks as diaspora, but with a number of qualifications. Unlike most populations considered to be diasporas, most Italian migrants generally were not forcefully removed from Italy, nor did the majority identify with a national Italian identity.⁸⁴ Instead, Gabaccia conceptualizes the Italian diaspora as containing multiple identities of various lengths of duration. Thus, she argues, one could speak of a diaspora of Sulmonesi⁸⁵ or even of anarchists. Gabaccia has

⁸² Franc Sturino, Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930 (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1990) 3.

⁸³ Baily 13-14.

⁸⁴ A diaspora commonly refers to populations that have (1) been forced to leave their national territory, (2) maintain myths and memories of their homeland, (3) feel alienated from the wider host population, (4) continue to support their homeland, (5) have a desire to return, and (6) form a collective identity based on these realities. James Clifford, “Diasporas,” Cultural Anthropology 9.3 (August 1994): 305.

⁸⁵ Sulmonesi are people from the city of Sulmona located in the Abruzzi region.

chosen the term diaspora as a heuristic device to study transnational Italian migration.⁸⁶ However, her definition of diaspora raises concerns because it denies the original political significance of the word. How would someone from a truly persecuted diasporic community, such as a Palestinian, react to Gabaccia's new interpretation of this term? Further, it is not apparent how her remodeled meaning of diaspora is any better suited to the study of Italian migration than the already existing migration networks concept. Many Italian anarchists were persecuted in Italy and elsewhere for their activities, but many others were not.

Since I do not believe that Italian anarchists can truly be considered a diasporic population and because I subscribe to Baily's criticism of chain migration as being too linear, I will employ his concept of "migration networks." The transnational Italian anarchist movement established its own migration networks that spanned the continents of Europe and North and South America. They criss-crossed the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Whether anarchists were migrating to find work, avoid military service, or escape political repression, these specifically anarchist migration networks aided them in deciding where to travel based on the existence of an active anarchist community as well as the ability to find work and accommodations. These migration networks could also help anarchists enter countries clandestinely to avoid the scrutiny of immigration authorities, a subject I will explore later in this study.

Transnational Social Movement Theory

Historical studies of transnational radical movements have tended to focus on the importance of migration from a home country to multiple host countries in establishing

⁸⁶ Gabaccia, 5-9, 11.

and continuing the movement abroad. Michael Miller Topp's Those Without a Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists, for example, examines the formation and culture of the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI), a syndicalist union composed of Italian migrants living in the United States with links to radicals living in Italy,⁸⁷ while Hartmut Keil has traced socialist thought and worker culture among German migrants to the United States.⁸⁸ Migration was central in establishing transnational radical networks among various left-wing persuasions, but how do we examine these movements beyond their migratory roots? What theoretical blueprints can we use? Labour historian Marcel van der Linden has suggested turning to other disciplines, such as sociology, to develop transnational historical inquiry.⁸⁹ Following his lead, I have chosen Transnational Social Movement (TSM) theory, an analytical framework created by sociologists who study movements of this kind.

TSM theory was developed in response to the emergence of organizations that “participate in domestic and international politics simultaneously, drawing upon a wide variety of resources, as if they were part of an international society.”⁹⁰ Transnational Social Movements (TSMs) most often struggle for social justice and focus on changing both particular nation-states and on the international organizations in which they are collectively represented. As such, these struggles occur beyond the boundaries of a

⁸⁷ See Michael Miller Topp, Those without a Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

⁸⁸ See Hartmut Keil, “Socialist Immigrants from Germany and the Transfer of Socialist Ideology and Workers’ Culture,” A Century of European Migrations, 1930-1930, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

⁸⁹ Marcel van der Linden, Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labour History (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 10.

⁹⁰ Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997) 4.

particular nation state.⁹¹ TSMs are also characterized by “voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange.”⁹² The study of transnational social movements tend to focus on relatively recent events beginning with the anti-World Trade Organization protests in Seattle at the close of the twentieth century.⁹³ This is a result of an analysis on the part of some scholars who view globalization as a recent phenomenon caused by the intensification of transnational relationships between states and capital, which in turn, have led to the formation of transnational social movements. However, the term “globalization” and its historical starting point are contested among scholars of these movements. Research on historical TSMs has been conducted by those who believe that transnational protest began far earlier than 1999. Some examples include Margaret Keck’s and Kathryn Sikkink’s examination of transnational organizing against slavery and foot binding, Charles Chatfield’s exploration of transnational campaigns by advocates of peaceful international relations and how these campaigns helped promote and shape the League of Nations and the United Nations, and Michael Hanagan’s study of the transnationalism of Irish nationalists who struggled for an independent Ireland beginning in the 1850s.⁹⁴

⁹¹ John D. McCarthy, “The Globalisation of Social Movement Theory,” Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State, eds. Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Charles Chatfield (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997) 243; Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Charles Chatfield, “Social Movements and World Politics: A Theoretical Framework,” Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State, eds. Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Charles Chatfield (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997) 59; Jackie Smith and Hank Johnston, “Globalisation and Resistance: An Introduction,” Globalisation and Resistance: Transnational Dimensions of Social Movements, eds. Jackie Smith and Hank Johnston (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002) 2.

⁹² Keck and Sikkink, 8.

⁹³ Smith and Johnston, “Globalization and Resistance: An Introduction,” 9. For examples of studies on transnational social movements see Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield, and Ron Pagnucco, eds., Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press), 1997; Jackie Smith and Hank Johnston, eds., Globalization and Resistance: Transnational Dimensions of Social Movements (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002).

⁹⁴ See Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders: Transnational Activists in International Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Charles Chatfield, “Intergovernmental and

Scholars such as Keck and Sikkink, Chatfield, and Hanagan argue that some of their colleagues, i.e., those who believe that TSMs are recent phenomena, are essentially denying that such social movements have had a history. As Hanagan has demonstrated, scholarship on transnational migrants and their social movements has reinforced the idea that TSMs are products of “the modern global age” possible only because of advanced communication technology.⁹⁵ Hanagan refutes these claims in his study of transnational Irish revolutionaries. He points to the development of the steamship in the nineteenth century, which cut down travel time across the Atlantic from one and a half months to two weeks.⁹⁶ This technological innovation allowed for the transatlantic movement of mail, a crucial means for Irish revolutionaries to keep each other informed, forward essential funds, and sustain the movement’s journals. All of these factors led to the creation and maintenance of transnational migrant identities and social movements.⁹⁷ Like the Irish revolutionaries of Hanagan’s study, Italian anarchists were also able to create and maintain a transnational movement via letters, newspapers, and migration. Due to the competition between different steamship companies, for example, travel rates became affordable enough that Italian workers could migrate seasonally to Argentina. The Italian anarchist movement, made possible by such linkages, can be considered a transnational social movement.

TSM theory, then, provides an analytical framework within which to study organizations not tied to any one particular nation state. This theoretical approach has

Nongovernmental Associations to 1945,” *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State*, eds. Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield, and Ron Pagnucco (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997); Michael Hanagan, “Irish Transnational Social Movements, Migrants, and the State System,” *Globalization and Resistance: Transnational Dimensions of Social Movements*, eds. Jackie Smith and Hank Johnston (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002).

⁹⁵ Hanagan 53.

⁹⁶ By 1900 the trip lasted one week. Hanagan 55.

⁹⁷ Hanagan 55-56.

borrowed heavily from existing Social Movement (SM) theory. Simply put, TSM theory has taken the analytical components of SM theory and placed them in a transnational perspective. Social Movement theory attempts to explain why groups of people mobilize for activist work, the different forms in which this mobilization occurs, and the social, political, and cultural outcomes that result. SM theorists believe that “old social movements,” those that existed prior to the 1960s and were motivated by economic factors, have been supplanted by “new social movements” organized around issues related to identity. Examples of new social movements, according to sociologists Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph R. Gusfield, would be the Basque separatists in Spain, the women’s movement, and the hippies.⁹⁸ Some movements may combine the “old” with the “new” sources of identity: as Michael Miller Topp has demonstrated in his work on the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI), the activism of Italian-American syndicalists was informed not only by class but also by ethnicity and gender.⁹⁹

Social Movement theory has been criticized for its omission of class. Theorist Ellen Meiksins Woods, for example, has argued that the shift from class to identity “avoid[s] ... implicating the capitalist order and its class system.”¹⁰⁰ Yet, even though SM theorists tend to shy away from the use of the term “class,” class can be read back into their concept of “identity” because “the social self of a movement adherent is made up of several social identities.”¹⁰¹ Class position, much like ethnicity, gender, and, I

⁹⁸ How Johnston, Laraña, and Gusfield consider Basque sovereignty a “new” social movement is a bit of a mystery since Basques had sought their own autonomy prior to the Spanish Civil War. Limited self-government of parts of the Basque region was granted before and even after that conflict. Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph R. Gusfield. “Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements.” *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, eds. Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994) 7.

⁹⁹ Topp 4.

¹⁰⁰ Ellen Meiksins Woods, *The Retreat from Class: A New ‘True’ Socialism* (London: Verso, 1998) 176.

¹⁰¹ Johnston et al., “Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements” 12.

would add, political philosophy, is a key component of identity formation. The Italian anarchists active in North America were generally shaped by the working-class experiences of exploitation as migrant workers. Their class position determined what kind of labour they would perform, the areas in which they could live, and their standard of living. In a sense I am melding the Marxist approach to studying social justice movements, which is rooted in examining class, ethnicity, and gender, with SM/TSM theory.

SM/TSM theory is useful to my research because it includes themes outside of the Marxist triumvirate of class, race, and gender, such as ideology, tactics, culture, styles of mobilization, and patterns of alliance-building. As a result, SM/TSM theory is better able to address some of the topics relating to the Italian anarchist movement in North America including the role that different strains of anarchist philosophy played in movement cohesion, the ways anarchists responded to local and international crises, and the role of culture in building and maintaining the movement. By addressing these and other issues this study will enhance our understanding of Italian anarchists, how they operated transnationally, and the development of such a militant movement. For my study on Italian anarchists, I will employ such aspects of the TSM theoretical framework as activist identity formation (mentioned above), strategic framing processes, mobilizing structures, resource mobilization, and methods of social change.¹⁰²

Strategic framing processes encompass the various ways Italian anarchists tried to inform and influence others. For example, if comrades living in the United States were in danger of being deported to Fascist Italy, it was imperative that movement journals

¹⁰² I have replaced McCarthy's original phrase "repertoires of contention" with my own "methods of social change" because I feel the former is too vague.

convey this news to their readers and report it in a compelling way. Articles on the topic could detail the way in which the anarchists had been arrested, the conditions in jail, their treatment by police and their dire need for acts of solidarity. This kind of reporting could also castigate the police, the state, and the courts. If successful, it could frame a given process, such as the deportation of militants, in a movement-enhancing way.

Mobilizing structures are a second important feature of TSMs. These act as “collective vehicles ... through which people mobilize and engage in collective action.”¹⁰³ The radical culture of Italian anarchists could be considered such a mobilizing structure. Aspects of this culture included the formation of groups or circles that carried out autonomous social and political activities, a vibrant Italian-language press, drama societies, and the celebration of radical “holidays.” These various elements were central to maintaining movement cohesion, attracting new members, and providing spaces for collective struggle. They also made it possible for the movement to respond quickly to different crises.

Methods of social change are the different ways in which activists engage in their work. These methods are usually unorthodox and are generally a combination of public education, direct aid, and direct action.¹⁰⁴ The Italian anarchist movement used all three methods in their activism. Education was carried out via movement newspapers and speaking tours. It often blended in with direct aid, since anarchist journals and lecturers often raised funds to support anarchist causes and comrades in legal difficulties. Direct

¹⁰³ Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, “Introduction,” Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings, eds. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 3.

¹⁰⁴ John D. McCarthy, “The Globalisation of Social Movement Theory,” Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State, eds. Jackie Smith et al. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997) 257.

aid was also material. Defence committees were organized to coordinate legal struggles when anarchists faced prison sentences, deportations, or impending executions. And both education and direct aid could lead on to direct action, as in clashes between anarchists and Italian Fascists.

Chapter Breakdown

Chapter One will provide the historical context surrounding the emergence of anarchist political philosophy, describing its central tenets and different strains as well as its public image and contested presence on the left. The second chapter will examine the causes of Italian migration and describe how this process helped establish the transnational anarchist movement. Whether as labourers or political exiles, Italian anarchists' movements to regions of Europe and the Americas led to the creation of transnational networks which in turn provided prospective anarchist migrants with well-travelled paths to anarchist communities abroad.

Chapter Three will focus on the formation of militant anarchist identities. Italian migrant experiences in racist host countries, the reality of life in "lands of promise," Italian regionalism, and alignment with a particular strain of anarchism and/or noted figure in the movement all played significant roles in identity formation. The fourth chapter will expand on this last point by exploring the different factions emerging among the Italian anarchists in North America, whose relations with one another have sometimes been likened to a war.¹⁰⁵ To what extent did this "war" and other conflicts among the anarchists spread throughout the continent?

¹⁰⁵ For a discussion of the factional war between the adherents of Luigi Galleani and Carlo Tresca, see Nunzio Pernicone, "War among the Italian Anarchists: The Galleanisti's Campaign against Carlo Tresca,"

Chapter Five explores anarchist culture. The vibrant cultural *milieu* of Italian anarchists meant numerous social events – *filodrammatica*, picnics, dinners, and public lectures – often raised money for anarchist causes. Newspapers such as L'Adunata dei Refrattari and Il Martello were instrumental in advertising such events and were important venues for the spread of anarchist culture generally. Anarchist culture was responsible in maintaining, reinforcing, and expanding the transnational anarchist movement in addition to contributing to anarchist identity.

How did the anarchist movement mobilize in times of crisis? How did it raise funds for its causes? The sixth chapter analyses the role that anarchist identity and culture played during the Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation case of the late 1930s. As this struggle unfolded, Italian anarchist circles around North America mobilized to aid the two men by utilizing various methods of social change. This case study demonstrates the importance of self-funded political movements in drawing upon resources in a transnational context.

Chapter 1: Anarchism and the Italian Tradition

Introduction

Before delving further into the history of the transnational Italian anarchist movement, an explanation of first-wave anarchism is in order. This chapter will help familiarize the reader with anarchism's main tenets, its different strains, and the historical context within which this political philosophy emerged. It will not trace the linear development of anarchist thought by rehashing the "canon" of white male European thinkers who are often credited with the creation of anarchist thought. The idea that people should be free from the yoke of rulers and exploitative economic systems seems to me to be an organic concept – a logical conclusion – realized by anyone who has experienced oppression and coercion. However, it tends to be those who had the privilege of writing down their thoughts on stateless or government-free societies who receive credit for these ideas. This is simply a fact of historical enquiry; we can only study those records that are available. Many of the main themes of anarchist philosophy can be distilled from select anarchist theorists, without assuming that they speak for everyone or that they can indefinitely stand in for anarchists throughout the entire world, which in the present state of the literature they tend to do.

This chapter will also explore the public perceptions of anarchism and the debates surrounding this political philosophy within the wider left. For this last I will focus on The Voice, a Winnipeg-based socialist and labour newspaper that published from 1893 to 1918. Though this publication is outside the periodization and regional boundaries of this study, the often critical assessments of anarchism that appeared in The Voice were still relevant into the 1910s and 1920s. In addition, the generally unfavourable views it

printed on anarchism were similar to those expressed by John Spargo, a British-born socialist, in a lecture – “Socialism and the Anarchistic Peril” – he gave in Toronto in November 1901.¹ Spargo, who migrated to the United States earlier that year, illustrates both the prevalence and transnationalism of criticisms of anarchism within the international socialist movement.

Anarchism is a dynamic, not a static, belief system. If its core beliefs in statelessness and freedom have remained relatively constant, their interpretation has changed over time. This thesis focuses on “first-wave” anarchism, as described by Jason Adams. Many of its patterns do not resemble those of anarchism today. Tactics, for example, have changed. No longer do bands of armed anarchists travel the Italian countryside entering villages, burning tax ledgers, and fomenting insurrection. In contrast, today’s anarchists are involved in struggles around migrant rights, indigenous autonomy, and building alternatives to capitalism in the form of workers’ cooperatives and social centres. Nor do third-wave anarchists, at least those active in the North American and European contexts, necessarily view workers and peasants as the most revolutionary segments of society as did most first wavers. Third-wave anarchists are also more cognizant than their first-wave counterparts of forms of power beyond the state and capitalism, such as white privilege, gender oppression, and heteronormativity.

What Is First Wave Anarchism?

Anarchism is the idea that people can organize their lives without government; that each individual knows what is best for himself or herself and does not need to be told

¹ Ian McKay, Reasoning Otherwise: Leftist and the People’s Enlightenment in Canada, 1890-1920, (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2008) 111.

how to live life by an external institution. Anarchism is freedom; it is direct democracy. It is a conception of society without hierarchy, coercion, oppression, or violence, and in which all members have a say in decision-making processes and access to the necessities of life. Anarchism is not dogmatic nor is it a program; it is fluid and adaptive to particular conditions. It is a philosophy of the left wing of the political spectrum and is anti-capitalist.

During the first wave there were five identifiable strains of anarchist thought: mutualism, collectivism, communism, syndicalism, and individualism. However, two of them – mutualism and individualism – do not fit the above definition of anarchism because mutualism supported the idea of private property while individualism was not anti-capitalist. Still, these two philosophies did have a strong influence on anarchist thought, as I will demonstrate below.

Mutualism is an economic theory that has been credited to the French writer and philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Proudhon envisioned a stateless society founded on the principle of federation. In this society, farmers and artisans would organize themselves into local and autonomous communes, which would be part of a much larger federation bound by a single constitution that ensured society would be coordinated by a bottom-up approach. Members of society were to have access to the means of production, were exclusively entitled to what they produced, and could exchange the value of their labour for an equal amount of goods and services offered by others. The means of production, however, were to be held in common. Contracts between autonomous individuals or groups were to ensure that economic interactions were just.²

² Allan Antliff, Anarchist Modernism: Art, Politics, and the First American Avant-Garde (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) 3.

Mutualists believed in establishing cooperatives, such as banks and markets, as an alternative to capitalism in order to render the latter useless. Though Proudhon viewed property as theft, private property was not done away with under mutualism. Having a plot of land, mutualists argued, meant that a person was able to work and subsist. Mutualists did, however, object to members of the ruling class owning large amounts of land and exploiting others in order to develop it.³

Proudhon may have called himself an anarchist but in many ways his political theories could be described as stateless liberalism. Still, his ideas had a strong influence on anarchist thought. The Russian revolutionary and anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, whom I will discuss in greater detail below, helped formulate the collectivist position, which was a synthesis of mutualism and a critical reading of Marx's economic theories. Under a collectivist economic system, society would ideally adhere to a form of federation but there would be no private property – both land and the means of production were to be held in common. And, whereas the mutualists argued that an individual was entitled to everything that he or she produced, collectivists believed that all members of an anarchist society would be entitled to everything that was produced, with the caveat that one's right to take from the commonwealth was based on how much labour one had contributed to production.⁴ From Marx was borrowed his analysis of capitalism and its resultant division of society into classes based on their relationship to the means of production. There were, of course, issues that anarchists had with Marx and his political theories but I will address some of those later in the chapter.

³ On stateless federation see Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, The Principle of Federation, trans. Richard Vernon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979). For Proudhon's views on property and government see Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, What is Property? An Inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government (New York: Dover Publications, 1970).

⁴ Peter Marshall, Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism (London: Harper Perennial, 2008) 8.

Additionally, Bakunin and his adherents in the International Working Men's Association (IWMA) have been credited with the emergence of syndicalist ideas that led to the anarcho-syndicalist strain of anarchism.⁵ This is due to Bakunin's belief that the role of the IWMA should not be the formation of political parties but the organization of society

based on the various functions of daily life and of different kinds of labour. It is the organization by professions and trades. Once all the different industries are represented in the International, including the cultivation of the land, its organization, the organization of the mass of the people, will have been complete.

Bakunin argued further that "[t]he organization of the trade sections ... bear in themselves the living seeds of the new society which is to replace the old world."⁶ Anarcho-syndicalists, then, believed that by organizing within unions they could radicalize the working class, consolidate it into a mass movement, and move it towards revolutionary goals.⁷ They shunned the formal political process because it was in no way related to the struggle for worker emancipation. Instead, anarcho-syndicalists relied on direct action to fight battles important to workers and did not get involved in elections.⁸ They also opposed the Leninist proposition of a revolutionary vanguard party taking control of the state. For anarcho-syndicalists, the end of state capitalism was to be achieved by direct action in the workplace which would ultimately lead to a general strike. This would allow workers to take control of the means of production and organize workplaces along the anarcho-syndicalist principle of unity through decentralized

⁵ Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt, Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism (Oakland: AK Press, 2009) 153-155.

⁶ Mikhail Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism, trans. and ed. by Sam Dolgoff (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980) 255.

⁷ Rudolf Rocker, Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice (Oakland: AK Press, 2004) 59.

⁸ G. D. H. Cole, History of Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism, 1850-1890, vol. 2 (London: MacMillan, 1957) 358.

federations.⁹

In the North American context, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), also known as the Wobblies, came the closest of all the large radical bodies to the anarcho-syndicalist position. Formed in Chicago in 1905, the IWW promoted direct action tactics in place of the ballot box, sought worker control of society and the abolition of capitalism, and organized workers along industrial lines as opposed to the craft unionism of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Unlike the AFL, the IWW was open to women, people of colour, and immigrants. The majority of Wobbly unionizing efforts occurred in the resource extraction regions of Canada and the United States, though organizing also took place to a lesser degree in urban centres among factory workers. The union activities of the IWW led to severe violence against the organization and its organizers by the state as well as by vigilantes acting on the orders of business owners. The repression faced by the IWW appears to have been far greater in intensity in the United States than Canada; however, following the red scares in both countries towards the end of the First World War, the IWW was almost destroyed. The union still exists and continues to organize marginalized workers, though its numbers and profile are not as impressive as those it enjoyed in the early twentieth century.

The role of anarchism in the IWW has been a source of debate among historians. Rudolph Rocker believed the IWW was Marxist in orientation while historian Melvyn

⁹ Rocker 60. For a wider discussion of anarcho-syndicalism see V.V. Damier, Anarcho-Syndicalism in the 20th Century (Edmonton: Black Cat Press, 2009); Sam Dolgoff, The Anarchist Collectives: Workers' Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution, 1936-1939 (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1974); Murray Bookchin, The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years, 1868-1936 (San Francisco: AK Press, 1998); Graham Kelsey, Anarchosyndicalism, Libertarian Communism and the State: The CNT in Zaragoza and Aragon, 1930-1937 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism (Moscow: Progress, 1972); G. P. Maximoff, The Programme of Anarcho-Syndicalism (Sydney: Monty Miller, 1985); Rudolf Rocker, Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice (Oakland: AK Press, 2004); and Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt, Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism (Oakland: AK Press, 2009).

Dubofsky argued the union was an amalgam of Marxism, Darwinism, anarchism, and syndicalism.¹⁰ Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt have described the IWW as a form of revolutionary syndicalism that shared many aspects of anarcho-syndicalism but cannot be considered explicitly anarcho-syndicalist.¹¹ Neither has historian Salvatore Salerno called the IWW anarcho-syndicalist. However, in Red November, Black November he demonstrates the strong influence that anarchists and anarchist philosophy had on the formation of the union.¹² It should also be noted that a number of Italian anarchists were members of the IWW. In Paterson, New Jersey, anarchist silk workers affiliated with the IWW in 1906 and the Italian-language anarchist paper La Questione Sociale featured the union logo on the paper's masthead during this period.¹³ In addition, the anarcho-syndicalist Carlo Tresca, who will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four, was actively involved as an organizer with the IWW though he never became a member.¹⁴

Anarchist communism is a stateless form of communism and is best summed up in the phrase "From each according to their ability, to each according to their need." Anarchist communists believed that land, the means of production, and all the necessities of life should be held in common. As an economic and social theory, anarchist communism began to appear in the late nineteenth century. The Russian prince, Peter Kropotkin is generally credited with this anarchist philosophy but, as historian Nunzio Pernicone has demonstrated, the Italian anarchist Carlo Cafiero conceived of anarchist

¹⁰ Rocker 93; Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World, ed. Joseph McCartin, abridged ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000) 86.

¹¹ Schmidt and van der Walt 171.

¹² Salvatore Salerno, Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) 90.

¹³ Salerno 89.

¹⁴ Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 30.

communism independently of the Russian. Cafiero was trained as a lawyer but worked as a diplomat. During his travels to London, he saw firsthand the conditions in which the English working-class lived and became a socialist and supporter of the IWMA. While living in the city, he also met the prominent communists Frederick Engels and Karl Marx, with the latter asking Cafiero to return to Italy and promulgate Marx's form of communism in order to undercut the influence of the republican Giuseppe Mazzini and the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin. Cafiero arrived in Italy in May 1871 and began his work on behalf of Marx attending conferences and expressing the views of state communism. However, it was not long before Cafiero began to move towards the anarchist position. This impending break with the communism of Marx and Engels was the result of Cafiero's close contact with friends of Bakunin's as well as a resolution passed at the London conference of the IWMA in September of that same year. The resolution called for the International to become a political party, which Cafiero saw as an attempt to centralize the organization – a move that he did not support. In early 1872, Cafiero spent time with Bakunin discussing anarchism and in a letter to Engels dated 12 June declared his conversion to anarchism. He wrote for the radical Italian press and was involved with Errico Malatesta and others in an attempt to foment insurrection in the province of Benevento in the Campania region of southern Italy by entering towns, burning tax ledgers, and explaining the principles of anarchism. The exploits of the Matese Band, as they were known, came to a quick end as they were captured by government soldiers and imprisoned. Following his release from prison, Cafiero spent time in France, Switzerland, and England where he continued his anarchist activities and experienced further state repression as a result. He eventually returned to Italy in the early 1880s but

by this time had drifted into paranoia and fits of rage which resulted in his institutionalization at Nocera Inferiore, Campania, where he died in 1892 of intestinal tuberculosis at age forty-five.¹⁵

Cafiero's anarchist communism was adopted at the third national congress of the Italian Federation of the IWMA at Tosi in October 1876, predating that of Kropotkin by six years. Cafiero felt that an anarchist communist economy could be put into practice immediately following a revolution. Under this type of economic system "material abundance" could be achieved through the following developments: "harmonious cooperation, [the] introduction of new machines, [and the] considerable economy of labour, tools, and raw materials resulting from the elimination of luxury goods and other unnecessary products."¹⁶ Among the Italians in particular, anarchist communism had two distinct branches comprised of those who believed in organization and those who did not. I will elaborate on this division among Italian anarchist communists below.

In addition to communist and syndicalist strains of anarchism there is the individualist form. Though the individual is important to all anarchist philosophies, individualist anarchists place far more emphasis on the individual than communist or syndicalist anarchists. Individualists were critical of communism, especially the Marxian form, because they believed this political philosophy led to majority rule while negating the individual and his or her desires. According to individualists, in a communist society social duty becomes of the utmost importance and acts as a new religion. This is anathema to a political philosophy in which the individual and his or her desires are

¹⁵ Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism, 1864-1892* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) 112-113; Pier Carlo Masini, "Carlo Cafiero," *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani*, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 281-286.

¹⁶ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 112-113.

paramount. However, this did not mean that individualists had no use for others or led solitary lives. Some believed that individualists could enter into unions with those who shared the same belief system, in order to organize around areas of mutual interest or need.¹⁷ Though each of these offshoots differed, especially in their economic theories, all shared in common the idea that a life free from oppression, coercion, and hierarchy was not only desirable but possible. Among Italian anarchists, individualism had an insignificant presence in contrast to anarchist communism or anarcho-syndicalism. Yet it bears mention because it was considered one of the major forms of anarchist thought during the period of the first wave and had an influence within the wider anarchist movement.

Anarchism recognizes that each person is an individual with different temperaments, desires, and experiences; that each person knows best how to govern his or her own life. It aspires to a society based on freedom “in which no one could constrain his [sic] fellow beings without meeting with vigorous resistance, in which, above all, nobody could seize and use the collective force to impose his own wishes on others.”¹⁸ This freedom would be extended to all members of society but did not entitle each individual to act in any way. Instead, individual freedom was to be circumscribed by social responsibility; in other words, one’s right to behave in a certain manner stopped when it infringed on the rights of another.¹⁹ For first-wave anarchists, the three main impediments to liberty were the triumvirate of oppression known as the state, capital, and religion.

¹⁷ Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*, ed. David Leopold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 111, 276.

¹⁸ Errico Malatesta, *His Life and Ideas*, ed. Vernon Richards (London: Freedom Press, 1965) 48-49.

¹⁹ Malatesta 48-49.

Anarchists have spent a great deal of time criticizing the state. For them states negate individual freedom because they are administered by a minority that dominates the majority.²⁰ This minority is often comprised of wealthy elites or those in their service. As a result, the interests of the state are commonly those of the minority and not the wider population. The power of the ruling elites is maintained through laws and more direct means such as the police or the military, which protect their privileged position and private property, thus reinforcing class inequality. Additionally, the various authoritarian aspects of the state such as courts, police, schools, and banks, are all in the service of capital. They work to ensure the continued exploitation of workers under capitalism.²¹ States are also an affront to the natural solidarity that exists among persons because they encourage nationalism and patriotism.²² Well in advance of Benedict Anderson's theories of the "imagined community," first-wave anarchists argued that the nation-state relied upon a fiction without any natural foundation.²³ The creation of states is rooted in violence because their formation was often realized through bloody struggles whereby one group subjugated another.²⁴ States are also inherently conservative and demand conformity from their citizens; respect for the law, obedience, faith in the wisdom of government, and self-sacrifice in times of war are important qualities that need to be fostered within populations to facilitate rule over them.²⁵ Those who dare to challenge the state are met with laws and/or the physical coercion of state security. In general,

²⁰ Malatesta 27.

²¹ Peter Kropotkin, Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets, ed. Roger N. Baldwin (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968) 210.

²² Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 133-134.

²³ Emma Goldman, Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader, ed. Alix Kates Shulman (New York: Schocken Books, 1983) 113. See also Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 2006).

²⁴ Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 235.

²⁵ Goldman 119.

states are more concerned with security than with liberty.²⁶

Not only do anarchists spurn the state, they are also opposed to government, regardless of political persuasion, whether monarchical, democratic, or totalitarian. Governments, as mentioned above, are either comprised of or controlled by ruling elites who ensure that the function of government is to protect their class interests. It was government that called out the militia or the police to fire upon strikers in industrializing nations from the mid nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries. Government has never acted for the benefit of the majority of a population and any positive changes that have occurred within liberal democracies, for example, have been realized through the efforts of grassroots mobilization. For anarchists, this kind of self-mobilization is key. It is up to the people to work together collectively to initiate social change and not to rely on political parties. As a result, first wave anarchists generally did not engage in electoral politics.

But anarchism was not simply a philosophy that criticized existing institutions. It also offered some possible solutions. In place of the state system, anarchists proposed a form of federation comprised of autonomous communities.²⁷ With regards to the organization and planning of society, anarchists had varying ideas regarding forms of direct democracy. Some suggested that each member of an anarchist society would have a say in decisions that affected them, while others envisioned representatives selected by their community. This latter may sound similar to the current electoral system but in an anarchist society these representatives would be subject to recall and serve short terms to prevent any entrenchment of power. These positions would also be rotated to discourage

²⁶ Mikhail Bakunin, The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism, ed. G. P. Maximoff (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1953) 212.

²⁷ Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 81-88; Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, The Principle of Federation 70.

any such development.

Capitalism is an economic system based on coercion and exploitation, and stands in stark contrast to the principles of anarchism. It is coercive because people are forced to work in order to receive monetary remuneration or starve; it is exploitative because workers create wealth for the bourgeoisie but do not own the means of production themselves.²⁸ In addition, employees are paid a fraction of what their labour produces. Under capitalism, work itself shifted from a creative process to mind-numbing repetition often in unsanitary and unsafe working environments. Previously, work processes had been carried out by skilled workers in which, for example, one worker would be responsible for the manufacture of a pair of shoes from scratch. But, under the new factory system, the manufacture of a pair of shoes would be broken down in such a way that a worker would not make the entire pair of shoes, but would be given one task, such as attaching the sole to the bottom of the shoe. If the workers were paid by the piece, it would be in their best interest to work as fast as possible to receive the most amount of money. In this way, the industrial revolution helped to remove creativity from the new work processes, transferred the knowledge of manufacturing shoes and many other products from skilled workers to managers, and helped curb craft workers' job actions by making them redundant.²⁹

Capitalism breeds class inequality. And the creation and perpetuation of private

²⁸ Alexander Berkman, What is Anarchism? (Oakland: AK Press, 2003) 8.

²⁹ Berkman 7. For changes to labour processes under industrial capitalism in the North American context see Michael Burowoy, Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979); Richard Edwards, Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century (New York: Basic Books, 1979); Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986); and David Montgomery, The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

property enshrined this inequality – which is why anarchists have called for its abolition. Anarchists view private property as a form of theft because it prevents all people from enjoying the right to all land or what the land produces naturally or through human intervention.³⁰ In place of private property, first wave anarchists called for all land and its resources to be owned in common (as had been the case in the past); every member of an anarchist society was entitled to all the necessities of life.³¹

The third main target of first wave anarchist critique was religion. When speaking or writing against religion, anarchists were usually referring to Christianity – a tendency stemming not so much from their Eurocentrism as from the negative influence this particular religion has had on populations around the world. Jewish anarchists like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, and the Japanese anarchist Kotoku Shusui, all denounced Christianity in their speeches and written works. Goldman and Berkman targeted Christianity because of its role as the main religion in countries where they were active.³² It may be more surprising that Kotoku was similarly critical of this religion when it was not practiced in Japan to the same degree as Europe or North America. Yet Christianity appeared to have a growing influence to Kotoku who in 1906 commented in a letter to a comrade in California that the “Christian clergy have received considerable funding from the [Japanese] government. Now under State sponsorship, the clergy are going all-out to spread the gospel of patriotism. Prior to the [Russo-Japanese] war, Christianity was the religion of the poor. Now it has turned its coat. Within two years Christianity has turned into a huge bourgeois religion, an adjunct of the State and of

³⁰ Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Selected Writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon*, ed. Stewart Edwards (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1969) 36-37; Edward S. Krebs, *Shifu: Souls of Chinese Anarchism* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998) 128.

³¹ Goldman 73.

³² Goldman 232-248; Berkman 39-41, 60-63.

militarism.”³³ Among anarchists, religion was problematic because it taught people to be subservient to authority: “God being master, man is the slave.” Religion encourages people to put their faith and trust in God’s intermediaries on earth, instead of seeking truth and justice on their own. It thus dismisses human reason and freedom. Further, if people believed that God had to be obeyed unconditionally, then it followed that they must passively submit to emperors, kings, and all their functionaries who were viewed as divine authority.³⁴

This subservience was also demonstrated in the belief in an afterlife of reward for being a good Christian. The church demanded that persons of the lower classes accept their lot in life, thus persuading “the oppressed to accept oppression meekly.”³⁵ As a result, religion was an important tool used by the state and capital for their own interests. It created a docile population over which to rule. For those who found themselves barely able to afford food and rent or had their wages cut, the church counseled patience and restraint. Of course, anarchists argued that only people had the power to organize and fight for social justice since no heavenly help would be forthcoming. Indeed, organized religion actually benefited from capitalist society with many denominations amassing great wealth. And, because it profited from the existing system, the church had no interest in changing society for the benefit of the majority. Many anarchists, drawing on this line of reasoning, argued that the church always stood opposed to intellectual and

³³ Victor Garcia, Three Japanese Anarchists: Kotoku, Osugi, and Yamaga (Berkeley: Kate Sharpley Library, 2000) 3.

³⁴ Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 238; Bakunin The Political Philosophy of Bakunin 117.

³⁵ Malatesta 183.

scientific progress, and has persecuted people for challenging ideas contrary to religious dogma.³⁶

Free Love

Free love was another significant aspect of anarchist philosophy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his article on Canadian sex radicals Robert Bird Kerr and Dora Forster, Angus McLaren argues that anarchists were the only ones who dealt with the subject of free love and sexuality seriously and explicitly. He bases this assertion on the fact that Forster had to tone down her language on the subject when writing for Canadian socialist papers after the anarchist publication Lucifer: The Light Bearer, which she had previously contributed to, was censored by American authorities.³⁷ Free love during this period did not mean sexual irresponsibility, promiscuity, or disrespect for one's partner(s), but rather the right to form and end physical relationships when one was unsatisfied, to express oneself sexually, and engage in sex for pleasure rather than procreation. However, free love advocates placed more emphasis on the right of women to control their own bodies than they did on the liberation of men's sexuality. Free love was thus directly tied to feminist concerns and became synonymous with calls for access to birth control and abortions, the right to refrain from marriage, and the ability to have children out of wedlock.³⁸

³⁶ Goldman 56, 245; Berkman 62.

³⁷ Bird and Forster did not identify as anarchists but did see themselves as sex radicals. They were regular contributors to Lucifer: The Light Bearer, an anarchist publication that focused on issues of free love and sexuality, that was edited by the American individualist anarchist Moses Harman. Angus McLaren, "Sex Radicalism in the Canadian Pacific Northwest, 1890-1920," Journal of the History of Sexuality 2.4 (1992): 529, 541.

³⁸ Ackelsberg 167; Marsh 69-70; McLaren 533; Martin Henry Blatt, Free Love and Anarchism: The Biography of Ezra Hey wood (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989) 106-108; Bonnie Haaland, Emma Goldman: Sexuality and the Impurity of the State (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1993) 155.

Sex radicals challenged the repressive sexual mores of the patriarchal society in which they lived. During this period, sex and sexuality were subjects largely considered improper to discuss and literature on the subject was considered obscene and illegal to distribute. For instance, Carlo Tresca, who will be given more attention below, was sentenced to one year in prison for the distribution of birth control literature. He had run an advertisement in the paper he edited, Il Martello, for a book titled L'Arte di non fare i figli (The Art of Not Creating Children) that was available from the journal. Though the postal authorities had banned the issue in question and made members of Il Martello's staff cross out the ad with black crayon before it could be mailed, Tresca was still held criminally responsible for its circulation.³⁹

Advocates of free love were not interested in a society in which sexual issues were treated with fear, ignorance, and prudery. Instead they sought a world where the topics of contraception, sexual education, and divorce could be dealt with rationally, scientifically, and non-coercively. They hoped that this approach would put an end to loveless marriage, endless breeding, illegitimacy, prostitution, and venereal diseases.⁴⁰ They wanted to demonstrate to both men and women that sexuality was natural and needed to be expressed. But this did not mean that advocates of free love wished simply to satisfy sexual needs. Instead, human sexuality was to be based on self-control and mutual respect for others.⁴¹ Though this may have been the ideal, it was not always the practice. Carlo Tresca abandoned his daughter Beatrice and his wife Helga Guerra, whom he had married in 1904, in order to live with the Wobbly organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn in 1913. Later, Tresca would begin an affair with Gurley Flynn's sister

³⁹ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 152-155.

⁴⁰ McLaren 546.

⁴¹ Blatt 108.

Bina and the two would have a son named Peter. When Gurley Flynn found out about the affair and the birth, she fell into a deep depression.⁴² Free love in practice was not necessarily beneficial to both men and women.

Nor was free love embraced by all anarchists. Emma Goldman may have included this topic in her theories of anarchism, but many of her male comrades did not take this issue seriously, believing it to be inconsequential when compared to such important matters as the social revolution and its aftermath. Some also thought addressing the topic of sexuality would harm the movement.⁴³ Max Nettlau, for one, argued that the sex question added very little of substance to the anarchist philosophy. Instead he considered discussions regarding sex to be an issue of personal choice that had nothing to do with the wider anarchist movement.⁴⁴ This approach was not confined to male anarchists. As scholar Martha Ackelsberg has shown, anarchist women in Spain generally agreed that sexuality was something worked out between individuals.⁴⁵ Debates also existed among anarchists about what “free love” actually meant. Some felt that free love meant having a monogamous relationship with someone you loved. For others, it meant non-monogamy and choosing lovers as one pleased. What was agreed upon was the ability of individuals to leave unhappy relationships.⁴⁶

For the majority of free love advocates and sex radicals of the first wave, discussions of sexuality were framed in a heterosexist discourse that celebrated sex between men and women; homosexuality was almost completely absent from these

⁴² Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 74, 239, 244-245; Maurizio Antonioli and S. Cicolani, Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, vol. 2, 624.

⁴³ Haaland 1, 140.

⁴⁴ Max Nettlau, A Short History of Anarchism (London: Freedom Press, 1996) 288-289.

⁴⁵ Ackelsberg 172.

⁴⁶ Jennifer Guglielmo, Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945 (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 171-172.

discussions. But this does not mean that same sex relationships were ignored within anarchist ranks.⁴⁷ Emma Goldman spoke in defence of homosexuality as early as 1890.⁴⁸ In her autobiography, she relates her experiences lecturing on the subject in addition to the responses she received. According to Goldman, partisans of same sex love approached her after her lectures on homosexuality, thanking Goldman for helping them to feel accepted and confident in their sexuality.⁴⁹ Significantly, however, in Emma Goldman: Sexuality and the Impurity of the State Bonnie Haaland has suggested that even though Goldman defended male homosexuality, she did not support lesbianism in the same way. Like the psychoanalysts and sexologists that influenced her thoughts on sexuality, such as Sigmund Freud and Havelock Ellis, Goldman believed male homosexuality to be “a genetic predisposition,” whereas lesbianism was predicated upon women’s relationships with men – if men could not treat women as equals then women had no choice but to turn to one another for intimate relations.⁵⁰

Homosexuality was a theme touched upon by Alexander Berkman in his Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist, which was originally published in 1912.⁵¹ Berkman is candid about his experiences in prison and describes the emotional bond that formed between himself and another prisoner, Johnny/Felipe, while they were in separate cells in the basement of the prison known as the dungeon.⁵² The only human interaction both men have is with each other and, during the course of their time in the dungeon, a strong

⁴⁷ For an engaging study on first wave anarchism and homosexuality, see Terrance Kissack, Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917 (Oakland: AK Press, 2008).

⁴⁸ Haaland 164.

⁴⁹ Emma Goldman, Living My Life, vol. 2 (London: Pluto Press, 1987) 556.

⁵⁰ Haaland 163.

⁵¹ Alexander Berkman was imprisoned in 1892 for his attempted assassination of Henry Clay Frick of Carnegie Steel during a bitter strike in Homestead, Pennsylvania.

⁵² Berkman’s fellow inmate’s name was really Johnny but he wanted Berkman to call him Felipe just as the anarchist wanted Johnny to call him Sasha. Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist (New York: Schocken Books, 1970) 322.

emotional bond forms between them. Both Berkman and Johnny/Felipe express their love for one another and their desire to kiss when they are amongst the general prison population.⁵³

The second discussion of homosexuality in prison occurs during a conversation between Berkman and his friend George. George is unsure whether to bring up the topic of same sex relationships with Berkman because he does not know how the anarchist will react. George dislikes the fact that some inmates use their bodies to gain privileges but is not against homosexuality. He reveals to Berkman that he had been involved in an intense emotional and sexual relationship with another inmate for a year in the recent past. The conversation reveals that both men had an aversion to homosexuals previous to their incarceration, but had changed their opinions based on their prison experiences.⁵⁴

A fuller discussion of the anarchist movement's response to Berkman's prison memoirs and its discussion of homosexuality is beyond the scope of this project. It is possible that Berkman faced criticism because he addressed the issue but he does not appear to have been ostracized by the wider movement. However, this may be partially due to the fact that he focused only on describing his desires but never openly admitted to physical intimacy with another man. Furthermore, after Berkman's release from prison it appears that he formed physical relations only with women, most notably Emmy Eckstein.⁵⁵ Goldman on the other hand faced criticism for her lectures on homosexuality. Her anarchist comrades, whom she does not name, preferred that she not discuss same sex relationships because anarchists were already considered by most people to be

⁵³ Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* 318-324.

⁵⁴ Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* 433-440.

⁵⁵ Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz, *The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman* (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 103.

depraved and defending “perverted sex-forms” would only harm the movement further. Regardless, Goldman decided to ignore her critics inside and outside anarchist circles and continued to lecture on homosexuality.⁵⁶

Anarchism in the Public Mind

Because anarchism is seen as a direct threat to those invested in the status quo, the actual tenets of anarchist political philosophy have largely been obscured by its consistent misrepresentation by governments, monarchies, religious authorities, capitalists, and the mainstream press for the past 150 years. In the late nineteenth century, anarchism was most often portrayed as a violent political creed because of a series of political assassinations carried out by anarchists against heads of state and monarchs in Europe and the United States during this period. The idea that anarchism is synonymous with terrorism still persists today. A relatively recent article in The Economist, for instance, linked anarchism with jihadist terrorism following the London bombings on 7 July 2005.⁵⁷ It was also in the late nineteenth century that representations of anarchists began to appear in the media following acts of political violence attributed to them.

On 4 May 1886, an explosion rocked a strike rally held in Chicago’s Haymarket – a bombing that killed both workers and police, and was credited to anarchists.⁵⁸ In the

⁵⁶ Goldman, Living My Life 555.

⁵⁷ “For Jihadist, Read Anarchist,” The Economist 20 Aug. 2005: 17-20. My thanks to Andrew Stevens for bringing this article to my attention. For an even more recent work linking first wave anarchists to “terrorism,” see John Merriman, The Dynamite Club: How a Bombing in Fin-de-Siècle Paris Ignited the Age of Modern Terror (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009). Merriman’s treatment of the subject is far more nuanced than The Economist article.

⁵⁸ On 4 May 1886 during an anarchist rally to condemn the murder by police of a striker at the McCormick Reaper Works the previous day, a bomb was thrown into a crowd of nearby police, killing one instantly. Another six died later of injuries from the blast or from firing in panic at fellow officers. Eight anarchists were held responsible for the bombing though there was no direct evidence to support these charges. However, whether the eight were guilty of direct or indirect involvement with the bomb throwing incident

weeks following the blast, the New York City-based magazine Harper's Weekly published a series of drawings by illustrator Thomas Nast that depicted anarchists as foreign trouble makers who were typically armed and dangerous. Nast appears to have created two types of anarchist agitator: the black-hat-and-trench-coat-wearing anarchist who was a threat to the honest worker and the more overtly crazed maniac, armed and violent and ready for class war.⁵⁹ Both caricatures were characterized by dark clothing, unkempt hair and beards, and a wild look in their eyes.

In one of Nast's drawings (see Appendix C) a worker is sitting with his wife and child in his arms while on his right there stands a capitalist and on his left an armed anarchist. The worker is torn between following his boss, who may fire him, and the anarchist, who may shoot the worker should he fail to join the movement.⁶⁰ A second picture (see Appendix C) featured the German-born anarchist Johann Most. Most had been born illegitimately in Augsburg, Germany, in 1846 to a governess and an office clerk. At the age of seventeen he began travelling throughout central Europe perfecting his bookbinding skills and learning about politics.⁶¹ It was not long before Most was involved in radical political organizations and speaking publicly, overcoming such obstacles as a facial disfigurement which was the result of a bone infection during his

was beside the fact. They were to be made examples of by the state in order to send a message to present and future radicals that violent resistance to the present system would not be tolerated. Four of the eight anarchists, Albert Parsons, August Spies, Adolf Fischer, and George Engel were sentenced to hang and were executed on 11 November 1887. Louis Lingg was also sentenced to death but took his own life the night before he was to be hanged. Oscar Neebe was given fifteen years in prison while Sam Fielding and Michael Schwab were sentenced to life. These three men would be pardoned by Illinois Governor John P. Altgeld in 1893. See Paul Avrich, The Haymarket Tragedy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

⁵⁹ See Carl Smith, Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief The Great Chicago Fire, the Haymarket Bomb, and the Model Town of Pullman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁶⁰ Smith 136.

⁶¹ Martha Solomon, Emma Goldman (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987) 9.

youth.⁶² After innumerable arrests for speaking publicly to workers, Most left Germany for England and began publishing the journal Freiheit (Liberty), which became the international organ of German-speaking anarchists. In the early 1880s, Most was invited by the Social Revolutionary Club of New York to conduct a speaking tour of the United States. His tour gained him notoriety among Germans living in America and was instrumental in unifying non-German radical organizations. Most stayed in New York City and resumed publication of Freiheit there. Following the Haymarket bombing in May 1886, he was arrested for having previously published the Science of Revolutionary Warfare, a pamphlet that promoted the seizure of explosives by any means necessary. It also contained instructions on the manufacture of bombs and advice with regards to their efficacious placement. As a result, Most was sentenced to one year at New York's Blackwell's Island. Most was well-known for his violent editorials and public lectures in which he advocated the murder of politicians and capitalists because they were enemies of the working class.⁶³

The Nast illustration had Most standing in its centre holding a flag that reads "Socialistic War" in his left hand, while in his right a chipped sabre is held above his head in an imminent striking position. Most is surrounded by at least five rifle-bearing anarchists who are in the process of diving under an equal number of beds. Each of the five's features are shadowy and impossible to see clearly, and each is clothed in a trench coat and a hat much like the anarchist of the previous Nast illustration. According to scholar Carl Smith, this imaginary Most is leading a drill in which the cowardly

⁶² The bone infection led to an operation to stop the inflammation of Most's left jawbone. Two inches of the jawbone were removed causing the disfigurement. A. Wesley Johns, The Man Who Shot McKinley (South Brunswick: A. S. Barnes, 1970) 34; Max Nomad, Apostles of Revolution (New York: Collier Books, 1961) 257.

⁶³ Solomon 9-10; Nomad 280, 285-288.

anarchists are moving away from their raving and sword-wielding leader.⁶⁴ But the drawing could also be a satiric portrayal of the anarchist in American society during the post-Haymarket period or, alternately, a depiction of anarchists as so many monsters under the bed.

It is generally acknowledged that the eight anarchists convicted for the Haymarket bombing had no direct involvement in the attack against police and were instead being tried for their political views.⁶⁵ However, as much as the trial resulting from Haymarket led to the railroading of innocent anarchists, there were also cases in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in both Europe and America where acts of political violence or propaganda of the deed were carried out by anarchists. But why this turn to political violence? For some anarchists, disgusted by the inequality they saw in their societies, ones in which extreme wealth was in the possession of a few while the majority of the population starved, attacking symbols of authority appeared the logical conclusion. Political violence was also a means of retaliation against those who persecuted anarchists and workers in general. The period in which first wave anarchism flourished was a time of brutal and open class war. Governments called out militias to suppress strikes, radicals were thrown in jail for publicly speaking against capitalism and the church, and those of foreign birth were deported for their political activities, while others were executed for the same. By assassinating influential political figures anarchists were also demonstrating that it was possible to strike against authority. Some who engaged in

⁶⁴ Smith 136.

⁶⁵ For sympathetic treatments of Haymarket see Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) and James Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Golden Age America*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006). For an inconclusive revisionist history that suggests the Haymarket anarchists may have been involved in the construction of bombs, see Timothy Messer-Kruse et al., "The Haymarket Bomb: Reassessing the Evidence," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2.2 (2005): 39-51.

propaganda of the deed hoped their actions would spark a larger uprising.

It is beyond the scope of this project to explore anarchist political violence in depth but some examples are worthy of note. On 29 July 1900, Gaetano Bresci, who was living in Paterson, New Jersey, returned to Italy to kill King Umberto I. This was in direct response to events surrounding Italy's colonial wars in northern Africa. Two years before Bresci killed the king, mass demonstrations had been held all over Italy to protest the Italian government's involvement in Ethiopia. In May 1898, General Bava-Beccaris placed the city of Milan under military control to prevent a larger uprising, killing eighty citizens in the process. Afterwards, King Umberto congratulated Bava-Beccaris and decorated the general with a medal. Bresci assassinated the king to avenge those murdered in Milan.⁶⁶

The next year, United States President William McKinley was assassinated by Leon Czolgosz, an American citizen, during a public appearance in Buffalo, New York. In his statement to police, Czolgosz claimed that he was an anarchist who did not believe in rulers and that killing McKinley was his duty.⁶⁷ Commentators reacted to Czolgosz's actions in much the same way as they did in the aftermath of Haymarket. Many again referred to anarchism as a foreign ideology that had come to North America through European immigration. These "agitators of foreign birth," as one commentator described anarchists, were often thought to have come from countries unused to democratic institutions.⁶⁸ As the author of a Toronto Star editorial lamented,

It is quite possible that the growth of the United States has been too rapid to be healthy. That country has opened its ports and its fertile

⁶⁶ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 48.

⁶⁷ Vernon L. Briggs, The Manner of Man That Kills (New York: Da Capo Press, 1983) 243.

⁶⁸ "Sermon by Dr Herridge," The Globe (Toronto), 17 Sep. 1901: 5.

acres to immigrants from all climes, and with the good there has come much of the utterly bad. During the past half century the desperate, the ignorant, the lawless, have found a haven in the United States, and some of them ... have utterly failed to realize the responsibilities that accompany self-government and full personal liberty.⁶⁹

Not only was the Detroit-born and -raised Leon Czolgosz considered a foreign radical with no experience of so-called democratic institutions, but he was also characterized as insane because he chose violence over the ballot box.

The sense of injury in Czolgosz, which has led to his insane resentment against organized society, is, like all delusions, an attempt by a weak and disordered brain to explain a disordered feeling, - in this case, a painful feeling, having its origin in the ill-adjustment of the individual and his inability to fit himself successfully into the conditions of life as he found them.⁷⁰

Czolgosz's attack was generally seen as the act of a troubled mind. Yet, the assassination of McKinley also occurred following the brutal subjugation of the Philippines after this territory became a United States possession in 1898, and some drew a connection.⁷¹

The use of propaganda of the deed generated a great deal of debate among anarchists. A few years after the McKinley assassination, the anarchist writer and lecturer Voltairine de Cleyre, citing the existence of Christian and Republican assassins in the past, argued that there was nothing specific to anarchism that led some adherents to commit acts of political violence. Instead she argued that those who engaged in violence were "react[ing] against the injustices created by the prevailing system of the time." In Czolgosz's case, de Cleyre pointed to a capitalist economic system that literally destroyed lives, polluted the environment, and gave the working class no hope of a better

⁶⁹ "Uncle Sam is Thinking," *Toronto Star* 16 Sep. 1901: 4.

⁷⁰ "Czolgosz a Human Misfit," *Manitoba Free Press* 10 Sep. 1901: 4.

⁷¹ Voltairine de Cleyre, *Exquisite Rebel: The Essays of Voltairine de Cleyre – Anarchist, Feminist, Genius*, eds. Sharon Presley and Crispin Sartwell (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005) 302-303.

situation. Under circumstances such as these she felt it was not a surprise that some decided to strike back against an exploitative system.⁷²

Anarchism and the Wider Left⁷³

The wider left had a more nuanced position on anarchism than mainstream commentators and the press. Some of the debates surrounding anarchism appeared in The Voice, a prominent English-language socialist and labour newspaper based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, that published from 1893 to 1918, and which was read in other North American centres. Its debate can be taken as relatively common in the turn-of-the-century left. The newspaper was edited by Arthur W. Puttee beginning in 1899 until the paper was succeeded by the Western Labor News in 1918. Puttee, a printer by trade, was born in England and migrated to Winnipeg in 1891. In 1900, he was the first labour Member of Parliament to be elected to the House of Commons. Puttee was also responsible for co-founding the local trade union council and the Winnipeg Labour Party, a reformist labour political party. Puttee has been described more as a “British Labourite” than a Marxist. He wanted to reform the capitalist system through the ballot box and the nationalization of railways, for example, and not by revolution. Puttee also championed the abolition of the Senate and the creation of a Department of Labour.⁷⁴ His political views were more than apparent in the pages of The Voice.

Discussions around anarchism in The Voice appeared with some regularity. As

⁷² De Cleyre 302.

⁷³ This section originally appeared in Travis Tomchuk, “There are Anarchists at Large in Winnipeg: Local Anarchists and Commentaries on Anarchism in the Winnipeg Labour Press, 1900-1919,” unpublished essay, Queen’s University, 2005.

⁷⁴ “Arthur W. Puttee,” Government of Manitoba, http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/hrb/notable_manitobans/puttee_aw.html (accessed 18 Aug. 2010).

well as commenting on lectures by Emma Goldman when she visited Winnipeg, writers explained the differences between philosophical and revolutionary anarchism, produced a number of articles on the differences between socialism and anarchism, and denounced the use of violence by anarchists especially after Czolgosz assassinated President McKinley. Anarchism was not always completely denounced within the pages of The Voice but the general sense was that socialism and not anarchism was the proper road to a workers' utopia. Anarchism was tolerated but never endorsed even if anarchist theorists were personally respected. William Restelle's article on Proudhon gave a glowing account of the philosopher and outlined his ideas on property. However, Restelle closed his piece by stating "we cannot commend [Proudhon's] views [but] we must pay tribute to the integrity and unselfishness of the man himself."⁷⁵

Unlike the mainstream press, The Voice distinguished between two types of anarchism: philosophical and violent. This simplistic categorization of anarchism as either idealistically peaceful or absolutely murderous was maintained throughout the paper's existence. According to the journal's commentators, philosophical or individualist anarchists were characterized by their belief in personal liberty and absolute freedom from state coercion.⁷⁶ Influenced by Tolstoy and Proudhon, philosophical anarchists were non-violent, opposed to militarism, spurned the ballot, and believed education was the best way to promote the anarchist ideal. Their conception of civilization was based on communistic societies "in loosely federated groups, but on an entirely voluntary and non-authoritarian basis."⁷⁷ Under the anarchist system, according

⁷⁵ William Restelle, "Notable Anarchists," The Voice 8 Oct. 1909: 6.

⁷⁶ "What Anarchy Is: A Name for the Extremes of Idealism and Savagery," The Voice, 14 Sep. 1900: 7.

⁷⁷ "Karl Marx, Michael Bakunin and Henry George: A Comparison between Socialism, Anarchy and Single Tax," The Voice 17 Apr. 1908: 1.

to Restelle, the luxury and complexity of modern civilization would disappear and people would return to a simplistic existence living off the land. As a result, there would be no need for prisons, insane asylums, or charities, and suicide, poverty, and prostitution would cease.⁷⁸

The Voice described revolutionary anarchists as a minority within the movement who, by their violent deeds, were responsible for the negative conception of anarchism. These anarchists promoted propaganda of the deed, direct action, violence, and assassination to further their cause.⁷⁹ In an article from The Voice published on 14 September 1900 under the heading “What Anarchy Is: A Name for the Extremes of Idealism and Savagery,” the unknown author questions whether anarchists actually practice the libertarian ideal they claim to profess. He asserted that “orthodox” anarchists – ostensibly those of the violent persuasion – were guided by a set of rigid rules whereby division was not permitted within their ranks, missions could not be declined once given, and all political movements that did not seek “the destruction of capital as its direct object” were to be repudiated. Involvement in non-anarchist organizations was only allowable if information useful to the anarchist cause could be discovered or to unmask “a false comrade,” with the latter being considered an important service to the movement.⁸⁰

Periodically, The Voice would run articles or editorials that questioned whether anarchism was more practical than socialism. Often, these debates occurred during the visits of Emma Goldman and after the lectures she delivered to Winnipeg radicals. Rarely was the anarchist cause championed within the pages of The Voice. Instead,

⁷⁸ “Karl Marx, Michael Bakunin and Henry George,” The Voice 17 Apr. 1908: 1.

⁷⁹ “Karl Marx, Michael Bakunin and Henry George,” The Voice 17 Apr. 1908: 1.

⁸⁰ “What Anarchy Is,” The Voice, 14 Sep. 1900: 7.

anarchism was considered a fine idea but attacked for its impractical idealism. After delivering a series of lectures in April 1907, Goldman's anarchist politics were critiqued in an editorial written by "Sansculotte." The author first suggested that Goldman's facts had been manufactured to support her argument and likened her denunciation of socialism to that of "the most uncompromising defender of the present order of things."⁸¹ "Sansculotte" did not share Goldman's belief that a socialist state would behave as tyrannically as one that was liberal and capitalist. The author also felt that, while anarchism might have dispensed with socialist economics and philosophy, it did not have a plan to put in their place. He or she criticized Goldman for not stating what mode of production would succeed capitalism and for having no apparent "conception that the present state of society was the product of an evolutionary process." "Sansculotte" also felt that Goldman's lecture was devoid of any analysis of the problems of the existing industrial system and simply pointed to direct action as a means by which workers would be able to improve their situation.⁸² Local socialist John Mortimer also took issue with Goldman's promotion of direct action – in this case the general strike – saying it was like "...pitting empty stomachs against bank vaults."⁸³ Dismissing the practical applications of anarchism, "Sansculotte" summed up his view of Goldman's lecture: "If what Miss Goldman set forth was all the philosophy of Anarchy had to set before the workers, it [would] make little headway with the intelligent proletariat."⁸⁴

To the contributors of The Voice, anarchism was considered too simplistic with its "government is bad therefore no government is good" argument. An unnamed

⁸¹ Sansculotte, "Resembles Trade Unionism," The Voice 19 Apr. 1907: 3.

⁸² Sansculotte, The Voice 19 Apr. 1907: 3.

⁸³ "Apostle of Anarchy," The Voice 19 Apr. 1907: 1.

⁸⁴ Sansculotte, The Voice 19 Apr. 1907: 3.

commentator in The Voice felt this kind of reasoning would only appeal to those who believed they had no role to play in government, while alienating those who felt their role in the electoral process mattered.⁸⁵ Further, anarchism's negation of all government required the individual to be "fairly harmonious in nature and character," a goal that could not be achieved because of humanity's inherent unkind behaviour. The author of the article felt that coercion would be necessary to force the masses to act accordingly, making anarchism undesirable.⁸⁶

Unsurprisingly, anarchists were underrepresented within the pages of The Voice. However, on occasion, anarchists would reply to some of the erroneous claims made by the paper's contributors regarding anarchism. For instance, an editorial by Marksizzo equating anarchists with the petty bourgeoisie elicited a response by F. Kraemer, who identified himself as an anarchist. Marksizzo's commentary lumped anarchists, single taxers⁸⁷, Bryan Democrats⁸⁸, and state socialists together in their regressive desire to return to pre-industrial times when independent producers were prolific. From Marksizzo's perspective, such diverse political tendencies arose from the petty bourgeoisie's ever-more-complete reduction to the ranks of the proletariat. He argued that until these elements accepted their new class position, they would be "the most active agents in the hands of the capitalists to fight ...socialist propaganda." As he pointed out,

Sometime these people will see that the day of the petty bourgeoisie [sic] and the economic system under which he flourished belong to the

⁸⁵ "The Anarchist Lectures," The Voice 19 Apr. 1907: 6.

⁸⁶ "Karl Marx, Michael Bakunin and Henry George," The Voice 17 Apr. 1908: 1.

⁸⁷ Adherents of Henry George and his economic philosophy of the single tax whereby all taxes would be abolished save for those based on land value.

⁸⁸ Named after the liberal Democrat and former presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan who ran for president unsuccessfully in 1896 and 1900. Bryan's politics were anti-imperialist, anti-trust, and pro-peace. He was also for prohibition and did not believe in evolution.

history of other days, and that social revolution, whatever changes it will produce, will never recall the decadent dreams of the anarchist, which are petty bourgeoisie [sic] pure and simple.⁸⁹

According to F. Kraemer's response, this was not the first time that Marksizzo had attacked anarchism. Kraemer begins his letter by taking a jab at the writer for not debating Emma Goldman on the subject of anarchism during her most recent visit. He then admits that as an anarchist he found the article amusing but felt it must have confused Marksizzo's "Socialist disciples." After the author put state socialism in the same category as anarchism, the single tax, and "Bryan Democracy," Kraemer wondered what kind of socialism was being advocated. "Knowing that party interests, solidarity, etc., would not permit a good Socialist to oppose Marksizzo in a public paper," Kraemer quoted from a pamphlet written by England's Morris Davidson entitled Anarchist Socialism vs. State Socialism. Using the pamphlet to back up his argument, Kraemer wrote that anarchism and socialism might share the same purpose of providing for the welfare of all people, but they differed in the means they advocated for achieving this goal. Whereas socialism would see monopolies and natural resources under state control, anarchism would abolish monopolies and put control of the resources in the hands of those who extracted or cultivated them. Kraemer also stated that in his opinion anarchism was the future while socialism was the past. The last quote he used was a clever way of questioning Marksizzo's politics: "To-day each of us must choose for one or the other of these two Socialisms, or else confess that he is not a Socialist."⁹⁰

Nor was this the first time that Kraemer had defended anarchism against attacks made by Marksizzo in the pages of The Voice. Almost a year earlier, Kraemer had

⁸⁹ Marksizzo, "Individualism and Socialism," The Voice 8 Jan. 1909: 3.

⁹⁰ F. Kraemer, "Anarchism vs. Socialism," The Voice 15 Jan. 1909: 1.

written a letter to the paper announcing an upcoming lecture by Emma Goldman. He then criticized Marksizzo for his previous and negative columns on anarchism and the supposed danger it posed. Kraemer questioned whether or not free thought existed within Winnipeg's socialist movement by stating "I know that the common workingman enslaved by the public opinion or the platform of his party...will take it for granted that anarchy is an awful thing." He appealed to workers to attend Goldman's "What Anarchy Really Stands For" lecture in order that they make their own decision about anarchism and not be beholden to a party line.⁹¹

After President McKinley's assassination, The Voice, like newspapers all over the world, reported on the event, covered local and global reaction to the attempt, and voiced their own opinions on the incident, Leon Czolgosz, and anarchism. A week after McKinley succumbed to his injuries, the front page of The Voice carried excerpts from a number of religious, progressive, and reactionary commentators. American Socialist Eugene Debs was quoted as saying, "The way to end Anarchy is to cease producing it." In contrast, Reverend J. C. Atkin of Hamilton, Ontario, had a different solution: "I have great faith in hemp. Hang extreme socialism, hang anarchy, hang communism, and save society, save rulers, save capitalists, save working men."⁹²

Reaction within the pages of The Voice was mixed. Czolgosz's actions were unanimously condemned but there was no consensus on the way in which to deal with violent anarchists or anarchism in general. While press and pulpit called for the extermination of all anarchists, The Voice carried many pleas for calm. Calls for

⁹¹ F. Kraemer, "Anarchist Lecturer: Emma Goldman Makes Another Visit to City Next Week," The Voice 27 Mar. 1908: 4.

⁹² "The Assassination of President McKinley," The Voice 20 Sep. 1901: 1.

vengeance against Czolgosz and other anarchists led nowhere.⁹³ William Small, a contributor to the paper, maintained that justice had to be carried out through the legal system. Small was also interested in what drove Czolgosz to commit such a desperate act. He believed Czolgosz's surroundings and the influences with which he came into contact had led him to murder the president. The author had seen children in the streets of Winnipeg coming "under the influence of evil" and suggested proper training would mould them into "productive members of society." In Small's view, allowing children to hang around the railway station or any of the hotels in close proximity meant they would encounter men using profanity and lead to the "seeds of anarchy and murder being sowed [sic]."⁹⁴

An editorial from The Voice, a far more nuanced piece than that of Small, deplored the McKinley assassination but criticized the United States for the misery it inflicted on the working class during rapid industrialization. The wealth generated by industry was enough to provide families with comfort and prosperity but instead great disparities existed between classes. The author believed that America may have begun on the right path, but had become as exploitative as other capitalist nations. Anarchism was thought to be a creation of "despotic Europe," but the writer reminded readers that Czolgosz had been born in Detroit and lived his entire life in the United States. As the author asserted, describing Czolgosz as a foreign anarchist was a popular tactic by the media, religious leaders, and the general public to demonstrate how un-American the assassination of a United States president was considered. Yet, as he reminded readers, this was not the first time a president had been assassinated. President Lincoln had been

⁹³ "Anarchy," The Voice 20 Sep. 1901: 4; William Small, "The Genesis of Anarchy," The Voice 20 Sep. 1901: 5.

⁹⁴ Small, "The Genesis of Anarchy," The Voice 20 Sep. 1901: 5.

shot on 14 April 1865 and President Garfield suffered the same fate on 2 July 1881.⁹⁵

But opinions within the pages of The Voice did not always lean towards an understanding explanation of Czolgosz's actions. Some of them harshly condemned anarchism and sought to separate socialists from it. In an editorial entitled "The Man M'Kinley," the author singled out the German-born anarchist Johann Most for advocating violence in his lectures and publications. Stating that there was a fine line between expressing an opinion and inciting people to violent action, the editorial called for the suppression of "what is plainly hurtful and degrading to society." The author also accused United States authorities of being lax in censoring Most's Freiheit publication which preached violent revolutionary methods.⁹⁶ In a different article, the commentator argued that the "logic of terrorism" promoted in anarchist publications demonstrated to workers that a handful of individuals were responsible for existing economic conditions. Instead of waiting for the masses to refuse their servitude to the capitalist machine, impatient workers, by violent means, could make it dangerous for anyone to hold positions of power. The author believed that it was this kind of reasoning that created individuals like Leon Czolgosz. He not only blamed Johann Most for advocating violence, but also anarchist theorists such as Proudhon and Kropotkin since violent anarchists read the works of classic and contemporary writers.⁹⁷

When anarchists assassinated political figures, those on the wider left unsupportive of this kind of tactic accused anarchism of being in league with capitalism because of the resulting repression against leftist movements that followed. It was usually in the aftermath of these attacks that national governments would use the

⁹⁵ "Scissors[ial]s [sic]," The Voice 27 Sep. 1901: 6.

⁹⁶ "Anarchy," The Voice 20 Sep. 1901: 4.

⁹⁷ "Anarchy vs. Socialism," The Voice 1 Nov. 1901: 6.

opportunity to pass laws that targeted all radicals on the left. The 1 November 1901 issue of The Voice re-printed an article from the United States-based International Socialist Review titled “Anarchy vs. Socialism” that broached this subject. The article’s author stated that,

Once again the anarchists have proven themselves the greatest foes [sic] of capitalism. The story, long grown old in Europe, has been repeated here. The act of one fanatical criminal at Buffalo has rallied every force of reaction and exploitation as no avowed defender of capitalism could hope to do. It has been recognized in Europe that in every great emergency, when the forces of oppression are hardest pressed, they can always hope some such deed will come to their rescue.... This makes...anarchy the ally of capitalism.⁹⁸

In fact, according to the article, anarchism offered the greatest resistance to the realization of a socialist society. The “logical violence” of anarchism provided an excuse for reactionaries to attack anyone who sought “to change the established order.” The author felt that violent revolution was unnecessary now that American workers had the vote. In an attempt to distance socialism from anarchism, the author pointed out that each ideology was antithetical to the other. Socialism did not espouse violence but instead placed its emphasis on educating people to vote wisely so socialists could become the government and put an end to exploitation and oppression. As a result, “anarchists and socialists have ever been sworn enemies.”⁹⁹ In light of McKinley’s assassination, the United States government would pass legislation in 1903 that made anarchism illegal.

Such debates in The Voice were typical of those that resonated throughout the North American and North Atlantic left from 1890 to 1940. In general, leftists often saw anarchists as problematic fellow anti-capitalists, prone to endanger the broader movement with their ill-considered tactics.

⁹⁸ “Anarchy vs. Socialism,” The Voice 1 Nov. 1901: 5-6.

⁹⁹ “Anarchy vs. Socialism,” The Voice 1 Nov. 1901: 5-6.

The History of Italian Anarchism and Anarchist Thought

Debates surrounding political violence were also an important feature of anarchism in Italy in the late nineteenth century. Within the Italian context, anarchism emerged as a movement during the *Risorgimento*, which literally means “The Resurgence,” the long and bloody process that led to the country’s unification in 1861. Prior to unification, the Italian peninsula was divided among various kingdoms and duchies which often fell under the control of various European empires, especially the Austrian and the French. Such foreign occupation of and intervention in the region, as well as the influence of the French Revolution, helped to develop ideas of Italian independence and democratic forms of government among the peninsula’s educated elites. Over time, revolutionary groups such as the *carbonari* were formed to oust the Austrians, but these attempts ended in failure in the early 1820s. One former member of the *carbonari* was Giuseppe Mazzini, a lawyer originally from Genoa, who became one of the most important figures of the unification movement. He believed that Italy had been created by God Himself to be a united and free nation, which meant that all the reigning monarchs and the Pope had to be dethroned. Mazzini felt that this process could only occur through revolution. Once all the oppressors of the Italian people had been removed from power a democratic republic could be established. Mazzini published his views and developed a network of liberal supporters who helped finance his Italian endeavours. He also recruited Italians for military service including Giuseppe Garibaldi, another former *carbonari* and military leader who had been living in exile in Uruguay.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Martin Clark, The Italian Risorgimento (London: Longman, 1998) 36-40; Lucy Riall, Risorgimento: The History of Italy from Napoleon to Nation-State (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) 6, 14-19.

During the 1848-1849 period, Austrian rule was challenged when the citizens of Milan gained control of the city and established a provisional government. Later, Rome was declared a republic and Pope Pius IX had to flee the city. In both cases, the Mazzinians arrived to take advantage of the situation in the hope that these events would be the catalysts for Italian independence. Yet this happy outcome remained elusive. The Austrians quickly reasserted their control of Milan and the pope requested the help of the French to restore his rule in Rome. These failed rebellions led to harsh repression and it was not until the late 1850s that Italy's unification resumed in earnest. An alliance between the Kingdom of Piedmont and France ended in a successful war against Austria leaving the former in control of northern Italy. During the war Garibaldi had fought on the side of Piedmont but became disillusioned with the kingdom's Prime Minister, Camillo Benso, the Count of Cavour. He saw Cavour as a moderate opportunist and opposed his pragmatic cession of Nice, his hometown, to the French. Believing that enough revolutionary sentiment existed in Sicily, Garibaldi organized a thousand volunteers and sailed to the island to unite the south with the rest of Italy in May 1860. At the outset Garibaldi claimed his expedition was for Italy and King Vittorio Emanuele of Piedmont, but his real intention, after defeating the Bourbons, was to march on Rome, remove the pope, and proclaim the city as Italy's capital. By doing this he hoped to challenge Benso and overturn the territorial agreements with France.¹⁰¹

Garibaldi's campaign against the Bourbons ended in victory after six months of conflict. He reorganized the government in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and proclaimed himself dictator. Cavour and others within the Piedmontese government quickly became concerned with Garibaldi's success and how it might affect that

¹⁰¹ Riall, Risorgimento 22-25, 31-33.

kingdom's plans for the country. To prevent Garibaldi from seizing Rome, the Piedmontese army was dispatched to the Papal States and was able to take control of most of central Italy though leaving Rome in peace to prevent any French intervention. However, when the Piedmontese army met with Garibaldi in the Campanian town of Teano, the revolutionary agreed to hand over all his recently acquired territories. In February 1861, Italy officially became a country and Turin the national capital.¹⁰²

The *Risorgimento*'s broken promises were anarchism's opening opportunities. The Italian state may have been unified in 1861, with Venice and Rome becoming part of Italy in 1866 and 1870, respectively, but the idea of an Italian nation tended to be restricted to relatively few urban-based intellectuals and wealthy elites. For the rest of the peninsula's largely agrarian population, whose loyalties were vested in a particular region or city and not a nation, a centralized government was viewed with suspicion and hostility. During the *Risorgimento*, the republicans promised Italians, especially those of the lower classes, that a unified Italy would lead to a variety of social reforms. After unification, they largely failed to deliver on them. Instead, peasants confronted a higher tax burden, especially on such necessities as bread. Young men were forced into the army. This not only contributed to a strong distrust of government but also led to peasants, both men and women, to physically resist the state by seizing land and revolting.¹⁰³ The social unrest that followed unification challenged the stability of the fledgling nation. It has been suggested by historian Donna Gabaccia that these factors – a weakly reformist state and an unresolved land reform question – influenced the Italian

¹⁰² Clark 80-85; Riall, *Risorgimento* 33; Lucy Riall, *Sicily and the Unification of Italy: Liberal Policy and Local Power 1859-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) 73.

¹⁰³ Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000) 109-110; Antonio Gramsci, *The Southern Question*, trans. Pasquale Verdicchio (Toronto: Guernica, 2005) 44.

left's and labour movement's predominantly anarchist character from the 1870s until the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁴ This social unrest led anarchists to view Italian peasants as potential revolutionaries and attempt to channel this discontent.¹⁰⁵ Since anarchists championed direct action and revolution, and believed that people, not governments or political parties, were the initiators of social change, anarchism in some ways simply provided a new name for practices already long in existence. Anarchists such as Mikhail Bakunin, Carlo Cafiero, Andrea Costa, and others did a great deal of work throughout Italy to spread anarchist ideas and organize a movement. This activism ultimately led to the establishment of the first, highly anarchist-oriented, Italian branches of the IWMA in the 1870s.¹⁰⁶

A type of organic anarchism may have been widespread among Italy's lower classes; indeed, anarchism's appeals for liberty and a life free from coercion or oppression would appear to be widely-experienced dreams and desires. However, it is difficult to determine how many peasants and labourers, often illiterate people who did not leave a clear record of their ideas, held views that could be described as anarchist or anarchistic. One of the earliest known Italian writers to conceptualize a society on what can be described as anarchist principles was Carlo Pisacane, Duke of San Giovanni. Pisacane was born in Naples in 1818 to a poor noble family and joined the Neapolitan army in 1839. By 1847, he had become influenced by Mazzini's republicanism and spent

¹⁰⁴ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 109. It has further been suggested that the creation of the Partito Socialista Italiana (PSI) in the 1890s was in "sharp reaction to the Bakuninist tradition of populist and 'anarchoid' revolt" and the party "defined itself in total rejection of anarchism and its communal tradition." Gwyn A. Williams, foreword, *The Occupation of the Factories: Italy 1920*, by Paolo Spriano, trans. Gwyn A. Williams (London: Pluto Press, 1975) 12.

¹⁰⁵ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 8-9, 109-110; Carl Levy, *Gramsci and the Anarchists* (Oxford: Berg, 1999) 5; Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 53.

¹⁰⁶ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 3; Michael Miller Topp, *Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 30.

a short time in both England and France, even serving with the French army in Algeria. Returning to the Italian peninsula during the revolutions of 1848, Pisacane served with Mazzini and Garibaldi and entered Rome in the fall of that year to take control after political unrest had led to the assassination of Pellegrino Rossi, minister to Pope Pius IX, and the pope's hasty exit from the city. This led to the establishment of the Roman Republic during which Mazzini introduced prison reforms, freedom of the press, secular education, and redistributed some of the church's landholdings to peasants.¹⁰⁷ In 1849, Pisacane served as Chief of Staff in Mazzini's army of the Roman Republic, but this position was short-lived; the republic was defeated after four months by the French military under orders from Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte to restore Pius as ruler of the Papal States.¹⁰⁸ Afterwards, Pisacane went into exile first in London and then later in Genoa where he supported himself as a teacher.

During this exile, Pisacane came to know the French physician and anarchist Ernest Coeurderoy and the Russian writer and revolutionary Alexander Herzen. It has been suggested that Pisacane's relationship with these two men may have influenced his change in political perspective. He became convinced that Italy was in need of a social – not merely a nationalist and republican – revolution. This led to his break with Mazzini, whom Pisacane had begun to consider an authoritarian and anti-socialist. During this same period, Pisacane was reading the works of French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the French utopian socialist Charles Fourier, and the Italian federalists Carlo Cattaneo and Giuseppe Ferrari. Pisacane's political ideology has been described as Proudhonian socialism with a collectivist bent and a precursor to Bakunin's collectivist

¹⁰⁷ Clark 57; Riall 90-91.

¹⁰⁸ Clark 58; George Woodcock, Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004) 275.

anarchism. Pisacane, evidently focused strictly on the Italian peninsula, viewed national and social problems as intertwined and felt that armed struggle not only had to be carried out not only against foreign and domestic monarchical rule but also against the wealthy. He was strongly opposed to private property, the state, and religion, and imagined an ideal Italian society comprised of free communes united by a provisional pact among liberated regions. Within this federation, much as in Proudhon's mutualist anarchist vision, each member would be guaranteed the right to whatever they produced. However, and this appears as a contradiction in Pisacane's thought, both industrial factories and cultivated land would be held collectively. Each individual's "freedom of action" would also be guaranteed under this federation. To achieve his vision of a socialist society, Pisacane believed, much like his radical and nationalist contemporaries, in revolutionary means. Any act of revolt would be useful in sparking the Italian masses to rebel. Among those Pisacane felt were the most open to spontaneous rebellion were the peasants of southern Italy, the region known as the *Mezzogiorno*. And it was his attempt to put his theories into practice that led Pisacane to sail to Campania in late June 1857 in an attempt to overthrow the House of Bourbon which ruled Naples at that time. The landing in Campania was a disaster since no widespread support existed for Pisacane's plan and he and his allies were defeated by Bourbon forces within a few days. It was during that battle that Pisacane decided to take his own life to avoid capture.¹⁰⁹

Pisacane's political theories were very similar to those of the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, who lived and organized in Italy following the Neapolitan's death. Bakunin was born in 1814 on his family's estate at Premukhino in the province of Tver. His father was sympathetic to liberal ideas and a cousin of his mother's side had been

¹⁰⁹ Nettlau 91-92; Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 11-13; Woodcock 275-276.

involved in the failed 1825 Decembrist revolt.¹¹⁰ Bakunin was educated by private tutors until the age of fifteen when he was enrolled in Artillery School. After graduating he left the military and went to Moscow to study philosophy where he became fascinated with Hegel. This sparked his move to Berlin which led to his deep immersion in the works of German intellectuals such as Feuerbach. However, Bakunin did not stay in Berlin indefinitely and travelled throughout western Europe meeting Proudhon and Marx in the 1840s and imbibing their political philosophies and radicalizing his own. Not only a philosopher, Bakunin was also a person of action and was more than willing to involve himself in uprisings when the opportunity arose. He went to Paris during the 1848 Revolution and served with the Workers' National Guard. Later that year he was involved in an insurrection in Prague and another in Dresden in 1849. This last led to his arrest and eventual deportation to Russia where he was imprisoned for eight years. His family's appeals to Tsar Alexander II allowed Bakunin to be released from prison in 1855 but banished to Siberia. There he had some freedom of movement and was able to escape, eventually sailing to the United States and then to England. By 1864, Bakunin was living in Italy and intermingling with those who shared his political views.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ The Decembrist uprising or revolt occurred following the death of Tsar Alexander I in December 1825. Alexander's brother Constantine, who was next in line for the throne, publicly renounced his claim which led to another brother, Nicholas to step forward to accept rule. Some military officers felt that Constantine was the rightful tsar and refused to swear allegiance to Nicholas I. They assembled in Senate Square in St. Petersburg on the morning of 14 December with three thousand soldiers under their command and hoped to spark a larger uprising with the rest of the city's military. However, this result did not actually materialize and the soldiers in Senate Square were in a stand-off with nine thousand soldiers loyal to Nicholas. The rebels were eventually fired upon causing them to scramble and regroup on the frozen Neva River, but this location also came under fire causing the ice to break apart killing many. In the aftermath of the uprising, military officers were executed for their role while others were jailed or deported to Siberia. Marshall 266; Anatole G. Mazour, The First Russian Revolution, 1825: The Decembrist Movement: Its Origins, Development, and Significance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961) 154-180; Marc Raeff, The Decembrist Movement (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966) 1-2.

¹¹¹ For biographical studies of Mikhail Bakunin see Edward Hallett Carr, Michael Bakunin (London: Macmillan and Company, 1937); Mark Leier, Bakunin: The Creative Passion (New York: St. Martin's

During his life, Bakunin wrote a great deal and contributed much to anarchist theory. A contemporary of Marx, Bakunin is probably best known for his insightful critique of state communism, which he argued would lead to the substitution of the bourgeoisie by a new ruling elite, comprised of educated workers, who would administer the lives of the majority and create a new despotism. It was for Bakunin a matter of means and ends: how could a dictatorship of the proletariat end with the eventual dismantling of the state and freedom for all? As he remarked,

They [the Marxists] insist that only dictatorship (of course their own) can create freedom for the people. We reply that all dictatorship has no objective other than self-perpetuation, and that slavery is all it can generate and instill in the people who suffer it. Freedom can be created only by freedom, by a total rebellion of the people from the bottom up.¹¹²

In light of the communist revolutions of the twentieth century, Bakunin's reasoning with respect to state communism has been viewed as prescient by many scholars.¹¹³

Of course, Bakunin was critical of all states. They placed the common good, supposedly embodied by the state, over that of the individual. And the common good was not determined by the majority but a minority of legislators, government representatives, religious figures, and capitalists, governing the state to suit their own interests under the guise of representative democracy. States led to working-class exploitation, nationalism, and patriotism, which Bakunin believed was contrary to the natural solidarity that existed among people. Bakunin was against capitalism and private property, and felt that all social wealth should be held collectively. However, one's right

Press, 2006); and Brian Morris, Bakunin: The Philosophy of Freedom (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1993).

¹¹² Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 332-333.

¹¹³ For instance, see Peter Singer, A Darwinian Left: Politics, Evolution and Cooperation (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999) 3-5.

to that social wealth depended upon how much labour a person contributed to its creation. Bakunin was also critical of religion because it acted as a tool of the ruling classes and preached subservience to authority. In addition, belief in a god led to the denial of human reason and human liberty.¹¹⁴

Not only a critic, Bakunin also championed more practical ideas about how an anarchist society could be organized. In place of states Bakunin conceptualized a form of federation, made up of communally-organized workers' associations, whether industrial, agricultural, scientific, literary, or artistic. The commune would then belong to a regional federation with all regions being part of yet another larger federation. Ideally, these federations would be joined in a truly international union. As much as Bakunin may have wished otherwise, the realization of a federated anarchist society could only occur through social revolution. This would be a violent struggle to overthrow the state and the institutions that supported or benefited from its existence. Even though Bakunin may have spent part of his life travelling around Europe to engage in insurrection, he did write in Revolution and Revolutionary Violence that revolutions could not be improvised or made by individuals. Rather they occurred because the "force of circumstances" led to "the spontaneous action of the masses."¹¹⁵

Due to the similarity between the political philosophies of Pisacane and Bakunin there has been debate surrounding the former's influence on the latter. Why does this matter? Bakunin has generally been given historical credit for introducing anarchism to Italy, especially by T. R. Ravindranathan in his Bakunin and the Italians. However,

¹¹⁴ However, he did not explain how the amount of labour contributed to the creation of social wealth would be determined or by whom. Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 133-134; Bakunin, The Political Philosophy of Bakunin 118, 209, 213, 409.

¹¹⁵ Bakunin, The Political Philosophy of Bakunin 374-375, 410.

pointing to one specific historical figure as the root of a political movement when similar ideas may already have been widespread before his arrival negates the role of Italians themselves in the creation of anarchist or anarchistic thought. Ravindranathan is adamant that Bakunin was unaware of Pisacane's ideas even though he was friends with two close comrades of Pisacane, Attanasio Dramis and Giuseppe Fanelli, the latter having served with Pisacane during the failed insurrectionary attempt in Campania. He even goes as far as stating that "Fanelli, Dramis, and others who knew Pisacane well and revered his memory never spoke of his writings, let alone his socialist ideas."¹¹⁶ Only with a Ouija board or a time machine could one be so certain of what people long deceased did or did not discuss throughout their lives. Nettlau, on the other hand, believes that, based on his friendship with Fanelli alone, Bakunin must have known about Pisacane and his political ideas though there is no mention of the Italian in any of Bakunin's writings.¹¹⁷ Woodcock, for his part, contends that Pisacane's theories and actions were already known among radicals in Italy, which led to Bakunin's friendly reception in the country.¹¹⁸ In this way, Bakunin acted more as a catalyst than the initiator of the Italian anarchist movement.¹¹⁹ I err on the side of caution and believe it possible that Bakunin was aware of, and may have possibly been influenced, by Pisacane's socialist views. It is telling that it was during his time in Italy that Bakunin fully developed his anarchist thought.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ T. R. Ravindranathan, Bakunin and the Italians (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988) 71.

¹¹⁷ Nettlau 92.

¹¹⁸ Woodcock 276.

¹¹⁹ Carl Levy, "Italian Anarchism, 1870-1926," For Anarchism: History, Theory, and Practice, ed. David Goodway (London: Routledge, 1989) 26.

¹²⁰ Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 15.

After his arrival in Italy in 1864, Bakunin involved himself in what was to be the last phase of the *Risorgimento*. He believed that the anti-monarchical and anti-clerical republicanism of Garibaldi had revolutionary potential that could spread to the rest of Europe.¹²¹ However, Garibaldi, much like Mazzini, wanted to establish a democratic republic that would maintain the property rights of wealthy land owners and change little for the majority of non-propertied classes. Bakunin's role in Italy, then, was to introduce socialist concepts into debates surrounding republicanism and demonstrate that republicanism would not solve problems of inequality, but simply shift power from the monarchy to that of the bourgeoisie much like the American and French revolutions had done previously.¹²²

In October 1865, Bakunin was living in Naples and in contact with the circle of disgruntled republicans who wrote and published *Il Popolo d'Italia* (The People of Italy). It was through this channel that he was able to meet a group of radicals from southern Italy that included the revolutionaries Giuseppe Fanelli and Attanasio Dramis, Neapolitan lawyers Carlo Gambuzzi and Alberto Tucci, the former Calabrian priest Raffaele Mileti, and the Sicilian physician and deputy Saverio Friscia among others. These men considered themselves patriotic Mazzinians but had already begun to question how the republican cause, without a well considered social program, was going to solve Italy's widespread social and economic problems, especially in the *Mezzogiorno*. But, according to Ravindranathan, these southern radicals were neither willing to challenge Mazzini publicly because of the deep respect they still had for the man, nor able to conceptualize an alternative to republicanism. Thus, Bakunin's meeting with this group

¹²¹ Ravindranathan 13.

¹²² Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 23-25; Ravindranathan 85.

was productive for both parties. For the southern radicals, Bakunin writings in Il Popolo d'Italia usefully attacked Mazzini's religious and bourgeois vision of a unified Italy. For Bakunin, the Italian context afforded him the opportunity to advance his anarchist views and provided a nucleus for pan-European revolutionary endeavours. Collectively the group became known as the *Società dei Legionari della Rivoluzione Sociale Italiana* (Legionnaire Society for the Italian Social Revolution – SLRSI).¹²³

The first action of the SLRSI was to attend a public meeting on 11 February 1866 to protest a new set of government-instituted taxes. The meeting was conducted by a more moderate group of Mazzini and Garibaldi supporters who, while still critical of the new tax regime, were unwilling to denounce it as vociferously as the SLRSI. Alberto Tucci, for instance, declared that the Italian state was created to benefit a privileged minority and called for open revolt. In addition, Carlo Gambuzzi condemned the heavy taxation legislated by the centralized bureaucracy and argued for more regional autonomy in administrative matters. It is unclear how much the intervention of the SLRSI influenced others at the meeting who did not share their views at the outset, but news of the event became a topic of debate in the Italian parliament.¹²⁴

Throughout 1866 Bakunin continued to challenge the Mazzinian cause in republican newspapers open to printing such articles. In the summer of that year he drafted the Revolutionary Catechism, which soon became the political program for the SLRSI. In this document Bakunin outlined his collectivist form of anarchism: absolute freedom for all except those refusing to work for the common good, political and economic organization from the base to the summit, “[r]eplacing the cult of God by

¹²³ Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 19-20; Ravindranathan 39-40.

¹²⁴ Ravindranathan 47-48.

respect and love of humanity”¹²⁵ (emphasis in original), universal revolution, and the creation of autonomous communes joined in federation as a means of replacing states.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, Saverio Friscia had been busy organizing sections of the SLRSI in his native Sicily to great effect. In the fall of the same year, Alberto Tucci and Bakunin collaborated on a pamphlet entitled La Situazione Italiana which boldly criticized the actions and motivations of Mazzini and Garibaldi. The pamphlet’s appearance came after the latter’s failed attempt to wrest control of Venice from the Austrians. La Situazione Italiana argued that the efforts of Mazzini and his followers were contrary to the wishes of most inhabitants of the Italian peninsula and that the republican cause had been unable to rectify the whole country’s deep social problems. The peasants and workers did not strongly support the republican state because it would not improve their circumstances in any way. On this last subject, Tucci and Bakunin asserted that a bourgeois government would always be opposed to the interests of peasants and workers, and believed that only a “revolution made by the People for their positive and complete emancipation” would truly make Italy free. La Situazione Italiana has been credited with laying the groundwork for the inevitable break many republicans made with Mazzini in 1871 following his condemnation of the Paris Commune of that same year.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ According to Bakunin, religious worship would not be banned outright: “Neither society, nor any part of society ... has the right to prevent free individuals from associating freely for any purpose whatsoever: political, religious, scientific, artistic But society is obliged to refuse to guarantee civic rights to any association or collective body whose aims or rules violate the fundamental principles of human justice. Individuals shall not be penalized or deprived of their full political or social rights solely for belonging to such unrecognized societies. The difference between the recognized and unrecognized associations will be the following: the juridically [sic] recognized associations will have the right to the protection of the community against individuals or recognized groups who refuse to fulfill their voluntary obligations. The juridically unrecognized associations will not be entitled to such protection by the community and none of their agreements will be regarded as binding.” Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 82)]

¹²⁶ Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism 76-97.

¹²⁷ Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 22; Ravindranathan 52-60.

In early 1867, as the SLRSI and its ideas became more widely known, a new group was formed called *Libertà e Giustizia* which published a newspaper of the same name until the end of that year. This publication continued to disseminate the ideas of the original SLRSI and challenge Mazzinian republicanism.¹²⁸ It was this group whose members would comprise the first Italian section of the IWMA in 1869. The IWMA, also known as the First International, was established in London in 1864 in an attempt to unite all leftist political tendencies and labour unions committed to working class struggle. Congresses were held in Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands during the late 1860s and early 1870s. They were highly contentious affairs – inevitably so, given the diversity of socialists from many backgrounds who came to them. Two factions quickly emerged, one headed by Karl Marx and the other by Mikhail Bakunin, divided from each other on questions of revolutionary strategy. Marx and his followers viewed the state as the vehicle for worker emancipation while Bakunin was openly critical of the centralist and authoritarian aspects of Marx's state communism. In 1872, the IWMA was moved to New York in an attempt to prevent its control by the majority who opposed Marx but within four years the association ceased to exist.¹²⁹

The Italian section of the First International was collectivist anarchist in ideology. Its members, such as Gambuzzi and Stefano Caporusso in Naples and Friscia in Sicily, helped enlarge the section's membership to over three thousand in the first months of 1870. By that time a newspaper, *L'Eguaglianza* (Equality), was being published and section members had begun to involve themselves in labour strikes leading to their arrests. Within a three-year period, the membership of the Italian section ranged from

¹²⁸ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 25-26; Ravindranathan 64.

¹²⁹ Cole 88, 120; Marshall 282-283, 302.

between twenty to thirty thousand. The majority of its members was made up of skilled rather than unskilled workers from central and southern Italy in addition to students and intellectuals. Women were also involved in the early anarchist movement though only a few of them became prominent within the International in Italy during the 1870s. Women such as Luisa “Gigia” Minguzzi and Vincenza Matteuzi headed the Tuscany Federation and the Marchigian-Umbrian Federation respectively. Most women, however, comprised the rank and file and by 1876 women’s sections had been organized in Florence, Aquila, Imola, Perugia, Carrara, and Prato. These sections were involved in creating their own programs and propaganda, and attending congresses. Women were not immune to attacks by the state and experienced the same violence as did men.¹³⁰

Post-*Risorgimento* Italy was far from united and experienced severe social unrest. In the 1860s, peasants in southern Italy resisted conscription and a new tax regime legislated by a government they considered a foreign colonizer. This led to civil war in the southern regions of the country. Disaffection with the Italian government was not limited solely to the south. Rioting broke out in Turin in 1864 following the capital’s transfer to Florence. Insurgents seized Palermo for a short time in 1866. A gristmill tax introduced in 1869 to help pay for the debts incurred during the *Risorgimento* led to rioting throughout the country.¹³¹ Then in 1873, Italy was hit by an economic crisis due in part to its transition from a predominantly agricultural and artisanal to an industrial society as well as rampant inflation caused by the government’s issuance of large sums of paper money to balance the budget. Poor harvests that same year led to cost of living increases for workers which caused strikes throughout the peninsula that continued into

¹³⁰ Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 27; Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 31-32, 79.

¹³¹ Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 27-28.

1874. Even the government's use of soldiers and the *carabinieri* could not prevent the mass demonstrations in which people engaged.¹³²

Under these conditions, the leadership of the International in Italy believed the moment for social revolution and the overthrow of the state was at hand. The Internationalists embarked upon a series of insurrectionary actions which they hoped would provide the revolutionary spark to cause the masses to overthrow the Italian government. This tactic was largely unsuccessful. Without a large base of support from the start the efforts of the Internationalists were in vain. The failed uprising in Bologna in 1874 led to Bakunin's retirement to Switzerland and another in the Matese Mountains, south of Naples, in 1877, to the eventual Italian outlawing of the International.¹³³

As a result of anarchist insurrections in the 1870s, anarchism became synonymous with criminality in the eyes of the Italian government. The movement was often the target of state repression during the frequent periods of social unrest that flared up in Italy during the late nineteenth century. Yet, in spite of such governmental backlash, anarchists continued their activism throughout the 1880s and 1890s. Some, like Luigi Galleani, the law student turned anarchist, began organizing workers through the *Partito Operaio Italiano* (POI – Italian Worker's Party), which was under considerable anarchist influence in the northern regions of the country. At the same time, anarchists in the south were active in the *Fasci Siciliani*, a worker and peasant association that organized around such issues as fairer taxation and land for the poor. The *Fasci Siciliani*, however, was eventually dissolved and its leaders arrested when Premier Francesco Crispi declared

¹³² Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 82.

¹³³ Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 28.

martial law in Sicily and ordered forty thousand soldiers to occupy the island after reports of a planned uprising.¹³⁴

Anarchist Communism: Organizationalist and Anti-organizationalist

The continual harassment and disruption of the movement and its activities by the Italian authorities caused anarchists to re-evaluate their tactics. Anarchists such as Francesco Saverio Merlino and Errico Malatesta, both of whom had taken part in insurrections, felt that Italian anarchists should organize themselves into a national party that would simultaneously have some legitimacy in the eyes of the state and draw large numbers of supporters amongst the wider population. Merlino was a Naples-born lawyer and writer who began to outline his anarchist ideas in a journal he co-published in 1877. After the failed attempts of the Matese Band to foment revolution, Merlino publicly supported their actions and in 1878 defended its arrested members in court. In 1884, he was tried for “conspiracy against state security,” found guilty, and given a four-month prison term. However, Merlino went into exile and did not serve his sentence. During this period he traveled through western Europe and lived in the United States for six months in 1892. While in exile he continued to write on anarchist themes for various journals and when in New York City he helped his comrades establish the anarchist newspaper Il Grido Degli Oppressi (Cry of the Oppressed). In 1894, Merlino returned to Italy but was arrested and forced to serve the prison term that led to his exile. Upon his release from prison, Merlino publicly declared in the pages of the Rome-based conservative paper Il Messaggero that he no longer considered himself an anarchist. This led to a year-long debate with his old friend Errico Malatesta which ended with Merlino

¹³⁴ Levy, Italian Anarchism 29-30; Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 283-285.

describing his political outlook as libertarian socialism, a term which is often used as a synonym for anarchism. Though he was no longer actively involved in the anarchist movement after his time in prison, Merlino continued to represent former comrades in court. In 1904, he was interviewed about anarchism in Italy by a reporter from Turin's La Stampa. He declared that the movement was no longer relevant. The article, "La fine dell'anarchismo" (The End of Anarchism), shocked many of Merlino's former comrades and led to a response from Luigi Galleani, which I will explore in greater detail in Chapter Four. Merlino continued to write on socialist topics and the rise of fascism in the early 1920s. After the Fascists passed a series of laws in 1925 and 1926 that required all political writing to be approved by the government, Merlino was forced to cease publishing. He died in Rome in 1930.¹³⁵

Errico Malatesta, the well-known anarchist communist, was born in the small town of Santa Maria Capua a Vetere in the Campania region in 1853. He studied medicine at the University of Naples but was expelled after his involvement in a republican demonstration in 1871. Inspired by the Paris Commune, Malatesta became interested in socialism and joined the Naples section of the IWMA. The following year, he met Bakunin and attended the anarchist congress at St. Imier, Switzerland. This was the first meeting of an anarchist international comprised of groups expelled from the IWMA. Following the congress, Malatesta focused his energies on anarchist propaganda and insurrection. He was involved in the Matese Band actions of 1877 and was arrested with his comrades. They were imprisoned for over a year and then released. Further

¹³⁵ Luigi Galleani, The End of Anarchism?, trans. Max Sartin and Robert D'Attilio. Orkney: Cienfeugos Press, 1982) ii-iii; P. Iuso, "Francesco Saverio Merlino," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani 162-168.

repression following a series of attacks against the Italian monarchy in 1878 and the illegalization of the International forced Malatesta to go into exile. He lived in a number of countries – Egypt, France, Switzerland, England, Romania, Belgium, Argentina, and the United States – many of which he had to leave due to his political activities. His exile abroad was marked with periodic returns to Italy. However, his notoriety and the ever present danger of imprisonment meant his visits there were often brief. During his life, Malatesta established a number of anarchist journals in Italy, Argentina, and France, and wrote pamphlets such as Fra Contadini (Between Peasants) which provided an accessible explanation of anarchist communism. Malatesta returned to Italy for the last time in 1919 and began publishing Umanità Nova (New Humanity) but was imprisoned in 1921 for his support of the postwar factory occupations. He was released before the Fascists came to power and began to publish yet another anarchist journal, Pensiero e Volontà (Thought and Will) in defiance of the laws the Fascists introduced against any form of independent press. Malatesta spent the rest of his life in Rome under house arrest where he died of bronchial pneumonia in July 1932.¹³⁶

Anarchists such as Merlino and Malatesta were known as organizationalists. They did not envision a parliamentary political party but rather a movement that would be non-hierarchical in structure and united in action. A clandestine meeting was held in Capolago, Switzerland, in early 1891 to establish an anarchist party which became known as the *Partito Socialista Anarchico Rivoluzionario – Federazione Italiana* (PSAR-FI). Two principal resolutions were passed at this congress. One recognized that participation

¹³⁶ G. Berti, "Errico Malatesta," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 57-66; Marshall 345-361; Malatesta 201-240; Davide Turcato, "Making Sense of Anarchism: The Experiments with Revolution of Errico Malatesta, Italian Exile in London, 1889-1900," diss., Simon Fraser University, 2009.

in elections was contrary to anarchist principles and, further, that anarchists should engage in anti-electoral propaganda and voting boycotts. The second resolution condemned any compromise or alliance, no matter how temporary, with republicans and irredentists.¹³⁷ Another outcome of the Capolago congress was to call for a general strike in Rome for May Day later that year which, congress attendees hoped, would lead to an insurrection. However, spies within the anarchist movement warned Italian authorities of the May Day plans and the desired uprising never materialized. Many anarchists were arrested and, after being found guilty, were given prison sentences and fines. An even greater crackdown on anarchists and their activities ensued.¹³⁸ Ultimately, in the context of the gradual enfranchisement of more and more of the Italian population, the PSAR-FI could not compete with the parliamentary socialism of the PSI.¹³⁹

In opposition to the organizationalists were the anti-organizationalists who, as the name implies, were against organization of any kind. They had two main reasons for their stand. The first stemmed from previous experience with the violence of the Italian state. Above-ground anarchist groups became targets of violence which in turn disrupted the anarchist movement. The reasoning of the anti-organizationalists was that if no movement were visible, no movement could be attacked. The second reason was a result of a deeply-held mistrust of all organizations because of their perceived authoritarian and bureaucratic behaviour. A given union, for instance, might begin with a handful of workers who coalesced around workplace issues. However, once these workers began to

¹³⁷ An irredentist movement existed in Italy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Irredentists believed that the Italian state should encompass all ethnically Italian peoples. Since ethnic Italians lived in Switzerland, Corsica, and other regions near Italy, the irredentists were militarist and nationalist – two positions anathema to anarchism.

¹³⁸ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 170, 255-256, 264, 269.

¹³⁹ Martin Blinkhorn, *Mussolini and Fascist Italy* (London: Routledge, 2006) 5; Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 30.

create a union, various hierarchical positions would be needed to oversee its daily affairs. According to anti-organizationists, these positions would mean too much power in the hands of a minority potentially able to act in its own self-interest to the detriment of workers in general. The solution then was for workers to organize spontaneously around specific grievances. Once these grievances were settled with the employer, the workers would return to work and unite in the future if it was necessary to do so.

Another important aspect of this strain of anarchism was its embrace of individual acts of political violence. This tactic was called for most ardently by those anarchists who had experienced the brutality of state repression firsthand. Two important adherents of this anarchist approach were Emilio Covelli and Carlo Cafiero.¹⁴⁰ Much like the organizationalists, both viewed true anarchist revolution as a negation of parliamentary politics but, in addition, also believed that constant actions should be carried out against the state to bring about its downfall. These continuous actions would help strengthen the anarchists in “much the same way a gymnast strengthens his [sic] muscles by using them.”¹⁴¹ For Covelli, Cafiero, and other anti-organizationalists, anarchists could not simply wait for the revolution’s ideal conditions, nor could they count on the masses to discover anarchism on their own. Instead, a small group of committed revolutionaries

¹⁴⁰ Emilio Covelli has received little scholarly attention though he was considered “one of the most important and original thinkers in the Italian anarchist movement” during the late 1870s and the early 1880s. Covelli studied law at Naples before attending universities in Germany, where he became a socialist. He is considered the first Italian to have written on Marx’s Das Kapital and wrote the first Italian work that conceptualised socialism as a science. Upon his return to Italy in 1874, he joined the Naples section of the IWA. Carlo Cafiero, as mentioned above, was a friend and ally of Bakunin. He, like Covelli, was trained as a lawyer though he did not work as such. The Paris Commune had a strong influence on Cafiero and he became a revolutionary as a result. While living in London, he met Marx and Engels and joined the International. They were impressed with the Italian and made him the General Council’s special agent in Italy. When Cafiero returned to Italy in 1871, and began his work on behalf of the General Council at Naples, he was viewed with distrust by Bakunin’s adherents. However, Cafiero effectively demonstrated his commitment and played an important role in the Naples section of the International. Cafiero would later join the legalitarian socialists in 1882. Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 64-65, 112, 185-186, 197.

¹⁴¹ Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 187.

would carry out actions that would then, it was believed, motivate others to rebel. In order to conduct acts of violence against the state and avoid reprisals, anarchists were to organize themselves into clandestine cells. As popular as the anti-organizationalist rhetoric surrounding violence was in Italy during the 1880s, most anarchists were unwilling to engage in violent actions. Thus, continuous revolution as a tactic never became a reality among Italian anarchists. As Pernicone has suggested, it was more of a state of mind than a program – a stance that “offer[ed] psychological sustenance to intransigent rebels locked spiritually and morally in unequal combat with the state and bourgeois society.”¹⁴² Nonetheless, beginning in the mid 1890s, Italian anarchists were involved in attacks against heads of state or monarchs, such as Sante Jeronimo Caserio’s killing of French President Marie Francois Sadi Carnot in 1894 and Gaetano Bresci’s assassination of King Umberto I of Italy six years later. Caserio was motivated by Sadi Carnot’s execution orders against anarchists Auguste Vaillant and Émile Henry, who themselves were involved in acts of political violence.¹⁴³ These attacks may well have demonstrated the vulnerability of their intended targets but they did not lead to mass revolution. In fact, the result of these actions was the introduction of new anti-anarchist laws and the further surveillance and repression of the movement.

¹⁴² Pernicone, Italian Anarchism 186-188, 190-193.

¹⁴³ Auguste Vaillant was a French anarchist who threw a bomb into the Chamber of Deputies in Paris in December 1893. Though no one was killed during the attack, Vaillant was sentenced to death. Vaillant carried out this bombing because he was outraged at the social inequities suffered by the lower classes who went without food when the wealthy spent thousands of francs on trivial enjoyments. Émile Henry, another French anarchist, tossed a bomb into a crowded café which he believed to be frequented by members of the bourgeoisie though some workers were present at the time of the attack. Henry was motivated by Vaillant’s execution the previous week. Goldman 268-271; James Joll, The Anarchists (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964) 132, 137-139; John Merriman, The Dynamite Club: How a Bombing in Fin-de-Siècle Paris Ignited the Age of Modern Terror (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009) 1-3.

Anarcho-syndicalism

As a result of the governmental backlash between 1870 and 1900, the anarchist movement in Italy could no longer sustain a national presence. Nonetheless, it did maintain strongholds in the regions of Tuscany, Umbria, Lombardy, Campania, and Sicily, and in the city of Rome.¹⁴⁴ Despite the constant attempts by the Italian government to suppress their activities, anarchists continued to involve themselves in worker and peasant struggles, as they had since the formation of the First International, through key positions within local chambers of labour. These chambers were originally established in the 1890s as labour exchanges funded by municipal governments but quickly became autonomous. Each chamber represented workers, regardless of skill or vocation, and controlled the labour market in a specific jurisdiction. When labour disputes occurred provincially, such chambers organized boycotts and sympathy strikes providing a sense of unity among the labouring classes. Chambers of labour also acted as cultural centres providing a space for social events, educational courses, and regular public meetings where workers would debate issues relating to job actions. Much anti-war and anti-religious organizing was conducted at these chambers as well.¹⁴⁵

Labour unions did not enjoy the same support within the populace as did the chambers of labour. By 1914 only ten percent of Italian workers were unionized. Still, anarchists of the organizationalist persuasion who had begun to adopt syndicalist positions became increasingly active in the union movement, joining the socialist-associated *Confederazione Generale del Lavoro* (CGL), the *Sindacato Ferrovieri Italiani*

¹⁴⁴ Carl Levy, *Gramsci and the Anarchists* (Oxford: Berg, 1999) 8-9.

¹⁴⁵ Donna Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) 55; Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 48-49; Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism* 283-284; Michael Miller Topp, *Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 234-238.

(SFI – Italian Railway Workers’ Union), and the *Federazione Italiana Operai Metallurgica* (FIOM – Italian Metal Workers’ Union). Due to the mixed composition of these unions which included socialists, syndicalists, Catholics, and republicans, in addition to anarchists, each was wracked with internal disagreements on tactics and politics. Anarchists and other syndicalists who became disaffected with the CGL met in Modena in 1912 and established the *Unione Sindacale Italiana* (USI), which quickly began to organize workers throughout central Italy and Liguria. It also incorporated the chambers of labour in these regions. Within a year, the USI’s membership was just over one hundred thousand, about half that of the CGL. The USI advocated direct action in the form of strikes, work slowdowns, and sabotage, as a means of struggle in the workplace.¹⁴⁶

Anti-militarist campaigns were another important focus of anarchist activity. Italy’s invasion of Libya in September 1911 led to anarchists and socialists co-organizing anti-war demonstrations and attempting to stop trains carrying soldiers from travelling to various ports. Anti-militarist activism continued throughout 1913 and 1914 as a European war began to appear inevitable. Anarchists and socialists were constantly being arrested for distributing anti-war literature outside barracks and public meetings were disrupted by police. A demonstration against the military in Ancona on 7 June 1914 resulted in the murder of two protestors and sparked *la settimana rossa* (the Red Week), a week of strikes, street protests, and confrontations with police and nationalists. During this seven-day period, some small towns in the Marche region declared themselves

¹⁴⁶ Levy, *Gramsci* 9; Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 46, 54; Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta, “Virgilia D’Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile,” *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World*, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 303.

autonomous from Italy. But for all the agitation by the Italian left against military intervention, within less than a year Italy had entered World War I on the side of the Allies. This event had repercussions for the left. Some, including anarchists, believed in the Allied propaganda that the war was being waged to protect the democratic nations of Europe from German authoritarianism. The USI also experienced a serious rift within its ranks over Italy's involvement in the war. Some syndicalists believed that war would strengthen the resolve of the working classes and lead to a proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie while others maintained their anti-interventionist stance. The union's membership shrank by half during the war as many were conscripted for the war effort or left the USI because of its position. The internal issues within the USI and the wider Italian left, however, did not put an end to anti-war activism; anarchists were still distributing literature condemning Italy's involvement, holding anti-war protests, and helping smuggle leftist deserters into neutral Switzerland.¹⁴⁷

Il Biennio Rosso

The social unrest that followed the First World War in Italy led to *il biennio rosso* (the Two Red Years) which lasted from 1919 to 1920. Massive social protest, strikes, and the occupation of factories and land were sparked by high unemployment with two million out of work and by an inflation that caused prices to increase nearly six times their previous value.¹⁴⁸ As a result of the dire economic circumstances, workers voted for the PSI in 1919 which led to 156 seats in the Italian Parliament, the most held by a single party at that time. The following year, the PSI won majorities in a quarter of Italy's

¹⁴⁷ Levy, *Gramsci* 51; Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 56-60;

¹⁴⁸ Levy, *Gramsci* 119-120; Topp 231-232; Ventresca and Iacovetta, 305.

comunes. During the same period the CGL membership expanded from 250,000 to over two million. The Confederation led many strikes during *il biennio rosso* including a twenty-four hour general strike in solidarity with the Russian Revolution that took place in July 1919. Chambers of labour were also active at this time. Following the food riots that erupted in northern and central Italy that same summer, the chambers created food committees that took control of stores and sold the food at reduced prices. In cities like Ferrara and Bologna and its immediate surrounding areas, where chambers of labour had exceptionally strong support, they were able to dictate conditions of work to industrialists and large landowners. USI membership also expanded dramatically and the union led the factory occupations of those workers it represented. During this two-year period, anarchists were heavily involved in protests against high food prices, as well as against the militarism and imperialism that had led to the outbreak of the war. Malatesta's return to Italy from exile in London in late December 1919 led to a speaking tour of the country from January until the summer of the following year. His lectures were very popular and drew large crowds not only of peasants and workers, but also of police who disrupted these gatherings. The violence unleashed by the state only increased tensions between it and the wider public. In June 1920, two divisions of Italian soldiers mutinied at Ancona. In order to come to the aid of the soldiers and take advantage of a revolutionary moment, Malatesta led members of the USI and a group of anarchists to the city. Shortly thereafter, Ancona was in open revolt as the local armoury was seized and its contents distributed to strikers and the general populace. However, the rebellion fizzled out rather quickly after the CGL refused to call a general strike.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ Alexander De Grand, *Italian Fascism: Its Origins and Development* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000) 24; Levy, *Gramsci* 119-120; Topp 231-232; Ventresca and Iacovetta 305.

The climax of *il biennio rosso* came in September 1920 when more than 400,000 workers across the country seized control of their places of work. This action was a result of solidarity with Fiat plant workers in Turin locked in a wage dispute with their employer. For four weeks workers controlled factories, set up kitchens to feed themselves, and in Turin continued to manufacture cars, reportedly faster and more efficiently than before the strike. The seizure of factories panicked industrialists who called on Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti to restore order. However, Giolitti ignored the calls to use violence and decided to allow the workers to realize that their situation could not last indefinitely because they did not control the banks, post offices, the telephone system, and other important institutions. Conflicts within the Italian left also played their part in ending the factory occupations. While the USI believed that Italy was on the brink of revolution, the CGL viewed the workers' control of their workplaces as a response to grievances with employers. The Confederation also felt that a revolution in Italy would lead to intervention and sanctions by other countries. Thus, the CGL refused to accept the USI and PSI position that workers' power was the first step in overthrowing the capitalist system. However, the PSI was unwilling to allow the CGL to control the strike. In early October workers, lacking support from the wider Italian left and with a vague promise by the prime minister that workers would have more control in matters relating to their industries, began to leave the factories.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Paolo Spriano, *The Occupation of the Factories: Italy 1920*, Gwyn A. Williams, trans. (London: Pluto Press, 1975); De Grand 22-37; Levy, *Italian Anarchism* 61-68; Levy, *Gramsci* 119-166; Philip Morgan, *Italian Fascism, 1915-1945* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 37-49; Peter Neville, *Mussolini* (London: Routledge, 2004) 43-46; and Topp 233.

The Rise of Fascism

As a result of the militant working class uprisings during *il biennio rosso* and because of Prime Minister Giolitti's refusal to use violence to end the factory occupations, Italian elites, fearing that Italy was in danger of its own socialist revolution, decided that they would take it upon themselves to destroy any threat that the left still posed to their interests. To that end, they helped form *squadristi* in regions where socialists, broadly defined, were most numerous and influential. The *squadristi*, or blackshirts, were comprised of ex-soldiers, university students, and anti-socialist peasants who used violence to destroy leftist organizations and institutions in the two years following *il biennio rosso*. They often acted with the approval or cooperation of local prefects, police, or military. Within six months of the formation of the *squadristi*, it was responsible for the destruction of 119 chambers of labour, 107 cooperatives, and 83 peasant league offices. In the place of destroyed leftist organizations and institutions Fascists created their own alternatives.¹⁵¹

At first Benito Mussolini, the former socialist who gradually turned to fascism during the course of the First World War, and his Fascist movement did not ally themselves with the *squadristi* and chose instead to run for parliament on a platform that was almost identical with that of the PSI. Mussolini had tried to form an alliance with the *Unione Italiana del Lavoro* (UIL) which was a nationalist syndicalist union. And, much like Mussolini and his followers, the UIL was wary of a premature revolution led by the proletariat and thought Bolshevism was the greatest threat to Italy. However, the UIL, keeping true to the syndicalist position that rejected parliamentary action, was unwilling

¹⁵¹ Levy, *Gramsci* 122-123; Topp 244.

to accept a merger with any political party.¹⁵² Mussolini's political fortunes improved once he abandoned the socialist parts of his platform. He fed on bourgeois fears of a Bolshevik revolution in Italy, formed an alliance with the *squadristi*, and convinced Italian elites to financially support his paper Popolo d'Italia.

In order to curb the growing influence of Mussolini, Giolitti hoped to co-opt the Fascists by including them in the government, a tactic he had used with the socialists prior to the First World War. He invited the Fascists to be on the government ticket during the 1921 elections, which they accepted, and won thirty-six parliamentary seats.¹⁵³ The prime minister's plan appeared to be working and, within a few months, Mussolini had proposed a truce with the socialists. This action on Mussolini's part raised the ire of the *squadristi* leaders and almost led to his downfall within the Fascist movement demonstrating the precariousness of Mussolini's position within the party. The future *Il Duce* quickly began to endorse the violent tactics of the blackshirts and in the fall of 1921, after the *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (PNF) was created, the *squadristi* became the movement's private army.¹⁵⁴

By the middle of 1922, PNF membership was over 300,000. In the summer of that year the blackshirts targeted towns in northern Italy, mainly socialist strongholds. A general strike in Genoa was forcibly halted with the city then falling under Fascist control. Milan was the next and last socialist city to fall to the Fascists. After a few

¹⁵² The UIL is an interesting example of a nationalist syndicalist union that spurned electoral politics. It was founded in June 1918 by Alceste De Ambris, Edmondo Rossoni, and Angelo Olivetti and acted as a direct challenge to the USI. The UIL supported national revolution and the masthead of their paper *L'Italia Nostra* (Our Italy) proclaimed: "The Fatherland should not be denied, it should be conquered!" It saw returning veterans of the First World War as the likely vanguard for a nationalist revolution. The UIL always maintained its independence from the fascists and, once the Fascist Party was founded by Mussolini in November 1921, it was denounced by the UIL as simply another political party. Topp 223-234, 245.

¹⁵³ De Grand 34; Morgan 56-59; Neville 46-50.

¹⁵⁴ Blinkhorn 27; Topp 244-245.

hours of fighting leftists in the streets, the Fascists had succeeded in smashing the printing presses of the local socialist daily L'Avanti (Forward) and setting fire to movement buildings. Mussolini and the Fascists were now too powerful to be stopped. An offer made to the PNF to join a coalition government was dismissed by Mussolini. With the Italian parliament dissolved, the Italian king refused to declare martial law and instead invited Mussolini to form a new government. Mussolini arrived in Rome by train in October 1922 to assume his position as Italy's dictator.¹⁵⁵

The rise to power of the Fascists was a monumental blow to anarchists and the wider Italian left. The constant attacks and continual repression made it difficult for anarchists to maintain their organizing activities. According to historian Carl Levy, anarchists most likely experienced the greatest violence in comparison to other tendencies on the left between 1921 and 1926, which forced many to leave Italy or live in poverty.¹⁵⁶

Conclusion

The success of anarchism in Italy was related to the particular patterns of its state formation. Prior to unification in 1861, the Italian peninsula was fragmented into a series of kingdoms and city-states, and, in the aftermath of the *Risorgimento*, the Italian state could hardly be considered united. For the overwhelming majority of the peninsula's population, unification meant marginalization and exclusion. It was under these conditions that Italy's anarchist movement flourished. It also laid the groundwork for what would become its transnational North American component. It was in Italy, after

¹⁵⁵ Blinkhorn 27; De Grand 36-37.

¹⁵⁶ Levy, Gramsci 122-123, 223.

years of experimentation with other forms, that the two most influential strains of anarchism, anti-organizationalist anarchist communism and anarcho-syndicalism, developed and were put into practice. As Italian anarchists began to migrate to Canada and the United States, they carried with them their anarchist politics and experiences as activists. In effect, they embodied and expanded this intricate history. Once in North America, they were able to recreate the anarchist *milieu* they had been part of in Italy with its newspapers, *circoli*, and antagonisms. They also came into contact with the wider left which, as The Voice evidence suggests, often viewed them with suspicion. In this setting, they often believed themselves to be both representatives of a universal movement to liberate the world working class and often beleaguered exponents of a viewpoint not shared by many of their fellow workers and socialists. The next chapter will examine the reasons for Italian migration and the resulting establishment of transnational anarchist networks.

Chapter 2: Migrant Anarchists

Introduction

Migration among the peoples of the Italian peninsula can be traced to the early sixteenth century when peasants began sojourning as a means of economic survival.¹ But it would not be until the late-nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth centuries that a truly mass migration of Italians would occur. From 1876 to 1942, around 18.5 million Italians migrated to other parts of Europe as well as North and South America, the northern and southern coasts of Africa, Australia, and the Middle East.² Most of the historical works concerning this process focus on the experiences of Italians from certain regions of Italy or the history of Italian migrants more generally.³ The picture of Italian migration that emerges from these studies is one that was typically seasonal and temporary. As we have seen, some would migrate to urban centres within Italy or to other countries to find work

¹ Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000) 3; Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke, eds., *A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 8.

² Samuel L. Baily, *Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) 24; Mark I. Choate, *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008) 238.

³ For studies on Italian migration from particular regions of Italy to North and South America see Samuel L. Baily, *Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Konrad Eisenbichler, *An Italian Region in Canada: The Case of Friuli-Venezia Giulia* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1998); Donna R. Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988); Franc Sturino, *Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930* (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1990); and Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977). For general histories on the subject consult Mark I. Choate, *Emigrant Nation: The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000); John Potestio and Antonio Pucci, eds., *The Italian Migrant Experience* (Thunder Bay: Canadian Italian Historical Association, 1988); Bruno Ramirez, *Crossing the 49th Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991); Bruno Ramirez, *The Italians in Canada* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 1989); Bruno Ramirez and Michael Del Balso, *The Italians of Montreal: From Sojourning to Settlement 1900-1921* (Montreal: Les Éditions du Courant, 1980); and John Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto : Development of a National Identity 1875-1935* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).

in the winter, and return to their home villages in the summer to resume working in the fields. In this way, incomes received from migrant labour supplemented local livelihoods and allowed families to avoid reliance on one specific source of income, thus reducing the negative impacts of periods of economic crisis.⁴ Migrants abroad often sent remittances home to family members or tried to save their earnings to buy their own land upon their return to Italy. Financial considerations were not the only impetus for migration, however. Italians also left home for other reasons ranging from failed courtships, the avoidance of military service, or environmental devastation. Migrants from Italy were usually young, single peasant men in their early twenties. Sojourning Italians travelled established migration networks created by those family members, friends, and *paesani* who had previously migrated.

The sojourns of Italian anarchists are relatively unstudied in the histories of Italian migration. Studies exist on the other elements of the Italian left, such as the socialists, communists, and syndicalists. They explore how these well-established Italian political cultures were transplanted to the United States.⁵ But there is no parallel monograph-length study for anarchists in America or elsewhere. This has left a hole in the existing scholarship on Italian migration history in general and radical migration history in particular. Did it mean something different to be an Italian anarchist migrant, as opposed to a Communist or socialist one? Were an anarchist's reasons for leaving Europe the

⁴ Franco Ramella, "Emigration from an Area of Intense Industrial Development: The Case of Northwestern Italy," *A Century of European Migrations, 1930-1930*, eds. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991) 265; 269; Robert F. Harney, "Men Without Women: Italian Migrants in Canada, 1885-1930," *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s-1960s*, eds. Franca Iacovetta with Paula Draper and Robert Ventresca (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 207.

⁵ See Donna R. Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) and Michael Miller Topp, *Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001).

same as those of other Italians? How did the experience of the non-anarchist migrant compare to that of the anarchist? During the closing decades of the nineteenth century various sites of anarchist settlement outside of Italy were established in countries like France, Switzerland, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and the United States. Like other elements of the Italian left, anarchists who migrated to distant parts of the world brought with them a distinct political philosophy and culture. These transnational radicals continued their political activities against the state, created anarchist newspapers and kept their comrades abreast of events both locally and internationally. In the 1920s and 1930s, they also took to the streets to combat fascism within the contested neighbourhoods of the various “Little Italies.” This chapter will compare and contrast the migrant experiences of Italian anarchists with those of other non-anarchist Italian migrants. I will argue that political activism and its consequences – state violence and prison terms – played as significant a role in the decision of anarchists to migrate as did the need for waged labour. I will also show that the majority of migrant anarchists were more likely to be skilled in a trade than their non-anarchist co-nationals.

Italian Migration Prior to the First World War

From 1870 until the outbreak of First World War, four million Italians migrated to Canada and the United States, with the overwhelming majority settling in the latter.⁶ During the 1890 to 1920 period, for instance, roughly 126,647 Italians migrated to Canada as opposed to more than 14.5 million to the United States. Even during periods of migration restriction, the United States always experienced greater numbers of Italian

⁶ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 69.

migrants than did Canada.⁷ This disparity in numbers was due, in part, to the scale of rapid industrialization that occurred south of the Canadian border, and the dire need for cheap immigrant labour to maintain this process. Canada also needed immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century but the official line of the Canadian government placed emphasis on the need for agricultural workers to settle in the Canadian West. Basing his opinion on what he perceived to be the case in the United States, Clifford Sifton, the Canadian Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, felt Italians did not make good immigrants because they were far more likely to settle in urban centres instead of agricultural regions.⁸ Thus, the Canadian government did not actively encourage Italian settlement. In addition, the Italian Commissariat of Emigration, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published a series of discouraging bulletins on Canada arguing that only wealthy peasants would be able to settle there successfully.⁹ But even this lack of support from the Canadian and Italian governments did not prevent a system of seasonal migration from being established between the two countries in the early twentieth century.¹⁰ The official line on immigration coming from Ottawa may have been that Canada required agricultural workers, but the realities of Canadian immigration were quite different. Capitalists needed unskilled labour for their businesses in the ever-expanding industrial sector. This meant that the thousands of mostly male Italian labourers who migrated to Canada in the years before 1914 expecting to engage in farm

⁷ Bruno Ramirez, The Italians in Canada (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 1989) 7; Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929," Gli italiani fuori d'italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione 1880-1940 (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1983) 259; and Samuel L. Baily, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) 54.

⁸ Harney, "Men Without Women" 209-210; John Zucchi, A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 2007) 6.

⁹ Harney, "Men Without Women" 209-210; Franc Sturino, Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930 (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1990) 76.

¹⁰ Harney, "Men Without Women" 209-210; Zucchi, A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada 6.

labour were often channeled into factories, resource extraction, and building such infrastructure projects as railways, bridges, canals, and dams.¹¹ If labourers were in short supply, the United States became a site of recruitment. Migrants would typically arrive in Canada during the early summer to work seasonal labour, with the intention of returning to Italy in the fall. However, the trip home did not always materialize. Low wages and high costs of living could mean having to delay one's return to Italy, forcing some migrants to spend winter months existing precariously in Canada.¹² Those migrants who could not return home or chose to stay in Canada gravitated toward the urban centres of Montreal or Toronto, with their more favourable employment opportunities. Cities were generally favoured by Italian migrants because of the urban need for labourers to construct and maintain roads and sewers. Such centres could also provide an opportunity for Italians to go into business for themselves and open their own modest grocery stores or shoe repair shops.¹³

Italians who migrated to the United States found themselves working in resource extraction and infrastructure construction as they did in Canada, especially in the western states. They also came to the United States as replacement labour for freed slaves.¹⁴ In addition to constructing roads, sewers, and buildings, Italian migrants would also be employed in the textile mills of Massachusetts and New Jersey and the steel mills of Pennsylvania. As in Canada, the majority of Italians tended to settle in America's larger urban centres such as New York, Boston, and Chicago, where employment opportunities

¹¹ Donald H. Avery, Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995) 20-21; Zucchi, A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada 6; Harney, "Men Without Women" 209-210; Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas 74-75; Ramirez, The Italians in Canada 6.

¹² Harney, "Men Without Women" 209-210.

¹³ Ramirez, The Italians in Canada 6, 11.

¹⁴ Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas 59. Ella Antolini, for example, worked on a plantation in Louisiana where she picked cotton alongside her family. Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005) 134.

tended to be greatest. Cities could also provide an escape from the brutal working and living conditions of isolated labour camps.¹⁵

The majority of Italian migrants were males but women also migrated, though often in the company of family. While it may have been more likely for women to travel with family members than make the sojourn alone, one has to keep in mind that they, too, were labour migrants. Their ability to contribute to the household income would be just as important as male earnings.¹⁶ Between 1876 and 1915, women comprised nineteen percent of all migrants from Italy, while in the 1916-1945 period thirty-three percent of the migrants were women. Employment options for women were more restricted than for men, but jobs could be found in the garment or service industries. Another option, especially among married women, was to take in boarders to supplement family incomes. Boarders could be relatives or *paesani* from Italy who paid low fees for accommodation, meals, and laundry service. The money brought in from boarders was only a third of what could be earned working outside the home, but it such income could be a blessing for mothers struggling to raise children. Additionally, taking in borders might well be the only type of work available to women in smaller resource extraction centres.¹⁷

Even with the low wages that Italian migrants received in North America, their earnings made a real difference to families in Italy. Sending remittances in Canadian or American funds was easier than having one's family travel to North America, where the reality of the low wages meant it was difficult to support a family. Migrants would usually save money by boarding, foregoing entertainment, and being thrifty when buying

¹⁵ Ramirez, *On the Move* 108.

¹⁶ Jennifer Guglielmo, *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945* (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 45, 59.

¹⁷ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 7, 75, 101.

food.¹⁸ In some cases, migrants planned to work a season in Canada or the United States and earn enough money to return to Italy and buy land. They might make many trips to North America. A male sojourner could migrate as a youth to help support his immediate family; then, with a family of his own, spend a season abroad; and make yet another, later voyage to support ailing parents.¹⁹

Italian migrants were often exploited in North America. They worked in dangerous conditions for low pay, may have had part of their wages kept by a foreman or *padrone*, could be forced to pay inflated prices for goods at company stores, and, as manual labourers, had no job security as they moved from one workplace to another. Sometimes they acted as strike-breakers.²⁰ Italian workers, however, did not always quietly accept their exploitation. Forms of resistance included work slowdowns, refusal to work, or quitting. As migrants, Italian labourers were in a precarious situation, especially if a *padrone* was holding their wages until the end of the season. *Padroni* were men who acted as labour agents selling jobs to migrants who wanted them for a fee and, thus, facilitated the migration of single labourers or whole families from Italy to the Americas and elsewhere. *Padroni* are often viewed as corrupt exploiters of immigrant labour who made their money by cheating migrants of their wages. Labour agents of this sort, such as Montreal's Antonio Cordasco, the self-crowned "king of Italian labourers," definitely existed. Cordasco had a monopoly on providing the Canadian Pacific Railway with unskilled workers during the early twentieth century. He would charge migrants for their voyage across the Atlantic, finding them employment, as well as transporting them

¹⁸ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 91-92.

¹⁹ Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 70, 72.

²⁰ Bruno Ramirez, "Immigration, Ethnicity, and Political Militance: Patterns of Radicalism in the Italian-American Left, 1880-1930," *From 'Melting Pot' to Multiculturalism: The Evolution of Ethnic Relations in the United States and Canada*, ed. Valeria Gennaro Lerda (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1990) 122-123.

to the work site. Food for Italian labourers was provided by the labour agent's traveling commissary service whereby the cost of items was deducted from the migrants' wages. In order to ensure the good behaviour of workers in the field, wages were kept by Cordasco in Montreal until a worker's term of employment expired. However, *padroni* such as Cordasco were in the minority. As a rule, the relationship between most labour agents and migrants ended after the former received a commission for the service of finding employment for Italians. Generally, Italian labourers were not the slaves of *padroni*, but rather their clients.²¹ The need for a *padrone* was eventually circumvented through chain migration whereby a migrant would travel to a destination outside of Italy with a prepaid ticket with friends and/or family eventually following the same route.²²

Perceptions of Italians in North American Host Societies

In North America during the late nineteenth and early to mid twentieth centuries the Italian migrant was viewed in a very complex and contradictory manner. This was in part due to the racism of the time as well as the formation of national identities in Canada and the United States. Within this context, the Italian migrant was constructed as the exact opposite of what it meant to be a Canadian or an American.²³ Thus were Italians portrayed as criminals, anarchists, and strikebreakers who had a tenuous claim to

²¹ Robert F. Harney, "Montreal's King of Italian Labour: A Case Study of Padronism," *Labour/Le Travail* 4 (1979): 57-84; Gunther Peck, "Reinventing Free Labor: Immigrant Padrones and Contract Laborers in North America," *Journal of American History* 83.3 (Dec 1996): 851, 858; Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 66.

²² Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 66. Chain migration is the "movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants. Franc Sturino, "Italian Immigration: Reconsidering the Links in Chain Migration," *Arrangiarsi: The Italian Immigration Experience in Canada*, eds. Roberto Perin and Franc Sturino (Montreal: Guernica, 1989) 64.

²³ Joseph P. Cosco, *Imagining Italians: The Clash of Romance and Race in American Perceptions, 1880-1910* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003) 17.

whiteness – that complex set of socially-constructed privileges derived from defining the non-white Other, one so normalized in North America that its daily existence is unmarked. The benefits of whiteness include living relatively free of police harassment, being favoured in job interviews, learning white history in school, and seeing whites represented predominately in all forms of media.²⁴ In both Canada and the United States, whiteness became the criteria through which all other peoples were judged. And because the racial status of Italians occupied a space in between white and black, their identities were malleable in the hands of Canadian and American host societies. Racialized Italian migrants could simultaneously be imagined as both docile and prone to engaging in violent acts.

Racist ideology has had a long history as a means of justifying one group's brutality over another. It has also played an important role in creating national or ethnic identities. During the nineteenth century attempts were made scientifically to prove the racial superiority of one group over another. Those who sought scientific proof for their racial superiority were given great impetus with the publication of Charles Darwin's research on natural selection. Intellectuals, who became known as Social Darwinists, began to apply Darwin's theories on nature to humankind arguing that there was a

²⁴ For studies on whiteness see Toni Morrison, Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); David R. Roediger, The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class (London: Verso, 2007); David R. Roediger, Colored White: Transcending the Racial Past (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Ruth Frankenberg, White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Maurice Berger, White Lies: Race and the Myths of Whiteness (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1999); Joe L. Kincheloe, Shirley R. Steinberg, Nelson M. Rodriguez, and Ronald E. Chennault, eds., White Reign: Deploying Whiteness in America (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998); Grace Elizabeth Hale, Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940 (New York: Vintage Books, 1999); and George Lipsitz, The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

correlation between race and progress. Because the majority of Social Darwinists²⁵ were men from countries located in north-western Europe, it was not surprisingly the white male European/Caucasian who was viewed as the apex of evolution. As the German biologist Ernst Haeckel wrote, “The Caucasian ... man has from time immemorial been placed at the head of all the races of men, as the most highly developed and perfect.”²⁶ Eastern and southern Europeans, not to mention the peoples of other continents, did not fare well in this hierarchy. And, according to historian Michael Miller Topp, southern Italians were often deemed the lowest of the European races.²⁷

The idea that the various peoples of the earth could be ranked hierarchically based on their supposed progress enjoyed a great deal of currency during this period of mass migration. These prejudiced views informed the treatment, often entailing discrimination and violence, that Italian migrants and others received from the host societies of Canada and the United States. In some cases, the justification used to classify Italians as an inferior race or to limit the number of Italians admitted by Canadian or American

²⁵ I realise that “Social Darwinism” is a contested term among scholars, some of whom feel that the left used Darwin’s ideas in a far more creative and progressive manner than the right though it is for the right that this term is generally reserved. For studies on the progressive applications of Darwinism see Robert C. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979); Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, Revised Edition (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955); Ian McKay, *Reasoning Otherwise: Leftists and the People’s Enlightenment in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2008) 13-77; and Richard Weikart, *Socialist Darwinism: Evolution in German Socialist Thought from Marx to Bernstein* (San Francisco, London and Bethesda: International Scholars Publications, 1999).

²⁶ Here Haeckel is using the term Caucasian as a stand in for white European. Ernst Haeckel, *The History of Creation: Or the Development of Evolution in General and its Inhabitants by the Action of Natural Causes*, trans. E. Ray Lankester, vol. 2 (London: Henry S. King and Company, 1876) 321. For contemporary studies on Ernst Haeckel see Robert J. Richards, *The Tragic Sense of Life: Ernst Haeckel and the Struggle over Evolutionary Thought* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008); and Nolan Heie, “Ernst Haeckel and the Redemption of Nature,” diss., Queen’s University, 2008.

²⁷ Michael Miller Topp, “‘It’s Providential that there are Foreigners Here:’ Whiteness and Masculinity in the Making of Italian American Syndicalist Identity,” *Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America*, eds. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003) 105.

immigration was actually provided by Italian “scholars” who were involved in the racist construction of their co-nationals.²⁸

The study of Italy’s citizens began in earnest following the *Risorgimento*. During this period, positivism, a philosophy that bases itself on the premise that “actual sense experience” is the only means of gathering “authentic” knowledge, flourished within the country’s universities and scholars attempted to make certain disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, and criminology, into precise sciences. The “scholarship” that resulted tended to argue in favour of the supremacy of northern Italians over their southern counterparts. For instance, the Italian sociologist Alfredo Niceforo, who wrote such studies as La Delinquenza in Sardegna (1897) and Lo Studio Scientifico delle Classi Poveri (The Scientific Study of the Poor Classes, 1907), asserted that Italians from the northern regions of the country were Teutonic Aryans while those of the south were a mixture of Europeans and Africans. In addition, the research conducted by Cesare Lombroso, the Italian criminologist, further denigrated the inhabitants of southern Italy. He argued that delinquency was an inherited trait that could be identified by physical characteristics, such as high cheekbones among others. In an article he wrote in 1902 entitled “The Last Brigand,” Lombroso asserted that southern Italians were genetically predisposed to criminal behaviour.²⁹

The “scholarship” of Niceforo and Lombroso contributed, inadvertently or otherwise, to the ill treatment of Italians as they migrated abroad.³⁰ In 1911, the United

²⁸ Harney, Forging the Chain 51-52; Antonio Gramsci, The Southern Question, trans. Pasquale Verdicchio (Toronto: Guernica, 2005) 33.

²⁹ The irony of Niceforo’s research is that he was born in Sicily. Harney 51-52. See also Daniel Pick, “The Faces of Anarchy: Lombroso and the Politics of Criminal Science in Post-Unification Italy,” History Workshop 2 (Spring 1986) 62-63; and Daniel Pick, Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, 1848-1918 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 114-115.

³⁰ Harney, Forging the Chain 51.

States Immigration Commission's Dictionary of Races of People quoted Niceforo when it divided Italians from the north and the south into two distinct ethnic groups, claiming that the Italians of these two regions "differ as radically in psychic [sic] characters as they do in physical."³¹ In Canada and the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Italians, especially those with darker complexions originating in southern Italy, had at best a tenuous claim to whiteness.³² More research needs to be conducted on the implications of this pattern within the Canadian context. The United States situation has been more completely explored. There, southern Italians, considered to be on the lowest rung of Europe's evolutionary ladder, confronted a racism that rivaled in its violence that oppressing African Americans. The United States government went so far as to make a distinction between northern and southern Italians in its immigration statistics beginning in 1899.³³ During this time the term *guinea*, which was used as a racist term for African Americans, began also to be directed against Italians. In the southern states, Italians were segregated much like blacks and barred from streetcars, schools, theatres, and churches. Italian migrants also joined African Americans as victims of lynchings.³⁴

Italian migrants were also labeled as blacks because of the types of labour they performed. In the southern United States, Italians were employed by plantations to pick

³¹ Harney, Forging the Chain 50.

³² For the American context see Cosco 16; Louise DeSalvo, "Colour: White/Complexion: Dark," Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America, eds. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003) 22; and Jennifer Guglielmo, "Introduction: White Lies, Dark Truths," Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America, eds. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003) 11. For the construction of Italians in Canada see J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates or Coming Canadians (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) 132-135; John Zucchi, Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity 1875-1935 (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988) 72-76; and Franca Iacovetta, Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992) 103-123.

³³ Cosco 11; Topp, Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America 105.

³⁴ Cosco 16; Jennifer Guglielmo, Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America 11.

crops such as cotton, a form of labour that had traditionally been done by blacks. Italians also intermingled with African Americans who were working the cotton fields which, according to scholar Joseph Cosco, resulted in Italians being equated socially and economically with blacks.³⁵ In Canada, work was also racialized by nativist workers. “Black” labour was considered the most dangerous, poorly paid, and vile available – jobs often taken on by Italians and other southern or eastern European and Asian migrants. In the eyes of some Anglo-Celtic labourers, the fact that Italians and others would work in such wretched conditions was proof of their racial inferiority.³⁶

The United States Immigration Commission’s Dictionary of Races of People went on to characterize southern Italians as having a genetic predisposition to “excitable, impulsive, [and] highly imaginative” behaviour. In addition, southern Italians were deemed to be too individualistic which made them incapable of adapting to highly organized society. The northern Italians, on the other hand, were considered “cool, deliberate, patient, practical and capable of great progress on the political and social organization of modern civilization.”³⁷ Lombroso’s ideas regarding the criminality of Italians also spread and gained acceptance especially among those who opposed Italian migration to Canada and the United States. By the late nineteenth century, not only were racial distinctions being made between northern and southern Italians, but diagnoses of the supposed criminal and impassioned nature of Italians in general were also firmly

³⁵ Cosco 16; Vincenza Scarpaci, “Walking the Colour Line: Italian Immigrants in Rural Louisiana, 1880-1910,” Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America, eds. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003) 63.

³⁶ Harney, Forging the Chain 55.

³⁷ Harney, Forging the Chain 50.

upheld. Italians were often described as “stiletto-wielding criminals,” anarchists, or members of the mafia.³⁸

According to immigration historian Robert Harney, the media stereotypes and popular misconceptions to which Italians were subjected were similar to the portraits of “bad natives” in more straightforwardly colonial settings. Italians were described as animalistic, shiftless, likely to engage in violent behaviour, and peculiarly susceptible to the influence of a leader. The Canadian and American popular presses often made a point of reporting on violence within Italian communities, thus reinforcing negative stereotypes about Italian migrants. Violence among Italians was often attributed to their passionate nature or involvement in organized crime and, though physical confrontations did occur and some Italians were involved in illegal activities – as happens in all communities everywhere – these portrayals made it seem as though violent behaviour was an Italian specialty. Unfortunately, with the host societies of Canada and the United States already believing Italian migrants to be inherently violent, the actions of Gaetano Bresci, the Italian anarchist who assassinated King Umberto I of Italy in 1900, could only have strengthened this opinion in the minds of Canadians and Americans.³⁹

Conceptions of Italians as labourers were many and various. Employers who relied on the guest worker program to fill their need for workers viewed Italians as a docile and malleable workforce. However, once Italian workers began to assert themselves, disrupt production, or go on strike, employers began to label them as radical troublemakers. Nativist elements among Canadian and American labour viewed the arrival of Italian migrants as a threat to job security. Various businesses did hire

³⁸ Cosco 11; Harney, *Forging the Chain* 63.

³⁹ Harney, *Forging the Chain* 57, 61, 63.

immigrants in order to depress wages or break strikes, leading to a widespread misconception that most Italians were scabs. However, a wide body of literature on Italian labour radicals in North America has challenged this stereotype.⁴⁰

Migration Following the First World War, Fascism, and the Great Depression

During the interwar period, Italian migration to North America declined due to a series of restrictive immigration policies targeting “less desirable” immigrants implemented by both the Canadian and American governments at the behest of capital. These restrictions were deemed necessary by both countries in order to address economic crises, xenophobia/racism, and social unrest. The United States tended to spearhead these anti-immigrant initiatives with Canada following suit.

After the First World War ended, the massive output of war-time economies slowed down dramatically. In Canada and the United States, jobs were in short supply and unemployment on the rise. Many of the unemployed were migrants who, in times of boom, were considered a necessary element of capitalist prosperity. Once the economy faced a serious downturn, they became expendable.⁴¹ At the same time veterans began returning home and looking for work. In Canada especially, they felt jobs should be their reward for the fulfillment of their patriotic duties. Many Canadian or British-born

⁴⁰ For studies on Italian labour radicalism in Canada and the United States see Phillip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer, eds., The Lost World of Italian-America Radicalism: Politics, Labor, and Culture (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003); Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, eds., Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988); Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Bruno Ramirez, “Immigration, Ethnicity, and Political Militance: Patterns of Radicalism in the Italian-American Left, 1880-1930,” From ‘Melting Pot’ to Multiculturalism: The Evolution of Ethnic Relations in the United States and Canada, ed. Valeria Gennaro Lerda (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1990) 115-141; Michael Miller Topp, Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001).

⁴¹ For a study on Canada’s forced deportation of unwanted migrant labour see Barbara Roberts, Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada, 1900-1935 (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988).

veterans believed that migrants should be removed from places of work to make way for returning soldiers. Xenophobia and outright racism prevailed in many places. This was coupled with an already-entrenched nativism among Canada's dominant Anglo-Celtic population. Anti-immigrant sentiment was also an issue in the United States. According to the elites of both nations, southern and eastern Europeans were the least desirable migrants after the Chinese. Not only were these groups considered alien in appearance and custom but they also lived in crowded migrant neighbourhoods, areas of perceived criminal and morally unacceptable behaviour, and home of the foreign radical.⁴²

The success of the Russian Communists in overthrowing the Tsar in 1917 fired the imaginations of socialists around the world and caused more than a few North American capitalists to fear a possible Communist-led revolution in Canada and/or the United States. Measures had to be taken to protect the interests of Canadian and American ruling elites and capital. The image of the bomb-wielding foreigner was dusted off and used as it had been following the 1901 McKinley assassination. Both states unleashed the full might of their respective security forces: strikes were crushed by police, the offices of leftwing newspapers ransacked, and various socialist, Communist, and anarchist groups were infiltrated, though the intensity of this repression was greater in the United States than it was in Canada.⁴³ Show trials sentenced those guilty of "Bolshevik" tendencies to prison terms. Those unable to claim Canadian or American citizenship were often deported to their countries of birth.

These were the issues that led the United States to introduce a literacy bill that came into effect in 1920, which prevented illiterate migrants from entering the country.

⁴² Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 147-148.

⁴³ McKay 422.

As literacy among Europeans increased, this legislation became less effective and led to an immigration quota in 1921 restricting European immigrants to three percent of the 1910 census, which meant that only 355,000 migrants would be allowed entrance into the United States. For Italians, who tended to have lower rates of literacy than Northern Europeans, migration numbers dropped from 204,000 per year to 42,000. These numbers were still considered too high and another restriction quota was introduced in 1924 that further limited Italian migration numbers to the United States to less than 4,000 annually.⁴⁴ The introduction of restrictions to Italian immigration in North America led to more families migrating to join partners and simultaneously saw rates of migrant return to Italy increase between 1921 and 1945 with eighty-three percent of returnees travelling from Canada and the United States.⁴⁵ Restrictions in North America did not lead to a decrease in the number of Italians leaving Italy; they simply traveled to other nations such as France, Argentina, and Brazil. In fact, following the First World War, Italian labourers were most likely to travel to other European nations with France being the most popular destination, even more so than the United States.⁴⁶

Canadian legislation tended to mirror that of its neighbour to the south, and also included the introduction of literacy laws and quotas to curb the number of migrants allowed into the country. Though it has been suggested that Canada did not enforce its anti-immigration laws to quite the same degree as the United States, the fact remains that these laws were in effect and implemented.⁴⁷ A quota law was passed in Canada in 1920

⁴⁴ Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 64-65.

⁴⁵ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 135-136.

⁴⁶ In 1928, 200,000 to 400,000 Italians left Italy, roughly the same amount as during the 1880s and 1890s. It was not until the Great Depression that migration from Italy was curbed. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 133, 135.

⁴⁷ Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 142-143.

in part due to postwar depression and social unrest as well as pressure from the United States after its own quota law came into effect. This new legislation included the requirement that each migrant carry a minimum of \$25 and hold a ticket to their final destination. They would only be allowed in Canada if they had arrived on a continuous journey ticket and, once landed, underwent strict health and literacy tests. Migrants were also forced to take an occupational test to ensure that only those who were farmers, farm workers, or domestic servants gained entrance.⁴⁸ As a result of this general Canadian quota, only immediate family members of resident immigrants and agricultural labourers were allowed into the country.⁴⁹ This legislation had the desired results. Between 1911 and 1920, 62,663 Italians migrated to Canada, but following the introduction of quotas Italian numbers declined to 26,183 in the 1920s.⁵⁰ It must be noted, however, that in the mid 1920s, large numbers of immigrants were again entering Canada due to pressure from the private transportation companies, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and the Canadian National Railway (CNR), whose role in immigration and the settlement of migrants was a profitable aspect of operations. As a result, both the CPR and CNR signed the Railway Agreement with the federal government in 1925. This agreement allowed the railway companies to circumvent anti-immigration legislation and recruit farm labourers from southern and eastern Europe. During this period, the CPR and CNR

⁴⁸ Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 146-147; R.J.B. Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World 1860-1960* (London: Routledge, 1996) 123. The continuous journey regulation was passed by the Canadian government in 1908 initially as a means to curb Indian migration. Due to the distance between India and the western coast of Canada, vessels would have to stop in Japan or Hawaii meaning that once passengers arrived in Canada they were not allowed to land.

⁴⁹ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 3, 133, 181-182.

⁵⁰ Ramirez, *The Italians in Canada* 6-7.

definition of farm labourer was loosely interpreted. The Great Depression of the 1930s would again seriously restrict the entrance of migrants to Canada.⁵¹

United States and Canadian immigration restrictions were one reason for declining numbers of Italian migrants; Italian emigration rules were another. The Fascist government in Italy had its own ideas about migration and felt that its citizens were needed at home to work the land, build infrastructure, and serve in the military.⁵² In fact, migration historian Franc Sturino asserts that Fascist regulation outweighed North American restrictions in curbing Italian immigration.⁵³ Following the Fascist immigration law of 1927, longstanding patterns of family reunification were disrupted. First it denied the cousins of migrants permission to emigrate. Eventually it also prevented in-laws, aunts and uncles, and unmarried siblings from doing so. One of the few ways that Italian migrants could leave Italy was by adding their name to a governmental list of workers guaranteed work abroad.⁵⁴ Preventing the movement of Italian migrants became moot once the global economy collapsed in 1929. Job opportunities in Canada and the United States dried up and in order to avoid having to care for unemployed immigrants, both nations became more restrictionist.⁵⁵ During the 1930s fewer than 4000 Italians arrived in Canada.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Reg Whitaker, Canadian Immigration Policy since Confederation (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991) 5, 12-13.

⁵² Sturino, Forging the Chain 155.

⁵³ Gabaccia, on the other hand, suggests that the First World War and the Second World War had the greater impact on preventing migration and not so much economic crisis, racist immigration laws, or Fascist regime curbing of migration. Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas 133.

⁵⁴ Sturino, Forging the Chain 154-155.

⁵⁵ Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas 134.

⁵⁶ Ramirez, The Italians in Canada 6-7.

Anarchist Migrant Experience

Who was an anarchist? In the eyes of the political theorist, as we have seen, an anarchist might be anyone supporting a political philosophy that holds the state to be harmful and replaceable, and supports and works for a stateless, free society. The *Casellario Politico Centrale* (CPC), which monitored the Italian regime's enemies in the 1920s and 1930s, applied a somewhat different standard – one based on reputation, documented activism, and adherence to particular groups and leaders. A review of the files pertaining to the area covered by this thesis produced a corpus of 70 files of such “anarchists.” From these files, one can derive some fascinating impressions which greatly enrich our understanding of the anarchist movement in North America. One important theme they raise is that not all of these people arrived in North America as fully-formed anarchists. Based on the CPC files from this selection, Italian authorities had twenty-one migrants listed as anarchists prior to their arrival in Canada while four became anarchists at some point after migration. (When exactly the remaining eleven migrants assumed their political identity is unknown.) For those anarchists in the files pertaining to the United States, the breakdown is as follows: nineteen were anarchists upon leaving Europe, seventeen become anarchists after their arrival in America, and the stories of nine are unknown. For some, particularly noticeable in the Canadian files, conversion to anarchism occurred prior to migration; for others, more prominent in those files relating to the United States, the opposite would be true.

These files suggest that the age of anarchist migrants to North America tended to vary from the mid teens to the mid forties. The majority of them were in their twenties and thirties upon arrival in North America, which differs from the typical age of the early

twenties among non-anarchist migrants. Eleven anarchists came to Canada between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine while seven arrived between thirty and thirty-four. Thus, eighteen Italians who were anarchists or who would eventually identify as such came to Canada between the ages of twenty and thirty-four. Five migrated to Canada in their teens between the ages of fourteen and eighteen while four arrived in their forties between the ages of forty-one and forty-six. The age of the remaining nine Italian anarchists are unknown because their date of birth was not recorded in their CPC files, their date of arrival in Canada was unknown, or both. In the United States, thirteen arrived between the ages of twenty and twenty-eight while seven came between the ages of thirty and thirty-nine. Six migrated as teenagers between the ages of seventeen and nineteen while only five arrived in their forties (between the ages of forty and forty-four). Among this sample group, the age of fourteen individuals at the time of their arrival in the United States is unknown. With the exception of two women, the rest of this group is male.

Italian migrants who travelled to Canada came from all over the *Mezzogiorno*, from the regions of Lazio and Marche in central Italy, and Friuli and Veneto in the country's north-east.⁵⁷ These findings generally correspond with those of anarchist migrants who came to Canada in the years between 1901 and 1940. Much like the wider non-anarchist migrant Italian population, of those thirty-six individuals who were identified as anarchists in Canada the majority (14) came from the Marche region in central Italy. Twelve originated from north-western Italy and six from the *Mezzogiorno*. An exception to the migration trend would be the two anarchists, Giuseppe Rolle and

⁵⁷ Ramirez, *The Italians in Canada* 8-9. The *Mezzogiorno* refers to Southern Italy and includes the regions of Calabria, Campania, Abruzzi, Molise, Sardegna and Sicily.

Agostino Confalonieri, who came from the north-eastern regions of Piedmont and Lombardy, respectively.⁵⁸

According to immigration historian Rudolph Vecoli, the vast majority of Italians who migrated to the United States were originally from the *Mezzogiorno* and, based on the CPC files I obtained, nineteen United States-bound anarchists, almost half, came from southern Italy.⁵⁹ However, twelve anarchists from this corpus originated from northern Italy while another eight migrated from the central part of the country. Again, this group is quite small and a wider study would have to be conducted to reach a definitive conclusion. Nonetheless, these initial findings suggest that Italian anarchists who migrated to the United States may have had more varied regions of origin than non-anarchist Italians.⁶⁰

Among the corpus of Italian anarchists migrating to Canada and the United States, there is not a significant difference in the numbers who came to North America before the First World War and after. In the Canadian context, fifteen anarchists arrived between 1901 and 1914 while fourteen migrated during the 1920 to 1940 period. The fourteen years prior to the war saw eighteen anarchists travel to America. After 1918 another twelve arrived. The immigration restrictions of the 1920s in both Canada and the United States do not appear to have played that great a role in preventing Italian anarchists from migrating to each country. During that period nine anarchists arrived in

⁵⁸ The breakdown of regions of origin is as follows: north-western Italy: Friuli-Venzia Giulia: 7; Veneto: 2; and Emilia-Romagna 1. The *Mezzogiorno*: Calabria: 4, Molise: 1, and Apulia: 1. The place of origin for four anarchists is unknown because this information was not included in their files.

⁵⁹ Vecoli, "The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929," 259. The actual breakdown is Abruzzi 5; Apulia 1; Calabria 2; Campania 3, Sardegna 3; and Sicily 6.

⁶⁰ Of the twelve anarchists who came from regions in northern Italy five came from the northwest (Liguria: 2 and Piedmont: 3) while seven came from the northeast (Emilia-Romagna: 6 and Trentino-Alto Adige: 1). The eight anarchists who migrated from central Italy came from the following regions: Marche 4; Tuscany 3; and Umbria 1. The region of origin for six of the anarchists is unknown.

Canada while thirteen came to the United States. The 1930s were a different story. The Great Depression and the resultant restrictions placed on immigration by receiving countries meant that anarchist migration in those years was seriously reduced. In the 1930s, only two anarchists, Ruggero Benvenuti and Agostino Confalonieri, came to Canada.⁶¹ In that same period only Ernesto Bonomini traveled to the United States.⁶² At no point during the First World War did any of the anarchists from this corpus migrate to North America.

The overwhelming majority of those who migrated from Italy did so in order to work. According to migration historian Donna Gabaccia, during the period from 1876 to 1914 more than fourteen million migrants travelled abroad for employment as opposed to members of elites, the second group she identifies, which numbered only 565.⁶³ This trend continued into the 1915 to 1945 period, when almost 4.5 million Italian migrants left their country, including only 188 elite members.⁶⁴ It is difficult to know the exact reason for Italian anarchist migration due to the lack of definitive sources on the subject. What is evident is that anarchists, like their Italian co-nationals, often migrated to work abroad. For example, Vincenzo Gabbani arrived in Canada in 1912 where he worked for a number of years on the construction of a power station possibly located near Ottawa. By 1929, he had moved to Cobalt, Ontario, where he worked as a manual labourer and

⁶¹ Prefetto di Pesaro-Urbino, Pesaro-Urbino, to Ministero del'Interno, Rome, 27 Apr 1943, Ruggero Benvenuti, busta, 508, CPC, ACS, Rome; J.L. Cohen Papers (JLCP), MG30, A94, Vol. 14, File 2761A, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Ottawa.

⁶² Pennetta, Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, 3 Sep 1939, Ernesto Bonomini, busta 740, CPC, ACS, Rome. Of course, such conclusions are only suggestive, because of the size of the group and the lack of concrete details surrounding the year in which some anarchists arrived in North America. The number of anarchists whose date of arrival in Canada or the United States is unknown is seven and fourteen, respectively.

⁶³ The elite migrants included artists, scholars, or trained professionals who may also have travelled for purposes of work. However, their reasons for migrating differed drastically from those of agricultural and factory workers in Italy. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 43, 68.

⁶⁴ The percentages for Italian labour migrants who travelled to North America for both the 1876-1914 and 1915-1945 periods are 31% and 25%, respectively. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* 68, 135.

operated a boarding house.⁶⁵ Giulio Russiani settled in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, in 1921 and may have been employed by Algoma Steel, the town's main employer during this period.⁶⁶ Among the Canadian-based anarchists five migrated for work while three living in the United States did so. Some anarchists, though not identifying as such while still youths, migrated with their families. Maria Vecile came to Canada along with her mother to reunite with a father who worked in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, in either 1902 or 1903.⁶⁷ This only occurred in one other instance in the Canadian context and was more common with the Italian anarchists who migrated to the United States where seven migrated with their families.

Other motives, such as war resistance or avoiding the draft, could influence anarchist migration. Giuseppe Rolle left Italy before the outbreak of the First World War because he did not want to be forced to fight.⁶⁸ Attilio Bortolotti was in his mid-teens and still living in the town of Codroipo in what is today the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia. He experienced the war firsthand. Its senseless violence persuaded him that he never wanted to fight for any government. Bortolotti contacted a brother living in Canada in order to obtain the proper forms to initiate the migration process.⁶⁹

State repression played a much larger role in anarchist migration than did the fear of military service. Vincenzo Capuana had been under heavy surveillance while living in

⁶⁵ Console Generale d'Italia, Ottawa, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 29 July 1935, Vincenzo Gabbani, busta 2211, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁶⁶ Prefetto di Udine, Udine, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 10 Nov. 1937; Carmine Senise, Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, to Prefetto di Udine, Udine, 17 Oct. 1937, Russiani, CPC, ACS, Rome. See also Craig Heron, *Working in Steel: The Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) 135, 166.

⁶⁷ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

⁶⁸ Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, to Console Generale, NYC, 13 Dec. 1912, Giuseppe Rolle, busta 4377, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁶⁹ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 177-178.

Italy because of his anarchist activities. He served in the military during the First World War but deserted twice. On one of those occasions he was sentenced to four months in jail. After the Fascists came to power, Capuana, committed to the antifascist cause, was “watched attentively” because he was considered dangerous by authorities. Employed as a merchant mariner, the anarchist jumped ship while in New York City ostensibly because life in Italy was becoming too difficult.⁷⁰ Capuana was not the only anarchist to jump ship to avoid a return to Fascist-controlled Italy. Giovanni “John” Vattuone, a native of Carloforte, Sardinia, was a member of the Maritime Union and sailed on a cooperatively controlled ship bearing the musical name *Il Giuseppe Verdi*. When he arrived in New York City in 1920, a letter was waiting for him from his sister who still lived in Carloforte. She warned Vattuone about returning to Sardinia because local Fascists were aware of his radical views and activism. However, it was not until the Fascists became more powerful that Vattuone decided it was no longer safe for him in Italy. In September 1922, he, like Capuana, left his ship while docked in New York City.⁷¹ In total, in our corpus of files, persecution resulted in three anarchists migrating to Canada and eight to the United States.

In at least one example, an anarchist had to leave Italy because of criminal activity that had nothing to do with anarchist activism. Efisio Constantino Zonchello was found guilty of embezzlement while living in Cagliari, Sardinia, in 1908. His security file is vague on the details surrounding this charge but Zonchello was fined 250 *lire*,

⁷⁰ Prefetto of Spezia, “Biografia di Vincenzo Capuana,” 27 Jan. 1931, Vincenzo Capuana, busta 1055, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁷¹ David Koven Papers (hereafter DKP), File 131, “Giovanni “John” Vattuone 1899-1994,” unpublished manuscript, 1994, International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, 4-5.

banned from holding any type of public office, and sentenced to ten months in jail. Not wanting to serve the time, he left Italy and later made his way to the United States.⁷²

For Italian anarchists there were two forms of migration: the standard familial or regional pattern and one that was specifically anarchist. Attilio Bortolotti, for instance, migrated to Windsor, Ontario, where his older brother Guglielmo had settled and was able to find his first job through an Italian contractor known by his sibling.⁷³ Such networks were crucial when anarchists needed to escape persecution in Italy or abroad. They played a key role in helping Italian anarchist fighters in the Spanish Civil War find their way to Canada and the United States.

The majority of the Italian anarchists from this group were trained in some kind of skilled labour, which included the following vocations among others: baker, bricklayer, typographer, and electrician. But this did not necessarily mean that they were able to find work in their field of expertise. Giulio Ghetti, who was a cobbler by trade and lived in Windsor, actually made his living as a delivery driver for a local bakery.⁷⁴ In many cases, it is hard to tell how many of these anarchists found their jobs in North America. Before the First World War, many may have used the *padrone* system and/or familial migration networks. Employment could also be secured through fellow anarchists. When Agostino Confalonieri arrived in Montreal in the fall of 1939, comrades there offered him work as a painter. However, because he was in Canada illegally he declined the offer and stayed on the move.⁷⁵

⁷² Prefetto di Nuora, "Biografia di Efisio Constantino Zonchello," 21 May 1938, Efisio Constantino Zonchello, busta 5592, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁷³ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179.

⁷⁴ Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 20 Aug. 1929, Giulio Ghetti, busta 2355, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁷⁵ Agostino Confalonieri, Toronto, to Bipi, Brussels, 19 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, V14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

Sites of Settlement

Italian anarchists migrated to towns and cities all over Canada and the United States but a few cities in both countries deserve special attention. Sault Ste Marie's Little Italy was in the city's west end with James Street as the neighbourhood's commercial centre. The local Italian anarchists formed a circle known as *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* and had a hall on Albert Street West. At least three of the circle's members lived on the same street as their hall while others lived on Queen Street West, Rome Street, and Toronto Street which were also located in the city's west end.⁷⁶ Algoma Steel was the main industry in Sault Ste Marie and some of the anarchists from *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* worked in the mill.⁷⁷ The group was aligned with Carlo Tresca and his newspaper *Il Martello*. In 1919, *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* brought Tresca to Sault Ste Marie where he delivered a series of lectures.⁷⁸

Toronto had more than one area of Italian settlement though it appears as though most anarchists lived near the Little Italy neighbourhood at Dufferin Street and Davenport Road with Brandon Avenue being the focal point.⁷⁹ The neighbourhood began to coalesce in the 1890s as Italian migrants settled in the area to work on maintaining the railway, constructing sewers, and building roads. In 1905, a foundry was opened by Canadian General Electric at the corner of Lansdowne Avenue and Davenport Road, which attracted more migrants to the area. Some of the earliest Italians to live in

⁷⁶ Bortolotti, personal interview. See also Giuseppe Coleffi, busta 1402; Dante Dezi, busta 1763; Domenico Moscardelli, busta 3435; Nazzareno Taus, busta 5049, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁷⁷ John E. Zucchi, "Cultural Constructs or Organic Evolution? Italian Immigrant Settlements in Ontario," *The Luminous Mosaic: Italian Cultural Organizations in Ontario*, eds. Julius Molinaro and Maddalena Kuitunen (Welland: Éditions Soleil Publishing, 1993) 24; Heron, *Working in Steel* 78; Bortolotti, personal interview.

⁷⁸ Bortolotti, personal interview; Carlo Tresca, *The Autobiography of Carlo Tresca*, ed. Nunzio Pernicone (New York: The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, 2003) 191-193.

⁷⁹ Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* 6; Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 170.

this neighbourhood came from the town of Terracina in the Lazio region. However, beginning in the 1920s the migrants from Terracina were joined by others from the regions of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Abruzzi. According to immigration historian John Zucchi, the Dufferin and Davenport Little Italy was primarily home to both skilled and unskilled labourers who worked in construction. The neighbourhood had numerous boarding houses operated by Italian migrants.⁸⁰ The boundaries of this Little Italy were Davenport Road to the north, Dufferin Street to the east, Dupont Street to the south, and the Canadian National Railway line to the west.⁸¹ Addresses in the CPC files show Italian anarchists living on Brandon Avenue, which falls within these boundaries, but also on St. Clarens Avenue just south of Dupont to the east of Lansdowne Avenue and on Gladstone Avenue which lies one street east of Dufferin Street and runs south from Dupont Street.⁸² The active anarchists in this neighbourhood were known as *Il Gruppo Libertario* and published a paper under the title Il Libertario.⁸³ Later, some of the Italians involved in this group would join the Libertarian Group organized by Emma Goldman during her time in Toronto in the mid-1930s.⁸⁴

Windsor was the site of another Little Italy. However, this Little Italy did not begin to form in earnest until the construction of St. Angela Merici Church on Erie Street in 1939, which acted as a focal point for the Italian community. Prior to 1939, Italians

⁸⁰ John Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity 1875-1935* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988) 41, 57-58.

⁸¹ Sturino, *Forging the Chain* 169; Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto* 41.

⁸² See Ruggero Benvenuti, busta 508; Attilio Bortolotti, busta 772; and Ernesto Gava, busta 2317, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁸³ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 184-185.

⁸⁴ Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz, *The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman* (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 139-140.

settled on Wyandotte Street and in the city's downtown.⁸⁵ By the 1920s, the number of Italians living in Windsor was quite small with only 271 Italians living in the city in 1921. This number would increase to more than 1100 by the 1930s as a result of a construction boom in the 1920s and jobs in the automobile manufacturing sector. Work in these occupations meant Windsor's Italian community was predominately working-class.⁸⁶ Windsor was also the third site of considerable anarchist presence in the province with most living within the Wyandotte and Erie area. Italian anarchists resided on Howard Avenue and Mercer, McDougall, and Assumption streets. It is unknown whether this group was identified by a name, but, during the 1920s, they did meet above a grocery store operated by Fortunato Mariotti located at 500 Mercer Street. The store also had a modest anarchist library.⁸⁷ The Windsor anarchists organized regular social events and were active in antifascist struggle. They would also travel to Detroit to fight fascism and attend social events held by their comrades in that city.⁸⁸

Detroit did not have a Little Italy. There were areas of Italian concentration but no specifically Italian neighbourhood. Italians initially settled in the city's downtown and later near Gratiot Street in neighbourhoods that had previously been home to German migrants.⁸⁹ Information on the addresses of Detroit-based anarchists is scarce but at least two still lived in the Gratiot area in the 1930s. Three more anarchists lived in Oakwood Heights southwest of Gratiot and closer to Dearborn, which was a typical area for Italians to move once leaving Gratiot. Detroit's Italian anarchists were known as *Il Gruppo 'I*

⁸⁵ Susan Petkovic, "Italians in Windsor: The Development of the Erie Street Community from Ghetto to Via Italian," MA Thesis, Queen's University, 1992, 65, 69; Armando Delicato, *Italians in Detroit* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2005) 81.

⁸⁶ Petkovic 64, 67.

⁸⁷ G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console, Toronto, to Consolato Generale d'Italia, Ottawa, 7 July 1933, Fortunato Marriotti, busta 3075, CPC, ACS, Rome. Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 179.

⁸⁸ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 180.

⁸⁹ Delicato 8.

Refrattari’ and organized numerous social events in and around Detroit to raise money for various anarchist causes. This group was supporters of the New York City-based journal L’Adunata dei Refrattari.

As was the case with Windsor, Newark, New Jersey’s Little Italy centred around a church – in this case, the Church of St Lucy which was built in 1891 at 118-7th Avenue. Seventh Avenue acted as the community’s hub with Italians living in the surrounding area. The boundaries of this Little Italy were Parker Street to the west, Stone Street to the east, 8th Avenue to the south, and Park Avenue to the north. The community was comprised of Sicilians, Calabrese, and Neapolitans as well as others from the *Mezzogiorno*. The Italians from these regions brought their religious customs with them and each town or *comune* celebrated their own saints weekly between June and October.⁹⁰ Newark was also the home of *L’Adunata dei Refrattari*, the anarchist circle responsible for writing, editing, and publishing the New York City-based anarchist journal of the same name. Others involved with the group did not have a “hands on” role with the production of the newspaper. *L’Adunata* may have had a meeting place at 8 Garside Street which was located within Newark’s Little Italy.⁹¹

Italian settlement in New York City was widespread with migrants living in neighbourhoods all over the five boroughs. The city’s well-known Little Italy was located on Mulberry Street in Manhattan but it is not clear whether any Italian anarchists from this study lived in that community.⁹² It seems likely that this would have been the case

⁹⁰ Justin R. Cristaldi, “Little Italy Across the Hudson,” *Primo* (Sep./Oct.) 2001 <http://www.sicilianculture.com/littleitaly/nj-newark.htm> (accessed 9 July 2010).

⁹¹ Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 24 July 1931, Efisio Constantino Zonchello, busta 5592, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁹² See George E. Pozzetta, “The Mulberry District of New York City: The Years before World War One,” *Little Italies in North America*, eds., Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario): 7-40.

but I cannot say for certain. The office for Carlo Tresca's Il Martello was located in Manhattan but far north of Mulberry Street. A group of the same name formed around the paper but I have been unable to determine where exactly its members lived in the city. Italian anarchists did reside in Brooklyn which was home to *Circolo Volontà* and the South Brooklyn Group who were allied to L'Adunata dei Refrattari. *Circolo Volontà* was known to meet at 112 Troutman Street but I have been unable to find a meeting location for the South Brooklyn Group.⁹³

The anarchists of these six cities were in contact with one another and sometimes traversed the Canada-United States border in order to work, engage in activism, or escape the authorities.

Conclusion

The Italian anarchist migrant experience shared some similarities with that of their non-anarchist co-nationals. Anarchist migrants were mostly men who travelled, via migration networks, to pre-established sites of Italian settlement in Canada and the United States. In the Canadian context, anarchist and non-anarchist migrants alike came from a variety of Italian regions. Italian migration to the United States was greatest from the *Mezzogiorno*, but, at least judging from our small sub-population, anarchist migrants tended to come from all parts of Italy. As was the case for Italian migrants generally, anarchists also faced discrimination and outright racism. For the majority of Italian migrants, leaving home to find work was part of a longstanding pattern of sojourning. Yet among anarchists, political persecution could also play as significant or greater a role

⁹³ Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 24 July 1931, Efsio Constantino Zonchello, busta 5592, CPC, ACS, Rome.

in determining migration. As a result of their political activities, anarchists could be arrested, charged, and given long-term prison sentences. Conditions worsened under Fascist rule with anarchists, to an unprecedented extent, becoming targets of state violence. There were other differences between anarchist and non-anarchist migration. Anarchists tended to be of a wider range of ages than the average Italian migrant and were often trained in some type of skilled trade. Still, there was no guarantee that they would find employment in these trades after arriving in North America.

The existing scholarship on Italian migration focuses on the process in a general way – why and where Italians migrated and their experiences migrating and living in non-Italian host countries. What has not received the same amount of attention is the migration of radical political movements. By examining the specific aspects of anarchist migration and how it compares with that of their co-nationals, a clearer picture of Italian migration begins to emerge. The push and pull factors that initiated migration were not necessarily the same for all Italians especially when one accounts for such traits as political identity. The next chapter will build upon some of the subjects discussed in chapter two such as class, gender, ethnicity, and anarchist philosophy and how these different categories influenced the formation of Italian anarchist identity.

Chapter 3: Anarchist Identity Formation

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the formation of anarchist identities among Italians in North America by exploring the roles that class, ethnicity, and particularly gender played in this process. In addition, I will examine how Italians became involved in the anarchist movement, and the ways in which the influence of certain notable personalities and the adoption of specific anarchist philosophies contributed to identity-formation.

There is a common misconception among scholars who study social movements that “old movements,” i.e. those that existed prior to the 1960s, were largely motivated by economic and class interests. According to sociologists Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph R. Gusfield, it was not until the Sixties that activists moved beyond economics and class and began to organize around race, gender, and sexuality.¹ Similarly, even scholars who recognized the existence of ethnic/racial tensions within the working class in the pre-World War II period still asserted that class overrode other forms of identity during strikes.² But, as historian Michael Miller Topp has shown in his study of the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI), for Italian syndicalists, “class politics were always informed by their ethnic identity [and] their gender identity.”³

Much like other leftwing political philosophies, the worldview of anarchists was informed by their everyday lived experience. For those Italian radicals who migrated to North America in search of employment or to escape political persecution at home, the

¹ Hank Johnston et al., “Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements,” *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, eds. Enrique Larana et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994) 21.

² See, for example, Elizabeth Jameson’s *All That Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998). She states on page 235: “Class overshadowed all other sources of social identity during the [1904] strike.”

³ Michael Miller Topp, *Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 8-9.

reality of the “New World” was that conditions there were not necessarily better than those they had left behind. There was little upward mobility to be had and the overwhelming majority of Italian anarchists remained working class. Those who persisted in their political activism still experienced state repression in its various forms. As migrants in the dominant Anglo-Celtic host societies of Canada and the United States, Italians found themselves the targets of racism in a way they had seldom previously experienced. Even though most migrants identified with a particular region of Italy rather than a nation state, they were now being collectively denigrated as Italians. Gender was similarly important – whether an anarchist was male or female could determine the extent of their inclusion within the wider society and the movement to which they belonged.

Of course not every Italian who lived and worked in North America became an anarchist because of their migrant experiences. The formation of an anarchist identity was also based on shared feelings of resistance to capitalism, the state, and religion among others.⁴ As political scientist Martha Ackelsberg has argued, it is through “collective confrontation [that] radicalization seems to require – or at least be enhanced by – the existence of a community of others with whom one shares the experience and which then continues to validate the new sense of self.”⁵ But radical identities are not only informed by what a collectivity stands against, they are also bound by a shared vision of the future and by attempts to realize that future.⁶

⁴ Gustav Landauer, *For Socialism*, trans. David J. Parent (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1978) 44.

⁵ Martha Ackelsberg, *Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 203.

⁶ Joseph R. Gusfield, “The Reflexivity of Social Movements: Collective Behaviour and Mass Society Theory Revisited,” *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, eds. Enrique Larana et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994) 63; Johnston et al. 12.

Issues of identity were further complicated for anarchists due to the strong influence played by certain key figures within the movement. Men like Luigi Galleani and Carlo Tresca, for instance, identified with specific forms of anarchism that informed their theories and practices. And it was often with these “leaders” that the rank-and-file of the movement aligned themselves. Thus, it was not only class, ethnicity, and gender that informed transnational anarchist identities, but also the adoption of a particular anarchist philosophy. An individual anarchist might find his or her choices in life tightly circumscribed by belonging to a particular group led by a particular leader.⁷ It could matter profoundly, for example, if one declared for Galleani or, conversely, aligned oneself with Tresca.

Building on Topp’s research on the FSI, this chapter will examine how class, ethnicity, and gender informed anarchist social identities. It will also focus on the influence of movement personalities and differing anarchist political philosophies on this process. I will argue that one’s political identification was as central to an understanding of radical political identities as class, ethnicity, and gender. By examining the processes that led Italian migrants to anarchism, we can better understand how that identity and its political philosophy led to the activism in which these men and women engaged.

Class

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Italian migrants were generally employed in unskilled waged labour and were drawn from the most proletarianized of all the European nationalities in North America. Between the years 1901 and 1910, for instance, Italian government statistics showed that the percentage of unskilled migrants to the

⁷ Johnston et al. 16.

United States ranged from 75 to 90 percent. Another survey, this time conducted in New York City to determine the occupations of Italian men in 1916, found that more than fifty percent were employed as labourers while 15.7 percent were artisans who worked as tailors, barbers, shoemakers, and carpenters. Less than two percent held professional or clerical jobs.⁸

The majority of the roughly seventy Italian anarchists in this study who arrived in Canada and the United States were trained in some kind of skilled labour though this did not necessarily mean they found jobs in these trades. Even those anarchists who were able to find steady employment for decent pay rarely escaped their working-class origins. Nicola Sacco, who would later be tried and executed for his supposed role in a pay roll robbery in 1920, was employed as a skilled operator in a shoe factory in Milford, Massachusetts. During the late 1910s, he was earning almost fifty dollars a week, which was far more than his unskilled co-workers. A portion of Sacco's wages were sent as remittances to his family in Italy which may help explain his modest lifestyle.⁹ Still, Sacco's decent-paying job was the exception. Within the wider North American anarchist movement, the straitened circumstances of the Italians were well known. Writing to a comrade in 1939, Emma Goldman described Italian anarchists as "the poorest of the poor."¹⁰ As historians Philip Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer have shown,

⁸ Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer, "Introduction: Italian American Radicalism – An Interpretive History," The Lost World of Italian-American Radicalism: Politics, Labour, and Culture, eds. Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger, 2003) 8-9.

⁹ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 25-26.

¹⁰ Emma Goldman, Toronto, to Nick Di Domenico, NYC, 22 Oct 1939, Federico Arcos: Emma Goldman Papers (FA:EGP), Labadie Collection (LC), Ann Arbor.

upward mobility among Italians was a difficult process that could take many generations, especially for those concentrated in areas of low-waged unskilled work.¹¹

As was shown in Chapter Two, many anarchists who migrated to Canada and the United States already identified themselves as anarchists prior to their arrival. However, roughly one third made the transition post-migration which suggests that the experiences of a migrant labourer could also lead to politicization.¹² Italian migrants may have hoped that Canada and the United States would be lands of promise, but this ideal quickly gave way to the realities of rapidly industrializing capitalist economies, dangerous and/or backbreaking working conditions, low wages, and job insecurity. Due to the racism directed against Italians, employment opportunities were limited, forcing some to work for local elites known as *prominenti*, who took advantage of the situation by paying migrants less than their non-Italian counterparts.¹³ For some, including Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a comrade of Sacco's who shared the same fate, radicalization was a direct result of their experiences in North America.¹⁴

Ethnicity

Ethnicity played a complicated role in the shaping of anarchist identity. Chapter One explored the relationship between Italian migrants to North America and the Italian state. The rather recent creation of a unified Italy in 1861 meant that most migrants

¹¹ Cannistraro and Meyer 8-9.

¹² Forty-eight Italians, twenty-one in Canada and nineteen in the United States, were identified as anarchists before migrating to North America while twenty-one, four in Canada and seventeen in the United States, became anarchists afterwards. For the remaining twenty identified anarchists, eleven in Canada and nine in the United States, it is unclear when they adopted this political identification.

¹³ Paola A. Sensi-Isolani, "Italian Radicals and Union Activists in San Francisco, 1900-1920," *The Lost World of Italian-America Radicalism: Politics, Labor, and Culture*, eds. Phillip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003) 191.

¹⁴ Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 34-35; Cannistraro and Meyer 8.

tended to identify with a home town or region as opposed to a unified nation state. Indeed, they often did not consider themselves Italian. Moreover, many spoke a regional dialect, not the newly-official and consolidating “national language.”¹⁵ At the same time, as will be demonstrated below, anarchists did identify as Italians on occasion, while those who truly embraced a transnational anarchist identity did not identify themselves with a particular nation state at all. Significantly, such newspapers such as Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari were written in standard Italian in place of the various dialects Italian anarchists spoke. Thus though an anarchist's relationship to Italy might be tenuous, he or she often participated in a community of activism and correspondence centred on newspapers written in standard Italian, might well live in a “Little Italy,” and confront forms of “anti-Italian” prejudice that paid little heed to the peninsula's regional complexity. The *Galleanisti* Vincenzo Farulla, for instance, recalled non-Italians calling him “guinea,” “wop,” and “macaroni strangler.” He also had children throw snowballs at him while living in Boston.¹⁶ In his and other cases, it seems plausible to suggest that it took a voyage from Italy to North America for many activists to discover their “Italianicity.”

Luigi Galleani wrote on the discrimination Italian migrants faced abroad in an article from Cronaca Sovversiva provocatively titled “Dagoes.” Here Galleani discussed the various kinds of manual labour in which Italians were employed building infrastructure projects or working in hazardous mines – contributing substantially to the

¹⁵ Jennifer Guglielmo, “Introduction: White Lies, Dark Truths,” Are Italians White?: How Race is Made in America, eds. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003) 10; Franc Sturino, Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930 (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1990) 3.

¹⁶ Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 120.

countries where they had settled. But for all their hard work, Italian migrants were disparaged by the host societies, not least because of the “ambiguity” surrounding their whiteness. As Galleani asserted, “Americans and English, Polish and Slavs, Germans and French are *whites*; the blacks – there is no possible doubt – are *negroes*. The Italians? ... [T]he Italians are not more black, but they are still not white, they are *Italians*, something between the white and the black.” Galleani argued further that Italians were not viewed as completely human: “The *dago* is not only the foreigner or the barbarian, he is ... in the anthropological classification, the bottom rung; something of a hybrid between a man and a gorilla.”¹⁷ As historian Ruth Frager has demonstrated in her study of Jewish needle trades workers in interwar Toronto, experiences of racism informed their “political awareness and led to a commitment to activism.” This was especially the case for Jewish socialists whose “class consciousness and ethnic identity reinforced each other, deepening their commitment to radical social change.”¹⁸ Italian anarchists could also have been similarly politicized due to the discrimination they faced in Canada and the United States.

But how did anarchists see themselves? This is not to say that the old regional patterns quickly died. Consider, for example, the complex biography of Pietro Allegra. Allegra was born in Palermo in 1877 and later enrolled in a technical school. His radical politicization occurred during the 1894 state of siege declared by then Prime Minister Francesco Crispi and the resulting occupation of 40,000 Italian soldiers to quell two years of revolts among Sicilian peasants. Organized by the workers’ and peasants’ *Fasci Siciliani*, peasants mobilized and demonstrated for higher wages, improved

¹⁷ “Dagoes!” *Cronaca Sovversiva* (CS) 28 Aug 1916: 1.

¹⁸ Ruth A. Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto 1900-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 35.

sharecropping contracts, and an end to high taxation. Many peasants were arrested and more than few were killed in clashes with local police and military.¹⁹ Allegra joined a local anarchist circle and spent time in jail for his activism. In 1910 he migrated to the United States, first settling in Paterson, New Jersey, and then later in Long Island, New York, where he worked as a clerk at a cigar factory. During this time, Allegra was active in organizing cigar workers and began contributing to Carlo Tresca's journals L'Avvenire and later Il Martello. Now living in New York City, he became a member of the Bresci Group, named after the famed anarchist Gaetano Bresci. During the First World War, Allegra was involved in propaganda directed towards Italian men living in America to prevent their return to enlist in the Italian army. Under threat of deportation, Allegra returned to Palermo and carried on his anarchist activism until his return to the United States in 1920. Upon his return, Allegra resumed his involvement in Il Martello and in the 1920s was active in antifascist work. His support of and involvement in an antifascist united front not only strained his relationship with Tresca, who could not stomach working with the Communists following the events of the Spanish Civil War, but also brought Allegra closer to the Communist position until he broke with the anarchist movement. Allegra died in New York City shortly after the Second World War.²⁰

In an article that appeared in Il Martello in 1924, Allegra discussed fascism in his home region of Sicily briefly outlining the area's subjugation by foreign invaders

¹⁹ *Fasci* is a Roman word meaning "bundle of sticks." Donna Gabaccia, Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) 55-56; M. Minardi, "Pietro Allegra," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 25.

²⁰ Minardi 25-26; Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) 188; Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 233-234.

throughout history. He then drew a correlation with past oppressors and the present Fascist regime. As a result of this history, Allegra did not believe fascism would be able to take root in Sicily. Though he does not refer to himself directly as a Sicilian, he does demonstrate his ties to the region not only through the article's topic but also in the way he refers to the region as his "dear Sicily."²¹

But to what extent did regionalism affect the ability of Italian anarchists to interact with one another? The evidence shows that regionalism did not greatly hinder the ability of Italian anarchists to engage in activism together. For the most part, factionalism was the result of diverging anarchist ideologies and not one's region of origin. However, regionalism was not completely absent either. Frank Brand, an Italian anarchist active in New York City, stated in an interview that he, being from a small town near Milan, did not "mix very well" with the southern Italians who comprised the *Circolo Volontà* in Brooklyn where he lived. Instead, Brand preferred to work with Spanish anarchists.²²

For other anarchists, internationalism played a greater role than regionalism. The *Galleanisti* Alberico Pirani did not identify with any nation states. As he declared in an interview, "I'm international. I ain't got no country. When you mention country and religion, wash your mouth. That's the way you kill millions of people, for God and country and flag."²³ The anarchist poet and lecturer Virgilia D'Andrea also embraced an anti-state identity and during her lectures would urge audiences to view themselves as

²¹ Pietro Allegra, "Può un siciliano essere fascista?" (Can a Sicilian be Fascist?), *Il Martello* (IM) 5 Jan 1924: 2.

²² Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 173.

²³ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 141.

“citizen[s] of the world ... child[ren] of father Sun and mother Earth.”²⁴ Attilio Bortolotti made a literal break with his Italian citizenship following the murder of Giacomo Matteotti, a socialist member of the Italian Parliament, by Fascists in 1924 for his outspoken criticisms of the far right. Disgusted, Bortolotti destroyed his Italian passport by burning it in the stove.²⁵

However, anarchists also sometimes laid claim to a pan-Italian identity. This pattern was most visible during the years of antifascist struggle. Little Italies had always been contested terrain between radicals and reactionaries. Prior to the rise of fascism, Italian radicals went on the offensive against the *prominenti* and the Roman Catholic Church in an attempt to assert their vision of society within Italian communities.²⁶ After Mussolini assumed power, the conflicts between the left and the right became even more pronounced. Within Italian communities abroad, and often working through consular offices, the Fascists hoped to create a strong lobby that would pressure foreign governments, like those of Canada and the United States, to support the political interests of Italy. They also sought to disseminate a specifically Fascist reading of Italian culture. But the Fascists first had to overcome the localism of Italians who often did not identify with a unified nation-state. This would be accomplished in two ways: first, by developing a sense of pride among Italians and encouraging them to become more involved in Canadian and American politics; and, second, through the diffusion of

²⁴ Jennifer Guglielmo, “Donne Ribelli: Recovering the History of Italian Women’s Radicalism in the United States,” *The Lost World of Italian-American Radicalism: Politics, Labour, and Culture*, eds. Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger, 2003) 125.

²⁵ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 184; Attilio Bortolotti and Rossella Di Leo, “Between Canada and the USA: A Tale of Immigrants and Anarchists,” Kate Sharpley Library, <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/8pk1h4> (accessed 18 July 2010).

²⁶ Topp 48.

cultural programs, such as language courses.²⁷ To this end, the Fascists exported the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* (OND, National Afterwork Organization) to communities throughout North America. The aim of the *Dopolavoro* was to unify and oversee the operation of Italian social clubs and provide members and their families with popular forms of entertainment such as sporting events and movies. In addition, the Fascists created a separate organization – *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio all'Estero* (Italian Youths of the Lictor Abroad) – aimed specifically at children.²⁸ Fascists also sought to influence Italian communities in Canada and the United States by taking control of the benevolent society known as the *Ordine Figli d'Italia* (OFI – Order of the Sons of Italy) and through Italian language programs that would instill fascist values.²⁹

The Fascists' emphasis on nation and their perception of migrant settlements abroad as Italian colonies in some ways set the tone for antifascist responses to Italian identity.³⁰ Leftists may not have identified as Italians in the past, but with the fascists claiming to speak in the interests of Italians regardless of where they lived, antifascists, anarchists among them, also at times couched their alternative vision in nationalist terms. For example, on 20 March 1923, anarchists in New Haven, Connecticut, prevented Carlo Cattapane, a local Fascist, from speaking at the Town Hall. Forced to leave the stage due to the hostility of the mostly antifascist crowd, Cattapane was afterwards asked why he

²⁷ Robert F. Harney, "Toronto's Little Italy, 1885-1945," *Little Italies in North America*, eds. Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981) 55.

²⁸ Philip Morgan, *Italian Fascism, 1915-1945* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 135-136, 147; Luigi G. Pennacchio, "Exporting Fascism to Canada: Toronto's Little Italy," *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad*, eds. Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000) 56-57, 61.

²⁹ Attilio Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream: A [sic] Oral History with Art Berthelot," *Kick It Over* 17 (Winter 1986/1987): 2; Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 186; Susan Petkovic, "Italians in Windsor: The Development of the Erie Street Community from Ghetto to Via Italia," MA Thesis, Queen's University, 1992, 84.

³⁰ Bruno Ramirez, *The Italians in Canada* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, 1989) 16-18; Robert F. Harney, *From the Shores of Hardship: Italians in Canada* (Welland: Éditions Soleil, 1993) 116.

held the meeting. In response, the Fascist stated that he was Italian and only wanted to propagate *italianità* or Italianess. One of the anarchists then remarked, “We are, it is true, all Italians, we love Italy immensely, but we spit on the face of the assassins of the Italians.”³¹

Italian neighbourhoods were important sites of struggle and radicalization for anarchists. Typically Little Italies have been seen as safe havens for Italian migrants escaping the prevalent racism of host societies.³² It was here that Italians could communicate with *paesani* in their regional dialects, shop in various Italian-owned stores, socialize in saloons, purchase meals from *trattorie* or restaurants, join social clubs, find both classic and popular Italian literature, and read a politically diverse range of Italian-language newspapers.³³ Commentators have also discussed the ways in which Italian migrant communities allowed for the continuation of cultural traditions, such as religious practices, and the reliance on the extended family as a means of support during times of hardship. In addition, Italian migrants founded mutual aid societies to help ease financial burdens by providing small loans or other assistance to members in times of illness or death.³⁴

In much the same way that Little Italies could replicate cultural and social traditions practiced in Italy, they had the potential to sustain the radical thought and

³¹ Bifulco, “Antifascismo pratico,” *IM* 31 Mar 1923: 4.

³² Historian John Zucchi, however, cautions against viewing the formation of these enclaves strictly as a defence mechanism. He notes that the creation of Little Italies was often influenced by the location of *padroni* who supplied Italian labour for the labour market. Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* 7; Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto* 35.

³³ Baily 161, 195-197; Pozzetta 24-25; Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* 7.

³⁴ Ramirez, *The Italians in Canada* 12; Vincenza Scarpaci, “Observations on a Ethnic Community: Baltimore’s Little Italy,” *Little Italies in North America*, eds. Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981) 117; Gary Mormino, “The Hill upon a City: The Evolution of an Italian-American Community in St. Louis, 1882-1950,” *Little Italies in North America*, eds. Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci (Toronto: The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981) 148.

practice of leftist migrants and provide a site for its further development. These communities were generally able to shield themselves from assimilation into North American society. The majority of residents tended to be poor and working class which increased the possibility for collective struggles against employers and capitalism. They were simultaneously Italians and exploited workers and this could act as the basis for solidarity.³⁵

As Topp has shown with the FSI, the emphasis these syndicalists placed on activism within their own communities demonstrates both the continued significance of their ethnic identity and the relationship between their ethnicity and class position. Influence over their own neighbourhoods was paramount. The syndicalists challenged not only the Fascists and the *prominenti* who supported them, but also others on the Italian left, including anarchists, with the aim of establishing their specific political vision.³⁶ The same can be said of the anarchists who with their press, public speakers, and demonstrations, put forward their own alternatives to a nationalist, capitalist, and religious leadership within the Little Italies. Italy and the “Little Italies” shaped the outlook and the struggles of these leftists more powerfully than “Canada” or the “United States.”

Gender

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the role of women within the left became an important issue. Male radicals, often products of their time, tended to see women in their socially prescribed roles as wives and mothers tied to the domestic

³⁵ Cannistraro and Meyer 12.

³⁶ Topp 48.

sphere instead of seeing them as equals or comrades. In addition, many leftist men felt that women, members of a supposed weaker sex, were inherently conservative in their thought and actions due to the “natural” aspects of motherhood, child-centred and risk-averse as it was thought to be.³⁷ Though left political philosophies such as socialism, communism, and anarchism called for equality between the sexes, when and how this equality was to be achieved was up for debate. Male socialists and Communists may have believed they had no part to play in the oppression of women, pointing instead to an exploitative economic system, but for male anarchists, their relation with female comrades was far more complex.³⁸ Some male anarchists knowingly excluded women from the movement while others truly attempted to treat women as equals.

Leftist movements tended to have more male than female adherents and the Italian anarchist movement in North American was no exception.³⁹ To some extent this can be explained by the very male-dominated character of transatlantic Italian migration. Women of various ages also migrated often as wives with children in tow or as children in the company of mothers although, as historian Jennifer Guglielmo has argued, some women who migrated from Italy were wage workers.⁴⁰ Though women were present within Italian anarchist communities it was generally the men who edited and contributed to movement newspapers or became prominent lecturers. Women wrote articles for publications such as Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari but not to the extent that men did. The lack of women's involvement was an issue for male anarchists. In a 1923

³⁷ Linda Kealey, Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 8.

³⁸ Joan Sangster, Dreams of Equality: Women on the Canadian Left, 1920-1950 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989) 25.

³⁹ Sangster 53.

⁴⁰ Jennifer Guglielmo, Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945 (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 45.

article from L'Adunata dei Refrattari, Osvaldo Maraviglia, then the paper's editor, asked readers "How many times have we observed with bitterness that at our meetings, conferences and recreational events women are absent?"⁴¹ By posing this question Maraviglia demonstrated that women were present in Italian neighbourhoods but for whatever reasons were not part of the anarchist movement. But what was preventing Italian women from being active anarchists? Attempts were made by various circles to attract women to events by offering them free admission as well as requesting women to attend group meetings.⁴² Yet, women were still not participating to the degree that men wanted.

Ideas surrounding women and their role within anarchist movements in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries ranged from very progressive to extremely unenlightened. Among the more open-minded anarchists was Mikhail Bakunin who stated, "I am truly free only when all human beings, men and women, are equally free."⁴³ Emma Goldman, the most prominent woman of the first-wave anarchist movement, was another important writer and lecturer on themes of women's liberation. Born in the Jewish quarter of Kovno, Lithuania in 1869, Goldman's experiences as a Jew living under the repressive anti-Semitism of Tsarist Russia, and a strict and abusive father, had a great impact on her later political identity.⁴⁴ She migrated to the United States in 1885 and became an anarchist following the hanging of the Haymarket martyrs in November 1887. Active in New York City, Goldman was arrested numerous times for her activism.

⁴¹ Osvaldo, "Ritorna a Te" (It Returns to You), L'Adunata dei Refrattari (AdR) 30 Jan. 1923: 3.

⁴² Guglielmo 151.

⁴³ Mikhail Bakunin, Bakunin on Anarchism, trans. and ed. Sam Dolgoff (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1980) 237.

⁴⁴ Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz, The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 7.

On one such occasion she gave a speech where she counseled her listeners to “demonstrate before the palaces of the rich [and] demand work.” She then went on to say, “If they do not give you work, demand bread. If they deny you both, take bread. It is your sacred right.”⁴⁵ Goldman was sentenced to one year at Blackwell’s Island Penitentiary where she learned the basics of nursing. After her release, Goldman travelled throughout Canada and the United States lecturing on workers’ issues, birth control, education, and women’s rights.⁴⁶ In 1917, she was arrested for her anti-war work and imprisoned for two years. Quickly following Goldman’s release from prison, she, along with many other anarchists active in the United States, was rearrested and ordered deported to Russia at the height of the American Red Scare. Her time in Communist Russia opened her eyes to the reality of the revolution – any genuine and radical attempts at direct democracy or workers’ control were stifled by the Bolsheviks who wanted to consolidate their power and centralize the administration of the Russian state. Disgusted by the behaviour of the Communists in violently suppressing radicals who challenged Communist rule, Goldman left Russia and spent the rest of her life living in France, London, Spain, and Canada where she continued her anarchist activism.⁴⁷ Her position in

⁴⁵ Moritz and Moritz 123.

⁴⁶ Moritz and Moritz 9.

⁴⁷ For biographical treatments of Emma Goldman see Richard Drinnon, Rebel in Paradise: A Biography of Emma Goldman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Candace Falk, Love, Anarchy, and Emma Goldman (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984); Emma Goldman, Living My Life, vols. 1 and 2 (London: Pluto Press, 1987); Bonnie Haaland, Emma Goldman: Sexuality and the Impurity of the State (Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1993); Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz, The World’s Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001); C. Brid. Nicholson, Emma Goldman: Still Dangerous (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2010); Martha Solomon, Emma Goldman (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987); Alice Wexler, Emma Goldman in Exile: From the Russian Revolution to the Spanish Civil War (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989); Wexler, Emma Goldman: An Intimate Life (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984); and the documentaries Emma Goldman, dir. Mel Bucklin, 2004, and Emma Goldman: The Anarchist Guest dir. Coleman Romalis, 2000. For collections of Goldman’s political writings see Peter Glassgold, ed., Anarchy! An Anthology of Emma Goldman’s Mother Earth (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001) and Emma Goldman, My Disillusionment in Russia (New York: Dover, 2004); Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader, ed. Alix Kates Shulman (New York:

a male-dominated movement created a space where she was able to bring forward her criticism of marriage as a coercive institution and advocate such measures as birth control education.⁴⁸

In contrast, anarchists such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Peter Kropotkin held less progressive views on women. Proudhon believed that the main social unit of a stateless society would be the patriarchal family. He was also an opponent of divorce and viewed the place of women in any society, anarchist or not, as tied to the domestic sphere. Kropotkin may not have been as sexist as Proudhon, but neither was he unprejudiced. He felt that women should be involved in anarchist activism but not put their feminist politics before the interests of the largely male working class.⁴⁹ Kropotkin also appears to have believed that men were more intelligent than women. As he once remarked to Emma Goldman, “When she [woman] is his equal intellectually and shares his social ideals, she will be as free as he.”⁵⁰

This appears to have been a sentiment shared by Osvaldo Maraviglia in 1923. In his article, he blamed men for women’s absence from the movement. Women were not showing up because anarchist men were failing to promote the cause at home. Maraviglia, echoing the paternalism of many of his radical contemporaries of the period, felt it was the role of male comrades to educate women on the topic of anarchism and thereby facilitate women’s liberation.⁵¹ In some ways, there seems to have been a gender hierarchy in this model of anarchist theory and practice. The males of the movement

Schocken Books, 1983); Vision on Fire: Emma Goldman on the Spanish Revolution, ed. David Porter (New Paltz: Commonground Press, 1983); and Anarchism and Other Essays (New York: Mother Earth Publishing, 1911).

⁴⁸ Emma Goldman, Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader, ed. Alix Kates Shulman (New York: Schocken Books, 1983) 204-213.

⁴⁹ Margaret S. Marsh, Anarchist Women, 1870-1920 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981) 19.

⁵⁰ Emma Goldman, Living My Life, vol. 1 (London: Pluto Press, 1987) 253.

⁵¹ Osvaldo, “Ritorna a Te,” AdR 30 Jan. 1923: 3.

were the keepers of this knowledge, who would then pass it down to wives, sisters, and lovers, who would then in turn pass it along to their children.

These contrasting views on women among movement theorists were, not surprisingly, replicated among the rank and file. Writing on women in the Spanish anarchist movement during the Civil War, Martha Ackelsberg found that male comrades either saw women in a position of lower status or, alternately, as men's equals who should be treated accordingly.⁵² The same situation developed among Italian anarchists. For example, in Spring Valley, Illinois, the women of *Il Gruppo Femminile Luisa Michel* were not allowed to enter the Prosperity Club, an important regional centre for the movement, wherein male anarchists held their meetings. In the winter of 1900, anarchist women and their male allies converged to protest the club's exclusionary practices. Since women were not allowed inside the Prosperity Club they sent in their male comrades with a proposal to end the club's discrimination against women and open the venue to all anarchists. The proposal was not well received and an intense debate between both sides ensued. When the supporters of *Il Gruppo Femminile Luisa Michel* asked for a vote on the proposal, they were stymied by the moderator.⁵³ The existence of women-only groups within leftwing movements "provided women with a separate space to build their confidence and explore socialist issues from a woman's perspective."⁵⁴ Yet, for *Il Gruppo Femminile Luisa Michel*, such a path was the only way to engage in anarchist activities. In some cases, even those male comrades who paid lip service to women's equality in public did not practice anarchism in their homes. In private with their

⁵² Ackelsberg 117.

⁵³ Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of a Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World* eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 217-218.

⁵⁴ Sangster 53.

families, some male comrades were domineering patriarchs whose authority was not to be questioned. John Vattuone, for example, was known to order his partner Elvira Ciminieri around the house by demanding she bring him whatever he wanted.⁵⁵

Possibly the Prosperity Club represented an unusual case within North America anarchism – it is difficult to know. Yet, more subtle patterns of gender discrimination are well documented. However rare it may have been for women to be physically barred from meetings and venues, they could be excluded in different ways. *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* of Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, which flourished in the 1920s, was comprised of both sexes. Women were left out of decision-making processes when events were held at their local hall. Their roles were those traditionally assigned women – food preparation, for instance.⁵⁶ The gendered division of labour within the anarchist movement meant that both women and men travelled within their own social networks. For the movement's women this could often mean the behind-the-scenes organizing of social events, such as lectures, dances, dinners, and plays, or canvassing for the movement's newspapers. The public meetings tended to be the preserve of males. Women would usually only attend meetings when there were critical issues to be discussed.⁵⁷ Women's contribution to the anarchist movement was important yet their work tended to "[keep them] in a sex-stereotyped domestic role that isolated them from power and perpetuated [their] secondary status."⁵⁸ Still, women could take on roles that would usually be assigned to male comrades in times of crisis. For instance, during the Red Scare in the United States, the anarchist community of Paterson, New Jersey, was raided and many male comrades

⁵⁵ Ackelsberg 117; David Koven Papers (DKP), File 131, "Giovanni "John" Vattuone 1899-1994," unpublished manuscript, 1994, International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, 17.

⁵⁶ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

⁵⁷ Guglielmo 151, 228.

⁵⁸ Sangster 53.

were taken into custody or forced underground. As a result, it was the women who began to distribute anarchist pamphlets and journals.⁵⁹

Anarchist women were also expected to fill traditional roles as mothers. Those anarchists, whether theorists like Kropotkin or the less celebrated rank and file, who held conventional views of gender roles argued that women were naturally suited for this function. They believed that women were biologically predisposed to want children and raise them, leading to the conclusion that it was not an imposition upon a woman's freedom to become a mother, a destiny aligned with her natural instincts.⁶⁰ Though Proudhon, Kropotkin, and others, may not have viewed mothers as potential revolutionaries, women and men within the Italian anarchist movement in North America certainly did.⁶¹ As mothers, anarchist women shared the important duty of raising the next generation of anarchist militants, a concept which Caroline Merithew has termed "anarchist motherhood." Anarchist women, as did their socialist and communist counterparts, redefined motherhood as a revolutionary act to challenge the patriarchy they experienced under a capitalist economic system as well as within the anarchist movement. As educators, they were instilling anarchist principles in their children to ensure that the social revolution continued. And in this role, women were laying equal

⁵⁹ Guglielmo 202-203.

⁶⁰ Marsh 19-20.

⁶¹ José Moya's research on the Italian anarchist movement in Buenos Aires has argued that women in that city placed less importance on motherhood than their counterparts in the United States. He attributes this difference to the greater involvement of women in the Buenos Aires labour movement which allowed for the possibility of choosing labour struggle over child rearing. José Moya, "Italians in Buenos Aires's Anarchist Movement: Gender Ideology and Women's Participation, 1890-1910," Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 210.

claim to that of male comrades regarding their importance and contribution to the anarchist movement.⁶²

In addition, it was through education that women could subvert patriarchy. In a L'Adunata article titled "To the Women," the author, one Delie, argued that "old moral religionist[s] ... antediluvian man, [and] the priest" had made proletarian women the slaves of men by reducing women to domestic beasts. It was these beneficiaries and promulgators of patriarchy whom the author charged with keeping women in a servile state by reinforcing dominant beliefs which relegated women to roles as servants and objects of sexual pleasure. These opponents of women's equality, according to Delie, also objected to women reading philosophy and becoming better educated. Addressing young and future mothers specifically, the author asserted that they had to resist the oppression of women. Mothers had to educate and raise their daughters to take their place in society as equals to men. If mothers were successful in this they would be farther along the path to anarchism. But, if they did not, woman would "remain a beautiful plaything to satisfy the capricious lust of man."⁶³ Interestingly, this article does not address how important it would be also to educate sons regarding patriarchy and how to help combat it as males.

Some male comrades were also proponents of "anarchist motherhood." However, the way in which some men wrote on the subject could be quite patronizing. In "To Proletarian Mothers," which was published in the 2 November 1929 issue of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, Celestino Lalli told women directly that it was their responsibility to educate their sons to be "future champions" of anarchist ideals, and not be slaves to the

⁶² Merithew 218; Sangster 163.

⁶³ Delie, "Alle Donne" (To the Women), AdR 15 Jan. 1923: 3-4.

greedy *padrone* or the priest, or fighters of wars for the wealthy. For Lalli, it was the “mission” of mothers to understand their role as “educators and liberators.” No mention was made by the author of the education of daughters, nor did he bring up the ability of mothers/women to engage in social struggle or revolution beyond these circumscribed roles. Instead, mothers/women were seen additionally as the comforters and supporters of men whose activism was difficult and emotionally trying.⁶⁴

“Anarchist motherhood” may have had its supporters among Italian anarchists of both genders but not all anarchists believed it was the role of radical mothers to educate their children. A week after “To Proletarian Mothers” was published in L’Adunata dei Refrattari, the paper ran an excerpt, translated into Italian, from Benzion Liber’s book The Child and the Home, titled “Fathers and Sons.”⁶⁵ In contrast to Lalli’s article, the Liber excerpt focuses on the role of fathers in teaching their sons about leftwing radicalism, capitalism, and the proletariat. Liber is critical of the way in which male comrades trained their sons to memorize revolutionary poems and songs but without providing sufficient context with respect to their meaning and import. Instead, the sons were simply acting as parrots repeating what their fathers had taught them to say. He also felt that those male comrades who were considered leaders of radical movements were so busy in their activism that they had ignored their sons thus breeding indifference or hatred within them. For Liber, it was the father and not the mother who was responsible for a son’s radical education. However, such paternal pedagogy required proper preparation. As Liber suggested,

⁶⁴ Celestino Lalli, “Alle Madri Proletarie” (To Proletarian Mothers), AdR 2 Nov. 1929: 4.

⁶⁵ Benzion Librescu (1875-1958) was born in Romania and changed his last name to Liber after his arrival in the United States in 1905. He was a physician and hygienist who wrote books on diet, health, and child rearing. Liber was also involved in the founding of the single tax colony at Free Acres, New Jersey, and a treasurer of the Anarchist Red Cross. Avrich, Anarchist Voices 196-197.

If our social ideas are true, we can reasonably presume that a child brought up rationally will be induced to embrace them. We must not prove to be absolutely secure in being right; rather we must add a degree of skepticism to those ideas for which we are most enthusiastic.⁶⁶

It is hard to discern if Liber's article on raising radical children in L'Adunata was published as a deliberate counter-thrust to Lalli's article from the previous week or whether the timing was purely coincidental.

While some anarchists felt the role of educator belonged to either the father or the mother, others felt that this task was the responsibility of both parents. Philadelphia's Aurora Alleva, writing on the lack of children involved in the anarchist movement, blamed both parents for their inability in interesting their sons in anarchism. Believing that sons were too enamoured of baseball, movies, and comics, Alleva argued that parents were not spending enough time with their children and failing to instill anarchist principles. She suggested parents meet their children half-way. For example, if a son showed an interest in reading, parents should give him some anarchist literature to read. And if a child was not interested in reading, parents were told to accustom him to reading some anarchist publications every day. In addition, Alleva felt it was important for parents to bring their children to anarchist meetings and lectures in the hope that the latter would develop an interest in the movement as well as in the social question.⁶⁷

With the exception of the article written by Delie, these above examples omit any mention of the education of daughters focusing instead on the importance of ensuring that sons are properly radicalized to carry on anarchist struggles. What does this tell us about the Italian anarchist movement? It appears, based on these examples, that a form of

⁶⁶ B. Liber, "Padri e Figli" (Fathers and Sons), AdR 9 Nov. 1929: 5-6.

⁶⁷ Aurora Alleva, "Perchè" (Why), AdR 27 July 1929: 5.

patriarchy existed within the movement whereby the education of sons was given primacy over that of daughters. But it was not only men who subscribed to this idea. Women themselves also wrote on the importance of educating sons. Even Aurora Alleva, who stated that the anarchist ideas instilled in her by “my mother and father are infinitely more beautiful and better than the school could ever have taught me,” failed to mention girls in her article.⁶⁸ In the movement’s key newspapers, one hears a fair bit about the women missing from anarchist meetings, but, ironically, little acknowledgement of the biased treatment of girls in the family that likely sustained this pattern.

“Anarchist motherhood” was not the only option open to women within the Italian anarchist movement. For those who combined feminism with their anarchism, the family structure was seen as a main factor in women’s inequality and dependence on men. If women were to be truly equal, anarchist feminists believed, then women had to be economically, psychologically, and sexually independent of men and of such patriarchal institutions as marriage. Anarchist feminists did not accept claims that motherhood was a natural instinct and, though they agreed there were differences between women and men, challenged assumptions that intellect and psychology were based on gender.⁶⁹ Without taking her to be typical – and the sources make any such claim doubtful – the teacher, lecturer, and poet Virgilia D’Andrea stands as this movement’s most articulate explorer of the anarchist-feminist path.

D’Andrea was born in Sulmona on 12 February 1888 to parents Stefano and Sambascia. Her father worked as a civil servant while her mother was a homemaker.

⁶⁸ Aurora Alleva, “Una Breve Riposta a L.D.C.” (A Brief Response to L.D.C.), *AdR* 2 Nov. 1929: 4.

⁶⁹ Marsh 45-46.

D'Andrea had a painful childhood; her mother died early and her father was later murdered by the lover of his second wife. She spent the rest of her youth in a convent and later enrolled in the University of Naples where she received her teaching certificate. Afterwards, she returned to the Abruzzi region and began to teach elementary school at Avezzano. There D'Andrea witnessed first hand the poverty in which her students lived. Indeed, D'Andrea herself was barely able to meet her own needs as a self-supporting teacher. This experience coupled with the region's 1915 earthquake are thought to be two major events that politicized D'Andrea. Avezzano was the quake's epicenter. It left most inhabitants dead and the city in ruins. The slow and inadequate response of the Italian state added to D'Andrea's sense of injustice.⁷⁰

D'Andrea eventually left the teaching profession to dedicate herself to antimilitarist activism against Italy's involvement in the First World War, and this may have been around the time when she joined the *Partito Socialista Italiano* (PSI). As a member of the PSI, D'Andrea organized a women's section of the party in Sulmona. In 1917, while attending a meeting of the *Unione Sindicale Italiana* (USI), she met Armando Borghi who was the leader of the union. When exactly D'Andrea moved from socialism to anarchism is not known but it is possible that her contact and later romance with Borghi may have had some influence. She embraced anarcho-syndicalism as her political philosophy, taking her cue from Errico Malatesta who had argued, "The task of anarchists is to work to strengthen the revolutionary conscience of organized workers and

⁷⁰ Crescenzo Pacelli, Prefetto di Bologna, "Biografia di Virgilia D'Andrea," 27 Mar. 1919, Virgilia D'Andrea, busta 1607, CPC, ACS, Rome; Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta, "Virgilia D'Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile," *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World*, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 301-302.

to remain in the Unions [sic] as anarchists.”⁷¹ And, like Malatesta by way of Bakunin, D’Andrea also conceptualized an anarchist society as a series of freely-associated federations.⁷²

D’Andrea was heavily active during *il biennio rosso*, the two years of radical leftist factory and land occupations that followed the First World War. She was arrested and charged with plotting the overthrow of the government and inciting others to revolt. Found guilty, D’Andrea’s prison time was confined to a few weeks, in view of her womanly status.⁷³ Life became increasingly more dangerous for D’Andrea in Italy. In March 1921, three anarchists bombed Milan’s Diana Theatre in an attempt to kill the city’s Fascist chief of police in retaliation for his severe treatment of their comrades. The Fascists in turn used the incident as a pretext to attack the left and its various institutions. D’Andrea was one of the few who defended the anarchists. She argued that the men were also victims who had acted out of desperation and in retaliation against the bourgeois state for the imprisonment of Malatesta and Borghi for their roles in *il biennio rosso*. With the Fascists on the attack and growing in power, D’Andrea and the recently emancipated Borghi left Italy near the end of 1922.⁷⁴

The couple lived in Germany and France, and continued their anarchist activism especially against fascism. Borghi was invited to tour the north-eastern United States in May 1927 in support of Sacco and Vanzetti who were set to be executed later that summer. A year later, D’Andrea arrived in New York City and in the fall of 1929 began

⁷¹ Errico Malatesta, *Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas*, ed. Vernon Richards (London: Freedom Press, 1965) 114; Crescenzo Pacelli, Prefetto di Bologna, “Biografia di Virgilia D’Andrea,” 27 Mar. 1919, Virgilia D’Andrea, busta 1607, CPC, ACS, Rome; Ventresca and Iacovetta 302-3.

⁷² Ventresca and Iacovetta 304.

⁷³ Prefetto di Milan, Milan, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 27 Feb. 1921, Virgilia D’Andrea, busta 1607, CPC, ACS, Rome; Ventresca and Iacovetta 305.

⁷⁴ Ventresca and Iacovetta 305.

a speaking tour of the country that continued into early 1930.⁷⁵ Both she and Borghi aligned themselves with the anti-organizationalist anarchist communists of L'Adunata dei Refrattari – a strange choice for two militant anarcho-syndicalists.

D'Andrea's topic for the fall lectures was titled "Our Violence and the Violence of Others" which explained the difference between state violence and anarchist rebellion. In the case of the former, D'Andrea argued that state violence was carried out by the military during times of social unrest and labour strikes in order to protect private property and an exploitative capitalist economic system. Violence, according to D'Andrea, was not the preserve of anarchism. Instead, "it is sister of the slavery of man, therefore it is the negation of anarchy, it is the foundation and the base of the edifice of authority, of the State, of the Church." D'Andrea argued that anarchist violence was a form of rebellion – a legitimate form of self defence against the violence of the state and the institutions that it protects.⁷⁶

As a woman orator within the Italian anarchist movement in North America, D'Andrea was an anomaly. Most public speakers tended to be the males involved in the major Italian-language anarchist newspapers of the time. And, as a result, her lectures received a great deal of coverage and commentary in the pages of L'Adunata dei Refrattari. Those who reported on D'Andrea appear to have been exclusively male contributors to the paper. She was often described as a strong and confident speaker who

⁷⁵ Ventresca and Iacovetta 306-307; Il Cronista, "Conferenze di V. D'Andrea: La Nostra e l'Altrui Violenza" (Virgilia D'Andrea Lecture: Our Violence and the Violence of Others), AdR 5 Oct. 1929: 5; "Corrispondenze," AdR 7 Dec. 1929: 7; Il Veggente, "La Nostra Propaganda," AdR 1 Feb. 1930: 7; "Corrispondenze," AdR 22 Feb. 1930: 7-8.

⁷⁶ Il Cronista, "Conferenze di V. D'Andrea: La Nostra e l'Altrui Violenza," AdR 5 Oct. 1929: 5.

was able to convince skeptics because of her well-argued presentations.⁷⁷ One letter described D'Andrea as "more than ... an incomparable orator ... [she] profoundly shakes the spirit of the listener with her dazzling ... words, [giving] to him ... true intellectual enjoyment"⁷⁸ Her west coast lectures in the winter of 1930 were such a success that one correspondent rejoiced that "Immense and profitable is the work that could be done on this coast if [we could] continually have our comrade [D'Andrea] among us."⁷⁹

D'Andrea's experiences within the Italian anarchist movement paralleled those of other women orators involved in the radical left. Mother Jones, the Irish-born community organizer and labour activist who was involved in a number of strikes while living in the United States, especially among miners, was described in similar terms. Her adeptness at public speaking was recalled by one striker: "No matter what impossible ideas she brought up, she made the miners think she and they could do anything."⁸⁰ Wobbly organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's ability in rousing the workers was characterized thus,

She stirred them, lifted them up in her appeal for solidarity. Then at the end of the meeting, they sang. It was as though a spurt of flame had gone through the audience, something stirring and powerful, a feeling which has made the liberation of people possible, something beautiful and strong had swept through the people and welded them together, singing.⁸¹

Like these more famous left-wing women orators, D'Andrea was something of an anarchist celebrity. Some, perhaps too enamoured with D'Andrea's physical appearance,

⁷⁷ Il Cronista, "Conferenze di V. D'Andrea: La Nostra e l'Altrui Violenza," *AdR* 5 Oct. 1929: 5; "Corrispondenze," *AdR* 7 Dec. 1929: 7; Il Veggente, "La Nostra Propaganda," *AdR* 1 Feb. 1930: 7; "Corrispondenze," *AdR* 22 Feb. 1930: 7-8.

⁷⁸ "Corrispondenze," *AdR* 7 Dec. 1929: 7.

⁷⁹ Il Veggente (The Clairvoyant), "La Nostra Propaganda," *AdR* 1 Feb. 1930: 7.

⁸⁰ Dale Fetherling, *Mother Jones: The Miners' Angel – A Portrait* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974) 10.

⁸¹ Rosalyn Fraad Baxandal, introduction, *Words on Fire: The Life and Writing of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn*, by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987) 17.

impressed by the rarity of a woman lecturing among the Italian anarchist movement, and perhaps simply sexist, described her in ways that differed from male lecturers. One writer in *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, *Il Cronista* (The Reporter), called D'Andrea's October lecture "beautiful" and described her delivery as a "woman's heart impassioned by liberation."⁸² The San Francisco commentator's description of D'Andrea is worth quoting at length:

Only the resonant voice of [the] sweetest rhythm like a mountain waterfall, of the strong and kind orator, broke the silence ... [the] melody of the most pure and most beautiful Italian that we rarely get to hear. Yes, the gentle language is truly gentle when spoken from the heart and blossoms on the lips of an ardent femininity ... [such] as the femininity of Virgilia D'Andrea.⁸³

Gurley Flynn was also sexualized by male commentators: "Her lithe figure, her flaming red tie, her beautiful oval face with the broad clear brow and mischievous eyes: these were seen on a make shift rostrum, and wherever she went she drew people, held them as ponderous philosophers and thumping haranguers of the labor movement were unable to."⁸⁴ These examples demonstrate some of the challenges of women like D'Andrea and Gurley Flynn faced within the radical movements to which they belonged. Each was taken seriously as a lecturer but that respect was tempered with their sexualization by male commentators. In this way, those who wrote of D'Andrea's passion and femininity or Gurley Flynn's "beautiful oval face" belittled both women, whether cognizant of the fact or not, by refusing to focus solely on their oratorical abilities and well-argued points.

⁸² *Il Cronista*, "Conferenze di V. D'Andrea: La Nostra e l'Altrui Violenza," *AdR* 5 Oct. 1929: 5.

⁸³ *Il Veggente*, "La Nostra Propaganda," *AdR* 1 Feb. 1930: 7.

⁸⁴ Baxandal 9.

The coverage given to men involved in public lectures were, not surprisingly, devoid of such gendered language. The reportage in L'Adunata of a series of lectures given by Constantino Zonchello in Detroit in June 1924, for instance, expressed the happiness of local comrades that Zonchello had returned to the city and commented on the anarchist's speaking abilities.⁸⁵ Pietro Allegra's speech at an antifascist rally in New Haven, Connecticut, was similarly straightforward. The writer discussed Allegra's fiery words against Mussolini and his supporters and the cries of support he received from the audience.⁸⁶ No comment was made of speaker's facility with Italian or how the words blossomed from his lips.

Much like women of the wider left, Italian women faced a number of challenges within the anarchist movement. But even given the various issues with which they had to contend, anarchism, like socialism and communism, provided women space for progressive organizing and activism that was generally unavailable in the mainstream feminist movement.⁸⁷ Male anarchists, as did their male counterparts on the left, viewed women as equals to men at least in theory. However, among socialists and Communists the "woman question" never outranked arguments respecting the revolutionary seizure of state power.⁸⁸

Feminist anarchists connected issues that their comrades kept separate. Bakunin, for instance, stated that "... we demand, along with freedom, equal rights and duties for men and women – that is, equalization of the rights of women, political as well as social

⁸⁵ Uno che c'era, "Tre conferenze del compagno C. Zonchello" (The Three Lectures of Comrade C. Zonchello), AdR 7 June 1924: 4.

⁸⁶ Il Corrispondente, "Imponente manifestazione anti-fascista a New Haven, Conn.," IM 20 Jan. 1923: 4.

⁸⁷ Moya 195-196; Kealey 255; Sangster 25.

⁸⁸ Linda Kealey, Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 112; Sangster 52.

and economic rights, with those of men.”⁸⁹ He was also opposed to compulsory marriage and felt that marriage as an institution would go the way of the state in an anarchist society to be replaced by free unions.⁹⁰ Bakunin may have written about the role of women in a post-revolutionary sense, but anarchists such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Emma Goldman addressed their contemporaries in the present. Both criticized marriage, seeing it as a form of slavery. De Cleyre even advised women not to move in with men they loved if it meant becoming the man’s housekeeper and discussed marital rape in her essay entitled “Sex Slavery.”⁹¹ Goldman and De Cleyre also argued that women should have the right to be childless or to limit the number of children they had, and both supported the idea of free love.⁹² It appears that women in the anarchist movement were more likely than their male counterparts to address issues that affected female comrades and non-anarchist women in general. In this, they resembled their sisters in competing left movements. However, as historian Joan Sangster has shown, for Canadian communists in particular, the inclusion of birth control and free love in the party program was the result of these issues being addressed in the Soviet Union as well as by women party members in Canada.⁹³ For anarchists, on the other hand, the introduction of women’s issues was due to their own initiatives and not because of a party line. Goldman and De Cleyre may also have had more influence among male comrades than most women in the movement which in turn allowed them to speak on issues not normally broached by males. This is not to suggest that debates surrounding women’s

⁸⁹ Mikhail Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. G. P. Maximoff (New York: Free Press, 1953) 326.

⁹⁰ Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* 326.

⁹¹ Voltairine de Cleyre, *Exquisite Rebel: The Essays of Voltairine de Cleyre – Anarchist, Feminist, Genius*, eds. Sharon Presley and Crispin Sartwell (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005) 223, 229.

⁹² Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays* (New York: Mother Earth Publishing, 1911) 211; De Cleyre 224.

⁹³ Sangster 25, 53.

involvement did not occur – the incident at the Prosperity Club is an important example – but “the less authoritarian nature of anarchism and its loosely constructed ideological tenets ... attracted women of various cultural and economic backgrounds.” The anarchist movement did provide women a contingent and vulnerable space for resistance against misogyny and sexism.⁹⁴

Why I Became an Anarchist

The paths individuals traveled to their anarchism varied. Some were politicized before leaving Italy or may have been born into a family that identified itself as anarchist. For others, it was their experiences as transnational migrants and the exploitation they faced first at home and then abroad that radicalized them. If an Italian’s experience as a transnational migrant did not lead to politicization, having a partner who identified as an anarchist or exposure to anarchist cultural events could prove influential.

Since an anarchist movement existed in Italy since the late nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for families to be deeply rooted in anarchism and pass their politics along to future generations. Such was the case with Gabriella “Ella” Antolini, whose father and brothers were all anarchists. Antolini was imprisoned in 1918 after being caught transporting dynamite from Youngstown, Ohio, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to be used in retaliation against prosecutors who had recently sentenced eleven Italian anarchists to lengthy prison terms for a bombing they did not commit.⁹⁵ William Gallo was also born into a family of anarchists. While living in Paterson, New Jersey, at the

⁹⁴ Merithew 219.

⁹⁵ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 134; Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 104-113.

age of ten, he worked for the Paterson-based anarchist paper La Questione Sociale where he folded the paper, addressed it, and delivered it to the post office.⁹⁶

Another avenue to anarchism, one apparently followed more often by Italian women than men, was marriage. Irma Cassolino became an anarchist after marrying her husband Giobbe Sanchini. Both were deported from the United States in 1919 for their anarchist activities.⁹⁷ Concetta Silvestri, who lived in Massachusetts, was drawn to anarchism after meeting Silverio De Chellis, whom she later married.⁹⁸ Maria Vecile of Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, turned to anarchism under the influence of her husband Umberto Martignago.⁹⁹ In most of these cases, it is difficult to determine under what circumstances the acceptance of anarchism occurred. Did men put pressure on their spouses to become anarchists? Was the adoption of this political philosophy something that women who married anarchists gradually came into on their own? In the case of Vecile and Martignago, at least, the couple's daughter Libera Martignago Bortolotti explained that her father's role in developing her mother's anarchism arose not out of coercion but from mutual respect.¹⁰⁰

Other Italian migrants already identified themselves as anarchists before they migrated from Italy as was the case with the above-mentioned Giobbe Sanchini.¹⁰¹ Some, such as Oreste Fabrizi, Alberico Pirani, and Bartolomeo Provo were involved with the socialist movement in their native Italy but did not see themselves as anarchists until after their migration.

⁹⁶ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 155.

⁹⁷ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 138.

⁹⁸ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 107.

⁹⁹ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

¹⁰⁰ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview.

¹⁰¹ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 138.

The plight of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti was another important way in which many Italian migrants were introduced to anarchism and led to the formation of anarchist identities. The arrest of the two anarchists for murders stemming from a bankroll heist in Massachusetts in 1920 led to a trial the following year. Even though the evidence against them was circumstantial at best, both were found guilty and sentenced to death. Many believed that Sacco and Vanzetti had been tried not so much for their involvement in the robbery, as for their political beliefs and immigrant status during the period of anti-foreign radical hysteria known as the Red Scare. In early 1922, Attilio Bortolotti, who was living and working in Windsor, Ontario, was given a pamphlet explaining why Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent and had not been given a fair trial. He wanted to know more about the men and what anarchism meant so he visited the library. Eventually, Bortolotti was able to gather some papers including Malatesta's Fra contadini (Between Peasants) and a pamphlet by Sébastien Faure, a prominent French anarchist who had written Autorité ou liberté (1891), La question sociale (1906), and Douze preuves de l'existence Dieu (1914). It is possible that the pamphlet Bortolotti read was one of these three. It took Bortolotti half a year to understand the material, but it had a great influence on him, and led to his self-identification as an anarchist.¹⁰² In addition, Valerio Isca and his partner Ida Pilat, both of New York City, became anarchists because of the Sacco and Vanzetti case.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Avrich, Anarchist Voices 179.

¹⁰³ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 145.

Alignment

In Chapter One I explained the two strains of anarchism that were most common among Italians. Beyond a general anti-capitalist, anti-religious, anti-state anarchist identity, one's adherence to a particular form of anarchism could also be significant. An anti-organizationalist anarchist communist, for instance, may not have been supportive of labour unions in the same way as an anarcho-syndicalist. And a fundamental difference in opinion regarding unions could affect the relationship anti-organizationalists had with unions and the way in which they carried out labour struggles.

At the same time, such conflicting varieties of anarchism did not automatically conduce to factionalism. Many anarchists sympathized with multiple strains.¹⁰⁴ Ruggero Benvenuti, for example, subscribed to both the anti-organizationalist journal L'Adunata dei Refrattari and anarcho-syndicalist Il Martello.¹⁰⁵ Some anarchists' political identities also shifted from one form of anarchism to another over time. When John Vattuone first came to New York City he joined a group aligned with the anarcho-syndicalist Carlo Tresca. However, he increasingly felt himself drawn more to the ideas of L'Adunata dei Refrattari and joined the anti-organizationalist *Circolo Volontà* group.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

Previous scholarship on Italian leftists has demonstrated the roles that class, ethnicity, and gender all played with regards to the formation of radical identities. Italians were one of the most proletarianized migrant groups in North America, often

¹⁰⁴ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 52-53.

¹⁰⁵ Norman Borins to J.L. Cohen, 26 Oct. 1939, Jacob Lawrence Cohen Fonds (JLCP), MG30, A94, Vol. 14, File 2761: Rex vs. Attilio Bortolotti et al, 1939-40, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Ottawa.

¹⁰⁶ "Giovanni "John" Vattuone," 1899-1994," DKP, File 131, unpublished manuscript, Feb. 1994, IISH, Amsterdam : 6, 10.

working as poorly-paid labourers in precarious job settings. In many cases their experiences post-migration were little less repressive than those they had had before they left Italy. As exploited workers, their radicalization could occur before or after their arrival in Canada or the United States. This was certainly the case for the anarchists in this study. Many of them were skilled workers but this did not necessarily mean that they enjoyed a middle-class lifestyle as their Canadian or American-born counterparts. Some anarchists who had a trade were forced to take whatever work they could find to support themselves and their families.

Most Italian migrants identified not with a unified nation state but with a particular home town or region. Yet among the host Anglo-Celtic societies of Canada and the United States these migrants were labeled as “Italians” and often referred to in explicitly racist ways. The discrimination Italian migrants faced in these host societies could be brutal at times. The relationship between anarchists and an Italian state was complicated. Many chose to either maintain regional identities or embrace a non-statist internationalism. Still, appeals to “Italianness” were made by anarchists most prominently during battles with Fascists in Little Italies during the 1920s and 1930s. They sought to demonstrate that there was a radical alternative to the Fascist world view.

The Italian anarchist movement in North America was dominated by men to a large degree. They were the ones who edited anarchist newspapers and authored its articles. In addition, it tended to be men who gained prominence through their involvement with these newspapers or as public speakers. Women were active in the movement but they had to face a number of challenges from male comrades who questioned their ability to be anarchists or relegated them to domestic roles as meal

providers for social events or as mothers and educators for the next generation of anarchist militants. But even with its problems, the anarchist movement tended to be more progressive than the mainstream feminist movement and, in some cases, the wider left.

Political alignment was also another important factor in anarchist identity formation. Adherence to a particular strain of anarchism could dictate how one approached one's activism. Within limits, these political identities could be fluid. The existence of influential personalities within the Italian anarchist movement could lead to their adherents taking strong positions regarding who they would engage in activist work. The next chapter will explore this aspect of anarchist identity formation in greater detail.

Chapter 4: Factional Disputes

Introduction

The two most influential personalities within the transnational Italian anarchist movement in North America were the anti-organizationalist anarchist communist Luigi Galleani and the anarcho-syndicalist Carlo Tresca. Both of these men were able to garner loyal followings through the anarchist papers they edited, their speaking tours, and their involvement in labour struggles. Their differing views on anarchist theory and practice, as well as the rivalry between them for supporters, led to a deep schism within the Italian anarchist movement. And, after Galleani was deported to Italy in 1919, his adherents in the United States, who launched their own paper, L'Adunata dei Refrattari, maintained their attacks on Tresca. Much has been made of the rift between the two men. Both Nunzio Pernicone and Dorothy Gallagher have described the adherents of Galleani, known as *Galleanisti*, as waging a personal war against the anarcho-syndicalist Tresca for a series of “crimes” that sullied his anarchist credentials. They have also demonstrated how this antagonistic relationship affected the ability of Italian anarchists to work together, even in the face of fascism – proving how divisive activist identities based on particular figures could be.¹ But how far-reaching was this feud? Since the editorship of L'Adunata was overseen from New York City and Newark, New Jersey, and Tresca was active in New York City, was this rift contained to these locales? Did their supporters in other parts of North America subscribe to the accusations made by

¹ Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Nunzio Pernicone, “War among the Italian Anarchists: The Galleanisti’s Campaign against Carlo Tresca,” The Lost World of Italian-America Radicalism: Politics, Labor, and Culture, eds. Phillip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003): 78-97; Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988); and Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Oakland: AK Press, 2005).

both men in their respective anarchist journals or did this conflict play far less of an important role?

Chapter Four will provide brief biographies of both Galleani and Tresca as well as outline their anarchist philosophies and practice. It will also explore the origins of the hostility between these two and evaluate the extent to which their antagonistic relationship hindered anarchist activism. I will argue that the war of words between Galleani and Tresca and their supporters played a far more negative role in their immediate localities than it did in other sites of Italian anarchist activity in southern Ontario and the north-eastern United States. In fact, when it came to struggles against fascism, for example, in such cities as Detroit and Toronto, the contrast was remarkable. These outlying Italian anarchists were not as divided amongst themselves as their comrades in New York City; they were also far more willing to work with the wider Italian radical community. The transnational perspective – with a heightened awareness of both the global and local contexts – thus gives us a different handle on the Galleani/Tresca split than one that just focuses on ideologies, personalities, and localities.

Luigi Galleani

Luigi Galleani was instrumental in helping build an Italian anarchist movement in the United States during his time living there. He was a proponent of anti-organizationalist anarchist communism, a school that shunned organization in its furtherance of a philosophy that adhered to the anarchist communist premise “from each according to ability, to each according to need.” Anarchists of this tendency believed that revolutionary activity should emerge spontaneously and that permanent organizations,

whether labour unions or anarchist federations, would only lead to bureaucracy and dogma. Galleani's anarchism was also marked by a strong advocacy of violence as a revolutionary tool. The proletariat and the bourgeoisie were engaged in a class war and workers had to defend themselves in the same way as the ruling class.

Galleani has been described by comrades as an honest and humorous person who had many friends. He was renowned for his excellent oratorical abilities and debating skills. Galleani was university educated and very intelligent. He spoke so well during his speeches that "the ordinary guy in the street didn't understand him."² Galleani must have been a very charismatic personality because even though it was hard for many anarchists to follow his words, people "loved him anyway."³

Galleani was born on 12 August 1861 in the town of Vercelli not far from Turin. His father was a school teacher and the Galleani family enjoyed a middle-class existence. Galleani became interested in anarchism in his late teens, but it was not until he started a law degree at the University of Turin that he began to speak publicly against the government and capitalism. Galleani completed his degree but never practiced this profession.⁴ Instead, he focused his energies full time on Italian anarchism and the wider labour movement.⁵ Galleani, along with others of his generation, became an important leader and militant within the Italian anarchist *milieu* and would become well-known for his writing and oratorical skills.⁶

² Louis Tarabelli in Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 130.

³ Alberico Pirani in Avrich, Anarchist Voices 142.

⁴ Nunzio Pernicone, "Luigi Galleani and Italian Anarchist Terrorism in the United States," Studi emigrazione 30.111 (1993): 472.

⁵ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 48.

⁶ Nunzio Pernicone, Italian Anarchism, 1864-1892 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) 238.

By the late 1880s, Galleani was contributing articles to the Italian anarchist press and establishing papers of his own such as the Turin-based Gazzetta Operaia (Workers' Gazette), which was oriented towards Malatesta's organizational anarchist-communism with a strong support of syndicalism. During this time he went on speaking tours and became an important organizer for the Italian labour movement, especially in textile workers' strikes in and around Turin. Galleani's efforts also led to important inroads for anarchism among Italian labourers. With all this activity, it did not take long for local authorities to become interested in the anarchist. The threat of arrest forced Galleani to flee Italy in 1889, but he was absent from the country for only a short while returning that same year.⁷ Upon his return, the anarchist's renewed activism and more visible profile made police more determined to put an end to his political work.

That chance finally occurred in early 1894, when Galleani and other anarchists were arrested by Genovese police and charged with conspiracy to commit a criminal act. Though evidence against the anarchists was lacking, they were found guilty. Galleani was sentenced to five years *domicilio coatto*, or forced domicile, on the island of Pantelleria.⁸ While there, Galleani met his future companion Maria Rallo and continued to write on anarchism. However, he did not serve his entire sentence on the island. Near the end of 1899 a plan was developed among some of Galleani's anarchist comrades who

⁷ Pernicone, Italian Anarchism, 223, 233, 258-259; Nunzio Pernicone, "Luigi Galleani and Italian Anarchist Terrorism in the United States," 473; Carl Levy, Gramsci and the Anarchists (Oxford: Berg, 1999) 19-20. The paper later changed its name to *La Nuova Gazzetta Operaia*. M. Scavino, "Galleani, Luigi," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al, vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 654.

⁸ *Domicilio coatto* was the forced banishment by the Italian state of a political dissident to an isolated island in the Adriatic, Mediterranean, or Tyrrhenian Seas. In addition to Pantelleria, other island locations for forced exile included Favignana, Lampedusa, Lipari, Tremiti, and Ventotene. On these islands, dissidents were not always imprisoned and, depending on which island they were sent to, could be allowed free movement and the ability to intermingle with the local inhabitants; Pantelleria was such an island. In these instances, the idea behind *domicilio coatto* was that a dissident would be effectively isolated and not continue their activities against the Italian state. And, as Galleani demonstrated, it was possible for those sentenced to forced exile to escape. Pernicone, Italian Anarchism, 132.

lived abroad to rescue the anarchist from the island. Given a false passport under the name of Antonio Valenza, Galleani, along with Rallo, sailed to Tunisia, Malta, and then to Cairo where he lived for almost one year. After Gaetano Bresci assassinated King Umberto I on 29 July 1900, Galleani was arrested in Cairo but was not extradited to Italy. Instead he was granted shelter by the British and moved to London. Unable to find adequate employment in the city, Galleani and Rallo relocated to the United States arriving on 1 October 1901. Galleani was now forty years old.⁹ The couple settled in Paterson, New Jersey, and Galleani began to edit the anarchist publication La Questione Sociale.¹⁰

During this time Galleani's anarchist beliefs underwent a slight transformation. He was still an anarchist communist but he came to believe that organization of any kind was the antithesis of anarchism. In the late nineteenth century, the Italian anarchist movement was experiencing a crisis over its future. The harsh repression unleashed by the Italian state, and the anarchists' insurrectionary failures, led to two different solutions: an organizationalist one that argued anarchists should form a semi-legal national party that would seek mass public support while spurning parliamentary action and the other, anti-organizationalist, that would see the anarchist movement become invisible, allowing for continued class war against the state but providing no easy target for the Italian authorities. In addition to an emphasis on security culture among anti-organizationalists, they also nurtured a deeply held mistrust of institutions of any kind because of their

⁹ Scavino 655.

¹⁰ Scavino 655; Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929," Gli italiani fuori d'italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione 1880-1940, eds. O Bayer et al. (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1983) 272; Rudolph J. Vecoli, "'Primo Maggio' in the United States: An Invented Tradition of the Italian Anarchists," May Day Celebration, ed. Andrea Panaccione (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1988) 65.

perceived authoritarian and bureaucratic behaviour. In their view, workers and peasants would organize spontaneously around specific grievances, struggle for change, and, once their demands were met, disband until other issues arose. This school of thought came out strongly against the formation of permanent organizations, such as labour unions, in which power would often be held by a minority acting in its own best interests and not those of its members.¹¹

But Galleani's turn to anti-organizationalist anarchist communism did not mean his involvement in labour struggles came to an end. On the contrary, between April and June 1902, Galleani was involved in the dye workers' strike at Paterson's silk mills. The mostly Italian dye workers were attempting to form a union to improve their working conditions. On 18 June, Galleani led more than 6,000 workers to the mills where they seized control of operations. Six hours later the state militia arrived to "restore order." While trying to free some strikers held by police, Galleani was wounded when a bullet grazed the left side of his face. Eight strikers died that day as did one police officer.¹² His involvement in the violence meant Galleani was indicted for incitement to riot. As previous experience had taught him, when trying to avoid legal prosecution it was a good idea to cross an international border. This demonstrates the significance of the border among anarchists. Not only did it act as a confining barrier, but it could also be used to frustrate state repression. Galleani entered Canada and lived in Montreal where he stayed with José Gonzalez,¹³ a successful manufacturer of Cuban cigars, for at least five months

¹¹ Luigi Galleani, *The End of Anarchism?*, trans. Max Sartin and Robert D'Attilio (Orkney: Cienfeugos Press, 1982) 49.

¹² Luigi Galleani to Jacques Gross, July 1902 and Sep. 1902, Jacques Gross Papers (JGP), International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam; Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 65.

¹³ Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 48-49. I have been unable to determine anymore information on Gonzalez was or how he came to know Galleani. During his time living in Montreal, Galleani resided at two different addresses with Gonzalez. Those addresses were 38 St Peter Street, most likely St Pierre Street,

while continuing to contribute to La Question Sociale.¹⁴ He did not enjoy his stay in the city. His separation from Maria and the children and the stress that came with not knowing whether he could return to the United States had a great effect on him. He was also disappointed that the only reading material he could find in the city was religious in nature and he relied on comrades in Europe to send him anarchist literature.¹⁵ Though Galleani wanted to leave Montreal, his delicate legal situation in the United States meant he had nowhere else to go.¹⁶

Around the time Galleani was living in Montreal, there was interesting activity among Jewish anarchists who had migrated from eastern Europe, London, and New York to work in Montreal's burgeoning textile trade. One of the first activities was the establishment of a radical Yiddish library at the home of Hirsch "Harry" Hershman, originally from the region of Bukovina, which is now divided between Romania and Ukraine. Hershman migrated first to New York City where he was employed as a tailor, working anywhere from fifteen to eighteen hours a day. Under these conditions it did not take long for him to join the local union movement. In 1901, he moved to Montreal and again worked in the garment industry. The radical library was originally situated in the home that Hershman shared with his wife Jenny, and it was she who oversaw its operation. Eventually the library would move to a rented store front located at 392 Saint-Laurent Boulevard. All the Yiddish-language books and pamphlets that the library carried had to be ordered from Berlin and New York City. Hershman was instrumental in organizing Mutual Aid, a discussion group that was comprised of many leftwing

and 203 Murray Street. Galleani to Gross, July 1902 and 2 Nov 1902, JGP, IISH, Amsterdam. My thanks to Meghan Gallant for translating these letters from the French.

¹⁴ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 48-49; Scavino 656.

¹⁵ Galleani to Gross, Sep. 1902, JGP, IISH, Amsterdam.

¹⁶ Galleani to Gross, July 1902, Sep. 1902, Nov. 1902, JGP, IISH, Amsterdam.

tendencies but with the majority identifying as anarchists.¹⁷ Based on the few letters I have obtained written by Galleani during his time in Montreal, it does not appear as though he had any contact with the local Jewish anarchists and he makes no mention of an Italian anarchist presence in the city at this time. In 1905, the Italian consul general in Montreal wrote to then Canadian Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier to ask if Canadian authorities could investigate whether Galleani was still living in Montreal. The Dominion Police looked into the matter and determined that after a few months in the city, Galleani had returned to the United States.¹⁸

In fact, Galleani had resumed living in the United States in early 1903 after re-entering the country using the false name of Luigi Pimpino, a pseudonym under which he wrote articles in anarchist publications. He settled at Barre, Vermont. Barre was home to a group of Italian anarchists who were mostly stone and marble cutters from Carrara and other northern Italian towns. In June 1903, Galleani, with the help of local anarchists, began to publish Cronaca Sovversiva, which Paul Avrich described as “one of the most important and ably edited periodicals in the history of the anarchist movement.” Most of the writing was done by Galleani under various assumed names.¹⁹ The paper’s circulation ranged from 4000 to 5000 copies per issue. It travelled along transnational Italian anarchist networks in North and South America, Europe, Northern Africa, and

¹⁷ Mathieu Houle-Courcelles, Sur les Traces de l’Anarchisme au Québec (Montréal: Lux Éditeur, 2008) 49-54.

¹⁸ Houle-Courcelles 95-96.

¹⁹ Some of Galleani’s assumed names included Mentana, Tramp, Luigi Pimpino, and L’Eretico. Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 221; Michael Miller Topp, Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 293; Vecoli, “‘Primo Maggio’ in the United States: An Invented Tradition of the Italian Anarchists,” 82.

Australia. In 1912, Galleani moved to Lynn, Massachusetts, where he continued to publish Cronaca Sovversiva.²⁰

While living in the United States, Galleani went on numerous speaking tours, travelling to Italian communities and lecturing at mining camps, meeting halls, and social events. Not only did Galleani's efforts increase the number of Italian anarchists by a few thousand, but these speaking tours also led to the creation of a network of Italian anarchist groups. They shared a subculture constituted by the following criteria: "passionate loyalty to the anarchist cause, indomitable courage in the face of adversity, sectarian inflexibility and intolerance in matters of ideology and tactics, and general endorsement of popular violence."²¹ Galleani was not a pacifist and he believed that violence was necessary to avenge those who had felt the force of state repression, whether they be fellow anarchists, labour activists, or anti-war socialists. The state, regardless of whether it pertained to Italy, the United States, or elsewhere, was more than willing to conduct war against those who struggled to better their lot in life. Thus, the same means employed by government, often at the behest of capital, had to be used by anarchists in a violent class war. To this end, Galleani published La Salute è in voi (Health is Within You) in 1905. This was a forty-six page pamphlet that called for retaliation against "tyrants and oppressors" and listed instructions for the manufacture of bombs. But it was not until the 1910s that the *Galleanisti* put the manual in practice. A series of bombings was carried out that targeted the anarchists' and workers' enemies – the police, robber barons, judges, senators, attorney generals, and postmasters.²²

²⁰ Luigi Galleani, The End of Anarchism? trans. Max Sartin and Robert D'Attilio (Orkney: Cienfeugos Press, 1982) iv; Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 49-51.

²¹ Pernicone, "Luigi Galleani and Italian Anarchist Terrorism in the United States," 475.

²² Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 98, 143.

These multiple attacks did not lead to any legal action against Galleani because he was never directly involved. But American authorities were well aware of his standing within the Italian anarchist movement and closely watched his actions in order to bring charges forward. Their chance came in May 1917. Cronaca Sovversiva was raided following an anti-conscription article written by Galleani entitled “*Matricolati!*” (Experts!).²³ Shortly thereafter, Cronaca Sovversiva lost its mailing privileges, making it difficult to deliver issues to subscribers. In the fall of 1917, a law was passed that required all non-English newspapers to translate all articles on the war into English. Instead of complying with the new law, Cronaca Sovversiva suspended publication and went underground where it produced issues intermittently.²⁴ The newspaper was finally banned outright in July 1918. In order to effectively deport those the United States government considered enemies of the state, it was necessary to make amendments to the existing Immigration Act which targeted that anyone who

advocate[d] or [taught] the duty, necessity, or propriety of the unlawful assaulting or killing of any officer or officers, either of specific individuals or of officers generally, of the Government of the United States or of any other organized government, because of his or their official character, or who advocate[d] or [taught] the unlawful destruction of property.²¹

The revamped act of 1918 now named anarchists directly and made it possible for the United States government to deport anyone who identified as, or was suspected of being, an anarchist. Anyone in possession of anarchist literature could also be expelled from the

²³ Galleani, along with the paper’s printer, Giovanni Eramo, were charged with conspiracy to obstruct the draft and arrested in June of that same year. Both were later fined \$300 and \$100 respectively and released. Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 94-96.

²⁴ Ugo Fedeli, Luigi Galleani: Quarant’anni di lotte rivoluzionarie, 1891-1931 (Catania: Centrolibri, 1984) 102.

²¹ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 130.

country.²⁵ Thus, the American government was now legally empowered to rid itself of Galleani and his supporters.

Galleani and eight of his adherents were deported to Italy aboard the *Duca degli Abruzzi* on 24 June 1919. Galleani, a fifty-seven year old diabetic who had lived in the United States for eighteen years, had to leave behind his wife and five children, three of whom were American-born.²⁶ He arrived in Genoa in July 1919 and settled in Turin, where he was closely watched by Italian police. In January 1920, Galleani began to publish *Cronaca Sovversiva* once more. After Mussolini came to power in October 1922, the anarchist was arrested, found guilty of sedition, and sentenced to fourteen months in prison. This was the first in a series of imprisonments for Galleani who refused to abide by Fascist rule.²⁷ In February 1930, because of his failing health, Galleani was released from prison and allowed to move to the Tuscan village of Caprigliola where he was under constant police surveillance. It was here while on one of his daily walks that Galleani suffered a heart attack and died on 4 November 1931.²⁸

Carlo Tresca

Galleani's nemesis, Carlo Tresca, was born on 9 March 1879 in Sulmona, located in the Abruzzi region. He came from a large and successful upper class family which lived on an estate that produced wine and olive oil and also owned a stationery store. The Tresca family experienced economic hardship during the 1890s, in part because of a tariff

²⁵ Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 127-128, 130-131, 133-134.

²⁶ The other eight anarchists were Raffaele Schiavina, Giovanni Fruzzetti, Giuseppe Solari, Tugardo Montanari, Vincenzo De Lecce, Alfonso Fagotti, and Giobbe and Irma Sanchini, who were joined by their two young daughters. Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 135-136; Scavino 657.

²⁷ Scavino 657.

²⁸ Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* 209.

war between France and Italy, whereby French imports of Italian wine were cut in half. As a result, there was not enough money to pay for Tresca's university education and he was enrolled in an *Istituto Tecnica*, where he was trained to become a bureaucrat. It was while taking courses at the *Istituto* that Tresca began to attend *Partito Socialista Italiana* (PSI) lectures. By 1898, he had joined the party.²⁹ As a member of the PSI, Tresca carried out propaganda amongst artisans and peasants living in Sulmona. His first arrest came in June 1902 after helping organize the disruption of a patriotism demonstration held by local monarchists. Tresca was charged with shouting subversive epithets and sentenced to a few months in jail.³⁰ After his release, and as editor of the Sulmona-based socialist paper *Il Germe*, Tresca used this platform to personally attack the *carabinieri* captain who had arrested him. In response, the captain sued Tresca for libel and the socialist returned to jail in the spring of 1903 to serve a brief sentence. His repeated attacks within the paper against Sulmona's elites meant more charges of libel, which in Italy during that time could mean imprisonment for up to five years. In April 1904, a penal tribunal sentenced Tresca to nineteen months plus a day in addition to a 2,041 *lire* fine and court costs. Instead of serving the sentence and paying the fine, Tresca decided to immigrate to the United States.³¹

Tresca arrived in America in 1904 and settled in Philadelphia where he joined the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI), the socialist, and later syndicalist, organization created the previous year by Italian migrants living in the United States. The purpose of the FSI was to provide an alternative voice in Italian communities controlled by colonial

²⁹ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 7-9, 11.

³⁰ Pernicone states the sentence was 30 days while Antonioli states it was a three month term. Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 14; Maurizio Antonioli, "Tresca, Carlo," *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani*, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al, vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 623.

³¹ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 14, 18; Antonioli 623.

elites as well as to build a movement that could mobilize supporters in times of strikes and the defence campaigns that often resulted.³² That same year Tresca became the director of the FSI paper Il Proletario and, as with Il Germe in Sulmona, he used this paper to attack the migrants' exploiters, the *padroni* and bankers and the Italian consuls who protected them. When the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was formed during a Chicago meeting in 1905, Tresca, who had always believed in the potential of direct action, began to advocate revolutionary syndicalism. This created conflict with the FSI, which during that period endorsed socialism by the ballot box and was affiliated to the Socialist Party of America (SPA) and the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) at different times. The following year, Tresca left Il Proletario and began writing for La Voce del Popolo and later La Plebe where he again declared war on the enemies of Italian workers living in the United States. As in Italy, these personal attacks meant that Tresca was being charged with libel and, as a result, he did a couple of short jail terms.³³ Upon his release from imprisonment in 1910, he was able to launch the paper L'Avvenire (The Future).³⁴

But Tresca's activism was not limited to the printed word; his work with the IWW, though he never officially joined the organization, put him on the front lines of numerous strikes in the Midwest and north-eastern United States. The first strike involving Tresca occurred in Lawrence, Massachusetts. It began in January 1912 after mill owners reduced wages after a state-wide law was introduced that limited the hours that women and children were allowed to work. In response, Italian, Lithuanian, and

³² Michael Miller Topp, Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 27-28.

³³ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 30; Antonioli 624.

³⁴ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 39-40.

Polish mill workers, most of them women, stopped working, sabotaged looms, and left the mills. The Italian workers were represented by an IWW local and the union sent Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti to Lawrence to lead the strike. During the course of the labour struggle, both men were framed for the murders of Anna Lo Pizzo, an Italian striker, and John Rami, a Syrian boy, even though it was the police and militia, respectively, who were responsible for the deaths. As a result of the incarceration of Ettor and Giovannitti, a handful of IWW organizers were called to Lawrence including “Big Bill” Haywood and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn to direct the strike. The replacement organizers were able to oversee the strike’s victory. However, at the strike’s conclusion, Ettor and Giovannitti were still in prison awaiting trial and this was unacceptable to the IWW and the Lawrence mill workers. The resources mobilized for the strike were quickly transferred to the struggle to free the two incarcerated Wobblies. There was a dire need for a well-respected organizer to carry out this work among the Italian workers, and this led to Tresca’s presence in Lawrence. Due to the efforts of Tresca and others, Ettor and Giovannitti were eventually acquitted of the murder charges. For Tresca, the Lawrence strike had two important personal outcomes: it was his position on the struggle’s tactics that sparked the rift between him and Galleani, on which more will be written below; and in the course of the strike, he met the Wobbly speaker and organizer Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, with whom he was to have a thirteen-year relationship.³⁵

After his successes in Lawrence, the IWW began to call on Tresca to assist in strikes in which Italian workers were involved. In 1913, he was involved in the Paterson silk workers’ strike. The root causes of this conflict stemmed from the refusal of factory

³⁵ The relationship was actually an affair since Tresca had been married to Helga Guerra since 1904. He abandoned Guerra and their daughter Beatrice in 1913 to live with Gurley Flynn. Guerra filed for divorce that year, though it was not granted until 1942. Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca*, 74, 239; Antonioli, 624.

owners to implement an eight-hour day. At the same time, employers doubled the workload and lowered wages. Unfortunately, the factory owners refused to negotiate with the IWW and the strikers were forced to return to work under the same conditions that had caused their exodus from the factories. Though the twenty-two week strike ended in failure, Nunzio Pernicone attributes the militancy of the strikers to the efforts of Tresca and Flynn. The silk workers experienced police violence and mass arrests, and resisted attempts by employers to use patriotism to divide foreign and American-born strikers. The employers also called upon the anti-IWW American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the hopes of derailing the strike. Through all of this, the strikers remained committed to a victory, until the economic burden on them and their families could no longer be tolerated.³⁶

The Mesabi Range strike was sparked in 1916 when the Oliver Mining Company introduced a work speed-up to correspond with the new eight-hour day. This meant that there was no real increase in wages once hours had been reduced. Again, the IWW requested that Tresca travel to Minnesota and help lead the strike. The Oliver Mining Company refused to meet any of the strikers' demands and instead hired one thousand "special guards" who meted out corporate "justice" through the beating and murder of striking employees. Clearly this was no place for a union organizer. During the strike, Tresca, along with others, was indicted as an accessory "after the fact" for the murder of a deputized mine guard who had been killed by Phillip and Militza Masonovitch and three boarders, all strikers, in self-defence after the mine guard had forcibly entered their home and assaulted them. Tresca and the IWW organizers charged under the indictment as well as Militza Masonovitch and one of the boarders were allowed to go free while the

³⁶ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 65-69.

rest were given prison terms. Haywood was outraged when he heard that a deal had been reached whereby workers were jailed and the organizers were freed. This event and its aftermath signaled the end of Tresca's involvement with the IWW.³⁷

Tresca embraced anarcho-syndicalism only gradually. He did not begin to identify himself as an anarcho-syndicalist until his mid-thirties. His grassroots PSI connections in Italy and his IWW links in the United States foreshadowed his more explicit post-1914 advocacy of revolutionary syndicalism, a stance increasingly at odds with the IWW's centralized leadership. During this period, Tresca began to question whether the IWW was still syndicalist. He believed in direct action as a tactic and was no stranger to anarchists; Tresca had worked with them during strikes and deeply respected Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman. It may have been the influence of these two well-known anarchists during the unemployed actions in New York City in 1914 that led Tresca to identify himself as an anarcho-syndicalist.³⁸

Prior to America's involvement in the First World War, Tresca had been writing articles and speaking publicly against the war. Once the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, the anarcho-syndicalist began arguing that in order for workers to resist the war effort they should engage in general strikes and revolution. It was these opinions that led to Tresca's close surveillance by federal authorities at a time when anything radical was considered un-American. During this time of heightened xenophobia and fear of the radical foreigner, Italian language anarchist papers, such as Cronaca Sovversiva and L'Era Nuovo, were having their offices raided and editors arrested. Tresca and his paper L'Avvenire had not been targeted in the same manner

³⁷ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 88-93.

³⁸ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 78, 80.

because of an impending indictment against him and many others who were involved with the IWW. Federal authorities charged almost two hundred Wobblies with conspiracy to impede the war effort and Tresca was taken into custody. However, at the time of the indictment Tresca had not been active with the IWW and charges were eventually dropped. He was one of the fortunate few since the overwhelming majority of Wobbly defendants were found guilty and given long prison terms and large fines.³⁹ That same year the state repression against L'Avvenire increased as issues were continually being labeled “non mailable,” which increased the cost of producing the paper. Tresca had no choice but to cease its publication. However, this did not mean the end of his involvement in the radical press. In order to circumvent the problems he was having with the postal authorities, Tresca bought Il Martello: Giornale politico, letterario ed artistico (The Hammer: A Political, Literary, and Artistic Newspaper), an anti-religious publication, for less than \$300 from Luigi Preziosi who had started the paper in 1916. Because Il Martello was still under the name of Preziosi and published articles on non-political themes such as astronomy and poetry, it was able to maintain its second class mail privileges.⁴⁰ Following the First World War, Tresca’s anarchist views began to resurface and he denounced the 1919 deportation of anarchists like Goldman, Berkman, and Galleani. After the arrest of Sacco and Vanzetti in May 1920 the paper made their plight a focus and once Mussolini came to power in Italy, Il Martello went on the offensive against fascism.

³⁹ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 40, 96-98.

⁴⁰ Although he bought the anti-religious paper from Luigi Preziosi in 1916, Tresca did not actually list himself as publisher until June 1918 which caused him immediate problems with American authorities (even though Il Martello at that time was still devoid of political content). The paper was constantly losing its mailing privileges during the 1920s. Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 103-104.

During the interwar period, Tresca continued to report on labour struggles in the United States and Italy and maintained his attacks against wealthy, often Fascist-leaning Italian elites living in New York City. Il Martello was not Tresca's only venue. He often spoke against the far right at rallies and was involved in more than a few altercations with local blackshirts. After the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Tresca provided coverage of the conflict and helped raise money for the Republican and anarchist cause. After the conflict's tragic conclusion, which the anarcho-syndicalist felt was due to Communist betrayal of the social revolution, Tresca severed his ties with American-based Communists with whom he had willingly worked in the past.⁴¹

Tresca had garnered a great many enemies during his life because of his political activities. So when he was assassinated on 11 January 1943 after leaving the Il Martello office at Fifth Avenue and 15th Street there was no shortage of possible suspects. The communists were angry with Tresca because he had testified under oath in front of a grand jury and accused Schachno Epstein, Soviet spy and editor of the communist paper Freiheit, of involvement in the disappearance of former Communist Party member Julia Stuart Poyntz.⁴² Some, such as Hugo Rolland (real name Erasmo Abate) believed members of the *L'Adunata* group were responsible for Tresca's death.⁴³ Generoso Pope, the wealthy construction contractor, supporter of Mussolini, and editor of Il Progresso Italo-Americano, had been attacked by Tresca in the pages of Il Martello on numerous occasions. Tresca's murder may also have been ordered by Frank Garofalo, a mobster who was Pope's enforcer. Tresca had publicly insulted Garofalo at a war bond banquet

⁴¹ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 229.

⁴² Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 232-233; Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) 172-173.

⁴³ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 160.

in Manhattan in the fall of 1942 and the strongman was overheard expressing his determination to get back at him.⁴⁴ The anarcho-syndicalist's murder has never been solved; only his killer, Carmine Galante, a convicted criminal with ties to organized crime, has been identified. His motives and connections remain obscure.⁴⁵

Tresca may have had enemies but he had even more friends and comrades. He has been described as outgoing, friendly, and the kind of person who “talked to everybody.”⁴⁶ Sam Dolgoff, an anarchist comrade of Tresca's, recalled the time he traveled with Tresca to New Haven, Connecticut, for a meeting. Following Tresca's speech, men would bring their children to him and explain that Tresca was a great man. As Dolgoff reminisced, “These were not the sort of people to fall down on their knees, but they loved him.”⁴⁷ Tresca was also known as a man of action and courage, a fighter who “more than any other man was responsible for checking the Blackshirt groups from treading the streets of New York.”⁴⁸ A generous spirit, Tresca was willing to help comrades in need. In the 1930s, for instance, he let the Jewish, Russian, Chinese, and African-American anarchists of the Vanguard Group use the Il Martello office to hold meetings and also gave them a page in his publication for their English-language articles.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 259-260, 271-273.

⁴⁵ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 269-173; Gallagher 215-221.

⁴⁶ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 143.

⁴⁷ Gallagher 178.

⁴⁸ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 267.

⁴⁹ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 423-424, 445, 450, 458.

Galleani's Anarchist Philosophy

Tresca and Galleani had different approaches to anarchism. Galleani was considered a leading theorist within the movement in North America. His views on anti-organizationalist anarchist communism were set down in La Fine dell'anarchismo? (The End of Anarchism?) a response to Francesco Saverio Merlino's assertion in 1907 that anarchism's importance as a political ideology had ended. Merlino had been an anarchist from 1877 to 1897, and as a lawyer had defended Gaetano Bresci. But it had been the anti-organizationalist turn to political violence that caused Merlino to leave the movement and join the socialists.⁵⁰ His thoughts on anarchism were expressed during an interview he gave to a reporter from the Turin-based newspaper La Stampa in June 1907 on the occasion of a regional anarchist congress taking place in Rome later that month.⁵¹ During the interview, Merlino was asked to share his thoughts on the state of anarchism. He stated that the anarchist movement was no longer of any consequence because its most valuable aspects, on which he does not elaborate, had been adopted and put into practice by the socialists, while anarchism's less useful utopianism had been dispensed with altogether. He explained that the two existing tendencies in Italy, which he divided into organizationalists and anti-organizationalists,⁵² were ineffectual because of their own political positions. The organizationalists, according to Merlino, could not "find a form of organization compatible with their anarchist principles," while the anti-organizationalists were unable to "find a clear way to action." When asked to share his

⁵⁰ Merlino was a former anarchist who had left the movement and became a parliamentary socialist. Galleani v, 1, 73.

⁵¹ Galleani i.

⁵² Merlino actually refers to the anti-organisationalists as "individualists" but I have chosen to stick with the former term for the sake of coherence and because "anti-organisationalist" and "individualist" were used interchangeably during this period.

thoughts on the future of anarchism, Merlino answered that anarchism did not have one. He pointed to a lack of “men of high calibre” and claimed that Elisée Reclus and Peter Kropotkin were the last intellectuals of the movement. Merlino also believed that anarchist thought and practice were stagnant and the movement’s ability to recruit new members non-existent. He did not feel that the congress in Rome would do anything to re-inspire the anarchist movement and predicted it would be plagued by tired debates between organizationalists and anti-organizationalists over which strain was true anarchism.⁵³

Galleani’s rejoinder appeared in the pages of Cronaca Sovversiva in ten installments between 17 August 1907 and 25 January 1908. (All twenty-four parts of La Fine dell’anarchismo? were not published until the mid 1920s in L’Adunata dei Refrattari.)⁵⁴ Within these articles, Galleani argued against Merlino’s claim that anarchism had played itself out. Galleani denied Merlino’s statement that socialism had co-opted the best aspects of anarchist philosophy. Had this been the case, socialists would have been opposed to government, elections, police, and courts, which, according to Galleani, was not the case.⁵⁵ He also denied that utopianism had ever been a central aspect of anarchist thought. As for the lack of promising new anarchist intellectuals, Galleani conceded the difficult-to-repress excellence of Reclus, Kropotkin, and Bakunin. But he pointed out that these three giants had been succeeded by others – such as Errico Malatesta, Max Nettlau, and the Swiss historian of the First International James Guillaume.⁵⁶ Nor did Galleani deny that the anarchist movement had experienced

⁵³ Galleani 2-3.

⁵⁴ Galleani v.

⁵⁵ Galleani 68.

⁵⁶ Galleani 66-67.

internal conflict. However, he viewed this not as a crisis but an important aspect of the movement's development and proof of its vitality.⁵⁷

In La Fine dell'anarchismo?, Galleani also outlined his position on anarchism, revolution, and organization. Galleani's conception of an anarchist communist society meant that "everything must belong to everybody and must present the hypothesis of a world without god, without king, without government, without masters."⁵⁸ And like other anarchist communist theorists such as Kropotkin and Malatesta, Galleani also believed that the means of production and exchange had to be owned by everyone and that each person was entitled to whatever he or she needed from what was collectively produced.⁵⁹ Anarchists rejected the ballot box and instead opted for direct action, rebellion, insurrection, and social revolution. Electoral abstentionism by anarchists did not mean apathy on their part but simply expressed their opposition to representation as well as a strong distrust of the state because of its protection of the ruling classes.⁶⁰

Galleani believed in the general strike as a vehicle of revolution. A strike of this nature was to be openly revolutionary and demand more than better wage and shorter hours. A general strike would have to include all trades and use force and violence in order to secure the "unconditional surrender of the ruling classes."⁶¹ However, Galleani was also a strong proponent of individual acts of violence committed in revenge against political leaders and monarchs who had dealt with anarchists in a harsh manner. This was what led to his writing La Salute è in voi, mentioned above. These acts, he believed, were the sparks that ignited the flames of insurrection and led to successful revolution.

⁵⁷ Galleani 5.

⁵⁸ Galleani 16.

⁵⁹ Galleani 21.

⁶⁰ Galleani 13-14.

⁶¹ Galleani 11-12.

According to Galleani, violence was inevitable because the bourgeoisie was not going to allow its power to be challenged. Borrowing from Bakunin, Galleani believed that the existing order had to be destroyed to achieve a society of equal and free individuals.⁶²

As an anti-organizationalist, Galleani opposed those anarchists who wanted to create an anarchist political party. For him, a project of this sort was anathema to anarchist principles because such an organization would need a constitution, a program, and various levels of bureaucracy in order to function; in short, it would come to have its own government. Party members would be forced to submit to party discipline for the greater good even if in opposition to their own personal opinions or interests. Galleani felt that whenever possible anarchists had to resist compromise. With an anarchist political party this would not be possible.⁶³ Labour unions were another form of organization that Galleani did not support because of their reformist character. Whether led by conservatives or syndicalists, unions recognized and consented to the capitalist economic system. Their demands did not challenge this system but only offered palliatives such as pensions and old age security. Galleani supported anarchists who joined unions, but those who did so should always be the opposition to union leadership and never assume leadership roles themselves.⁶⁴

Tresca's Anarchist Philosophy

Tresca was not an anarchist theorist in the same way as Galleani. He never wrote at length about his views on anarcho-syndicalism or what a society based on these concepts would look like. In the pages of Il Martello, a reader could find the writings of

⁶² Galleani 34-35.

⁶³ Galleani 44-46.

⁶⁴ Galleani 49-50.

a variety of anarchist and non-anarchist thinkers meaning that there was no single theoretical focus of the paper. Instead, Il Martello gave greater focus on the struggles of the working class, attacked local fascists, and sought support for comrades who were in danger of imprisonment or deportation.⁶⁵ However, this did not mean that the paper was devoid of Tresca's opinions on anarcho-syndicalism, organization, and revolution, but, rather, that his views were implicit in numerous articles and never clearly articulated in a single work.

Tresca did not spend time theorizing anarcho-syndicalism but his views on the subject were similar to those of like-minded contemporaries. He believed that syndicalist unions, such as the IWW, demonstrated the best methods and forms of organizing to radicalize workers, while on the other hand, he viewed the AFL as a "bourgeois bulwark against the revolutionary aspirations of the masses."⁶⁶ In general, Tresca supported the idea of unions because he felt that only through the collective strength they offered could workers effectively struggle for their class interests. However, it was not enough for unions simply to demand better wages. They also had to organize for the abolition of wages and complete liberty for all employees.⁶⁷ Tresca was certain that workers united in syndicalist unions were capable of overthrowing the capitalist system.⁶⁸

For Tresca, the general strike was the best means to bring about social revolution.⁶⁹ During the *biennio rosso*, he wrote with great enthusiasm on the orderly expropriation carried out by Italian workers.

⁶⁵ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 106.

⁶⁶ Carlo Tresca, "Bisogna sfondare L'A.F. of L." (We Must Break the A.F. of L.), Il Martello (IM) 15 Apr. 1922: 1.

⁶⁷ Carlo Tresca, "Una sola grande unione" (One Big Union), IM 19 Apr. 1919: 6.

⁶⁸ Carlo Tresca, "Le elezioni in Italia," IM 1 Dec. 1919: 2.

⁶⁹ Carlo Tresca, "Le elezioni in Italia," IM 1 Dec. 1919: 2.

They requisitioned. And it was a requisition made with method, with order, with firmness. The expropriations were granted by an improvised action committee. In all the acts of the masses was seen an expression of a conscious will not of an individual or a group of individuals, but of a class that asserted the proper authority....⁷⁰

Tresca viewed revolution as a process of social transformation begun and finished by a class or group of individuals that resulted in a conscious restructuring of society, both economically and politically.⁷¹ He was also a proponent of insurrection and, though he did not call for acts of anarchist violence in the same way as Galleani, he did believe that workers murdered by the police and/or strike-breakers – as was the case when Valentino Modestino was murdered by private detectives at Paterson, New Jersey in 1913 – had to be avenged.⁷² He also defended anarchists who carried out *attentats*. On 21 March 1921, anarchists Ettore Aguggini, Giuseppe Mariani, and Giuseppe Boldrini bombed Milan's Diana Theatre in an attempt to kill the city's chief of police, a Fascist, for his treatment of arrested anarchists. Sadly, the attack killed twenty-one and wounded eighty with Police Chief Gasti escaping harm.⁷³ In an article entitled "Il Fascismo," Tresca argued against the anarchists' detractors by pointing out that less outrage had been expressed for the daily murders committed by Fascists than over this one incident. Aguggini, Mariani, and Boldrini were not mercenaries, Tresca argued, but anarchist idealists motivated by the suffering that surrounded them and had been inflicted on their comrades. The anarcho-syndicalist even went so far as to call the three men "forerunners" who would be judged

⁷⁰ Carlo Tresca, "La Tendenza economica della rivoluzione Italiana" (The Economic Tendency of the Italian Revolution), *IM* 15 Sep. 1920: 1.

⁷¹ Carlo Tresca, "La Tendenza economica della rivoluzione Italiana," *IM* 15 Sep. 1920: 1.

⁷² Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 80; Gallagher 79.

⁷³ "Ettore Aguggini," *Dictionnaire international des militants anarchistes*, <http://militants-anarchistes.info/spip.php?article1171> (accessed 23 Feb. 2009).

differently by future generations that appreciated the “humanitarian motive[s] that drove them to act.”⁷⁴

The Political Practice of Galleani and Tresca

Galleani and Tresca had quite different personalities. The former has been described as a severe man too strict in his beliefs and whose word was considered law.⁷⁵ However, he was also known for his honesty, humour, and oratorical skills. A few of Galleani’s comrades recalled his abilities as a public speaker though one, Joseph Moro, did not always understand what was being said because Galleani’s speaking style was hard to follow for those anarchists with little formal education.⁷⁶ Though not addressed specifically in the oral histories conducted by Paul Avrich, one has to wonder what role the language barrier played between Galleani and the rank-and-file of the movement. During this period very few Italians spoke standardized Italian and most continued to communicate in their regional dialects. It is quite possible that Galleani, who may have spoken in his native Piedmontese, was not as easily understood by speakers of Sicilian, for instance. Tresca was a skilled orator in his own right. While on a speaking tour of California in 1915, the anarcho-syndicalist was described by a comrade as a “propagandist who knows how to communicate to the masses the virile throbbing of revolutionary sentiment.” Tresca also left the crowd in a “state of emotional frenzy.”⁷⁷ In contrast to those of Galleani, Tresca’s speeches were never said to have been hard for his audiences to follow.

⁷⁴ Ego Sum, “Il Fascismo,” *IM* 17 June 1922: 1.

⁷⁵ Concetta Silvestri and Joseph Moro in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 107, 113.

⁷⁶ Joseph Moro, Bartolomeo Provo, and Harry Richal in Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 113, 117, 129.

⁷⁷ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 43, 87.

Other points of divergence between Galleani and Tresca were their differing strategies for working with others. Whereas Galleani was generally only willing to work with other anarchists, especially those who identified as anti-organizationalist anarchist communists, Tresca was far more open to collaborating with those outside the movement. The anarcho-syndicalist was on friendly terms with non-syndicalist labour leaders from the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union (ACWU), and, before turning his back on the Communist Party following the Spanish Civil War/Revolution, joined forces with New York City communists in antifascist struggle. According to Sam Dolgoff, Tresca's willingness to work with and befriend those outside of the anarchist movement was a deliberate tactic; having such contacts with potentially helpful people meant that the anarcho-syndicalist could call upon them in time of need.⁷⁸ Another comrade of Tresca's, Jack Frager, thought the anarcho-syndicalist probably mixed too much with non-anarchists, to the detriment of his reputation.⁷⁹ As will be shown below, it was Tresca's willingness to work with those outside the movement that broadened the rift between him and Galleani's adherents from L'Adunata dei Refrattari.

Both Tresca and Galleani believed that violence was a necessary means in fighting the class war and they did not shy away from getting into physical confrontations. As mentioned above, Galleani was wounded during the 1902 Paterson strike when fired upon by a police officer. Then, in early December 1916, while *Galleanisti* were engaged in a confrontation with Boston police during an antiwar demo,

⁷⁸ Gallagher 89.

⁷⁹ Gallagher 89.

Galleani stabbed a police officer in the hand with a knife.⁸⁰ Tresca was also involved in physical confrontations. For the anarcho-syndicalist, fascism could only be stopped “with out and out war.”⁸¹ During the 1920s when Italian antifascists were fighting their Fascist compatriots in the streets of New York City, Tresca was in the thick of it. In fact, on more than one occasion he and his comrades would walk into Fascist-controlled neighbourhoods looking for fights.⁸²

Origins of the Rift and Other Examples of Hostility

As was mentioned above, the antagonistic relationship between Tresca and Galleani can be traced to the former’s involvement in the Ettor and Giovannitti defence campaign that followed the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile workers’ strike. As strike resources were now redirected towards the defence of the jailed Wobblies, Tresca was called upon to act as a bridge between the defence committee and Lawrence’s Italian workers. Speaking at a May Day rally in Lawrence, Tresca told the crowd that a general strike was the most effective way to free Ettor and Giovannitti since American judges and courts could not be trusted to grant the two men their freedom. Plans were made to have the strike coincide with the beginning of the trial in late September. However, at a meeting to discuss preparations just days before the general strike was to be called, letters written by Ettor and Giovannitti asking that the strike be postponed were read aloud to those present. The two incarcerated Wobblies were afraid that a strike of such a political

⁸⁰ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti, 101-102.

⁸¹ Gallagher 129.

⁸² Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 171.

nature would end in failure, leading to serious repercussions against Italian workers.⁸³

After the letters were read everyone was in a state a shock. Tresca was not sure whether to go ahead with the strike and act against the IWW leaders or to heed the request of Ettore and Giovannitti; in the end he chose the latter course.⁸⁴

Tresca's decision to abide by the wishes of the jailed strike leaders and postpone the general strike angered Luigi Galleani and his adherents, who wanted the original plan to proceed. During the course of the Lawrence strike, the anti-organizationalist anarchists had worked hard to mobilize support for the workers and to raise badly-needed funds. Their activism around this strike and others as well as the popularity of Galleani and Cronaca Sovversiva meant they had influence among the workers. After the general strike plans had changed, the anti-organizationalists decided to organize workers for an industry-wide walkout. On the morning of 26 September, Umberto Postiglione, a regular contributor to Cronaca Sovversiva, and other anarchists showed up at various mills to tell workers to leave work at 3:00 pm and by 3:15 the process had already begun. That night a meeting was held in Lexington Hall with Wobblies and anarchists arguing their respective positions on a general strike. In the end, Italian workers overwhelmingly supported the labour action and as many as 12,000 went on strike the next day. The IWW wanted to reassert its control in Lawrence by curbing the duration of the strike. Their solution was a twenty-four hour protest to occur on 30 September. The protest was well attended and it provided an opportunity for Tresca and Flynn to convince the strikers to return to work and wait for the conclusion of the Ettore and Giovannitti trial. Not

⁸³ Pernicone attributes the postponement of the general strike, which was never called by the IWW but rather Tresca and Italian workers, to Haywood who felt that a direct confrontation with the state would end in disaster. The IWW leader believed that the acceptance of the change in strike plans would be better received if delivered by Ettore and Giovannitti. Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 53.

⁸⁴ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 53.

everyone was willing to abandon the strike, however; Italians in particular argued for its continuation. The majority of workers, exhausted by both the initial strike and the defence struggle for the arrested Wobblies, would not lend their support.⁸⁵ Ettor and Giovannitti were eventually acquitted of the murder charges and the strike, at least in the short term, had been successful with all the workers' demands being met by the Lawrence mill owners. But partly because of the IWW's unwillingness to use contracts, within three years the gains achieved by the workers had all but disappeared.⁸⁶

This disagreement over tactics at Lawrence caused the first cracks to appear in the relationship between Tresca and Galleani. Pernicone suggests that Galleani's singling out of Tresca when blame could also have been put on the IWW was based on Galleani's belief that Tresca was a rival for the leadership of Italian anarchists.⁸⁷ However, even after this event, Tresca and Galleani still collaborated on occasion. Though both men differed in their anarchism, they did agree on the core principles of anarchist philosophy which were anti-state, anti-capitalist, and anti-religion. Thus, there were moments where concern for the other was put before their respective disagreements. In 1916, Galleani and his adherents demonstrated on behalf of Tresca after the latter's arrest during the Mesabi Range strike in Minnesota. The following year Tresca invited Galleani to visit him in New York City though the meeting never happened. He also denounced Galleani's deportation in 1919.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 54-55.

⁸⁶ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 50, 58.

⁸⁷ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 58.

⁸⁸ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 189; Gallagher 76-77.

L'Adunata dei Refrattari

Following Galleani's expulsion from the United States, some of his adherents became more hostile towards Tresca, possibly due to the fact that the Tresca himself had not been deported.⁸⁹ Still, the relationship between the *Galleanisti* and Tresca, at least during the early 1920s, was more complicated than one based simply on mutual animosity. In April 1922, the first issues of the New York City-based L'Adunata dei Refrattari appeared.⁹⁰ This Italian language anarchist paper was the philosophical successor to Galleani's Cronaca Sovversiva. It emphasized such themes as the inherent authoritarianism of organizations (whether syndicalist or communist), the complicity of the Italian monarchy and the Catholic Church in Mussolini's rise to power, and the legitimate use of political violence in response to violent state repression.⁹¹ The day-to-day operation of the paper was in the hands of a few individuals such as Efsio Constantino Zonchello, Raffaele Schiavina (using the alias Max Sartin), Osvaldo Maraviglia, Nicola "Nick" Di Domenico, and Michele "Mike" Magliocca. Zonchello was L'Adunata's first editor and he also penned a number of articles under the pseudonyms "Ilario di Castlered" and "Red." In 1928, Schiavina assumed the role of

⁸⁹ Gallagher 76-77.

⁹⁰ *Refrattari*, derived from the Italian word *refrattario*, was a term used to identify anarchists in late nineteenth century anti-anarchist legislation in Italy. Robert D'Attilio, "L'Adunata dei Refrattari," Encyclopedia of the American Left, eds. Mari Jo Buhle et al. (Chicago: St. James Press, 1990) 4.

⁹¹ F. Bucci and G. Piermaria, "Schiavina, Raffaele," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 518. L'Adunata dei Refrattari's circulation between 1922 and 1945 was 5000 copies per issue. According to Paul Berman, its circulation increased to 10,000 copies per issue following the Second World War, when it was distributed widely in Italy for a time. Paul Berman, "The Torch and the Axe: The Unknown Aftermath of the Sacco-Vanzetti Affair," The Village Voice 17 May 1988. My thanks to Kenyon Zimmer for passing along this information. L'Adunata dei Refrattari continued to publish until 1971 when a declining subscription list no longer made the paper feasible. Avrich, Anarchist Voices 317.

editor, but this did not mean an end to Zonchello's relationship with the paper. He continued to go on speaking tours and engaged in propaganda on behalf of L'Adunata.⁹²

Schiavina's position as editor coincided with his illegal return to the United States after his deportation in 1919. It was a position he was to hold until the paper ceased publication in 1971. He had experience in the radical press because of his previous role as manager for Cronaca Sovversiva.⁹³ In order to avoid detection by American authorities and Italian *Opera Volontari Repressione Antifascista* (OVRA) agents, he used the alias Max Sartin. Under Schiavina's direction, L'Adunata dei Refrattari maintained the high editorial standards attained while the paper was edited by Zonchello. But, according to Paul Avrich, Schiavina was more than just the editor; he was the paper's soul. He wrote most of the articles under various pseudonyms, looked after all the editorial work, and ensured the paper was sent to the printer.⁹⁴ Osvaldo Maraviglia held the position of treasurer and, in this capacity he was responsible for sending money to various penurious anarchists or to assorted movement-related projects.⁹⁵ Nick Di Domenico acted as L'Adunata's manager, a position he held by at least 1926. He received and responded to correspondence sent to the paper.⁹⁶ And, finally, Michele Magliocca was secretary of L'Adunata from 1922 to 1971.⁹⁷ All of these men were also

⁹² Prefetto di Nuora, "Biografia del Efisio Constantino Zonchello," 21 May 1938; and Consolato d'Italia, NYC, to unknown, 9 Jan. 1932, Efisio Constantino Zonchello, busta 5592, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁹³ Bucci and Piermaria 516.

⁹⁴ Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 214. In addition to Max Sartin, Schiavina also signed his articles in L'Adunata dei Refrattari as "Max," "Calibano," "Manhattanite," "L'osservatore," "Melchior Steele," "m.s.," "m.," "r.s.," and "X.Y." Bucci and Piermaria 517. Schiavina also used the name Bruno Rossi, Rossi being the surname of his wife Fiorina. Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 215.

⁹⁵ Prefetto di Macerata, Macerata, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 12 Mar. 1927, Osvaldo Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome; Avrich, Anarchist Voices 503.

⁹⁶ Tullio Tamburini, Prefetto di Avelino, "Biografia del Nicola Di Domenico," 16 July 1938, Nicola Di Domenico, busta 1781, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁹⁷ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 121.

active, along with others, in *Il Gruppo L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, which was based in Newark, New Jersey.

Considering who was involved in publishing L'Adunata, it is surprising that Tresca helped with early issues of the paper by editing proofs and giving technical advice. During this time, both L'Adunata dei Refrattari and Il Martello posted advertisements for each others' social and fundraising events.⁹⁸ A May 1922 issue of Il Martello, for instance, featured a notice sent by Osvaldo Maraviglia appeared, regarding a benefit for political prisoners in Italy.⁹⁹ But this cooperation between Tresca and L'Adunata did not last long and the anarcho-syndicalist's actions were closely and critically scrutinized by Galleani's successors.

In the 1920s, the *Galleanisti* went on the attack against Tresca, prompted by a number of specific incidents. The first occurred in 1924, when the anarcho-syndicalist was charged and found guilty of sending birth control literature through the mail. The issue for the anti-organizationalists was not the materials in question but Tresca's courtroom denial that he was an anarchist. Following his release from a prison in Atlanta the next year, the anarcho-syndicalist stopped in Washington D.C. and in typical tourist fashion visited the White House. His arrival coincided with that of a group of students who had traveled from Philadelphia just to meet President Coolidge. While Tresca was standing with the children, the president appeared and shook the hands of all those who were present, including the anarcho-syndicalist. Tresca then published an account of this chance meeting in Il Martello. The *Galleanisti* could not believe Tresca had stooped so

⁹⁸ Nunzio Pernicone, "War among the Italian Anarchists: The Galleanisti's [sic] Campaign against Carlo Tresca," *The Lost World of Italian-America Radicalism: Politics, Labor, and Culture*, eds. Phillip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003) 82.

⁹⁹ IM 13 May 1922: 4.

low as to shake the hand of an American president.¹⁰⁰ Some of the anti-organizationalists believed that Tresca was an informer for the New York police. Emile Coda, for instance, had accused Tresca of supplying authorities with a picture of an anarchist wanted for questioning in New London, Connecticut.¹⁰¹ It is hard to judge the veracity of this accusation since it comes from an Italian security report. Yet if Coda and others believed this to be true, the charge does further explain the hostility of the *Galleanisti* towards Tresca. The other differences the anti-organizationalists had with the publisher of *Il Martello* stemmed from his willingness to work with communists in the antifascist struggle and his criticisms of Galleani.

These supposed transgressions culminated in the *Galleanisti* Emile Coda calling for a “Jury of Honour” to determine whether Tresca was guilty of acting in contravention of anarchist principles. It is strange that anarchist militants would resort to a “popular court” when courts were such an important tool of state repression and one to which anarchists were certainly not unaccustomed. The recourse to this unusual propaganda tactic demonstrated, more than anything, how thoroughly the *Galleanisti*, especially Coda, had come to despise Tresca. Coda himself selected the jury, comprised of six *Galleanisti* and Felice Guadagni, an anarcho-syndicalist who had been on the Sacco-Vanzetti Defence Committee (Tresca was not involved in any way). The jury met in Hartford, Connecticut, on 13 May 1928 and, not surprisingly, found Tresca guilty. However, the final decision was not unanimous because Guadagni refused to add his name to the published verdict that appeared in *L'Adunata*.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 154, 159; *IM* 23 May 1925.

¹⁰¹ Author unknown, Divisione Polizia Politica, to unknown, 14 May 1928, Nicola Di Domenico, busta 1781, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁰² Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 160, 199-210; Gallagher 108; *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* (AdR) 2 June 1928.

The outcome of the “Jury of Honour” did not resolve anything between the anti-organizationalists and Tresca, and the attacks continued. In February 1938, Tresca testified in front of a federal grand jury regarding the disappearance of former Communist Julia Stuart Poyntz the previous year. Poyntz was a prominent party member who was recruited by the *Ob'edinennoe Gosudarstvennoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie* (OGPU) and was recalled to Moscow where she remained until returning to New York City in 1936. By this point, Poyntz had become disillusioned with the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). She had conveyed these opinions along with other information to her friend of twenty years, Carlo Tresca. The ex-OGPU agent had also told others that she was planning on exposing the Communist movement based on her experiences in Russia. Poyntz’s meeting with Tresca was the last time he ever saw her. She disappeared soon afterwards. He suspected that Schachno Epstein, also an OGPU agent and Poyntz’s ex-lover, was involved in the disappearance. The anarcho-syndicalist met with the acting chief of the United States attorney’s office and explained what he knew. A subpoena for Tresca to appear before a grand jury soon followed. Not only did Tresca’s testimony lead to animosity from the Communists, it also gave L’Adunata fresh ammunition to use in their quarrel with him: Communists were bad but cooperating with the state was even worse. Max Sartin, in the pages of L’Adunata, described Tresca as a police collaborator who was engaged in the “act of informing and spying.” Sartin’s message was clear: cooperation with the state was antithetical to anarchist principles. This led to a back-and-forth between Sartin and Tresca in the pages of their respective papers. Tresca challenged Sartin to a public debate. But it was not only the anti-organizationalists who censured the anarcho-

syndicalist's actions. Many of Tresca's adherents could not believe he would cooperate with the state and never forgave him for it. Pernicone even suggests that Tresca's involvement in the Poyntz case ruined his reputation among anarchists and led to a decline in his once considerable influence.¹⁰³

Impact on Antifascism in New York City

While the *Galleanisti* and Tresca were involved in their war of words during the 1920s and 1930s, Fascists were organizing and becoming a strong presence in Italian communities throughout North America. Benito Mussolini promoted the establishment of Fascist groups and the recruitment of members in Little Italies throughout the world. He hoped that the formation of *fasci* would provide both a financial and political base for his dictatorship.¹⁰⁴ Italian officials in embassies and consulates helped to facilitate this process. These institutions also used resources to keep track of the migrant left wherever it was active. Naturally, the feud among the anarchists in New York City did not go unnoticed. As one report to Rome gleefully reported, “[*L’Adunata*] are going to produce a ferocious attack ... against Carlo Tresca that absolutely accuses him of being a spy for the Italian consulate.”¹⁰⁵ Another piece of intergovernmental correspondence maintained that the anarchist infighting “would administer a mortal blow to anti-Fascism.”¹⁰⁶ Not many Italian anarchists stepped forward to defend the anarcho-syndicalist, which Pernicone attributes to “an aura of infallibility with which Galleani had enveloped

¹⁰³ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 232-236; Pernicone, “War among the Italian Anarchists: The Galleanisti’s [sic] Campaign against Carlo Tresca” 91; Gallagher 72.

¹⁰⁴ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 128.

¹⁰⁵ Author unknown, Divisione Polizia Politica, to unknown, 14 May 1928, Di Domenico, busta 1781, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁰⁶ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 135.

himself and his disciples [that] dissuaded many anarchists from dissenting with ... L'Adunata.” Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, who thought the infighting of the Italians ludicrous, spoke out against the accusations made by the *Galleanisti*, while Malatesta condemned any such infighting during a time when unity was needed to fight against fascism.¹⁰⁷

The Fascists were no doubt hoping that the schism would seriously damage the anarchist movement's ability to organize meaningful resistance against far right encroachment in Italian neighbourhoods. In their respective biographies on Carlo Tresca, Gallagher and Pernicone have both argued that the fractious relationship between Tresca and the *Galleanisti* actually did harm efforts to combat fascism.¹⁰⁸ But to what extent was this the case? Did those anarchists aligned with L'Adunata refrain from antifascist activity? Was there no cooperation between the two factions? Did the feud expand beyond New York City or was it localized?

During the 1920s, attempts were made at forming a united front among Italian radicals to fight the Fascists in Little Italies throughout North America. The group that formed out of this initiative was called the *Alleanza Antifascista del Nord America* (AAFNA), established in 1923. AAFNA strove to mount a continent-wide movement against fascism in North America and to aid leftwing institutions in Italy suffering state repression. The *Alleanze Antifascista* was largely social democratic in character, with leaders from Italian locals of the ILGWU and the ACWU directing the organization. The *Alleanze Antifascista*, however, was unable to mount a serious challenge to fascism. The unions concerned themselves more with union affairs and, in the case of the ILGWU,

¹⁰⁷ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 200-201; Gallagher 135.

¹⁰⁸ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 200-201; Gallagher 135-136.

were consumed with a power struggle with the Communists. Another reason why the AAFNA failed was the lack of involvement of anarchists and other far leftists who rejected common fronts with reformist social democrats. In less than a year the *Alleanze Antifascista* had ceased its activities.¹⁰⁹

The unwillingness of anarchists, Communists, and syndicalists to join together in the AAFNA was no doubt also related to the creation of the *Comitato Generale di Difesa Control il Fascismo* (CGDCF) in February 1923, an initiative spearheaded by Tresca that sought to draw all radicals into the antifascist struggle. The *Comitato*'s leadership included Tresca and a number of his well-known allies including Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Pietro Allegra, and Luigi Quintiliano. Surprisingly, it also featured (albeit for a short time) the first editor of *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, Constantino Zonchello.¹¹⁰ Due to the large concentration of anarchists in the CGDCF and the problems within the *Alleanze Antifascista*, it has been suggested that CGDCF was responsible for most of the antifascist activism during the 1923-1924 period.¹¹¹

Tresca did not have much faith in the AAFNA when it existed and was not surprised when it finally became defunct, but he did think it was important that all Italian antifascists work together in a united front. After the socialist Giacomo Matteotti was murdered on 30 May 1924 by Fascists for speaking out against them in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, antifascist activity in North America began to hit a new peak. With fascism's influence growing within Italian communities, Tresca felt it was now important for the Italian left, broadly defined, to put aside sectarian squabbles and focus

¹⁰⁹ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 145.

¹¹⁰ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 145; Comitato Generale di Difesa Control il Fascismo, "L'Agitazione antifascista in New York e Brooklyn," *IM* 9 June 1923: 3.

¹¹¹ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 145.

on destroying fascism. As a result, the anarcho-syndicalist helped resurrect the *Alleanze Antifascista* in the fall of 1925.¹¹²

The new AAFNA's first meeting was attended by representatives of all the radical tendencies among the Italians in New York City with the exception of the *Galleanisti*.¹¹³ It is unclear whether the anti-organizationalists chose not to be present of their own accord or because no invitation was offered. As recently as May 1925, Tresca had been criticized in the pages of *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* for admitting he had shaken hands with President Calvin Coolidge. Perhaps this new round of attacks could not be forgiven by Tresca and an invitation to the *Galleanisti* was withheld. On the other hand, the anti-organizationalists may have refused to involve themselves in a united front based on their anarchist principles. *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* made clear their position on antifascism and united fronts. The journal had been receiving criticism for its perceived inaction against fascism by members of the Italian radical community. In a letter to the journal, Alfredo Gonello, from New York City, referred to *L'Adunata*'s antifascist propaganda as a "great colossal bluff." He also asserted that the paper's "propaganda against fascism is made exclusively among you, that is to say among the four lambs that wear the hat of editor and management of *L'Adunata*."¹¹⁴ Gonello suggested that those involved in the publication of *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* join the *Ordine Figli d'Italia* (OFI – Order of the Sons of Italy), the fraternal organization founded in 1905 to help migrants assimilate into North American societies, in order to have direct contact with Italian workers. In a response to Gonello's letter printed in the same issue, "Costanzo" – likely the paper's

¹¹² Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 175.

¹¹³ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 175.

¹¹⁴ Alfredo Gonello with response by Costanzo, "Senza Connubii Ripugnanti!" (Without Repulsive Marriages!), *AdR* 22 Dec. 1923: 3.

then editor Constantino Zonchello – scoffed at the idea of working within the OFI because the organization was comprised of and run by the *prominenti* among the Italian community. For Costanzo, to work within this organization was simply reformism. As he stated, “It can be [the] work of those socialists [who] want to reform an organism born evil, those that intend to seize the state to bend it to their pleasure and to their benefit. It is not work for us”¹¹⁵ Four months later an article appeared in L’Adunata dei Refrattari titled “Il Fascismo e Noi” (Fascism and Us) that explained the paper’s position on antifascism and united fronts. Early on in the piece, the author Tino – likely another pseudonym for Zonchello – openly admitted that “We acknowledge not being occupied in **L’ADUNATA exclusively** with fascism” (emphasis in original). For them, “Fascism is the new name of an old fact ... a universal attitude of the ruling class.”¹¹⁶ The journal would continue to keep its readers informed of events in Italy but not at the expense of the other important issues – such as anarchist philosophy, labour struggles, and the repression of anarchists around the world, to name but a few. L’Adunata recognized fascism for what it was but also believed it was equally important to not to “lose sight of the causes that have determined it.”¹¹⁷ It was just as necessary to combat capitalism and its resulting class system, as well as the state and government.

The publishers of L’Adunata dei Refrattari did not view united fronts in a favourable light. In the Italian context, the article argued, socialists and Communists wanted to replace fascism with their own dictatorships. Tino pointed to Russia and Germany as two examples demonstrating how communist and socialist rule was really no

¹¹⁵ Alfredo Gonello with response by Costanzo, “Senza Connubii Ripugnanti!” (Without Repulsive Marriages!), AdR 22 Dec. 1923: 3.

¹¹⁶ Tino, “Il Fascismo e Noi” (Fascism and Us), AdR 8 Mar. 1924: 1.

¹¹⁷ Tino, “Il Fascismo e Noi,” AdR 8 Mar. 1924: 1

better than that of the Fascists. With respect to Germany, Tino alluded to the repression against worker revolt in 1919 by President Friedrich Ebert and Chancellor Philipp Scheidmann, both members of the Social Democratic Party. Tino proclaimed himself in favour of “struggle against fascism, but struggle also, no less fierce, against communism and state socialism.”¹¹⁸ With such a position, one would assume that the *Galleanisti* would refrain from cooperation with Communists. Yet, the anti-organizationalists were involved in the CGDCF. It may have been the case that the Communist component of the *Comitato* was small enough to be insignificant or perhaps the idea of a united front against fascism was important enough to warrant working together. Regardless, by the late 1920s, the *Galleanisti* were criticizing the role of Communists in the AAFNA.

By early 1927, the *Alleanze Antifascista* had experienced a significant rupture. The continuing struggle between social democrats and Communists for control of the ILGWU caused the AAFNA to split. Those social democrats involved in various unions formed a break-away antifascist organization while the Communists took over the *Alleanze Antifascista*.¹¹⁹ The anti-organizationalists had always been wary of the AAFNA’s claim to political neutrality and did not think it possible for the various tendencies of the Italian left to put aside political positions to fight fascism. It was even harder for them to believe this would be the case now that the Communists had begun to lead the *Alleanze Antifascista*. In an article that appeared in a March 1929 issue of *L’Adunata dei Refrattari*, Armando Borghi noted the irony in the Communists calling for a united front when they now led the AAFNA. By invoking the united front, Borghi asserted, the Communists were actually asking other leftist tendencies to suspend their

¹¹⁸ Tino, “Il Fascismo e Noi,” *AdR* 8 Mar. 1924: 1.

¹¹⁹ Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 180-181.

politics while the Communists were unwilling to do the same.¹²⁰ Thus, there would be no more cooperation between the *Galleanisti* and the communists.

The anti-organizationalists of L'Adunata dei Refrattari may not have cooperated with Tresca or the Communists on the antifascist front but this did not mean that fascism went unchallenged in New York City. Numerous large demonstrations against the Italian right took place there. Fascists and antifascists fought numerous times in the streets of Italian neighbourhoods. L'Adunata's strong position on the antifascist struggle did not prevent those aligned with the paper from being involved in a united front or working with anarchists who were adherents of Tresca. The latter appears to have been the case during the Greco-Carrillo case. In the early morning of 30 May 1927, two Italian Fascists, Giuseppe Carisi and Nicola Amoroso, were murdered in the Bronx on their way to a Memorial Day parade. Arrested and charged for the murders were Calogero Greco, a thirty-three year old tailor who was a member of the L'Adunata dei Refrattari-aligned group *Circolo Volontà*, and Donato Carrillo, aged thirty-seven and also a tailor, who was both part of a mixed group of L'Adunata and Il Martello anarchists in the Bronx and a supporter of Tresca.¹²¹ Both Greco and Carrillo wanted their defence committee to be comprised of various radical groups suggesting that, at least for Greco, those whom L'Adunata deemed appropriate collaborators did not necessarily reflect the priorities of other anarchists affiliated with the paper. In the end, the Greco-Carrillo defence committee included Italian antifascists, liberals, socialists, Communists, and even Trotskyists. The two anarchists were acquitted after it was determined in court that Fascists had attempted to bribe a witness to place Greco and Carrillo at the scene of the

¹²⁰ Biarmando (Armando Borghi), "'Fiere' Internazionali" ('Proud' International), AdR 23 Mar. 1929: 6-7.

¹²¹ Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 24 July 1931, Calogero Greco, busta 2521, CPC, ACS, Rome.

murders.¹²² The two anarchists were given their liberty and escaped the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti who were murdered in Massachusetts that same year. It was an on-the-ground victory for an unusual united front and one that contradicts any exaggerated account of the anarchist movement's paralyzing factiousness.

Impact on Antifascism in Detroit and Toronto

It also does not appear that L'Adunata dei Refrattari's unwillingness to collaborate with a wider antifascist alliance in New York had much impact outside the city. On Columbus Day in Detroit, 12 October 1928, around sixty to seventy Fascists dressed in black shirts with full regalia marched through the city to Cadillac Square. When they arrived at the square they were met by a small group of antifascists comprised of nine anarchists – one of whom was Attilio Bortolotti of Windsor – two socialists, and one Communist. When the band started to play the fascist hymn *Giovenezza*, the assembled antifascists began yelling “*Abasso il fascismo!*” and “*Assassini!*” One of the Fascists put down the flag he was holding, drew a revolver, and shot the anarchists Antonio Barra and Angelo Lentricchia. Fighting then broke out between the antifascists and the Fascists until the police arrived and both groups began to scatter. Barra died of his injuries two days later; Lentricchia survived.¹²³

Toronto was another site of cooperation between anarchists and other Italian antifascists. A report written by G.B. Ambrosi, the Italian Vice Consul General, to superiors in Rome on antifascist activity in Toronto begins with a description of the local anarchist circle of *Il Gruppo Libertario*. The “leaders” of this group, according to the

¹²² Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 189, 192.

¹²³ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 182-183; Un trentennio di attività anarchica, 1914-1945 (Forlì: del gruppo “L'Antistato,” 1953) 163.

document, were Attilio Bortolotti and fellow Friulian Augusto Ongaro but the exact number of members was hard to determine because they “move continually between the US and Toronto.” The American cities mentioned in the report included Chicago and Detroit. The anarchists did not have a regular meeting place so they would take turns meeting at their homes. When they did gather, the anarchists would discuss anarchism, drink, and dance.¹²⁴

Toronto’s antifascist group was led by Nicola Giancotti, a socialist and iron presser employed by Tip Top Tailors, who also published the antifascist organ La Voce Operaia. The antifascists had formed a cultural circle named after the Italian Republican Giuseppe Mazzini and held meetings at the Labour Lyceum. L’Adunata dei Refrattari supporters Attilio Bortolotti and Augusto Ongaro were not, evidently, directly involved in the Giuseppe Mazzini group. However, they, along with other anarchists, did unite with the antifascists in order to disrupt Fascist events. It is unclear exactly how the anarchists and socialists became involved in joint antifascist activity. And, according to Ambrosi’s report, the relationship between the anarchists and other antifascists was not necessarily harmonious: both “were struggling for control – one wanted to dominate the other,” possibly due to differing ideas on the direction of antifascist activities.¹²⁵

The fact that cooperation existed between anarchists and other antifascists in Detroit and Toronto seems to indicate that the L’Adunata stance, with regards to a wider antifascist movement incorporating non-anarchist elements, was most strictly adhered to

¹²⁴ G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console Generale, Toronto, to Sezione Della Divisione Affari Generali e Riservata, Rome, 5 Mar. 1934; and G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console Generale, Toronto, to Console Generale, Ottawa, 16 Feb. 1934, Attilio Bortolotti, busta 772, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹²⁵ G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console Generale, Toronto, to Sezione Della Divisione Affari Generali e Riservata, Rome, 5 Mar. 1934; and G.B. Ambrosi, Vice Console Generale, Toronto, to Console Generale, Ottawa, 16 Feb. 1934, Attilio Bortolotti, busta 772, CPC, ACS, Rome; Rizzo Babuscio, Ministero Affari Esteri, Rome, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 13 July 1934, Nicola Giancotti, busta 2385, CPC, ACS, Rome.

by those involved in the publishing of the paper and its immediate circle of followers in the New York City-Newark area. Those L'Adunata adherents who lived outside of this metropolitan area had a different approach to antifascist struggle, which, possibly due to small numbers or a different understanding of the threat of fascism, meant a willingness to work with those who did not share their particular anarchist philosophy. The above examples also demonstrate the complexity of anarchist activist identities. For some, the decision to support a particular newspaper or key figure meant there were limits to their cooperation with other anarchists and the wider left, while for others the exact opposite was true.

Conclusion

Luigi Galleani and Carlo Tresca were among the most important figures among Italian anarchists in North America. Each subscribed to his own vision of anarchism; both also shared common ground on topics such as revolution and the necessity of violence in that process. Pernicone has tended to portray the *Galleanisti* as zealous in their attacks against Tresca, suggesting a strict adherence to a dogmatic approach to their relationship with the anarcho-syndicalist. This characterization does not accurately reflect how supporters of both L'Adunata dei Refrattari and Il Martello interacted with one another. Those who published the former definitely had strong feelings against Tresca and they made these views well known. But it does not appear that these views were shared by all readers of L'Adunata when it came to antifascist activism. Even within New York City there existed anarchist groups comprised of both L'Adunata and Il Martello supporters. Beyond New York, Italian anarchists joined forces with non-

anarchists to confront Fascists. Though these alliances may not have been devoid of conflict themselves, they do demonstrate that, whether due to small numbers or because the threat of fascism was considered of greater importance than factional disputes among anarchists, supporters of L'Adunata did not behave in the same manner as those who published the paper. Thus, to paint all the *Galleanisti* with the same brush is to commit a disservice to the memories and activism of these transnational radicals. A transnational focus allows us to detect nuances and even contradictions within the conventional interpretation of anarchist factionalism.

Chapter 5: Anarchist Culture

Introduction

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries constituted a period of intense cultural output by the left. Socialists, Communists, and anarchists created an enormous diversity of artistic and cultural forms to challenge capitalism, unite activists, and direct political action. These forms included newspapers, political cartoons, folk dancing troupes, drama societies, choirs, and radical “holidays” among others. Whether it was the radical songs of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or the mandolin orchestras of the Communist Party of Canada-affiliated Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, the left used art and culture to resist the role of government and capital in creating patriotic and hard-working citizens committed to the perpetuation of the status quo. These forms were also “a means of unifying workers and ... a basis [from which] to move against the repressive social conditions of industrial development that extended beyond the point of production.”¹ As “oppositional ideologies,” socialism, communism, and anarchism not only had to demonstrate that there were alternatives to the capitalist liberal democratic order, but were also required to develop strategies for building and maintaining these movements.²

For Italian anarchists, these goals were accomplished in a variety of ways. Newspapers were an important means of communicating anarchist theories and views on current topics to the movement faithful as well as to potential adherents. Paul Avrich has suggested that between 1870 and 1940 as many as five hundred anarchist periodicals

¹ Salvatore Salerno, Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) 149-150.

² Rudolph J. Vecoli, “‘*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States: An Invented Tradition of the Italian Anarchists,” May Day Celebration, ed. Andrea Panaccione (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1988) 56.

were produced in the United States with Italian output comprising one fifth of that total.³ Publications like Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari also acted as a form of historical memory by printing commemorative obituaries to radicals past or featuring articles on aspects of anarchist history such as the Paris Commune of 1871. But newspapers were not the only form of anarchist literature. Many pamphlets and books were published either by those responsible for movement newspapers or by others in their spare time.⁴

Social events such as dances, dinners, and plays performed by *filodrammatiche* or amateur dramatic societies, generally open to the wider Italian neighbourhood, also provided a way to attract new adherents. These social events combined entertainment and fundraising.⁵ The plays were often local productions though some *filodrammatiche* groups did tours of Italian communities to a limited extent. Plays dealt with anarchist themes such as worker exploitation under capitalism and the hypocrisy of religion among others. The plays of anarchist songwriter and poet Pietro Gori were a popular choice among *filodrammatiche* groups though the performance of plays written by less well-known anarchists was also common. Gori's plays were transnational and were performed by Italian anarchists in Canada, the United States, and other countries where Italian anarchists settled.⁶ Events of this nature could be organized to raise badly needed funds for the movement or coincide with an anarchist "holiday."

³ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 54.

⁴ Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti 54.

⁵ Michael Miller Topp, Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 53.

⁶ For collections of Gori's writings see Pietro Gori, Scritti Scelti (Cesena: L'Antistato, 1968); Maurizio Antonioli, Pietro Gori: Il cavaliere errante dell'anarchia (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 1995).

Another way to reach prospective members was through public speaking. Prominent anarchists would tour Italian communities speaking on a wide variety of subjects from anarchism to Italian literature. If anarchist comrades found themselves in trouble with authorities, these speaking tours were an invaluable means to raise awareness and support for this cause. In addition to tours, anarchists also spoke publicly during strikes and antifascist rallies.

Anarchist groups were a central component in the promotion and maintenance of radical culture. Anarchist circles wherein aspects of anarchist thought and literature could be discussed provided an alternative to nationalist or religious associations. They also organized social events and made arrangements to host anarchist lecturers.⁷ These groups, in all their remarkable diversity, made up Italian anarchism's vibrant transnational cultural network. Of equal importance was their ability to fundraise not only for anarchist causes abroad but also to maintain their own institutions such as halls and journals. Like IWW locals, anarchist circles used social and cultural events to educate, entertain and mobilize their members.⁸ As McCarthy and others have argued, mobilizing structures are "those collective vehicles ... through which people mobilize and engage in collective action."⁹ In this way, the specifically radical culture of Italian anarchists can be considered a mobilizing structure. This chapter will argue that culture was invaluable not only as a means for Italian anarchists to maintain, reinforce, and expand their transnational movement, but also laid the basis for mobilization. It will also demonstrate some of the limitations to anarchist organizing efforts that focused upon a

⁷ Vecoli, "'Primo Maggio' in the United States" 58.

⁸ Salerno 8.

⁹ Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, "Introduction," Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures, and Cultural Framings, eds. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 3.

particular ethnic demographic with little interaction with other migrant populations or with the host societies of Canada and the United States.

Newspapers

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the most influential anarchist newspapers in North America during the 1920s and 1930s were the anarcho-syndicalist Il Martello and the anti-organizationalist anarchist communist L'Adunata dei Refrattari. Both papers were based in New York City and traveled Italian anarchist networks throughout Canada, the United States, South America, and Europe. Each journal was packed with numerous articles as though the publishers wanted to include as much information as possible in the available space. In keeping with anarchist principles, these publications were devoid of advertising for businesses or appliances. Such modest advertisements as did appear focused on anarchist speakers' tours and literature sales. Il Martello was four pages in length while L'Adunata was eight.

Both Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari were text-heavy publications with their mastheads often being the most aesthetically interesting parts of each journal.¹⁰ Il Martello had at least three different mastheads during its existence. The first was simply a hand holding a hammer to the left of the paper's logo.¹¹ The second had three men, just below the logo, holding a large battering ram charging to the left where sat a large shaded humanoid creature wearing a helmet. This goliath-like figure actually sat between the *Il* and *Martello*.¹² The third masthead was a return to a more simplistic form and had a worker from the forehead down to the torso looking forward while holding a hammer in

¹⁰ See Appendix B for pictures of Il Martello's and L'Adunata dei Refrattari's mastheads.

¹¹ Il Martello (IM) 19 Apr. 1919: 1.

¹² IM 9 July 1921: 1.

his right hand. The figure was inside a circle with lines radiating from behind him as though he was standing in front of a bright light. This illustration also appeared to the left of the paper's logo.¹³

The L'Adunata dei Refrattari masthead was quite plain during the 1920s. The original version had *L'Adunata* written in large letters at the top left of the front page with *dei* and *Refrattari* in smaller print to the right with *dei* placed above *Refrattari*.¹⁴ In the late 1920s, the masthead simply had *L'Adunata* across the top with *dei Refrattari* centred underneath.¹⁵ Things became a little more creative in the early 1930s when a new masthead was developed that featured a revamped logo and an illustration. The drawing, to the left of the paper's logo, featured a waterfall in the background feeding a pool below with single tree to the left of the waterfall. In the foreground was the left profile of a young woman who was in the act of drinking water from her left hand.¹⁶ The waterfall and pool possibly represented L'Adunata dei Refrattari and suggested, perhaps, that reading the paper was like drinking from a pool of knowledge.

Photographs and political illustrations rarely appeared, especially in L'Adunata dei Refrattari. Political cartoons were published in Il Martello on occasion – sometimes in conjunction with an article. A drawing in the 27 January 1923 issue of Il Martello pictured a male Italian Fascist in black shirt with rifle slung over his left shoulder holding hands with a member of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) dressed in white robes and hood. Both the Fascist and Klansman were each standing on top of a man who represented workers. (See Appendix C) The political cartoon corresponded with an article titled “*Fascismo e*

¹³ IM 12 Jan. 1924: 1.

¹⁴ L'Adunata dei Refrattari (AdR) 15 Sep. 1923: 1.

¹⁵ AdR 6 July 1929: 1.

¹⁶ AdR 17 Jan. 1932: 1.

Klu Klux Klan [sic]” that demonstrated the similarities between both groups and the threat they posed to Italian workers in North America.¹⁷ Drawings could also be printed without relating specifically to an article or column. An illustration by Robert Minor, the American-born artist and journalist who turned from anarchism to communism following the Bolshevik Revolution, appeared in Il Martello in 1924.¹⁸ It showed a sitting worker, with “Lavatore Italiano” (Italian Worker) written on his torso, hunched over a lever connected to a machine that read “Produzione Capitalista.” The drawing’s subject was surrounded by bayonets. (See Appendix C) To the right of the drawing was added in Italian: “Under the Fascist government, with salaries reduced and hours increased, the worker must produce even more for ... the fatherland and the coffers of their bosses.”¹⁹

Il Martello was purchased by Carlo Tresca in 1919 and appeared semimonthly until 1921 when it was published on a weekly basis. The paper continued publication until Tresca was murdered in 1943. Il Martello’s circulation began with 2500 copies per issue and increased to 10,500 in 1924. By 1929 only 8000 copies were printed due to financial constraints and it is likely that circulation numbers dropped further once the Great Depression was in full swing.²⁰ L’Adunata dei Refrattari first appeared on 15 April 1922 and was established by adherents of Luigi Galleani to campaign on behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti, fight fascism locally and globally, and continue the propagation of anti-organizationalist anarchist communism.²¹ It too began as a semimonthly but in less than

¹⁷ Pietro Allegra, “Fascismo e Klu Klux Klan [sic],” IM 27 Jan. 1923: 3.

¹⁸ The inclusion of the Robert Minor illustration demonstrates Il Martello’s eclectic nature and Carlo Tresca’s willingness to include art from the wider left including Communists.

¹⁹ IM 26 Apr. 1924: 3.

²⁰ “Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps Being Taken and Required to Curb It,” Report of the Joint Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, vol. 1 (Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1920) 2; Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 105.

²¹ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 317.

a year began to appear weekly. L'Adunata's circulation during the 1922-1943 period was around 5000 copies per issue.²² However, it has been suggested that during the 1930s as many as 15,000 anarchists supported the paper which means that circulation numbers may have spiked dramatically in those years.²³ The last issue of L'Adunata appeared in 1971 as the paper folded due to a lack of subscriptions. Ironically, though the paper was maintained by anti-organizationalists, they were able to publish L'Adunata dei Refrattari for almost fifty years.

The distribution of anarchist papers occurred in two different ways. An individual could act as a distributor for a journal within a particular anarchist group or community. They would receive a certain number of issues and sell them or give them away to comrades.²⁴ Papers could also be shared and passed around, meaning multiple anarchists could read the same issue.²⁵ Individual subscriptions were the other means that anarchist newspapers were distributed among movement networks. Since Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari spurned advertising in their publications, they relied heavily on subscriptions and donations from cash-strapped supporters to keep their papers viable.²⁶ But even this could be a challenge. Before the outbreak of the Great Depression, Il Martello was already \$5300 in debt. The financial crisis only exacerbated matters. This meant that Tresca could not earn any money nor pay his staff. Loans,

²² Paul Berman, "The Torch and the Axe: The Unknown Aftermath of the Sacco-Vanzetti Affair," The Village Voice 17 May 1988.

²³ Robert D'Attilio, "L'Adunata dei Refrattari," Encyclopedia of the American Left, eds. Mari Jo Buhle et al. (Chicago: St. James Press, 1990) 4.

²⁴ Paul Avrich, Anarchist Voices 186.

²⁵ Guglielmo Boattini, Detroit, to Luigi Bertoni, Geneva, 1936, Guglielmo Boattini, busta 679, Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC), Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome; Marcella Bencivenni, "Italian American Radical Culture in New York City: The Politics and Arts of the *Sovversivi*, 1890-1940," diss., City University of New York, 2003, 80.

²⁶ Vecoli, "'Primo Maggio' in the United States" 78.

benefits, and cutting back to biweekly publication helped get Il Martello back into the black.²⁷

Since most of anarchist journals were shipped through the mail, they were often at the mercy of American postal censors who could remove mailing privileges. L'Adunata does not appear to have been disrupted in this way but Il Martello did occasionally run afoul of the New York Post Office. The 8 September 1923 issue was seized because of a small advertisement for a book on birth control. Members of the Il Martello staff were required to scratch out the offending ad in every issue with a black crayon before postal authorities would agree to deliver it. Unfortunately, the entire edition had to be remailed meaning Il Martello was forced to spend twice the amount on postage.²⁸ A less dramatic issue related to sending papers through the mail could be the delivery of a journal to the wrong address. However, in at least one instance, this led to a positive outcome. In 1927, John Vattuone's copy of L'Adunata dei Refrattari was mistakenly delivered to the home of another anarchist by the name of Antonio Ciminieri who lived a few blocks away. Ciminieri brought the paper to the bakery where Vattuone was employed but Vattuone was on a delivery run. When Vattuone returned, he was informed that Ciminieri had been by. After work Vattuone paid a visit to Ciminieri's home to thank him for re-delivering the issue of L'Adunata. There Vattuone met Ciminieri's daughter Elvira and the two became lovers.²⁹

Both Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari acted as a method of social change both as a form of education and a means of direct aid. These papers were important sources of information about social, political, and labour issues in North America, Italy,

²⁷ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 212-213.

²⁸ Pernicone, Carlo Tresca 151.

²⁹ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 152.

and the world through an anarchist lens. Articles were often attacks against government, capitalism, and religion, not to mention other anarchists. In addition, these papers promoted their own particular forms of anarchism among their readership.

L'Adunata dei Refrattari tended to have a greater focus on international news than local reporting. In the 17 January 1932 issue, of the nine articles published, four reported on events in Europe and South America, two were ideological in nature, two focused on historical subjects, and no articles appeared regarding news in the United States. The majority of international articles discussed issues directly related to anarchists. For instance, one article discussed the expulsion of three Italian anarchists from Spain for their involvement in a strike led by the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT), the Spanish confederation of anarcho-syndicalist unions, in September 1931. The author condemned the Republic for sending the men to Portugal, then under the fascist rule of António de Oliveira Salazar. Another article, “*Agli anarchici e simpatizzanti dell'Argentina*” (To the Anarchists and Sympathizers of Argentina), explained the decline of the anarchist movement in that country and demonstrated L'Adunata's presence there. The piece was co-signed by seventy Argentine anarchists and explained that the problems facing the movement were due in part to the repression of the government but also were derived from the infighting among the country's anarchists. The way forward, according to the undersigned was, “Concord in the libertarian family; union in the struggle against all the enemies of liberty. Only in this way can we give life to a strong movement, prepared to give battle to the regime of privilege and of authority, capable of destroying it. To do the contrary would be ... the ruin of our movement, and,

the consequence [would be] to postpone indefinitely the day of human emancipation.”³⁰

Two other features pertained specifically to Italian fascism but were actually lists and not articles in the traditional sense. The first, titled “*Vive pericolosamente*” (Living Dangerously), listed a number of attacks against Italian consular officials between 1927 and 1931 in cities such as Paris, Buenos Aires, Nice, Tunis, Zurich, and Pittsburgh.³¹ The second called “*Al Tribunale Squadrista*” (At the *Squadrista* Court) was a weekly column that printed the names of antifascists and the political crimes for which they were charged in Italian courts.³²

In keeping with *L'Adunata*'s anti-organizationalist position, the anarchist journalist and poet Luigi “Gigi” Damiani wrote an article called “*Per la nostra rivoluzione: Dall'esperienza spagnuola di oggi and quella possibile, di domani, in Italia*” (For Our Revolution: From the Spanish Experience of Today and that Possible Tomorrow in Italy) in which he critically examined the CNT. Damiani explored the ability of the confederation to thrive in an environment hostile to revolutionary union activity. He also explained that anarchists were numerous in the organization and claimed that anarchist philosophy was widely supported within it. However, as an anti-organizationalist, he did not believe in large unions. As Damiani wrote, “We who distrust syndicalism, gigantic organizations, who [ascribe to] the classic conception of [spontaneous] revolution ...can attribute to the CNT all the inconsistencies ... that are, for us, consequences of syndicalist methods” Damiani felt that the CNT, even with its large anarchist membership, was still susceptible to the influence of non-anarchist syndicalists and political parties who wished to use the confederation as a means to electoral ends. However, he did recognize

³⁰ Enrique Baldeuna et al., “Agli anarchici e simpatizzanti dell'Argentina,” *AdR* 17 Jan. 1932: 2.

³¹ “Vive pericolosamente,” *AdR* 17 Jan. 1932: 1.

³² “Al Tribunale Squadrista” *AdR* 17 Jan. 1932: 3.

the importance of the CNT in disseminating anarchist ideas and its work towards a post-capitalist society. Damiani also admired the CNT for “its tenacity, for its long life, [and] for its resistance.” Still, as he concluded, “[In] our point of view, we lament that the Spanish comrades have not yet given life to an independent anarchist movement”³³

L'Adunata dei Refrattari also included a review section. In this particular issue a pamphlet called Guerra alla guerra imperialista (War Against Imperialist War), a 1930 reprint regarding the Allied intervention in Russia during the country's civil war, was being critiqued. The pamphlet's author condemned the counter-revolutionary presence of the Allies who sought the overthrow of the Bolsheviks and the end of the social revolution. However, the reviewer from L'Adunata, unsurprisingly, had a much different view on the subject. Taking issue with the pamphlet's title, the reviewer stated, “To be against war means to be against the war of all the governments, the Russian government included.” Further, the review's author did not have much sympathy for the Bolsheviks: “I well understand that for the communists the Russian government is the social revolution. And here is the root of the misunderstanding. The Russian government is a government like all the others, and like all the others hates social revolution.”³⁴

Il Martello placed greater emphasis on local reporting than did L'Adunata dei Refrattari. In the 1 August 1931 edition of Il Martello, four articles on news in the United States were printed with only one international story. This issue also contained six pieces of ideological writing and one focused on an historical event. Of the “local” stories, two focused on a series of miner strikes in the states of Illinois, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Both were highly critical of the United Mine Workers

³³ Gigi Damiani, “Per la nostra rivoluzione: Dall'esperienza spagnuola di oggi and quella possibile, di domani, in Italia,” AdR 17 Jan. 1932: 4.

³⁴ “Giornali-Riviste-Libri” (Journals-Magazines-Books), AdR 17 Jan. 1932: 7.

of America's (UMWA) role in selling out the workers. In the Illinois coalfields, the officials of the UMWA had ordered striking miners back to work – a move that, according to the author, demonstrated the union was an “accomplice of the Peabody Coal Company”³⁵ In light of the UMWA's conduct in these strikes, Carlo Tresca described the union officials as the “lieutenants of capital” and appealed to workers to “struggle against the criminal union.”³⁶

The ideological reporting in this issue of Il Martello focused on revolution and the debate between organizationalists and anti-organizationalists. In the weekly column “*Fatti e Commenti*” (Facts and Comments), the author explained the conditions under which revolutions occurred.

One knows that revolutions are not the result of devious propaganda or the malevolent influence of a few agitators. Revolutions are inevitable historical phenomena that appear ... when the social system demonstrates itself incapable of holding the mass of people in intolerable conditions of life and when the beneficiaries of the system lose ... every confidence.³⁷

Writing almost two years into what would become known as the Great Depression, the author believed that the time was now opportune for the creation of an “intelligent and audacious” working-class army of

militant strength ... ready to act, to be the guide, to destroy and reorganize; ... ready to carry every revolutionary situation by speeding up the death of capitalism, to transform every revolutionary situation, local or international, in an intense general movement to eliminate capitalism and capable of organizing the new society, a society of free men [sic], when the revolution will have triumphed.³⁸

³⁵ “Le lotte dei minatori del bituminoso” (The Struggle of the Bituminous Miners), IM 1 Aug. 1931: 2.

³⁶ Carlo Tresca, “La Tragedia del Lavoro Organizzato” (The Tragedy of the Organised Worker), IM 1 Aug. 1931: 1.

³⁷ “Fatti e Commenti,” IM 1 Aug. 1931: 1.

³⁸ “Fatti e Commenti,” IM 1 Aug. 1931: 1.

The other ideological article of note, titled “*Sullo stesso argomento*” (On the Same Argument), was written by Giusto Volcelo and revisited the debates surrounding tactics. The author was responding directly to Luigi Damiani, Luigi Bertoni, and Luigi Fabbri (the three Gigis, in Volcelo’s satirical expression), all European-based anti-organizationalists. Volcelo took the three Gigis to task for their criticism of those anarchists willing to work within union structures or other forms of political organization – anarchists whom the anti-organizationalists regarded as revisionists. Volcelo stated that the three Gigis want to keep anarchism on “the old path” characterized by spontaneity, a lack of concrete plans, a rigid theory and practice, and a chasm separating it from the rest of the population. He then asserted that the methods used by anarchists up until the 1930s had led to a movement “very few [in number], isolated, unprepared and impotent.”³⁹ Volcelo felt that anarchists needed to be more open-minded when it came to activism.

We must act according to the existence of the struggle and use the most effective means for arriving at our end We do not share completely the maxim ‘All or nothing.’ We will attempt to make the greatest leap towards anarchy; if we will not arrive at its extreme edge, we will pause where we will arrive, maintaining that position with all means, resuming the advance only when it is possible.⁴⁰

Both Il Martello and L’Adunata dei Refrattari included writings on anarchist history. These articles could be biographies of notable anarchists, as was the case in the 17 January 1932 issue of L’Adunata which featured a piece on the life of Luigi Galleani, who had died the previous year.⁴¹ Historical writing could also explore an important

³⁹ Giusto Volcelo, “Sullo stesso argomento,” IM 1 Aug. 1932: 3.

⁴⁰ Volcelo, “Sullo stesso argomento,” IM 1 Aug. 1932: 3.

⁴¹ Max Nettlau, “Luigi Galleani nei ricordi di Max Nettlau” (Memories of Luigi Galleani), AdR 17 Jan. 1932: 3.

event or an anarchist movement in a particular country such as Spain.⁴² These newspapers would also place the odd quote by Bakunin, Malatesta, or another anarchist within their pages often in the lower right corner following an article. Neither publication appears to have printed fiction.

In light of the kinds of reporting and writing that appeared in Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari we can surmise that the faithful readers of these publications were militant anarchists dedicated to the social revolution, interested in the debates surrounding theory and practice within the movement, and attentive to the movement's history. Supporters of Il Martello were well informed about labour issues in the United States while readers of L'Adunata were more aware of the plight of anarchist comrades abroad.

Both newspapers were involved in direct aid. It was often in the pages of these journals that news of arrested comrades was first reported with appeals for readers to give generously to help fellow anarchists. In these instances, the journals would become the main avenues for donations. As money was received for a particular individual or individuals, Il Martello and L'Adunata would record this information on the last page of the journal and, as will be shown in the following chapter, were also responsible for forwarding the funds to the necessary group or defence committee. The treasurer of the newspaper was responsible for sending the money raised to the proper recipients. Osvaldo Maraviglia held this position with L'Adunata dei Refrattari. As his Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC) file glumly observes, Maraviglia sent lots of money to Italy "to

⁴² Max Nettlau, "I precedenti del movimento anarchico spagnolo: Rapporti colla Internazionale del 1864" (The Beginnings of the Spanish Anarchist Movement: With Reference to the International of 1864), IM 1 Aug. 1931: 3.

help the anarchist cause.”⁴³ A few examples include Maraviglia sending funds in 1928 to Giuseppina Cola, of Rome, whose husband Stagnetti, an anarchist militant, had recently died, and to Giuseppe De Luisi and Alfredo Franzini who were both imprisoned, the former at Soriano nel Camino near Rome and the other on the penal island of Pantelleria.⁴⁴ He also forwarded money raised by the journal to Errico Malatesta and his partner Elena Melli to help with living expenses during the early 1930s. At this time Malatesta, who was in his late seventies, was making a meagre living as an electrician.⁴⁵ In addition, Maraviglia sent Melli 100 *lire* to help cover the costs of Malatesta’s tomb when the well-respected anarchist died in July 1932. As late as 1936, Maraviglia was still sending Melli money ostensibly to help her meet her needs.⁴⁶

Additionally, the last pages of Il Martello and L’Adunata were reserved for anarchist circles around North America to advertise social and cultural events in various localities. These groups tended to be most concentrated in the eastern United States in cities such as East Boston, Needham, Newark, Paterson, Brooklyn, Pittston, Pennsylvania, and Manville, Rhode Island. *Circoli* also existed in Detroit, Chicago and Gary, Indiana, and on the west coast in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In Canada, groups in Toronto, Sault Ste Marie, and Windsor were the most active during the 1920s and 1930s. If the events advertised by these circles were fundraisers, which they often were, each group would give an account of the money raised, the cost to hold the event, how much money remained after costs were covered, and the cause for which the money

⁴³ Castelli, Alto Commisario per la Provincia di Napoli, Napoli, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 2 Apr. 1926, Osvaldo Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁴⁴ Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 4 Apr. 1928, Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁴⁵ Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁴⁶ Osvaldo Maraviglia, NYC, to Elena Melli, Rome, 12/13 July 1933, Nicola Di Domenico, busta 1781; Divisione di Polizia Politica to unknown, 15 May 1936, Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

had been collected. For example, a notice from *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari"* was placed in the 6 January 1940 issue of L'Adunata dei Refrattari stating that *Filodrammatica Aurora* would be performing two plays at Detroit's Carpathia Hall on 20 January 1940. The first was a drama by W.C. Wentworth called "*Spose di Guerra*" (Brides of War) and the other a comedy, "*I Due Sordi*" (The Two Deaf People) written by G. Moineaux. The plays were to be followed by a dance with the music performed by an orchestra. Food and refreshments were also to be available. The price of admission for the event was thirty-five cents per person and the money raised after expenses was to be donated to political prisoners.⁴⁷ Four weeks after this event was held, a follow up notice posted by *Il Gruppo "I Refrattari"* in L'Adunata stated that \$400.40 had been made at the door while expenses totaled \$272.10. The remaining \$139.30 was to be divided among three different funds for political prisoners as follows: the Bortolotti-Confalonieri defence fund in Toronto, the subject of the next chapter, received \$50; \$44.65 each was given to Political Victims in Italy and to the Persecuted of Europe, respectively.⁴⁸ It was more difficult for anarchists in smaller centres to raise the same amount of money as comrades in large cities. In 1922, an unnamed group in Timmins, Ontario, held a dance to benefit Sacco and Vanzetti and Il Martello. Through ticket and refreshment sales \$28.15 was made but after expenses only \$20 remained. These funds were then divided accordingly: \$15 was sent to the Sacco and Vanzetti Defence Fund and five dollars given to Il Martello.⁴⁹ In addition to advertising events, the last page could also be an inexpensive way for comrades to communicate with each other by posting a notice. Umberto Martignago,

⁴⁷ The notice for this event does not state whether the orchestra was comprised of anarchists or non-anarchist. "Comunicazioni," AdR 6 Jan. 1940: 8.

⁴⁸ "Comunicazioni," AdR 17 Feb. 1940: 8.

⁴⁹ IM 28 Jan. 1922: 4.

who had previously lived in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, sent a brief letter to L'Adunata dei Refrattari notifying them and his many comrades who read the paper that he had a new address in Rouyn, Quebec.⁵⁰

The last page would also feature a list of all those who had paid for subscriptions and/or donated money to help cover the deficits these papers often had. Again, a full accounting of the funds the paper received were printed, totaled, and subtracted from the remaining deficit. A surprising aspect of these subscriber and contributor lists was the amount of information published about each. If a comrade gave money to a journal or a cause, the first initial of their first name was printed along with their surname as was the city or town in which they lived, and the amount they had forwarded. This kind of publicity is hard to imagine in contemporary anarchist publications concerned with personal security. In this period, it was plainly very important for Italian anarchists, whether they published papers or held fundraisers, to report to fellow comrades on money-related matters to demonstrate that funds were going to their intended recipients. This way there could be no accusations of theft from within the movement. Honesty was a highly regarded attribute among Italian anarchists – and so, perhaps, in this case honesty trumped security. Alternately, in light of the considerable surveillance on the part of Canadian, American, and Italian security forces, the publication of the names and locations of adherents could also be interpreted as a form of defiance.

Anarchist Circles

Anarchist circles were the life's blood of the Italian movement. It was these groups that supported movement newspapers and sometimes established their own,

⁵⁰ AdR 15 Apr. 1939: 8.

organized social and cultural events, hosted lecturers, and engaged in various kinds of activism within Italian communities. They also provided a space for anarchists to meet and discuss anarchist philosophy and tactics, social and political issues, as well as maintain existing social ties and develop new ones. Anarchist circles were usually titled by words that reflected the philosophy's ethos: *volontà* (will), *libertà* (liberty), *pensiero* (thought) and *libertario* (libertarian). Groups were also named after anarchist journals. Both Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari had groups comprised of those involved in each paper's publication as well as others who were not. Among the Italian anarchists in North America it does not appear to have been a common practice to name *circoli* after anarchists. Yet, some groups did pay homage to well-respected or martyred anarchists. *Il Gruppo Femminile Luisa Michel*, mentioned in Chapter Three, was named after the French anarchist and communard. A group bearing the name of Michele Schirru, the would-be anarchist assassin of Mussolini, was formed in New York City in the 1930s, following Schirru's execution by Italian authorities.⁵¹

Unfortunately, Italian anarchists did not leave behind much information regarding the creation and history of the particular *circolo* to which they belonged. Many who migrated to North America during the 1920s and 1930s joined groups that were already in existence and because the majority of the anarchists in this study have long since passed away their memories are lost forever. Still we can get a sense of how these circles may have formed based on the little information that does exist.

When Attilio Bortolotti moved from Windsor to Toronto in 1929 he did not have much contact with the Italian left in that city though he had met a number of Jewish and

⁵¹ Capo della Sezione Prima, Rome, to Direzione Generale della Pubblica Sicurezza, Rome, 26 Sep. 1931, Salvatore Dettori, busta 1758, CPC, ACS, Rome.

Russian anarchists. In August 1934, a young anarchist from Pennsylvania, Nicola Leone, came to Toronto to visit his sister and sought out Bortolotti whose address he was given by the publishers of L'Adunata dei Refrattari.⁵² That month would mark the four-year anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti and the two anarchists decided to print 1000 leaflets to commemorate the Italian martyrs. It was while handing out this literature, most likely in the Dufferin Street and Davenport Road area, the Little Italy where Bortolotti lived, that he and Leone met an Italian socialist who informed them of another anarchist, Ruggero Benvenuti, who also lived in the community. Soon after Bortolotti and Benvenuti became acquainted and started to attend meetings at the Matteotti Club, named after the Italian socialist and parliamentarian assassinated by Fascists in 1924, in the hope of finding others open to anarchist ideas. The club was mostly comprised of socialists and Bortolotti often expressed his anarchist views. After a few months, one of the socialists challenged Bortolotti to a debate, presumably to prove which of the two political philosophies had the most merit. There is no description about the debate itself but after it ended six men approached Bortolotti and shook his hand. The consensus among the group was that they should start their own anarchist circle and this was how *Il Gruppo Libertario* was formed.⁵³

Anarchist *circoli* ranged in size. Toronto's *Il Gruppo Libertario*, for instance, had but twelve members while *Il Gruppo Libertà* from Needham, Massachusetts, numbered thirty.⁵⁴ However, given the lack of membership lists, it is difficult to know the size of

⁵² Attilio Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream: A [sic] Oral History with Art Berthelot," Kick It Over 17 (Winter 1986/1987): 1; Attilio Bortolotti and Rossella Di Leo, "Between Canada and the USA: A Tale of Immigrants and Anarchists," Kate Sharpley Library, <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/8pk1h4> (accessed 18 July 2010).

⁵³ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 184-185; Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream" 1.

⁵⁴ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 184-185.

other anarchist circles in North America and trying to recreate them through available materials leads to an incomplete picture. It is quite likely that groups could number less than twelve and others in excess of thirty. Though anarchists were not a large demographic within Italian communities in North America, they still had an influence stronger than their numbers might suggest. As Jennifer Guglielmo has argued, this was due to the establishment of “quite visible alternative cultural and political spaces in their neighbourhoods, which became popular centres for immigrant education, political discussion, labour organizing, and recreation.”⁵⁵

Anarchist groups typically met every week in a variety of different locations.⁵⁶ Sault Ste Marie’s *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* either bought or rented a 150-person capacity hall on Albert Street West, located in the predominantly Italian community of the West End. The size of the building made it an ideal location for holding social events like dances and plays.⁵⁷ It was at this hall, presumably, that Giuseppe Coleffi, the director of the local *Società Guglielmo Marconi filodrammatica*, staged plays.⁵⁸ Another option could be for groups to construct their own meeting place though it is uncertain how frequent this occurred among Italian anarchists. According to Evaristo Ricciardelli, a member of *Il Gruppo Libertà*, the Needham-based anarchists built what he described as “a clubhouse” on Sachem Street.⁵⁹ Building, renting, or buying a space was an expensive proposition for a working-class movement; meeting in members’ homes was a less costly

⁵⁵ Jennifer Guglielmo, *Living the Revolution: Italian Women’s Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945* (Charlotte: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 142-143.

⁵⁶ Bencivenni 39.

⁵⁷ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

⁵⁸ Guglielmo Marconi was an Italian inventor who developed a wireless telegraph system. In 1909 he was the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work. Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 2 Oct. 1934, Giuseppe Coleffi, busta 1402, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁵⁹ Avrich *Anarchist Voices* 129.

alternative.⁶⁰ Brooklyn's *Circolo Volontà* enjoyed, rent-free, a large meeting place with a stage. Some of the group's Sicilian members had links with the Mafia which owned this Cook Street building. As a result of this relationship, the anarchists used the space rent free and were never interfered with.⁶¹ This interaction between anarchists and organized crime is quite surprising considering the very different philosophies of each group. Mafia members were often paid by employers to prevent union organizing attempts in various factories and disrupt strike picket lines in New York City during this period.⁶²

As with the wider left, autodidacticism was common among anarchists with literature being read in one's spare time. Anarchist circles were a good source for radical reading material and an important means of education for a movement comprised mostly of people who, having to begin working at a young age to help contribute to family incomes, had received very little in the way of formal education.⁶³ Some even had their own modest libraries such as *Il Gruppo 'I Refrattari'* from Detroit.⁶⁴ Members would be free to borrow books, pamphlets, and newspapers which in turn led to discussions. As the Toronto-based anarchist Marie Tiboldo recounted, the group her father belonged to discussed anarchist philosophy, articles from *Il Martello*, and even Henry George's Single Tax Movement.⁶⁵

Anarchist *circoli* could also publish small scale newspapers. In 1934, Toronto's *Il Gruppo Libertario* embarked on the time-consuming work of publishing *Il Libertario* on an old mimeograph machine. This process required the use of a typewriter to cut a

⁶⁰ Julia Barnett, "The Life and Times of Marie Tiboldo," *New Socialist* 46 (April/May 2004): 20.

⁶¹ "Giovanni 'John' Vattuone, 1899-1994," David Koven Papers (DKP), File 131, IISH, unpublished manuscript, 1994, 10.

⁶² Guglielmo 190, 247.

⁶³ Guglielmo 153.

⁶⁴ Avrich *Anarchist Voices* 179-180.

⁶⁵ Barnett 20. Tiboldo does not name her father's anarchist group in the interview from the *New Socialist* but I am inclined to believe it was not the same as *Il Gruppo Libertario* also from Toronto.

stencil in waxed mulberry paper which was then placed around an ink filled drum. Once a blank sheet of paper was placed in the mimeograph, a hand crank located on the side of the machine put the drum and a pressure roller into action drawing the sheet forward. The process would force the ink through the stencil and on to the paper. It is unclear how many years this paper was produced, the total number of issues released, or its circulation but it did range in size from four to six pages.⁶⁶

Social Events

In addition, anarchist groups were responsible for organizing a wide variety of social and cultural events. Dances, dinners, plays, concerts, and picnics were often held on weekends and provided anarchists the opportunity to socialize. These *feste* were advertised among and open to the wider Italian community in an attempt to recruit new adherents as well as make contacts with those outside the anarchist movement. As historian Salvatore Salerno has shown in his study of the IWW, such happenings helped extend the movement's criticism of "industrial society beyond the confines of the factory gate."⁶⁷ Often these social events were held in tandem and a dinner could be followed by a dance or a play. In most cases these gatherings would mobilize resources through fundraisers to support movement newspapers, political prisoners in Italy and elsewhere, and defence funds among others. A door fee was usually charged for these events to cover costs and raise money. In some cases there was a general admission and in others men would pay a higher entrance fee than women. In January 1929, *Il Gruppo Autonomo* of East Boston held an event for a *Festa della Frutta* for which men were charged one

⁶⁶ Bortolotti 1. I have been unable to locate any copies of Il Libertario.

⁶⁷ Salerno 150.

dollar to enter but women could attend for free.⁶⁸ This may have been an attempt to draw more women to anarchist events or ease the financial burden on couples when both were anarchists. It was rare, however, for those who could not afford the cover charge to be turned away.⁶⁹ Efforts were also made to include the children of adherents in these activities. The advertisement for the annual Il Martello fundraising picnic and dance had “Bring your kids” written in English followed with this explanation in Italian: “[Carlo] Tresca will speak in English, as in the preceding years, to make them [the kids] know the faith that animates their parents.”⁷⁰

In keeping with their anti-nationalist and anti-religious views, anarchists created their own “holidays,” a tradition that had begun in Italy.⁷¹ In place of national birthdays such as Dominion Day and religious holidays like Easter, anarchists would celebrate May Day and commemorate 23 August, the date that Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were executed. To that end there were commemorative reprints of paintings made in honour of these two anarchists. Il Martello ran an advertisement for reproductions of a Sacco and Vanzetti painting done by Totò Tamburrino that would become available on 22 August 1931. The reprints were 20 x 17 inches in size and contained four colours. A caption from the ad reads: “Decorate your home with the image of the two great martyrs.”⁷² A radical calendar, known as the *Almanacco Sovversivo*, was created to keep track of these important days as well as note significant revolutionary moments in history such as fall of the Bastille and the Paris Commune.⁷³

⁶⁸ “Comunicazioni,” AdR 12 Jan. 1929: 7.

⁶⁹ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

⁷⁰ IM 1 Aug. 1931: 3.

⁷¹ Michael Miller Topp, Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 53.

⁷² IM 1 Aug. 1931: 3.

⁷³ Vecoli, “‘*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States” 58.

Radical holidays were a time for militants to wear red ties or carnations, and were observed in different ways – from local events that might include a meal and a speech to large convergences⁷⁴ that would draw anarchists from various cities.⁷⁵ On 2 September 1923, a public park in Detroit was the site of the commemoration of Gaetano Bresci's assassination of Italy's King Umberto in 1900.⁷⁶ According to one witness, more than two thousand were in attendance – most of them Italians, though some Spaniards and Americans were also present.⁷⁷ The gathering was chaired by Umberto Martignago of Sault Ste Marie's *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* and featured speakers living in the United States and Canada. Windsor, Ontario's anarchist circle was also present with Giulio Ghetti saying a few words on this occasion. No detailed record of the proceedings appears to have survived but speakers did explain who Gaetano Bresci was and why he killed King Umberto I – a subject that was explored in Chapter One.⁷⁸ Though links existed between Detroit and Sault Ste Marie anarchists, it was uncommon for the members of *Libero Pensiero* to travel to United States with much frequency due to costs, time off work, and possible problems while crossing the border. A trip of this sort would only occur for special events.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Here I am using the word “convergence” to mean a radical gathering in the same way that contemporary anarchists use this term to refer to political gatherings.

⁷⁵ Vecoli, “‘*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States” 77.

⁷⁶ The event was originally scheduled to take place on 29 July 1923, the exact day twenty-three years earlier that Bresci assassinated King Umberto I. However, for unknown reasons, the convergence was postponed to 2 September. *AdR* 4 Aug. 1923: 4.

⁷⁷ The figure of more than 2000 in attendance comes courtesy of Attilio Bortolotti. Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 180. Though the number seems quite high, reportage of the event in *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* indicates that an incredible \$2600.00 was raised at the event. Anarchist social gatherings were generally inexpensive and if tickets were as high as \$1.25 per person it would have meant 2080 were in attendance. After \$153.53 in expenses, \$2471.47 remained and was earmarked in the following manner: \$1853.56 was given to political victims in Rome, Turin, Milan, and Sicily while \$642.91 was divided among the following anarchist newspapers: *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, *Il Vespro Anarchico*, *Rivendicazione*, *Il Messaggero della Riscossa*, *Il Risveglio* (Geneva), and *Il Martello*. *AdR* 15 Sep. 1923: 4.

⁷⁸ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 180.

⁷⁹ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

May Day was another significant date on the anarchist calendar. Anarchists had different ways of observing it. May First was an international demonstration for the eight hour day as well as a commemoration for Chicago's famous Haymarket martyrs.⁸⁰ For some Italian anarchists, like Luigi Galleani, *Primo Maggio* was a time to celebrate the day's historic origins and reinforce revolutionary militancy in adherents.⁸¹ These anarchists became concerned over time that May Day was turning into a symbolic event divorced from its radical roots. They did not want it to become just another social occasion during which people ate food, danced, and got drunk. Nor did they want *Primo Maggio* to be a state-sanctioned holiday. Instead, some anarchists "insisted that it should be a day of real solidarity with the dispossessed, a day of unyielding militancy, such as the May 1886 strike had been."⁸² Even with these criticisms, however, many anarchists still viewed it more as a worker's holiday than not.

Filodrammatica

It was not uncommon for anarchist groups and circles to have their own *filodrammatica* or amateur dramatic society. The *filodrammatica* of Detroit's *Il Gruppo 'I Refrattari'* was organized by Ugo Baldi,⁸³ an anarchist considered to be a gifted

⁸⁰ Philip S. Foner, *May Day: A Short History of the International Workers' Holiday, 1886-1986* (New York: International Publishers, 1986) 39-40.

⁸¹ Vecoli, "'Primo Maggio' in the United States" 61.

⁸² Robert D'Attilio, "Primo Maggio: Haymarket as Seen by Italian Anarchists in America," *Haymarket Scrapbook*, eds. Dave Roediger and Franklin Rosemont (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 1986) 230.

⁸³ Ugo Baldi was born in the city of Pistoia in Tuscany in 1876 to parents Joseph and Annunciata. The date of his emigration from Italy and arrival in the United States is unknown. In 1918, while in Chicago, Baldi was stabbed during a protest against the Italian Workers Mission's visit to that city. The Italian Workers Mission was comprised of former syndicalists and radicals who, during the First World War became supportive of Italy's involvement in the conflict. The mission was sponsored by then AFL President Samuel Gompers, in an attempt to curb the spread of radicalism among Italian workers in America. Baldi was known to make his living as an actor but in 1931 his CPC file mentions his operating a small candy store. Attilio Bortolotti also claims Baldi was a doctor. He died of pancreatic cancer in Detroit on 16

actor.⁸⁴ While in Toronto, Attilio Bortolotti was the coordinator of *Il Gruppo Libertario's filodrammatica*.⁸⁵ There were also *filodrammatiche* comprised only of women such as Paterson, New Jersey's *Femminile di Musica e di Canto* (Women's Club for Music and Song).⁸⁶ Like other cultural events, theatrical performances often commemorated anarchist martyrs who lost their lives during the Paris Commune or during anarchist holidays such as *Primo Maggio*.⁸⁷ The plays were framed in a way that conveyed anarchist principles – often including strong critiques of religion and capitalism – or addressed issues facing Italian migrants.

Judging from the available evidence, anarchist *filodrammatiche* did not collaborate with other drama groups on the left. However, anarchists were aware of the performances of the drama groups of the wider Italian left suggesting that anarchists may have attended these productions. As Attilio Bortolotti recalled, “We left the socialists and communists way behind when it came to plays and recitals – followed, naturally, by dancing – for twenty-five cents a person.”⁸⁸

The most popular plays among anarchist *filodrammatiche* were those written by the poet and playwright Pietro Gori. Gori was born in Messina, Sicily, in 1865 and became involved in the anarchist movement in his early twenties while studying the classics and then law at the University of Pisa. He was arrested on numerous occasions for his anarchist-themed writing and activism. Gori's involvement in organizing a May

December 1934. Topp 220; Bortolotti and Di Leo, “Between Canada and the USA”; Consolato d'Italia, NYC, to Prefetto di Pistoia, Pistoia, 26 Nov. 1931; Certified Record of Death, State of Michigan, County of Wayne, 16 Dec. 1934, Ugo Baldo, busta 273, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁸⁴ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 180; *AdR* 22 Dec. 1934 in Ugo Baldo, busta 273, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁸⁵ Avrich *Anarchist Voices* 184.

⁸⁶ Guglielmo 172-173.

⁸⁷ Rudolph J. Vecoli, “The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929,” *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione 1880-1940*, eds. O. Bayer et al. (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1983) 278.

⁸⁸ Avrich *Anarchist Voices* 184.

Day celebration in that city in 1890 led to a six-month stay in jail. After his release, Gori travelled to Milan and began to practice law. As a lawyer he was an important asset to an Italian anarchist movement constantly facing state repression.⁸⁹ Gori was considered such a threat to social order by the Italian government that he was often arrested in the days leading up to May First. During his incarceration in May 1892, Gori wrote the one act play *Primo Maggio*. Two books of poetry, Alla conquista dell'Avvenire (Conquering the Future) and Prigioni e Battaglie (Prisons and Battles) were also published that year and quickly sold out with 9000 copies in print.⁹⁰

Following anarchist Sante Caserio Geronimo's assassination of French President Sadi Carnot on 25 June 1894, the Italian press, inadvertently touting the playwright's widespread renown, blamed Gori for inciting the attack. The next month three anti-anarchist laws were passed by the Italian government which curbed civil rights. Gori was now facing a possible five-year prison sentence and fled Italy. He made his way across Europe to London and set sail for the United States. Once Gori arrived in America in 1895, he quickly resumed his anarchist activities. He traveled extensively throughout the United States visiting Italian communities wherever they existed. Gori is said to have held as many as 400 meetings in the short year he lived in North America. His appearances combined the singing of radical songs with speeches about anarchist philosophy.⁹¹ Basing himself in Paterson, New Jersey, Gori was also responsible for forming *Il Gruppo 'Diritto all'Esistenza'* (The Right to Exist Group) in that city as well as co-creating the group's weekly newspaper La Questione Sociale with the Spanish

⁸⁹ Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism, 1864-1892* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) 258-259; Bencivenni 200; and M. Antonioli and F. Bertolucci, "Pietro Gori," *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani*, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 745-746.

⁹⁰ Antonioli and Bertolucci 746.

⁹¹ Topp 28.

anarchist Pedro Esteve that same year. During that period the organizationalist anarchist communist La Questione Sociale was the most popular Italian-language publication in the United States.⁹² Due in large part to Gori's transnational activism, he was able to help lay the groundwork for anarchist networks in the United States from 1895-1896. Gori's activities did not end there. After he was allowed to return to Italy, where he resumed his anarchist activities, Gori was again forced to leave the country in 1898 following the repression of the left and labour unions sparked by a series of bread riots. This time Gori made his way to Buenos Aires where he organized unions and taught criminology at the city's university.⁹³

Gori's cultural legacy should not be minimized. His plays were the favourites of anarchist *filodrammatiche* throughout North America. The most popular play was *Primo Maggio*. It focuses on a young peasant woman named Ida who, aware of her exploitation by the local landowners, dreams of a better world where people are free, women and men are comrades, and all work for the common good and not for a few wealthy *padroni*. As the play is set on May first, the workers' holiday, Ida implores a worker, a sailor, and her father to heed the day's significance. The second main character of the play is a young gentleman who is Ida's love interest. It is his family that owns the land that Ida works, but the young gentleman, guiltily aware that his wealth comes at the expense of poorly-paid and over-worked peasants, has become mentally and physically ill as a result. When Ida meets a stranger from a distant land – the land that Ida has seen in her dreams – the

⁹² La Questione Sociale (1895-1917) shifted from the organisationalist to the anti-organisationalist position following Giuseppe Ciancabilla's editorship of the paper in 1899. The next editor was Luigi Galleani who, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, maintained the paper's anti-organisationalist line. Topp 28; Vecoli, "The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929" 271-272; Vecoli, "'Primo Maggio' in the United States" 61, 65; Avrich, Anarchist Voices 503; Antonioli and Bertolucci 747.

⁹³ Antonioli and Bertolucci 747.

play becomes a discussion on who will travel with Ida and the stranger to this “promised land,” an allegory for revolution. As the stranger explains, the path to the “promised land” will be difficult: “I have crossed mountains and hills; I have crossed rivers and seas. The thorns of the forests have lacerated my clothes and my flesh, the midday sun has burned my blood, the wintry rain has bruised my face”⁹⁴ Through a series of debates, Ida attempts to convince others to join her on the path to revolution. She is successful in persuading both the worker and the sailor, who begin to realize the power they wield by withholding their labour. Her father, however, thinks Ida is crazy and accepts his lot as an exploited labourer. And, though the young gentleman realizes his role in the exploitation of others, in the end he is unwilling to join Ida and her comrades.⁹⁵

The play was book-ended with the music of “*Va pensiero, sull’ali dorate*” from Verdi’s famous opera *Nabucco*, a song that was well-known among Italians. Gori, however, transformed it. He retitled it “*Inno del Primo Maggio*” and changed Verdi’s lyrics. Where the original featured the Jews grieving for the loss of their homeland following their expulsion by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar (Nabucco in Italian), Gori’s version was about the celebration of May First which the anarchist likened to the “Sweet Easter of those who work.”⁹⁶ The “*Inno del Primo Maggio*,” like the play, was a call to workers to engage in revolutionary action and, according to historian Marcella Bencivenni, it was “an instant classic both in Italy and the United States, which

⁹⁴ Antonioli, *Pietro Gori* 133.

⁹⁵ Antonioli, *Pietro Gori* 128-146.

⁹⁶ Bencivenni 199-200; D’Attilio, “*Primo Maggio* 230; Vecoli, “‘*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States” 59-60. It was a common practice for radical songwriters to draft lyrics to the tune of a well-known song. Jim Connell’s “The Red Flag” is sung to the music of “O Tannenbaum,” for instance. Salerno 147.

contributed significantly in the popularization of May Day among Italian workers.”⁹⁷

Primo Maggio was first performed in Paterson, New Jersey, during Gori’s time in America – he was even part of the cast – as part of a May Day celebration.⁹⁸

Another popular play written by Pietro Gori was *Senza Patria* (Without a Country). It dealt with migration. The protagonist was a peasant farmer who had fought to unify Italy during the *Risorgimento*. But the social reforms promised by the republicans prior to unification did not materialize and the *contadino*, disgusted with the Italian state, decided to emigrate. Exploring themes such as patriotism and the pain of leaving one’s home, *Senza Patria*, in anarchist fashion, demonstrated the limits of state-fostered national identities and argued instead for internationalism.⁹⁹

Productions of Gori’s plays could have a powerful influence. Joseph Moro was a deeply religious young man and would preach the gospel every Sunday to Italian immigrants. While working at a shoe factory in Stoneham, Massachusetts, Moro met an anarchist co-worker, Giovanni Eramo. Moro would try to talk about his religious beliefs to Eramo but the anarchist argued persuasively against religion. In 1912, Moro attended a picnic put on by Lynn anarchists near Wakefield, where he saw the Pietro Gori play *Calendimaggio*. As he reminisced, “I was deeply moved. It inspired me so much that in twenty-four hours I gave up all my religion, all my former beliefs, and started to read anarchist literature, including *Cronaca Sovversiva*.”¹⁰⁰

As important as Gori’s radical plays were within the Italian anarchist movement, it is important to keep in mind that he was not the only one who authored such works.

⁹⁷ Bencivenni 200.

⁹⁸ Vecoli, “‘*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States” 59-60.

⁹⁹ Bencivenni 200.

¹⁰⁰ Avrich *Anarchist Voices* 112-113.

Writing a play was open to anyone regardless of whether they were involved in a *filodrammatica* or not. Even Carlo Tresca penned a one-act play titled *L'Attentato a Mussolini ovvero Il segreto di Pulcinella* (The Attempt on Mussolini's Life or Pulcinella's Secret). The plot centred around two followers of Mussolini who infiltrated the antifascist movement in order to organize an attempt on *Il Duce's* life. The assassination would be thwarted and provide an excuse for further repression against the Italian left. *L'Attentato a Mussolini*, which opened on 19 December 1925 at the Central Opera House in New York City, may have lacked the sophistication of works like Gori's but the play still provided a satirical and critical look at fascism.¹⁰¹ Plays were also written, produced, and performed by the movement's women. These works depicted women as political and outspoken, and dealt with issues central to women's lives. For instance, *Il Ribelle* (The Rebel) revolved around a discussion on arranged marriage versus free love between a mother and a daughter.¹⁰²

It must be noted, however, that not all plays performed by anarchist *filodrammatiche* were written by anarchists. In 1930, Michele Schirru, an Italian fruit vendor and anarchist living in New York City, returned to Europe to assassinate Italy's Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini. Schirru hoped that the killing of *Il Duce* would lead to the end of fascism in Italy and spark a mass revolt against the far right. In January 1931, Schirru was living in a hotel in Rome working on his plans. Unfortunately, his activities were discovered by local police who attempted to arrest the anarchist in his hotel room. During the arrest and before he was physically searched, Schirru pulled out his gun, fired, and wounded all three of the officers. He then pointed the gun at his own head and fired.

¹⁰¹ Bencivenni 239-240.

¹⁰² Guglielmo 173.

The shot did not kill Schirru but he was gravely injured. The anarchist was rushed to hospital and underwent an operation that saved his life. When he was well enough to talk, Schirru admitted to Italian authorities that he had come to Rome to assassinate Mussolini. In May of that year, the anarchist appeared before a special tribunal that found him guilty and sentenced him to death by firing squad. Schirru was shot eight and a half hours after the delivery of the verdict.¹⁰³

Schirru left behind a wife and two children living in New York City. In order to help ease their financial strains, sympathizers organized a fund-raiser on 22 February 1932 at the Castle Hall in the Bronx. The event featured a speech by Constantino Zonchello of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, who spoke on Schirru's martyrdom, and a play, Paolo Giacometti's La Morte Civile (Civil Death), organized by three of Schirru's comrades: Salvatore Dettori, Joe Melloni, and Amadeo Fulvi.¹⁰⁴ Giacometti (1816-1882) was an Italian lawyer turned dramatist who penned a number of plays and does not appear to have been a radical. His La Morte Civile is a tragedy that tells the story of a father who is imprisoned for murder and cannot provide for his wife and daughter. The wife and daughter are taken in by a local doctor which raises the ire of a local priest who believes the daughter is the illegitimate offspring of the doctor and the widow. The father escapes from prison and when he realizes what has happened in his absence is torn between his desire to look after his daughter, as impossible as that would be, or leave her in the care of the doctor.¹⁰⁵ The play does mirror the experiences of the Schirru family to

¹⁰³ Maurizio Antonioli, "Michele Schirru," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 528-529; Melchior Steele [Raphael Schiavina], "1931: Michele Schirru and the Attempted Assassination of Mussolini," Man! 1.5-6 (May-June 1933), <http://libcom.org/history/articles/murder-michael-schirru> (accessed 28 July 2010).

¹⁰⁴ Grossardi, Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 25 Feb. 1932, Salvatore Dettori, busta 1758, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁰⁵ Paolo Giacometti, La Morte Civile (New York: George F. Nesbitt and Company, 1873) 2.

a point. Michele Schirru may have wanted to look after his family, but his political convictions and the repercussions of carrying them out made this impossible. The performance was attended by 300 people and \$174 was raised and given to Schirru's widow.¹⁰⁶

In addition to writing plays, anarchists also wrote politically-oriented fiction. In 1916, Osvaldo Maraviglia, who would later become the treasurer of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, produced a book-length manuscript about life during the First World War. It is not clear whether this novel was ever published, either in book form or a series of installments in an anarchist journal, and it is quite possible that no manuscript of this work exists today. Italian authorities caught wind of the manuscript after it was intercepted in the mail on its way to Maraviglia. A military censor stationed in Genoa had been reading Maraviglia's incoming and outgoing mail because the anarchist's letters were of a subversive and anti-militarist nature.¹⁰⁷ The anarchist had sent the manuscript to his sister Isolina Maraviglia, a teacher who lived in Caldarola located in the Marche region of Italy, to be proofread. The story centred around two estranged step brothers who shared a German father but had grown up in two different countries: France and Germany. Both had enlisted in the armies of their respective nations and, due to unexplained circumstances, came face to face on the battlefield. The lieutenant colonel, who wrote the report from which this information is drawn, had this to say about Maraviglia's manuscript: "While the first part of the novel does not contain anything to

¹⁰⁶ Grossardi, Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 25 Feb. 1932, Salvatore Dettori, busta 1758, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁰⁷ F. Sora, "Osvaldo Maraviglia," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 84; Tenente Colonnello, Capo Reparto Censura Militare Posta Estera, Genoa, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 10 Nov. 1916, Osvaldo Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

censor, towards the end, and in the commentary, there are phrases of marked subversive character.”¹⁰⁸ The report contained two excerpts from the manuscript though the passages are not attributed to either of the stepbrothers or any other character in the novel. The first passage seems to be spoken by someone, possibly one of the brothers, who comes to the realization that war pits workers from one country against those of another: “... such is the horror of war, it really is true what the anarchists and the socialists say, that war must not be made between workers. The war is fratricide ... it is disgraceful ...” In the second excerpt it is not clear whether Maraviglia is directing his contempt towards the military’s rank-and-file or its generals:

... it is also true they are of the assassins, of the cowardly, of the seducers of our sisters these men ... that have their petty medals and crosses; they are more than delinquents, and every one of these [medals and crosses] represents who knows how many crimes they have committed. But this goes unnoticed by the people [who] as the old heroes pass by, bow, take off their hats, [and] erect monuments, because these vile achievements have their reward ... and we repeat the words of our rebel poets: no countries, no borders ... [and] the people united
¹⁰⁹

As his repressed manuscript reveals, Maraviglia, like many anarchists, saw novel-writing as a political mission.

Speaking Tours

Speaking tours provided another way to reach potential radicals, maintain established networks, and create new ones. The speaking tour was yet another form of anarchist education. It became a staple of the anarchist movement in the pre-radio days

¹⁰⁸ Ten. Colonnello, Capo Reparto Censura Militare Posta Estera, Genoa, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 10 Nov. 1916, Osvaldo Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁰⁹ Ten. Colonnello, Capo Reparto Censura Militare Posta Estera, Genoa, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 10 Nov. 1916, Osvaldo Maraviglia, busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.

of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Public speaking events were invaluable for disseminating anarchist philosophy and critiques of capitalist society, discussing political events in Italy and North America, and raising money for comrades in legal trouble. At them, speaker and audience could interact in a dynamic way that print media could not rival.

While in his late teens, Bartolomeo Provo worked in a skate shop in Torrington, Connecticut, and subscribed to the *Federazione Socialista Italiana* (FSI) weekly *Il Proletario*. However, after reading a few issues he felt that the paper did not adequately reflect his political views. After being laid off in 1915, Provo moved to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he saw a leaflet advertising a lecture by the *Galleanisti* Constantino Zonchello. Impressed with the speaker's talk on "The Italians in America," Provo approached Zonchello afterwards and began to subscribe to *Cronaca Sovversiva*.¹¹⁰ A public lecture also brought Catina D'Amico into the anarchist movement. She had heard Galleani speak at an open-air meeting as a teenager and was impressed by what he said and the way in which he delivered his speech. Recalling that event, D'Amico stated, "[Galleani] spoke directly to my heart." She then became an active anarchist in Brooklyn and took part in picnics, *filodrammatiche*, and other activities.¹¹¹

For the majority of those who traveled the anarchist lecture circuit, tours were a demonstration of their commitment to anarchism and not a path to financial security. Emma Goldman, whose notoriety assured her large and attentive audiences, was one of the few anarchists to try to make a living by public speaking. Notwithstanding her reputation, Goldman was barely able to make ends meet and constantly relied on

¹¹⁰ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 116-117.

¹¹¹ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 111.

financial assistance from friends and comrades.¹¹² Various anarchist circles could organize a date for a speaker, book a venue, and advertise the event but there was no guarantee that all expenses would be recouped. If it was difficult for someone like Goldman to make money from lecturing, could it have been any easier for less-renowned Italian anarchists to supplement their incomes in this way? Following a series of lectures in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, in December 1919, Carlo Tresca returned to the United States with a mere eight dollars in Canadian funds in his pocket.¹¹³

Tresca, who was not a naturalized American citizen, was taking a large risk by leaving the United States. It was possible that his re-entry would be barred by American border authorities. In order to get into Canada he posed as a sportsman under an assumed name and had no difficulties. On his way home, when he crossed from Sault Ste Marie to its sister city in Michigan, Tresca was interviewed at length about his identity and plans in America. He explained that he was on his way to visit relatives in Detroit for Christmas and had plans to open a school. Tresca also added that he wished to become an American citizen. His calm demeanour and ability to answer the questions posed to him satisfactorily, not to mention Tresca's respectable appearance – the suit, hat, spectacles, and van dyke – led to him shaking hands with immigration officers and an offer of a cigar.¹¹⁴ Evaded in this instance, the border in others worked more effectively to hamper transnational activism. It was rare for those based in the United States to make

¹¹² Goldman received a mere \$50, for instance, for a 1927 lecture in London, Ontario – and after paying Goldman her fee and the hall rental, and owing to low attendance and the small amount of literature sold, her anarchist enthusiasts in London lost \$35.00, according to police estimates. "Report re Lecture on Russia in London, Ontario by Emma Goldman – Anarchist," H.M. Newson, Superintendent, Commanding Western Ontario District, London ON, to H.D.X., Commissioner, RCMP, 11 January 1927, File: Emma Goldman, RG 18, Vol. 3317, LAC, Ottawa.

¹¹³ Carlo Tresca, *The Autobiography of Carlo Tresca*, ed. Nunzio Pernicone (New York: The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, 2003) 193, 197.

¹¹⁴ Tresca 191-193.

public appearances in Canada. For someone like Tresca, unable to claim American citizenship, the personal danger of crossing the Canada-United States border was too great: he did not pay Canada a return visit.

Inter-ethnic Anarchist Crossover

The numerous *circoli*, newspapers, social and cultural events, and public speaking tours among the Italian anarchists attest to the vibrancy of their movement. Anarchist groups throughout North America (and beyond) created a transnational network that allowed for the circulation of anarchist ideas, publications, and plays. The newspapers and plays created by the Italian anarchists were, not surprisingly, written in the Italian language and aimed specifically at Italian audiences. Italian anarchist activism occurred most often within Italian communities in Canada and the United States. Like other migrant populations, Italians settled in the same areas as family, friends, and *paesani*. In these zones of *Italianità*, traditional cultural practices, support networks, and a shared language were maintained. It made sense that the activism of radicals would occur in their own localities and among other Italian migrants. But to what extent did Italian anarchists intermingle with other migrant populations or the host societies of Canada and the United States? Was there much cooperation among anarchists of various ethnic backgrounds or did Italian anarchists remain insular in their radical work?

Cooperation did exist among Italian and non-Italian anarchists. This was probably most apparent during the Sacco-Vanzetti case when anarchists of all ethnicities banded together to raise awareness of the two anarchists sentenced to death and campaign for their release. During this period, Sault Ste Marie's *Il Gruppo Libero Pensiero* was

joined in marches by the Finnish anarchists living in the city. However, the relationship between these two anarchist communities went beyond Sacco and Vanzetti activism and extended into the social and cultural spheres more generally. This meant that Finns would attend the activities of the Italians and vice versa.¹¹⁵ The circle around L'Adunata dei Refrattari collaborated with the New York City-based group Road to Freedom, which was comprised of Jewish, French, and American members.¹¹⁶ Both groups held a meeting in New York to coordinate efforts to pressure the Soviet government to release Francesco Ghezzi, an Italian anarchist who had been clandestinely agitating among Russian anarchists.¹¹⁷ Ghezzi was arrested in May 1929 and charged with counter-revolutionary activities. He was sentenced to three years in a labour camp located 250 kilometres northeast of Moscow.¹¹⁸ A report from the Italian consul general noted that, "The meeting was attended by about 300 anarchists comprised of Polish, Spanish, Jewish, and Italians." Those in attendance were addressed by speakers in Italian, Spanish, Yiddish, and English.¹¹⁹

It is difficult to know how often Italian anarchists interacted with their counterparts of other ethnicities. The example mentioned above of the Gaetano Bresci commemoration in Detroit featured a speech in Spanish by Pedro Esteve and there were Spaniards in attendance even if they were not as numerous as the Italians. In Toronto, *Il*

¹¹⁵ Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

¹¹⁶ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 149, 420-421.

¹¹⁷ Barbara Ielasi and Mikhail Tsovma, "Francesco Ghezzi: Italian Anarchist in Vorkuta," Kate Sharpley Library, <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/sj3w24> (accessed 27 July 2010); Consolato Generale d'Italia, NYC, to Casellario Politico Centrale, 7 Jan. 1931, Carlo Pagella, busta 3652, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹¹⁸ Ghezzi was eventually released from the labour camp due to the lobbying efforts of an unknown number of supporters. However, he was not allowed to leave the Soviet Union. In 1937, Ghezzi was re-arrested again for counter-revolutionary activities but also for accusations of being a Nazi sympathiser and pro-Trotskyist – both of which he denied. He was imprisoned for two years before being given an eight year sentence in another labour camp. Ghezzi died there in 1942. Ielasi and Tsovma, "Francesco Ghezzi."

¹¹⁹ Consolato Generale d'Italia, NYC, to Casellario Politico Centrale, 7 Jan. 1931, Carlo Pagella, busta 3652, CPC, ACS, Rome.

Gruppo Libertario did not have a space of its own where members could stage their plays. But, because of the relationships established with the city's other ethnic anarchists, the group was able to make use of the Jewish left's Labour Lyceum and an old church where Russian anarchists held meetings.¹²⁰ What is not known is whether Jewish and Russian anarchists attended the performances of *Il Gruppo Libertario's* *filodrammatica* or, if so, whether someone was able to act as a translator for the non-Italians. Some Italian radical plays were translated into English and performed though it is not clear how often this may have occurred. A notice published in the New York City-based The Road to Freedom advertised an English production of Pietro Gori's *Without a Country* that was scheduled for 5 March 1927. The play was a benefit for L'Adunata dei Refrattari and presented by the International Literature Group.¹²¹

Typically, Italian anarchist papers were written in standard Italian which meant that their readership was largely, if not almost exclusively, Italian. It is not clear to what extent the editors of publications such as L'Adunata dei Refrattari, for example, felt it necessary to reach anarchists outside of the Italian *milieu*. Perhaps the existence of Spanish, Yiddish, and Russian-language journals meant that each ethnically-specific anarchist group was perceived to be responsible for reaching its own demographic. Yet, there were exceptions to this pattern. Though outside this study's regional parameters, the example of the San Francisco-based Man! bears mention. Between 1927 and 1932, Italian anarchists living in the city published the Italian-language journal L'Emancipazione. But, possibly due to their increasing contact with Jewish, Chinese, and English anarchists, the Italians decided that it would make more sense to create an

¹²⁰ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 184-185.

¹²¹ The Road to Freedom Mar. 1927.

English-language newspaper to reach more people. The first issue of Man! appeared in January 1933 and ran for seven years. Its publication was overseen by a mixed group of Italian and non-Italian anarchists.¹²²

It was far more common for Italians to belong to specifically Italian anarchist circles than to those comprised of multiple ethnicities. This is not to suggest that there was something about Italian anarchists in particular that made them avoid interaction with other migrant radicals – far from it. But, the names of subscribers and contributors that appear in publications like Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari are almost completely Italian. Still, Italians did join mixed groups like those that formed around Man! During a visit to Toronto in 1934, Emma Goldman helped establish the Libertarian Group that was comprised of Italian, Jewish, Russian, Dutch, and English members. These anarchists, also trying to reach a wider audience, mounted campaigns among the city's wider Anglo-Celtic population and published their pamphlets in English.¹²³ Those Italians who were involved in the Libertarian Group, such as Attilio Bortolotti, Ruggero Benvenuti, and Ernesto Gava, continued to focus on antifascist work.¹²⁴

Conclusion

The Italian anarchists in Canada and the United States created a vibrant cultural network that sustained their radical politics. Their various newspapers were a source of anarchist philosophy and critical commentary on current events in North America, Italy,

¹²² Marcus Graham, ed., Man! An Anthology of Anarchist Ideas, Essays, Poetry and Commentaries (London: Cienfuegos Press, 1974) xviii; Avrich, Anarchist Voices 163, 489.

¹²³ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 79, 185.

¹²⁴ Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz, The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 139-140; Emma Goldman, Toronto, to James Heney, Port Arthur, 17 Oct 1939, Federico Arcos: Emma Goldman Papers (FA:EGP), Labadie Collection (LC), Ann Arbor.

and elsewhere. Publications such as Il Martello and L'Adunata dei Refrattari also publicized the myriad social gatherings organized by anarchist *circoli* around North America. Anarchist groups were an essential component of the movement. They planned political actions and organized various social and cultural events – dinners, dances, picnics, and plays. These gatherings acted not only as a way for anarchists to socialize and attract new members, but were also designed to raise money for the anarchist press, political prisoners, or legal defences. Typically each anarchist *circolo* also had a *filodrammatica* that would perform plays, most often those written by Italian anarchist playwright Pietro Gori, that espoused anarchist principles and spoke of the Italian migrant experience. Anarchists also observed their own “holidays” as a counter to religious and nationalist celebrations.

It was through their press, anarchist circles, social events, and public speaking that anarchists were able to maintain, reinforce, and expand their transnational movement. It also enabled them to reach a wider Italian migrant population, to challenge the liberal democratic capitalist order and organize resistance to it, and instill a sense historical continuity via “invented traditions” as a means of sustaining anarchist culture.¹²⁵ Though Italian anarchist culture was aimed specifically at Italians, there were examples of ethnic crossover between Italian anarchists and anarchists from other migrant populations. However, it is difficult to determine exactly how widespread or frequent this intermingling may have been. With the exception of a few cases, Italian anarchists apparently did not invest themselves heavily in changing the Anglo-Celtic societies surrounding them. Their inability or unwillingness to do so would prove

¹²⁵ Vecoli, “*Primo Maggio*’ in the United States” 58. See also Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, eds., The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

disastrous in later years when “black diaper babies” became more assimilated into Canadian or American culture than into the radical political culture of their parents, leading to a decline in Italian anarchist numbers in North America.

Chapter 6: Deportation Struggles

Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated the cultural importance among Italian anarchists of financing and sustaining cultural activities. Comrades menaced by imprisonment, deportation, or execution could also look to the wider anarchist movement to agitate on their behalf. Anarchists were inspired by the movement's ethos of mutual aid but also by their individual identification as anarchists. After all, any anarchist could wind up in trouble with authorities. Support was also given because many incarcerated comrades were also friends, neighbours, and co-workers.

To understand how Italian anarchists responded to the victimization of their comrades, this chapter will focus on the struggle to prevent the deportation from Canada to Fascist Italy of two anarchists, Attilio Bortolotti and Agostino Confalonieri, during the 1939-1940 period. This discussion will revisit the different components of Transnational Social Movement (TSM) theory introduced earlier in this thesis. It will examine the ways Italian anarchists framed deportation and mobilized to fight against it, show how their political identities influenced alliances with other anarchists or non-anarchists, and the various methods employed to disseminate information about the plight of the arrested anarchists and to raise funds for their campaign. This chapter will argue that the transnational character of the Italian anarchist movement was central in preventing the deportation of Bortolotti and Confalonieri. Regardless of where Italian anarchists were located, whether in large urban centres or smaller resource extraction towns, their ability to tap into a much larger movement was an important means for dealing with various crises and reflected the anarchist principle of mutual aid. This example also demonstrates

the importance of self-sufficiency among politically marginalized groups, such as anarchists, that are unwilling or unable to draw upon state resources.

The Raid and Arrests

In the early morning of 4 October 1939, a combined force of the Toronto city police Red Squad and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) raided a shared residence at 847 Gladstone Ave. Living at this address were five Italian anarchists, Attilio Bortolotti, Ruggero Benvenuti, Ernesto Gava, Vittorio Valopi, and Agostino Confalonieri.¹ Benvenuti was a bricklayer who had come to Canada from the Marche region in 1931 while Gava hailed from Friuli and had been living in Toronto since 1927.² Valopi's origins remain a mystery. All of the men were taken into police custody and all literature found in the home was seized; two revolvers were also discovered. Valopi was released uncharged by police after questioning because no subversive literature was found in his room,³ but Bortolotti, Benvenuti, and Gava were charged under Sub-section (c) of Section 39A of the Defence of Canada Regulations, a part of the War Measures Act. This legislation had recently been invoked because of Canada's entry into the Second World War. It allowed for the prosecution of any person or persons who had "printed, circulated or distributed literature which might be prejudicial to the safety of the state or the efficient prosecution of the war."⁴ Bortolotti was also charged under the Criminal Code for the illegal possession of the two firearms. He, along with Benvenuti

¹ Confalonieri held a false Cuban passport under the name of Josè Marcos Joaquin.

² See Ruggero Benvenuti, busta 508, and Ernesto Gava, busta 2317, Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC), Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome.

³ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* (AdR) 2 Dec. 1939: 3.

⁴ Copy of Evidence, Rex vs. Attilio Bortolotti et al., Jacob Lawrence Cohen Papers (JLCP), 18 Oct. 1939, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Ottawa.

and Gava were confined in the Don Jail to await their court appearance. Confalonieri, whose identity as the Cuban Joaquin was still under suspicion, was also detained at the jail in order to be questioned by immigration authorities at a later date.

Immediately following the arrests, Emma Goldman, who was living in Toronto during this time, became involved in Bortolotti's and Confalonieri's legal troubles. She and Bortolotti had become close friends during her time in the city and he was one of the original members of the Libertarian Group formed by Goldman in 1934. That same year, Goldman, who had been deported from the United States in 1919, was granted permission to enter the country on a three-month visa with the condition that she not speak on anarchism or political issues. According to Bortolotti, Goldman discussed her acceptance of the offer with him. He expressed his thoughts on the matter to Goldman: "'You're prostituting yourself, Emma.'" And in response, "She looked at me – you should have seen it – this fiery, deadly look. She resented [what I said] very much. But when she came back, she said, 'Art[,] you were right.' We became really close friends after that."⁵ Bortolotti acted as Goldman's driver taking her around the city and to lectures he organized for her in Windsor.⁶

Goldman's first act for the defence was to contact J. L. Cohen to represent the anarchists. Cohen was a local lawyer who had gained notoriety for defending members of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) in the early 1930s.⁷ He was able to get the case against Bortolotti, Benvenuti, and Gava for printing and distributing anti-war

⁵ Attilio Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream: A [sic] Oral History with Art Berthelot," *Kick It Over* 17 (Winter 1986/1987): 1.

⁶ Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 185; 460.

⁷ For a lengthy biography on Cohen that, surprisingly, makes no mention of his involvement in this case, see Laurel Sefton MacDowell, *Renegade Lawyer: The Life of J.L. Cohen* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History/University of Toronto Press, 2001).

literature thrown out of court because the Crown prosecutor had been unable to demonstrate that the anarchists had carried out either activity. Cohen likewise had the gun charges dismissed against Bortolotti after it was revealed that the anarchist's statement to police on 4 October had been given involuntarily and under intimidation. It should also be mentioned that neither of the two revolvers was in working condition.⁸

However, Bortolotti was still not allowed his freedom as Canadian authorities discovered that the anarchist had lived in the United States for an unknown period of time, thus forfeiting his Canadian domicile. He had also returned to Canada illegally. Canadian immigration law at the time stipulated that in order for a foreign-born individual to become naturalized they first had to have lived in Canada for five years without any interruption and then to have formally applied to become naturalized.⁹ Bortolotti had arrived in Canada in early July 1920 and had meant to fill out his naturalization application form. However, this paperwork was misplaced and never submitted. In 1926, Bortolotti had begun working for his brother Guglielmo, a masonry contractor in Detroit, while commuting from Windsor, Ontario. Then, from 1928 to 1929, Bortolotti lived in Detroit and worked at a Ford plant. That same year, he was arrested by Detroit police for distributing handbills commemorating the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, and charged in contravention of a city by-law. During his court appearance, Bortolotti admitted to being an anarchist and the judge ordered his deportation to Italy. Bortolotti's lawyer was able to get him released on \$3000 bail, a sum which was raised by Italian comrades from Detroit's *Il Gruppo 'I Refrattari.'* As

⁸ Court Transcript, Rex vs. Attilio Bortolotti et al., 6 Nov. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa.

⁹ "Naturalisation in Canada," The Quebec History Encyclopedia, <http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/encyclopedia/NaturalizationinCanada.htm> (accessed 29 May 2010).

mentioned earlier, Bortolotti was counseled by Raffaele Schiavina, then editor of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, to avoid deportation to Italy by forfeiting the bail and returning to Canada. This he did. His re-entry was technically illegal by the immigration standards of the time because he did not present himself to authorities at the Canadian border.¹⁰ These were the circumstances that were used to deny Bortolotti any claim to Canadian citizenship and resulted in the order for him to be deported back to Italy.

Confalonieri, who was finally interviewed by Immigration Officer J.L. Malcolm on 5 December 1939, maintained that his true identity was the Cuban Josè Marcos Joaquin. During the course of this interview, Malcolm produced a number of letters written by Confalonieri to his comrades in Europe explaining his difficulties with Canadian Immigration, his use of false documents, and suggestions for those anarchists who were planning to travel from Europe to the United States via Canada. Police records obtained from France not only revealed the anarchist's true identity, but also showed that Confalonieri had fought on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. Since Confalonieri had entered Canada with a false passport, he, too, was ordered deported to Italy.¹¹

Deportation and the Left Prior to 1939

The Canadian government's use of deportation as a way to deal with radicals was nothing new. Deportation was an important means by which to rid Canada of those deemed undesirable. As Barbara Robert's Whence They Came: Deportation from

¹⁰ Theresa Moritz and Albert Moritz The World's Most Dangerous Woman: A New Biography of Emma Goldman (Vancouver: Subway Books, 2001) 192-193; Avrich, Anarchist Voices 182-184.

¹¹ Agostino Confalonieri Immigration Interview, 6 Dec. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

Canada 1900-1935 has shown, it was government policy to eject from the country, often in contravention of existing laws, migrants considered unhealthy, indigent, immoral, radical, or unemployed.¹² For radicals in particular, according to Roberts, there were two periods when specific leftist organizations were targeted *en masse*: 1918-1922, when the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was the focus and the 1930s, when the CPC was singled out. The crackdown against the IWW was facilitated by an Order-in-Council passed in 1918 as part of the already existing War Measures Act. The act was legislated in August 1914 and gave the federal government sweeping powers to police and intern so-called “enemy aliens” – those populations who had migrated from the German, Ottoman, and Austria-Hungary empires against whom Canada was at war – and who were considered a threat to the nation’s security at that time. It was not until after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and the resulting Red Scare in Canada that the Order-in-Council was introduced making radical leftwing organizations illegal and their foreign-born members deportable.¹³ According to Roberts, the Canadian government and the new security apparatus saw the IWW organizers as the sparkplugs of the wartime and

¹² See Barbara Roberts, Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada, 1900-1935 (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988).

¹³ Under the War Measures Act bans were placed on various radical and worker organisations, and any publications by these groups or foreign language presses were either banned or singled out for investigation. The Act clearly stated that any current member of a banned organisation or any person distributing its literature could face one to five years in jail, and that anyone found printing revolutionary literature or attending meetings in Russian, Ukrainian, or Finnish was susceptible to a \$5000 fine and at least five years in jail. Organisations banned under the 1914 War Measures Act included the Social Democratic Party of Canada, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Russian Socialist Democratic Party, the Russian Revolutionary Group, the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries, the Russian Workers’ Farband, the Ukrainian Revolutionary Group, the Ukrainian Social Democrat Party, the Socialist Labor Party, the Social Democratic Bolshevik Group, the Social Democratic Anarchist Group, the Workers’ International Industrial Union, the Chinese Nationalist League, and the Chinese Workers’ Association. Roseline Usiskin, “Toward a Theoretical Reformulation of the Relationship Between Political Ideology, Social Class, and Ethnicity: A Case Study of the Winnipeg Jewish Community, 1905-1920,” MA Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1978, 223. See also Dennis G. Molinaro, “‘A Species of Treason?’: Deportation and Nation-Building in the case of Tomo Čačić, 1931-1934,” Canadian Historical Review 91.1 (March 2010): 70-71.

postwar labour revolt. They championed drastic measures to end the organization's influence.¹⁴ The repression against the CPC began in earnest once the party was declared illegal in 1931. Those foreign-born individuals – even those who had become naturalized – who were found to be members of this organization could then be deported to their countries of birth. This last was possible due to a 1919 amendment to citizenship law that allowed for naturalization certificates to be revoked as a precursor to a convicted individual's removal from the country.¹⁵

In light of such anti-radical practices and conventions, it should come as no surprise that the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case was not the first time that Italian anarchists had mobilized to prevent the deportation of a comrade from Canada. On 24 June 1915, Armando Del Moro was arrested by police in Hamilton, Ontario, for anti-war and anti-religious propaganda.¹⁶ Del Moro was born in the *comune* of Mondolfo located in the Marche region on 1 April 1890. Before migrating to North America, he worked as a farm labourer. Del Moro's involvement in the anarchist movement began while living in Italy where he belonged to a group active in Mondolfo. It is not clear when Del Moro migrated but his reasons for doing so appear to have been to avoid service in the Italian military.¹⁷ Initially he lived and worked in the United States before moving to Hamilton to find employment.¹⁸ Del Moro was well-regarded among the Italian anarchists in North America. In the first article to appear on his arrest in the pages of Cronaca Sovversiva,

¹⁴ Roberts 71-97.

¹⁵ Roberts 126-129.

¹⁶ Mentana [Luigi Galleani], "Del Moro Arrestato in Canada," Cronaca Sovversiva (CS) 17 July 1915: 2; Un trentennio di attività anarchica, 1914-1945 (Forlì: del gruppo "L'Antistato," 1953) 126.

¹⁷ Prefetto di Pesaro-Urbino, Pesaro, to Ministero Interno, Rome, 24 Jan. 1916; Console Generale Reggente, NYC, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 27 Apr. 1917, Armando Del Moro, busta 1698, CPC, ACS, Rome.

¹⁸ Mentana, "Del Moro Arrestato in Canada," CS 17 July 1915: 2.

Luigi Galleani described Del Moro as “a brave, ardent, [and] active comrade” who worked tirelessly to spread anarchist ideals.

[A]t home, on the street, with coworkers or at the boarding house, with the first that he happens to come across, he speaks, reasons, discusses, challenges prejudices, provokes reaction, awakens conscience and ... never leaves his interlocutor without leaving in his pocket [or] in his hands [anarchist pamphlets such as] The God Pestilence, Between Peasants, [and] Evolution and Revolution.¹⁹

At some point following Del Moro’s arrest, he was ordered deported back to Italy. While incarcerated, he was unable to see or communicate with any of his friends. A co-worker, possibly the socialist Umberto Fiocca, learned of his arrest and persuaded a local lawyer by the name of Thomas Somerset to act on Del Moro’s behalf.²⁰ His anti-war propaganda came at a time when Canada, as part of the British Empire, was actively involved in the First World War and pro-war patriotism within the host society was rampant. Anti-war activism was also illegal under the War Measures Act of 1914, which had been passed in August of that year. Migrants who engaged in such activities could be deported. As historian Barbara Roberts has demonstrated, the Canadian Department of Immigration used the War Measures Act as a means to rid the country of foreign-born radicals and labour agitators.²¹ If deported to Italy, Del Moro would be forced to fulfill his military obligation.

More than three weeks had passed since Del Moro’s arrest and Galleani’s 17 July article which meant that the Italian anarchists had to move quickly. Galleani implored readers to send money to Cronaca Sovversiva to help cover legal costs within the next two weeks. He even tried to guilt readers into donating money stating that Del Moro’s

¹⁹ The God Pestilence was written by Johann Most, Errico Malatesta wrote Between Peasants, and Evolution and Revolution was authored by Elisée Reclus. Mentana, CS 17 July 1915.

²⁰ Mentana, CS 17 July 1915: 2; “Del Moro in Libertà,” CS 7 Aug. 1915: 2.

²¹ Roberts 71.

deportation would “weigh severely, perhaps for a long time on the shoulders of the ones that have responded to the appeal with the slump of the shoulders of the beggars, of the lazy and of the indolent.”²² The following week, Rizieri Fantini’s article in Cronaca Sovversiva again called for people to give. Fantini was more than aware that appeals to Italian comrades were numerous: “yesterday, today, tomorrow, it is the sick comrade or the journal at the point of death, the raffle for the group, for the injured We are small: it takes so little to clean our pockets!”²³ But he also believed anarchists could contribute more if they made some personal changes in spending. Referring to comrades he asked, “How many glasses of beer have they drunk, how many cigars have they smoked, in front of how many stupid movies have they [wasted their time], in the course of a week! A partial reduction ... on the expenses of these kinds of distractions ... would be 25 dollars for every comrade, would be suddenly, in five days ... \$125 to fund the agitation and legal assistance for Armando Del Moro. Are there five hundred comrades prepared to do ... as we do?”²⁴ The Italian anarchists responded to the appeals of Galleani and Fantini and were able to raise \$165.45 – a considerable sum in 1915.²⁵ In the end, Del Moro was not deported. By early August he had been released with a \$45 fine and one year of probation.²⁶

²² Mentana, “Del Moro Arrestato in Canada,” CS 17 July 1915: 2.

²³ Rizieri Fantini, “Per Armando Del Moro,” CS 24 July 1915: 3.

²⁴ Fantini, “Per Armando Del Moro,” CS 24 July 1915: 3.

²⁵ “Per A. Del Moro,” CS 28 Aug. 1915: 2; “Per A. Del Moro,” CS 11 Sep. 1915: 4.

²⁶ “Del Moro in Libertà,” CS 7 Aug. 1915: 2; Un trentennio di attività anarchica, 1914-1945 (Forlì: del gruppo “L’Antistato,” 1953) 126.

The Network for Anarchist Veterans of the Spanish Civil War

Unlike Del Moro, Agostino Confalonieri had not entered Canada legally to find work. But how exactly did he get from Europe to Canada? In early March 1939, a transnational network was established by Italian anarchists to aid comrades who needed to leave Europe for North America. These anarchists tended to be veterans of the Spanish Civil War who faced persecution for their involvement in aiding the Republican government or for their anarchist activities generally.²⁷ It is difficult to determine how many anarchists this network managed to send to Canada and the United States, or whether more than one of them existed. However, this particular network was able to send an unknown number of Italian anarchists from Europe to Canada with the United States as the final destination. One of those anarchists was Agostino Confalonieri.

Confalonieri was born in Monza, Italy, and had left home, like many Italian migrants to find work. He arrived at Bellinzona, Switzerland, in the early 1930s and began sending money home to his family in Italy.²⁸ By 1936, Confalonieri was working in a luggage factory owned and operated by Luigi Mainetti, a known Communist.²⁹ Based on his *Casellario Politico Centrale* (CPC) file, it is hard to determine to what extent Confalonieri was politicized before he arrived in Switzerland since he was not known to have expressed any opinions contrary to the Fascist regime and had no previous

²⁷ Direttore Leto, Capo Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 17 Mar. 1939, Mario Mantovani, busta 3002, CPC, ACS, Rome.

²⁸ In a letter dated 15 August 1934, Confalonieri enclosed 20 francs. Agostino Confalonieri, Bellinzona, to Confalonieri Family, Monza, 15 Aug. 1934, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.

²⁹ Console Generale, Canton Ticino, Lugano, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, June 1937; Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 14 Feb. 1936, Confalonieri, CPC, ACS, Rome.

criminal record while living in Italy.³⁰ Under these circumstances, it is possible that Mainetti may have had some influence on Confalonieri's political development.

The Spanish Civil War began on 17 July 1936 after General Francisco Franco's attempted nationalist coup against the Popular Front government met fierce opposition. In November of that same year, Confalonieri travelled to Spain and enlisted in the Rosselli Column, named after the Paris-based antifascist. He spent almost four months fighting on the Huesca front in the province of Aragon before leaving Spain. His reasons for this departure are unclear.³¹ Confalonieri then made his way to Geneva where he presented himself to the Spanish Consul and received a Spanish passport so he could return to fight in Spain. Confalonieri travelled to Bourg Madame, France, carrying the passport issued under the name of Agostino Gonzalo Neri. Just inside the border with Spain on 3 April 1937 he was arrested with fellow Italians Domenico Girelli, Valentino/Martino Segata, and Francesco Luigi Prevosto by French authorities for possession of false documents and for attempting to enlist in the Spanish militia. Confalonieri was sentenced to three months imprisonment.³² After his release, Confalonieri, using the alias Neri, settled at Suresnes, France, a suburb of Paris, where he became active in anarchist and antifascist circles. One of his activities included membership in a Paris-based antifascist committee – most likely *Giustizia e Libertà* – in

³⁰ Prefetto di Milano, Milan, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 31 Oct. 1934, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.

³¹ Prefetto di Milano, "Biografico del Agostino Confalonieri," nd, Confalonieri, CPC, ACS, Rome; Nick Heath, "Bifolchi, Giuseppe, 1895-1978," <http://libcom.org/history/bifolchi-giuseppe-1895-1978> (accessed 3 Feb. 2008); J.L. Cohen to Louis Fitch, 14 Mar. 1940, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa.

³² Stefano, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 17 Apr. 1937; Divisione Polizia Politica to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 22 Apr. 1937; Stefano, Divisione Polizia Politica to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 30 Apr. 1937; Alberto Brugnoli, Console, Montpellier, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, 18 May 1937, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.

support of Republican Spain. In May 1938, Confalonieri was expelled from France because of his political activities and went to Belgium. While in Brussels, he was arrested at the home of Renzo Carro, an Italian Trotskyist and antifascist, and jailed. After his release, Confalonieri demanded to be taken to the French border. Confalonieri was arrested as soon as he reached Tourcoing, possibly because Belgian authorities had sent word that the anarchist had re-entered France. After being jailed for three days, Confalonieri left Tourcoing and secretly re-entered Belgium where he stayed with anarchist Mario Angel and his partner. It was this constant harassment by the police in Belgium and France that led to Confalonieri's decision to leave Europe.³³

Another anarchist who wanted to leave Europe for North America was Ernesto Bonomini. He had left Italy in 1922, following the Fascists' rise to power and their subsequent repression of radicals. He arrived in France where he became an anarchist. In February 1924, Bonomini assassinated Nicola Bonservizi, the editor of the Paris-based Fascist newspaper L'Italie Nouvelle, because he was providing information on exiled Italian radicals to the Italian secret police in France. Bonomini was sentenced to eight years in prison and, after his release in 1932, was expelled from the country and went to Belgium. Eventually he traveled to Spain to help in the struggle against fascism. In April 1938, he attended a meeting in Paris but, even under an alias, was discovered and

³³ Prefetto di Milano, Milan, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 7 Mar. 1938; Divisione Polizia Politica to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 3 Nov. 1938; Ministero della Guerra, Rome, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 23 May 1938; Prefetto di Milano, Milan, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 9 June 1938; Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione degli Generale e Riservati, Rome, 5 July 1939; Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione degli Generale e Riservati, Rome, 27 July 1939; Divisione Polizia, Rome, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 5 June 1939; Mario Mantovani, Brussels, to Ministero Dell'Interno, Rome, 15 July 1940, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.

arrested for his illegal return to France. He was interned in the Rieucros camp in the Lozère department,³⁴ but was able to escape a year later and again went to Belgium.³⁵

Brussels was an important destination for anarchists who sought to leave Europe because it was the location of a group coordinating departures to North America. This group of twenty to twenty-five members was organized by the Belgian anarchist Hem Day³⁶ and was made up almost entirely of Italian anarchists including Milan's Mario Mantovani, a typographer and contributor to Italian-language newspapers such as L'Adunata dei Refrattari among others.³⁷ The formation of this group, evidently focused on assisting Italian anarchists who had fought in the conflict, was likely a result of the impending defeat of Republican forces in Spain. The first meeting was held on 4 March 1939, a month before the end of the Spanish Civil War. The group had a total of 22,000 Belgian *francs* at its disposal. The money had come from anarchist Luigi Bertoni, the Milan-born typographer and syndicalist who lived in Geneva, and from comrades in

³⁴ The Lozère department is located in the Languedoc-Roussillon region.

³⁵ Maccotta, Consule Generale, Paris, to Ministero Esteri, Rome, 2 Aug. 1938; Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, 31 May 1939; Ambasciatore, Paris, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, 24 Apr. 1939, Ernesto Bonomini, busta 740, CPC, ACS, Rome.

³⁶ Day had been helping anarchist refugees since at least the late 1920s. The Spanish anarchists Buenaventura Durruti and Francisco Ascaso were expelled from France in July 1927 because of their political activities and taken to the Belgian border. However, the Belgian border guards were unwilling to allow the notorious anarchists into their country. As a result, French authorities had to wait until nightfall to sneak Durruti and Ascaso into Belgium. After crossing into Belgium in this way, the two anarchists made their way to Brussels where they contacted Hem Day. Day had hoped that the anarchists would be granted political asylum by the Belgian government but this was not to be. Durruti and Ascaso were eventually found by Belgian police and taken to the French border. Immediately after crossing into France they were arrested by French authorities who had most likely been given advance warning by the Belgians that the anarchists would be arriving. Abel Paz, Durruti in the Spanish Revolution (Oakland: AK Press, 2007) 127-128.

³⁷ In addition to Day and Mantovani, this anarchist group included Antonio Moscardini, Paulo Catani, Azelio Bucchioni, Cafiero Meucci, Guido Schiaffonati, Marcello Bianconi, Ernesto Bruna, Pietro Montaresi, Celso Bendanti, Renato Riva and a few others. Leto, Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 17 Mar. 1939, Mario Mantovani, busta 3002, CPC, ACS, Rome; M. Granata, "Mario Mantovani," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 80-82.

Paris.³⁸ Mantovani's role in the group was to provide anarchists with false Cuban passports for their travels. It is unclear whether he forged the passports himself, was able to obtain these kinds of documents from someone else, or if they were actually supplied by someone at the Cuban consulate. Confalonieri's passport, for instance, was issued by the Cuban consul in Paris on 1 July 1939.³⁹

While in Brussels most Italian anarchist refugees would stay at Day's *Mont des Arts* bookstore and it is possible that both Confalonieri and Bonomini did so.⁴⁰ After leaving the city, anarchists would travel to Antwerp and depart, two or three at a time, on steamships for North America. With the help of Mantovani, Confalonieri and Bonomini had their passage booked through Canadian Pacific, which, according to Mantovani's testimony to Italian authorities, accepted travelers to Canada without much legal formality.⁴¹ The plan was that these men, who travelled with Cuban passports under false names, could travel from Europe, land in Canada, and then make their way into the

³⁸ It is not clear how these funds were procured. Leto, Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 17 Mar. 1939, Mario Mantovani, busta 3002, CPC, ACS, Rome; G. Bottinelli, "Luigi Bertoni," Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 159-164.

³⁹ Confalonieri Immigration Interview, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa. At this point I have been unable to determine Cuba's role in the issuance of passports to Italian anarchists who fought in Spain. During the war, Fulgencio Batista was the military leader of Cuba and, though he promised support to the Republic, did not actually come through with any concrete aid. After the war ended, he quickly recognised Franco and was lukewarm to Mexico's pleas for Cuba to accept large numbers of Loyalist refugees. Restrictions were placed on which refugees would be accepted with preference given to those willing to work as agricultural labourers or who had the financial means to invest in industry. T.G. Powell, Mexico and the Spanish Civil War (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981) 92, 153. However, according to Frank Fernandez, an unknown number of surviving Spanish anarchists left Spain and France with Cuban passports that were obtained through anarchist comrades with contacts within the Cuban Ministry of State. Some of the Spanish anarchists were detained by Cuban immigration authorities but later released after Cuban anarchists intervened. For Spanish anarchists, Cuba was also a gateway to North and South America. Frank Fernandez, Cuban Anarchism: The History of a Movement (Tucson: See Sharp Press, 2001) 63.

⁴⁰ Paz 140.

⁴¹ Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mario Mantovani, Brussels, 18 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa; Mario Mantovani, Brussels, to Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, 15 July 1940, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome; Leto, Direttore, Divisione Polizia Politica, Rome, to Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati, Rome, 17 Mar. 1939, Mario Mantovani, busta 3002, CPC, ACS, Rome.

United States, claiming that they were returning to Cuba. New York appears to have been the destination of choice for Italian anarchists departing from Europe because it was a centre of anarchist activity and home to L'Adunata dei Refrattari. The Cuban passports were issued from Paris and were only valid for a single journey.⁴²

Bonomini arrived in Canada sometime before Confalonieri and did not have any problems with Canadian Immigration. Allowed to continue his journey, Bonomini arrived in New York City and had already made contact with L'Adunata by 3 September. An Italian security report from New York around that time stated that Bonomini was known as Diego Semper which may have been the name from his Cuban passport.⁴³ Things did not go quite as smoothly for Confalonieri who arrived at Quebec City on 2 September 1939 on the *S.S. Montrose*. Upon his arrival, the anarchist was questioned by a Canadian Immigration official about his identity, profession, and the amount of money that he carried; his luggage was also searched. Confalonieri's responses and the fact that he did not have the required visa to enter the United States caused the Immigration officer to detain him for further questioning. He spent three nights in an immigration detention centre before finally being interviewed.⁴⁴ After four hours of interrogation, Immigration officers were not convinced by Confalonieri's story that he was a Cuban businessman returning to his country of birth after a twenty-year absence. The anarchist spent a total of ten days in detention during which time he was waiting for a visa that would allow him to enter the United States. After the visa was issued by the American

⁴² Confalonieri Immigration Interview, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁴³ Ministero dell'Interno, Rome, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, 3 Sep. 1939, Ernesto Bonomini, busta 740, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁴⁴ Confalonieri arrived on a Saturday and the centre was closed Sunday and for the Labour Day Monday. Confalonieri, Montreal, to Mantovani, Brussels, 13 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

Consulate in Montreal and unable to prove Confalonieri's actual identity, immigration officials released him under the condition that he book passage to New York and leave Canada within twenty-four hours. With his ticket to the United States purchased, the anarchist travelled to Montreal. Once in Montreal he decided not to continue on to the United States for fear that he would experience trouble with American Immigration and actually be sent to Cuba.⁴⁵

In Montreal, Confalonieri contacted a comrade by the name of Martini, most likely a contact involved in this transnational network, and stayed in the city for a few days. Even though the anarchist was offered work as a painter by a comrade, he wanted to put some distance between himself and Quebec-based Immigration officials. In addition, Confalonieri had in his possession a letter from a Paris-based anarchist by the name of Giuseppe Benvenuti addressed to his brother Ruggero who lived in Toronto. Martini sent a telegram to Attilio Bortolotti in Toronto to notify him that Confalonieri was in Montreal and wanted to leave the city.⁴⁶ Bortolotti's involvement in the network reflected his earlier attachment to the cause of aiding Italian anarchists fleeing Europe. He had had contact previously with Mantovani, who had been instrumental in channeling monies raised for the CNT-FAI in Spain, and with Luigi Mancini, who was from the same region of Italy. In a letter to Mancini, Bortolotti had expressed his willingness to help anarchist comrades who arrived in Canada as long as the resources were available.⁴⁷ Bortolotti made the proper arrangements and drove to Montreal with some of his Toronto

⁴⁵ Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mantovani, Brussels, 18 Sep. 1939; Confalonieri Immigration Interview, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁴⁶ Confalonieri Immigration Interview; and Confalonieri, Toronto, to Jiosef Tavernari, Brussels, 19 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁴⁷ Attilio Bortolotti and Rossella Di Leo, "Between Canada and the USA: A Tale of Immigrants and Anarchists," Kate Sharpley Library, <http://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/8pk1h4> (accessed 18 July 2010).

comrades to meet Confalonieri and bring him back to the city.⁴⁸ On 18 September, Confalonieri arrived in Toronto and was brought to the 847 Gladstone Avenue residence that would be the site of the 4 October raid. In letters to comrades in Europe, Confalonieri stated that he was not sure whether to stay in Canada, which depended upon his ability to find work, or make his way to New York to meet up with the L'Adunata anarchists.⁴⁹

Upon Confalonieri's arrival in Toronto, several centres were notified about his troubles with Canadian Immigration so that anarchists coming to Canada from Europe would not experience the same problems.⁵⁰ In a letter to Mantovani, Confalonieri also passed along suggestions that would help each prospective anarchist travelling to Canada posing as a Cuban. His recommendations included having a Cuban address stated in the passport; procuring a certificate of employment; having a visa for entry into the United States; maintaining a Cuban identity no matter what happened; explaining that the trip from Europe to Cuba via Canada and the United States was faster and cheaper than a direct trip; having a working knowledge of the history of Cuba; and being in possession of at least \$150 or more if one were posing as a tourist. Confalonieri was curious about how Bonomini was able to pass by Canadian Immigration without any problems and surmised that his favourable treatment was related to the larger sum of money Bonomini carried.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Confalonieri Immigration Interview; and Confalonieri, Toronto, to Jiosef Tavernari, Brussels, 19 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁴⁹ Confalonieri, Toronto, to Tavernari, Brussels, 19 Sep. 1939; and Confalonieri, Toronto, to Luigi Mainetti, Bellinzona, 23 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁵⁰ One of the cities was New York while another was most likely Brussels. The third centre may have been Paris, Geneva, or Antwerp. Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mainetti, Brussels, 23 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁵¹ Bonomini was carrying more than \$200. Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mantovani, Brussels, 18 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

It is difficult to discern how many Italian anarchists came to North America with the help of Day, Mantovani, and the other anarchists in Belgium, France, and Switzerland. In a written statement to Italian agents in Brussels, Mantovani admitted to helping Confalonieri and Bonomini in this way. These two were, evidently, not the first nor the last the network assisted.⁵² Confalonieri stated in a letter that “I am not the first who has passed the Immigration control with those documents, nor am I the second or the third.” In addition, an Immigration officer had mentioned to Confalonieri that a Cuban had passed through Canada two weeks prior and was detained for one day before being granted permission to continue on his travels. However, Confalonieri was not certain whether this person was an anarchist or an actual Cuban citizen. He did not appear to believe that the Immigration officer was referring to Bonomini.⁵³ In December 1939, Nicola “Nick” Di Domenico, publisher of *L’Adunata dei Refrattari*, wrote Goldman to inform her that another anarchist using a Cuban passport under the name of Pedro Mateo y Hernandez was in trouble with United States Immigration. Hernandez had successfully entered Canada but American authorities declared his passport invalid and returned him to Montreal. Di Domenico hoped that Goldman would be able to have Cohen look into the case and see how Hernandez could be helped. However, because of the tense legal situation of Bortolotti and Confalonieri at that time, as well as the lack of resources necessary to maintain this network, it was not possible for anyone to act on Hernandez’s

⁵² Mantovani, Brussels, to Ministero dell’Interno, Rome, 15 July 1940, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome. Spanish anarchists may also have used this network or one similar to it. During Goldman’s seventieth birthday celebration in Toronto in June 1939, she was greeted on behalf of the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT) by a Spanish anarchist who had recently fled from Spain. Ahrne Thorne also recalled a number of Spanish anarchists travelling from France to Canada. Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 81-82. However, it should be pointed out that Italian anarchists travelled under Spanish names and that Toronto anarchists did not realise Confalonieri was Italian until months after his arrest. Thus, it is possible that the Spanish anarchists that Thorne refers to could have been Italians.

⁵³ Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mantovani, Brussels, 18 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

behalf before he was sent back to France. Goldman apologized to Di Domenico for not being able to help Hernandez but blamed “Ham” for not notifying the Toronto comrades about this particular anarchist in time. Is Ham actually Hem Day? It could be the same person but I have not been able to make a definite link. In a letter to Di Domenico dated 9 January 1940, Goldman wrote “One thing is certain[,] dear comrade[,] you must write HAM again that we in Canada can handle no more cases of the nature of J[oaquin] or the one already deported [Hernandez]. Please impress that on [h]is mind.” Goldman reiterated her position again in a letter three days later.⁵⁴

Emma Goldman and the Wider Struggle to Save Bortolotti and Confalonieri

Indeed, it was Goldman who, living in Toronto at the time of the raid and subsequent arrests, spearheaded the struggle to prevent the deportation of Bortolotti and Confalonieri. Her involvement in the case was motivated by her close friendship with Bortolotti. She did not want Bortolotti and Confalonieri to suffer the same fate as Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti.⁵⁵ In addition to hiring J.L. Cohen as the defence lawyer for the anarchists charged under the War Measures Act and retaining him as counsel for the deportation hearings, Goldman reached out to all her contacts among the transnational anarchist movement, but with a specific focus on North America, to ask for financial support and/or coordinate events to raise funds to cover legal and other fees related to these cases. She contacted the Freie Arbeter Stimme, the Yiddish-language anarchist newspaper from New York, to ask for their assistance and received the paper’s

⁵⁴ Di Domenico, NYC, to Goldman, Toronto, 12 Dec. 1939; Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 14 Dec. 1939, 6 Jan. 1940, 9 Jan. 1940, and 12 Jan. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁵⁵ Goldman, Toronto, to James Heney, Port Arthur, 9 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

subscription list.⁵⁶ Appeals were also made to Toronto's Jewish anarchists, the Spanish anarchists of the *Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista* (SIA) based in New York, and most importantly, the Italian anarchists of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, who Goldman had initially hoped would be able to cover Cohen's \$1500 legal fee.⁵⁷

After Bortolotti and Confalonieri had both been ordered deported to Italy, defence committees were struck for both of the men though emphasis was placed on Bortolotti because he had a stronger case to remain in Canada. These committees appear to have been comprised of the same people since both struggles were so closely related. However, it is difficult to know exactly who was involved. Emma Goldman and Dorothy Giesecke Rogers were the only two who can easily be identified since both were responsible for sending and receiving correspondence.⁵⁸ Rogers was born in England and later immigrated to Canada. Initially, she was a supporter of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the socialist-labour party founded in 1932 that was the precursor to today's social democratic New Democratic Party (NDP). She and her Dutch husband lived in Scarborough Bluffs near Toronto. Rogers had heard of anarchism but did not know much about the political philosophy. She attended two lectures that Emma Goldman gave in Toronto in 1934 which sparked Rogers' interest to read more on anarchism. According to Attilio Bortolotti, within a few months of attending Goldman's lectures, Rogers had declared herself an anarchist and became involved in the Libertarian Group Goldman established that same year. Rogers acted as Goldman's secretary when the well-known lecturer was living in Toronto and the two became close friends.

⁵⁶ James Prasow, Medicine Hat, to Goldman, Toronto, 10 Dec. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁵⁷ Goldman, Toronto, to Clara Solomon, NYC, 22 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁵⁸ Rogers became the central figure in the defence committees after Goldman suffered her stroke in February 1940.

Following Goldman's death in 1940, Rogers moved to New York City and founded the Why? Group and its publication of the same name with anarchists from that city.⁵⁹

It is also possible that Ruggero Benvenuti and Ernesto Gava were part of these committees because they travelled to Detroit to deliver letters that could be sent around the United States. Rogers travelled to both Detroit and Buffalo in the same capacity as the two Italians.⁶⁰ This tactic ensured that correspondence containing sensitive information was not seized by Canadian authorities. How these anarchists were able to cross the Canada-United States border without any difficulty remains a mystery. It seems unlikely that Benvenuti, Gava, and Rogers were not being surveilled during this critical time. Perhaps Canadian security resources had already been redirected towards the war effort.

When it came to aid for Bortolotti and Confalonieri, Goldman focused on the anarchist movement. However, she did reach out to others on the left even if in a limited way. James Heney, a friend of Goldman's involved in the Port Arthur IWW, was one such contact. Goldman explained the case and its repercussions to the left.

Needless to say we intend to make a big fight and to do everything in our power to prevent the railroading of our people. In point of fact, it is not only a question of the liberties of the arrested Italians.... It is also a question of civil liberties which the War Ruling [War Measures Act] abrogates. Once the authorities will succeed in making a precedent of the indicted people no one will be safe from being raided and rounded up.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream" 1; Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 187, 455, 496; Moritz and Moritz 181.

⁶⁰ Goldman, Toronto, to M. Eleanor Fitzgerald, NYC, 17 Nov. 1939; Goldman, Toronto, to Millie Rocker, Stelton, 17 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor; Moritz 187.

⁶¹ Goldman, Toronto, to Heney, Port Arthur, 24 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

In the end, Heney would forward \$17.25 to the defence fund.⁶² Goldman also contacted the prominent social gospeller Protestant Reverend Salem Bland with whom she had shared a stage at a Sacco and Vanzetti memorial meeting at Toronto's Standard Theatre in September 1927. At that meeting, to roaring applause, Bland had declared the two anarchists innocent. Now, with regard to the Bortolotti deportation, the reverend met with Thomas A. Crerar, then Minister of Mines and Resources, and in charge of immigration. He pleaded on behalf of the Italian anarchist.⁶³ Another personage Goldman attempted to interest in the case was the CCF's federal leader J.S. Woodsworth. They met in person in Winnipeg during Goldman's lecture tour in December 1939. After he heard the facts of the case, Woodsworth suggested that J.L. Cohen contact David Lewis, the secretary of the CCF, and the party's national chair, M.J. Coldwell, who were both in Ottawa. He added that Cohen should also meet with top immigration officials. Other members of the CCF took a more direct role in the case. John Walter, for instance, wrote an article about Bortolotti and his impending deportation for the New York City-based Nation. He also contacted a fellow CCFer and Member of Parliament, W.D. Euler. Walter placed particular emphasis on the role the Fascists played in Bortolotti's current predicament. Euler immediately appealed to Immigration to allow Bortolotti to be released on bail. However, by that time (8 January 1940), bail had already been granted.⁶⁴ In order to interest a broader range of people in the case, Goldman also wrote letters that were published in Nation, New Republic, and Canadian Forum.⁶⁵

⁶² Dorothy Rogers, "Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement," FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁶³ [Agent] No. 30 [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], "Report re Sacco-Vanzetti Memorial Meeting," Toronto, 2 Sep. 1927, to RCMP Commissioner, Emma Goldman Papers Project (EGPP), Berkeley; Moritz and Moritz 93-94, 190-191.

⁶⁴ Moritz and Moritz 184, 188.

⁶⁵ Moritz and Moritz 189.

Goldman apparently made no attempts to contact the Communist Parties of either Canada or the United States. Like many anarchists, Goldman had been at first supportive of the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia seeing in that revolution many opportunities for a society truly organized by peasants and workers. She longed to be involved in building this new society.⁶⁶ After her deportation to Russia in 1919, she was able to see the realities of Bolshevik rule firsthand: mandatory identification permits, the murder of those critical of Bolshevik policies by the secret police, the imprisonment of anarchists, and the crushing of the Kronstadt Rebellion.⁶⁷ All were objectionable indications of the realities of Bolshevik rule. After leaving Russia in December 1921, Goldman criticized the Bolsheviks in her lectures. Indeed, Goldman was accused by Communists who attended her speaking engagements of being in the employ of the “capitalist press,” as was the case during a lecture she gave in Regina, Saskatchewan, in 1926. Jewish Communists in Winnipeg also boycotted a meeting she held in the city in February the following year ostensibly because of her stance on the Soviet Union.⁶⁸ In addition, Goldman did not trust the Communists to be involved in the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case based on their handling of the earlier Sacco and Vanzetti affair. As she explained to the Wobbly James Heney,

⁶⁶ Emma Goldman, Living My Life, vol. 2 (London: Pluto Press, 1987) 644-646, 726.

⁶⁷ Goldman, Living My Life 737, 740, 753-755, 809-811, 876-887. See also Emma Goldman, My Disillusionment in Russia (New York: Dover, 2004). Kronstadt was a naval base located on an island in the Gulf of Finland that was home to the Russian Baltic Fleet. The Kronstadt Rebellion of March 1921 was sparked by the suppression of labour strikes in nearby Petrograd. As a result, the Kronstadt sailors did not feel that the Bolsheviks properly represented the October Revolution. They held a meeting and passed a series of resolutions calling for new elections to the Soviets, freedom of speech, the right of assembly, and the liberation of all political prisoners among others. Fearing a possible attack by the Bolsheviks, the Kronstadt sailors voted to form a Provisional Revolutionary Committee. When word reached Moscow of the rebellion, 60,000 Soviet soldiers were sent to the island. After ten days of fighting, the Kronstadt sailors had been defeated. See Paul Avrich, Kronstadt, 1921 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

⁶⁸ “Report re Emma Goldman,” 3 Feb. 1927, EGPP, Berkeley.

I am very glad to know that you have followed the terrible crime the Communists have committed against Sacco and Vanzetti. It would be outrageous enough if it would be merely a question of having appropriated the huge sums collected for the defence of Sacco and Vanzetti. But in addition to this the damnable Communists also used the propaganda for our two men to enhance their own [image] thereby sacrificing their lives. I have always felt that if the fellow-workers in America would have procured competent and earnest legal help, and if the Communists had been eliminated from the campaign Sacco and Vanzetti would still be alive and free.⁶⁹

In short, Goldman in the late 1930s was unlikely to appeal to the Communists for help.

During the mobilization to prevent the deportation of Bortolotti and Confalonieri, a very considerable correspondence passed between Goldman/Rogers and Nick Di Domenico of L'Adunata dei Refrattari. The paper published articles on the impending deportation of the two men and its supporters raised the largest sum of money.⁷⁰ The majority of the letters sent to Di Domenico provided updates on the two cases and asked him to continue his appeals to the readers of L'Adunata to provide badly needed funds. For the most part, this back-and-forth between Goldman/Rogers and Di Domenico was cordial, but there were serious disagreements that erupted based upon who the defence committees should approach for help. One of those people was Carlo Tresca.

***L'Adunata* vs Carlo Tresca and Luigi Antonini**

As mentioned in Chapter Four, activist identities – based on a specific anarchist philosophy or support for a certain personality or newspaper – could determine whether or not anarchists of different tendencies would work together. The anarchists of

⁶⁹ Goldman, Toronto, to Heney, Port Arthur, 9 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁰ L'Adunata raised \$733.54, with the SIA raising the second largest sum of \$684.23. Detroit raised \$436.00 while Toronto forwarded \$310.00. However, in the case of Detroit and Toronto it is not clear who exactly contributed in these cities since the Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement only states “Friends” as contributors. In other words, it was not necessarily the case that Italians were the sole contributors in these cities. Dorothy Rogers, “Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement,” n.d., FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor; “Comitato Difesa Bortolotti,” AdR 13 July 1940: 7.

L'Adunata dei Refrattari, for instance, had very strong feelings with respect to their political collaborators. They were unwilling to associate themselves with individuals or groups they believed to be working against the interests of workers, whether as informants, pro-fascists, or corruptionists. Some have suggested that L'Adunata anarchists were far too critical of certain individuals, such as Tresca, or were unwilling to compromise or work with those who did not share their anti-organizationalist anarchist communist philosophy. Some, like Sidney Solomon, a former member of New York City's anarchist Vanguard Group, considered those involved with L'Adunata dei Refrattari to be puritan anarchists.⁷¹ It was important for L'Adunata to maintain its political integrity and the publication reacted strongly when this integrity was challenged or undercut by others.

The antagonism that existed between L'Adunata dei Refrattari and Tresca continued to be in evidence during the Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation case. The situation was so delicate that Goldman was reluctant to approach Tresca for help. However, M. Eleanor "Fitzi" Fitzgerald, a close friend of Goldman's and the former assistant editor of Goldman's Mother Earth journal, who was the unofficial representative of the United States branch of Bortolotti's and Confalonieri's defence funds, had met with a number of New York-based labour leaders and all of them suggested that she get in touch with the anarcho-syndicalist.⁷² For Goldman, the struggle over Bortolotti and Confalonieri was too important for it to be sacrificed to the rift between the two factions

⁷¹ Solomon was involved in the publication of Vanguard, an anarchist journal based in New York during the 1930s. Avrich, Anarchist Voices 449-450.

⁷² Tresca's pragmatic approach to political activity meant that he had many advantageous connections among labour unions, the media, and could raise necessary funds to pay for legal costs. He was also experienced in preventing Italian comrades from being deported to Italy. Fitzgerald to Goldman, 25 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor; moritz22.

of Italian anarchists.⁷³ She did not want the readers of L'Adunata to stop giving money, which they were doing at an impressive level. Because of the strong dislike the anti-organizationalists had for Tresca, Goldman felt it prudent to first broach the subject with Di Domenico. Quoting directly from the letter Fitzgerald had written on the need to contact Tresca, Goldman argued that the two anarchists' looming fate far outweighed the risks of approaching the anarcho-syndicalist. Still, Goldman would only contact Tresca if Di Domenico was in agreement.⁷⁴

Not surprisingly, Di Domenico was against enlisting Tresca's aid. Having never met Tresca, the publisher of L'Adunata dei Refrattari still had strong feelings against the man. In a 29 November 1939 letter to Goldman, he stated

I strongly believe [Tresca] to be dishonest, both morally and politically, and ... a dangerous [and] insidious enemy of our movement and comrades. [I'm not saying] he is a paid spy, but I am sure he acts like an 'agent provocateur' and a spy. ... [It] is ... my belief that within himself he wishes [Bortolotti] to be jailed or deported, and underhandedly will do his best to neutralize whatever agitation might be undertaken on his favour. This is my candid opinion.⁷⁵

Di Domenico deferred to Goldman's judgement on whether to involve Tresca and promised Goldman that L'Adunata would continue to raise money for the defence fund. But any co-operation between them and Tresca was strictly out of the question.⁷⁶ Goldman lamented the fact that these divisions existed among her Italian comrades and suggested to Di Domenico that the anarchist movement had made some members "fanatical and unrelenting" because of their inability to transcend personal quarrels when

⁷³ Goldman, Toronto, to Fitzgerald, NYC, 27 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁴ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 27 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁵ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 29 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁶ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 29 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

greater issues were at stake.⁷⁷ This statement sparked an exchange between Goldman and Di Domenico that forced the latter to re-state the position of L'Adunata dei Refrattari, as well as respond to Goldman's slight.

I have shown your preceding letter and my answer to a number of friends who are completely in accord with what I wrote to you. I am sorry to see that you consider as fanatics such comrades as have a different opinion of that man, whom they certainly know better than you do. But there is nothing to be done about it. No amount of abuse can change my opinion, or theirs, on this matter.⁷⁸

Perhaps fearing a withdrawal of aid from L'Adunata dei Refrattari, Goldman was quick to apologize for her observations of Italian comrades. In her response to Di Domenico's letter, she apologized for her unintentional insult. She wanted to contact Tresca, she explained, because she was so intensely worried about Bortolotti.⁷⁹

Goldman was not the only one wrestling with the factional dilemma. When Bortolotti declared himself an anarchist in 1921 he was enamoured of Luigi Galleani and was a supporter and contributor to L'Adunata. While living in Windsor during the early 1920s, Bortolotti had spent Sundays in Detroit with *Il Gruppo 'I Refrattari,'* which was aligned with the paper. He was also friends with L'Adunata dei Refrattari's editor, Raffaele Schiavina.⁸⁰ When J.L. Cohen asked Bortolotti whether to involve Tresca in the deportation case, Bortolotti did not think it would be useful.⁸¹ Goldman attributed Bortolotti's unwillingness to seek Tresca's to the feud between the anti-organizationalists and the anarcho-syndicalist.⁸²

⁷⁷ Goldman, Winnipeg, to Di Domenico, NYC, 2 Dec. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁸ Di Domenico, NYC, to Goldman, Winnipeg, 5 Dec. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁷⁹ Goldman, Winnipeg, to Di Domenico, NYC, 7 Dec. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁸⁰ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 180, 187-188.

⁸¹ Cohen, Toronto, to Goldman, Winnipeg, 1 Dec. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁸² Goldman, Toronto, to Fitzgerald, NYC, 27 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor. Confalonieri's relationship with L'Adunata dei Refrattari is less clear. It is difficult to pinpoint when he became an

Goldman, however, did eventually write to Tresca on 14 January 1940 asking for his help.⁸³ The seriousness of Bortolotti's and Confalonieri's situation must have superseded any worries she had regarding the possible fallout with L'Adunata. And it appears as though her outreach to Tresca was conducted without the knowledge of Di Domenico or the rest of the L'Adunata dei Refrattari group since none of the continuing letters between Goldman/Rogers and the paper discuss the issue. However, there would be no help forthcoming from Tresca. In his reply, he refused to get involved with Bortolotti's defence stating

Very sorry for Bortolotti: I think that [he] is a swell fellow and comrade. But in the past I have experienced very bad ingratitude from the bunch he is associated [L'Adunata]. You must know the sordid story. Of course! You don't believe that I am a spy.

The only support that Tresca gave was an undisclosed amount of money to the defence fund.⁸⁴ Tresca did, however, approach Luigi Antonini to help with the Confalonieri case. Antonini was the second individual with whom L'Adunata refused to work.⁸⁵

Luigi Antonini was the president of Local 89 of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). He immigrated to the United States in 1910 at the age of twenty-seven and quickly became involved with the union. He rose through the ranks of the ILGWU becoming president of Italian Dressmakers' Local 89 in 1939 which, at that

adherent of the paper's anarchist philosophy, but before his travels to New York were interrupted by Canadian Immigration he was on his way to contact the publishers of the paper. Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mainetti, Bellinzona, 23 Sep. 1939; Confalonieri, Toronto, to Mantovani, Brussels, 18 Sep. 1939, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa. Confalonieri's opinion of Tresca is uncertain as well. It may be that he shared views similar to that of Bortolotti and the wider L'Adunata network but it is also possible that he may not have been aware of the feud.

⁸³ Emma Goldman, "Emma a Carlo", Il Martello (IM), 28 May 1940. Tresca most likely printed this letter in Il Martello as a tribute to Goldman who passed away on 14 May.

⁸⁴ Carlo Tresca, NYC, to Goldman, Toronto, Jan. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁸⁵ Luigi Antonini, NYC, to Dorothy Rogers, Toronto, 12 Apr. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

time, had a membership of 40,000.⁸⁶ Antonini identified himself as a socialist and was involved in antifascist activities. However, he is known to have stopped his public attacks against a wealthy New York City-based Fascist sympathizer, Generoso Pope, in exchange for favourable press coverage of Local 89 in Pope's paper Il Progresso Italo-Americano. This in turn led antifascists to harshly condemn the union leader.⁸⁷ One of the issues that led to the conflict between L'Adunata and Antonini was his involvement in the Vincenzo Ferrero and Domenico Sallitto deportation case. These two Italian anarchists, who owned a restaurant in California, were arrested in April 1934 and ordered deported to Italy by United States authorities because of their political identities. The ILGWU had put up the \$2000 required for the men's collective bail. Sallitto eventually had the charges against him dropped, but Ferrero did not. He went into hiding in order to be spared a return to Italy which meant the forfeit of his bail.⁸⁸ Antonini was angered that the \$1000 bail for Ferrero had been lost and felt that the L'Adunata anarchists were laughing at him as a result. According to Max Sartin (Raffaele Schiavina), Antonini also believed himself to be above personal criticism because he had given money to help an anarchist.⁸⁹

Antonini was approached by the Joaquin Defence Committee in Toronto to ask for his assistance in obtaining a passport for Confalonieri.⁹⁰ (Perhaps to avoid confusion, the Joaquin Defence Committee continued to use Confalonieri's assumed name in its title

⁸⁶ Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Italian Immigrants in the United States Labour Movement from 1880 to 1929," Gli italiani fuori d'italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione 1880-1940, eds. O. Bayer et al. (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1983) 295; Console Generale, NYC, to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, 31 May 1939, Luigi Rocco Antonini, busta 160, CPC, ACS, Rome.

⁸⁷ Nunzio Pernicone, Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 255; Dorothy Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988) 195.

⁸⁸ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 147-148, 163.

⁸⁹ The Editor, "Lettera spedita" (Quick Letter), AdR 20 July 1940: 6.

⁹⁰ Rogers, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 10 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

even though his real identity had been discovered by Canadian Immigration on 26 January 1940.)⁹¹ At this point, the committee was trying to secure the anarchist's deportation to a country less hostile than Italy. Dorothy Rogers, who, after Goldman's stroke on 17 February 1940, was now chiefly responsible for correspondence, stated in a letter to Di Domenico that Antonini had been contacted. Di Domenico was outraged that the union leader would be asked to help an anarchist since Antonini had been involved in the purges of anarchists and other radicals from the ILGWU during 1920s and 1930s.⁹² In addition, Di Domenico accused the union leader of being the dictator of Local 89 and of having personal and political relations with known Italian Fascists. He felt that the defence committee had brought a great deal of shame upon Confalonieri for soliciting Antonini's help. They should have explained the situation in order for the anarchist to decide whether the union leader's help should be requested. Di Domenico stated that he would print L'Adunata dei Refrattari's position on the matter so those who had contributed to Confalonieri's defence would "know what was being done in his name."⁹³

In response, Rogers, who was not surprised by Di Domenico's criticism, stated that the Joaquin Defence Committee's decision to approach Antonini not been arrived at lightly and only because Confalonieri's situation was so dire. As she explained, "The question finally came down to this – deportation to Italy for Marco or an appeal to Local 89 to obtain a passport to some other country."⁹⁴ To inflame the situation further, Di

⁹¹ Confalonieri Immigration Interview, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761A, LAC, Ottawa.

⁹² Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 6 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor; Jennifer Guglielmo, "Italian Women's Proletarian Feminism in the New York City Garment Trades, 1890s-1940s," Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World, eds. Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 249.

⁹³ Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 6 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁹⁴ Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 10 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

Domenico claimed that Antonini was spreading the word around New York that L'Adunata dei Refrattari had begged for his help. As a result, he stated

It will take us years to try to persuade people that we had nothing to do with what you have done. And there will always be some at least who will not believe that we have since the beginning been against it. This is certainly one of the things which would not have happened if Emma [Goldman] had been able to continue her work. At any rate she would not have done it without letting us know before the thing happened. Of what will happen when the comrades are informed about this thing, you – I mean those who suggested it – will be the only ones responsible.⁹⁵

This quote demonstrates the fragility of transnational networks that relied heavily on personal contacts and relations. Without Goldman and her knowledge of the intricacies of the L'Adunata anarchists, Rogers and the rest of the defence committee were running the risk of alienating their most important allies. To aggravate the situation further, only a few days after Di Domenico sent his reply, a New York City-based Italian-language radio program broadcast news that Antonini was planning to help Confalonieri.⁹⁶ When word of this reached Rogers, she drafted a letter to be published in L'Adunata dei Refrattari that pointed out that Antonini had not been in contact with the Joaquin Defence Committee even after two letters had been sent to the Local 89 leader requesting his aid. She wanted it made clear to the paper's readers that the committee had received neither reply nor help, financial or otherwise, with regards to Confalonieri from Antonini.⁹⁷

The disagreement between L'Adunata and the Joaquin Defence Committee over the involvement of Antonini appears to have stemmed from a misunderstanding after a February 1940 meeting between representatives of the paper and J.L. Cohen. After the meeting, Cohen reported to the Committee that L'Adunata would still support efforts to

⁹⁵ Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 14 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁹⁶ Antonini, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 12 Apr. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁹⁷ Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 22 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

prevent Confalonieri's deportation even if Tresca and Antonini were approached. However, according to Di Domenico, during the meeting it was made clear to the lawyer that L'Adunata was against enlisting the aid of both men because they were viewed, not as personal enemies, but as dishonest people whose actions were contrary to the anarchist movement, working people, and to L'Adunata's principles. For the Committee or Cohen to ask for the help of Tresca and Antonini would be against the advice and without the consent of Di Domenico and the other representatives of the paper at the meeting. He stressed that the choice to involve the two men should have been left to Confalonieri and no one else. As he put it, "We told [Cohen] that, personally, we would rather die than ask them [Tresca and Antonini] the slightest favor, and that we would not do for any friend, relative or comrade a thing we would not do for ourselves."⁹⁸

L'Adunata's Coverage of the Arrests

Still, even given the conflicts between L'Adunata and the Toronto defence committee, the paper's commitment to helping both anarchists escape deportation was beyond reproach. From 28 October 1939 until 9 March 1940, a total of twelve articles on the arrests of the Toronto anarchists and the subsequent Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation case appeared in the pages of L'Adunata dei Refrattari. During this period, articles appeared almost weekly and kept readers updated on the various developments of the case. The size of the articles ranged from a few paragraphs to multiple columns.

The information regarding the plight of the Toronto anarchists was supplied to the paper first by Emma Goldman and subsequently by Dorothy Rogers. After the initial raid, Goldman did not want to associate herself directly with defending the arrested

⁹⁸ Di Domenico, NYC, to Rogers, Toronto, 29 Mar. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

anarchists because she felt her name could potentially jeopardize the case's outcome. In addition, Goldman was concerned that her public involvement could lead to her deportation from Canada. However, given her precarious position and the heightened sense of security following the legislation of the War Measures Act, Goldman felt it prudent to have her letters to L'Adunata dei Refrattari delivered by Rogers to Detroit or Buffalo and from there be sent on to New York City.⁹⁹ Later Ernesto Gava and Ruggero Benvenuti were involved in delivering letters and picking up money raised by L'Adunata forwarded to Detroit comrades from *Gruppo "I Refrattari."*¹⁰⁰ The information that Goldman provided L'Adunata was used to draft the articles.¹⁰¹

But the articles on Toronto's arrested anarchists did not only provide summaries of events and update readers with the progression of the cases. They also "framed" these events for a transnational network of activists. Theorist David Snow has defined framing as "the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action."¹⁰² L'Adunata dei Refrattari's analysis of the deportation cases was couched in terms of anarchist persecution; the hypocrisy of the Canadian state; collusion between the Italian Consul and the Toronto police; and the serious threat posed to Bortolotti and Confalonieri if their deportations to Italy were carried out.

⁹⁹ Goldman, Toronto, to Fitzgerald, NYC, 17 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹⁰⁰ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 19 Oct. 1939; 9 Jan. 1940; 15 Feb. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹⁰¹ The authorship of the L'Adunata articles is unknown because they were left unsigned. It is possible that they were written by Max Sartin, i.e., Raffaele Schiavina, the paper's editor. Avrich, Anarchist Voices 499.

¹⁰² John D. McCarthy, "The Globalisation of Social Movement Theory," Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State, eds. Jackie Smith et al. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997) 244.

L'Adunata described the arrest of the Toronto anarchists as an act of political persecution. The facts spoke for themselves. Canada had invoked the War Measures Act on 3 September 1939 after Britain declared war on Germany¹⁰³ and legislated new regulations under the War Measures Act on 28 September. Known as Section 39a of the Defence of Canada Regulations, this legislation gave Canadian security forces sweeping powers to arrest anyone involved in the printing or distribution of literature that interfered with Canada's war effort, the nation's safety, and the morale of its military.¹⁰⁴ And it was under these new regulations that the three anarchists had been charged. The author of the L'Adunata dei Refrattari article argued that in the six days that had passed since the introduction of the new regulations on 28 September and the arrest of the anarchists on 4 October, "it would be materially impossible for the accused to publish and circulate the material confiscated with the intention of violating these laws" The author claimed that the Toronto Crown Attorney was using the pretext of the War Measures Act to further the "work of persecution in hatred of the arrested comrades." Noting how quickly the arrests occurred following the introduction of the new laws, the paper asserted that this was a "case of political persecution, devoid of any relation with the war, of which the state of war simply offers the pretext."¹⁰⁵ Continuing with this line of reasoning, in a 2 December 1939 article, L'Adunata asked how it was possible that Canadian police had been able to uncover the "dangerous plot" of Bortolotti and the others in less than a week in a city of over half a million inhabitants.

That would mean that in the brief space of six days the Canadian police ... carried out a general investigation on the antiwar activities in the city of Toronto, that has around 631,000 inhabitants, discovered the

¹⁰³ Canada did not formally declare war on Germany until 10 September 1939.

¹⁰⁴ Rex vs. Attilio Bortolotti et al, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa.

¹⁰⁵ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 11 Nov. 1939: 6.

dangerous plot around the person of comrade Bortolotti and reached the certainty that the conspirators did criminal work.¹⁰⁶

The article's author did not believe the arrests of 4 October to be a demonstration of skilled policing. Instead, it was charged that

The reality is more modest. The Italian consular authorities in Toronto followed the antifascist activities of the comrades and as soon as they knew of the draconian laws of war, hurried to denounce them to the Canadian police – in which certainly there is no lack of fascists and pseudo-fascists – with the hope that they definitely be taken from circulation.¹⁰⁷

This alleged cooperation between Toronto police and the Italian Vice Consul could hardly have been surprising to the readers of L'Adunata dei Refrattari. Police were part of the state's repressive structure and anarchists were no strangers to persecution by various security forces in different countries. And, because anarchists believed all states to behave in the same oppressive ways, perhaps with the exception of Britain, which had become a haven for persecuted anarchists from other countries, the cooperation between the Italian state and Canadian police seemed natural.¹⁰⁸ The L'Adunata article from 2 December stated that Canadian police had no qualms about working with Italy even though Mussolini was allied with Nazi Germany, with whom Canada was at war. As the author suggested, with regards to Borotlotti's impending deportation,

The fact that Mussolini still sustains the alliance with Hitler's Germany, against which the British Empire and Canada find themselves in a state of war, does not disturb the Toronto police. They searched for pretexts on which to base the delivery of Arturo [sic] Bortolotti to the black shirts of the fascist monarchy, and went to ransack the archives of Canadian Immigration and those of the US, where it found diligent collaboration.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 2 Dec. 1939: 3.

¹⁰⁷ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 2 Dec. 1939: 3.

¹⁰⁸ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 3 Feb. 1940: 2.

¹⁰⁹ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 2 Dec. 1939: 3.

At the same time, in another article, the author was amazed that any kind of cooperation would exist between Canada, a member of the British Commonwealth, and Italy, since the latter had begun a propaganda campaign aimed at Italians which argued for the forceful end of England's control of the Mediterranean.

It seems incredible that one of the component governments of the British Commonwealth of Nations is about to [cooperate with] the fascist dictatorship ... right at the moment in which Italy revived an Anglophobic campaign and the loudspeakers of Mussolini claim the necessity of removing – naturally with the army and war – the English domination of access to the Mediterranean, that is Gibraltar, Suez and the Bosphorus.¹¹⁰

The articles in L'Adunata made much of the contradictions demonstrated by the Canadian state's persecution of antifascists when it was at war with Germany, a war supposedly "for the defence of democracy and of civilization."¹¹¹ And though Canada was part of the British Empire fighting on the side of Britain against Nazi aggression, it was more than willing to "tramp[le] down the best traditions of liberalism of the mother country, [and] ... sacrific[e] human life to the iniquitous letter of her inquisitorial and barbaric laws."¹¹²

Of course, when it came to dealing with leftist radicals, the Canadian government willingly colluded with Fascist or reactionary regimes.¹¹³ For example, in 1933, Tomo Čačić, a Croat from Yugoslavia, was arrested by Canadian authorities for being a member of the CPC. Found guilty of these charges, Čačić was ordered deported to his country of birth. In a recent study on the Čačić deportation, historian Dennis Molinaro has shown that the RCMP was in contact with the Yugoslav consulate in Canada

¹¹⁰ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 16 Dec. 1939: 5.

¹¹¹ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 18 Nov. 1939: 3; "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 2 Dec 1939: 3.

¹¹² "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 3 Feb. 1940: 2.

¹¹³ Roberts 154-155; Molinaro 83.

regarding the case. The consulate was forthcoming in telling the RCMP that Čačić was going to be arrested upon his return to Yugoslavia, leaving Canadian authorities under no illusion as to the fate that awaited the Communist.¹¹⁴

Once the original charges against Bortolotti, Benvenuti, and Gava under the War Measures Act and Bortolotti's possession of illegal firearms were successfully defeated in court, L'Adunata dei Refrattari shifted its focus to the impending deportations to Italy of Bortolotti and Confalonieri. The seriousness of this possibility could not be understated; the return of the two anarchist antifascists would mean either prison or death at the hands of the Italian state.¹¹⁵ In fact, imprisonment was the least punishment that Bortolotti and Confalonieri could hope to receive upon their return to Italy.¹¹⁶ The deportation cases of the two anarchists were put in a larger historical context of Italian anarchists who had faced similar deportations. In a L'Adunata article from 9 December 1939, the author mentioned Ugo Fedeli's deportation from Uruguay and Nicola Recchi's expulsion from Argentina.¹¹⁷ The paper also reprinted part of an article written by Luigi Galleani that appeared in Cronaca Sovversiva discussing the arrest of Hamilton's Armando Del Moro in 1915, which was mentioned above.¹¹⁸

Bortolotti was also "framed" by L'Adunata dei Refrattari as someone being slowly martyred for his convictions. The three months in the cold and damp Don Jail

¹¹⁴ Molinaro 83.

¹¹⁵ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 9 Dec. 1939: 7; "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 23 Dec. 1939: 4.

¹¹⁶ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 3 Feb. 1940: 2.

¹¹⁷ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 9 Dec. 1939: 7. Fedeli was deported from Uruguay in 1933 by the Terra dictatorship because of his anarchist activities. Upon his return to Italy he was imprisoned until 1943. Recchi was part of an anarchist circle in Buenos Aires involved in expropriations and bombings. He had lost his left hand while making explosives. In spite of this injury, he worked as a bricklayer and supported his family. After the execution of Severino Di Giovanni, a prominent figure in the circle of which Recchi was part, Recchi was arrested, tortured, and deported to Italy. He, too, was immediately arrested and imprisoned when he arrived. Recchi was not released from prison until after the Fascist regime fell. Afterwards he returned to Buenos Aires where he reunited with his family. Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 210.

¹¹⁸ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 23 Dec. 1939: 4.

were causing the anarchist health problems. He had lost twelve pounds during his incarceration and suffered from a fever of 103°F.¹¹⁹ As a result of such squalid conditions, Bortolotti was moved to the jail's hospital to receive medical attention.¹²⁰ As L'Adunata reported, "The condition of [Bortolotti's] health was undermined by the long detention in the infected prisons of Canada."¹²¹ This issue became another means by which the paper stressed the dire situation faced by Bortolotti in particular.

L'Adunata also commented on the lack of press coverage on the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case in the Canadian mainstream press as well as the general silence among left wing publications. Prior to January 1940, the only non-anarchist publication to cover the story was an IWW publication from Chicago called Industrial Worker.¹²² The apparent disinterest on the part of the Canadian media with regard to the impending deportations of the two anarchists was constructed by L'Adunata as part of a conspiracy to hand the anarchists over to the Italian government. "[I]n Canada the press has plotted the most airtight conspiracy of silence on [Bortolotti's and Confalonieri's] fate and on the [fact] that the Canadian government plan to return [the men] to the *squadrists* of the fascist dictatorship"¹²³ According to Emma Goldman, in her letter to L'Adunata dei Refrattari published on 18 November 1939, the lack of media coverage was compounded by the absence of any initiative on the part of Canadian defenders of civil liberties to take a public stand against the treatment of the arrested anarchists. As Goldman stated,

[W]e need the help of all comrades and of all the lovers of liberty that exist in the US. And this is certainly not because we have not

¹¹⁹ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 12 Jan. 1940; and 18 Jan. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹²⁰ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 23 Dec. 1939: 4.

¹²¹ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 20 Jan. 1939: 4.

¹²² It was not until early 1940 that letters regarding the case were printed in Nation, New Republic, and Canadian Forum. Moritz and Moritz 188-189.

¹²³ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 9 Dec. 1939: 7.

attempted to arouse the interest of the Canadian masses. Unfortunately there exists a conspiracy of silence among the daily journals, and no public [way] by which to reach the people of this city [or] of this country. More sad still is the complete absence of individual animation of civic sense, disposed to defend civil rights from the invasion of authority.¹²⁴

As Goldman insisted, if not for anarchist publications such as L'Adunata, there would have been no coverage on this deportation case.

There are ... Canadian Socialists, which [sic] boast that only they remain to guard the constitutional rights of the people of Canada. But it remains a fact that no journal, no magazine, socialist, liberal, unionist or other, in the US or Canada, said one word in defence of the arrested of Toronto.¹²⁵

L'Adunata expressed the importance of the anarchist press in the deportation struggle: “[I]n the US the anarchist papers are the only ones that interest themselves in [Bortolotti and Confalonieri], the others make themselves busy and, in every way, are completely indifferent to the persecution to which anarchists are subject as a result of their convictions.”¹²⁶

A final important aspect of the framing process for the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case – one tied directly to the mobilization of resources – was the necessity of United States-based comrades to provide financial assistance for legal costs because the anarchist movement in Canada, whether Italian or non-Italian, was not large enough to raise the money on their own. In fact, Toronto-based anarchists who involved themselves in the legal struggle on behalf of the 4 October arrestees counted on the solidarity of comrades living in the United States.¹²⁷ As Emma Goldman explained to Nick Di Domenico two weeks after the initial arrests,

¹²⁴ “Gli arrestati di Toronto,” AdR 18 Nov. 1939: 3.

¹²⁵ “Gli arrestati di Toronto,” AdR 16 Dec. 1939: 5.

¹²⁶ “Gli arrestati di Toronto,” AdR 9 Dec. 1939: 7.

¹²⁷ “La reazione liberale in Canada,” AdR 28 Oct. 1939: 2; “Gli arrestati di Toronto,” AdR 2 Dec. 1939: 3.

I wish I could hold out hope that part of the amount can be raised here from the Jewish Comrades. The trouble is we have no more than half a dozen and so far they have contributed only around forty dollars. There is no English movement or comrades. ... The Italians, also very few comrades, but anti-Fascists have collected \$133. They may raise a little more. I do not know.¹²⁸

J.L. Cohen's lawyer fee of \$1500 was the largest expense to be covered. Goldman felt he charged a fair price considering all the work it would take to free the arrested anarchists from jail.¹²⁹ The appeals for financial assistance appeared in the first article L'Adunata published regarding the original raid and arrests in Toronto. Readers were invited to send financial contributions to the paper directly to help "fight for the liberty ... of the hostages of Canadian reaction."¹³⁰ Goldman had requested that L'Adunata dei Refrattari collect funds from its readers and then forward them on to her because it would be less work on her part to keep track of all monies coming in.¹³¹ It was imperative that the paper's readership raise the necessary funds to cover legal costs in Toronto because the Canadian media ignored the plight of the arrested and no one, apart from local anarchists, were coming to their aid.¹³² Goldman had wanted the information on the arrests to appear in L'Adunata as soon as possible and, though not explicit in this, wanted the paper to publish news on the Toronto anarchists weekly.¹³³ When she received an advance copy of the 25 November 1939 issue of the paper, which had no information on Bortolotti's deportation save totals of money raised, Goldman wrote to Di Domenico to express her disappointment and stressed the need of "keeping this struggle in the public

¹²⁸ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 22 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹²⁹ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 22 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP.

¹³⁰ "La reazione liberale in Canada," AdR 28 Oct. 1939: 2.

¹³¹ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 19 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹³² "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 18 Nov. 1939: 3.

¹³³ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 19 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

eye due to the short term memory of most.”¹³⁴ In his response, Di Domenico explained that the reason for the omission had to do with sending the issue to the presses a day early because of the Thanksgiving holiday and reiterated that Bortolotti would not be forgotten.¹³⁵

Raising enough money to cover legal costs stemming from the initial arrest of the Italian anarchists and for the Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation case was always a pressing issue for the anarchists in Toronto involved in this struggle. Within the two and a half weeks following the 4 October arrests, only \$400 – not even one third of Cohen’s \$1500 fee – had been raised to offset expenses. Even before the first appeal appeared in the pages of L’Adunata dei Refrattari, Goldman asked Di Domenico if it was possible for the Italian comrades in the United States to raise \$1000. She realized that the Italian anarchists were “the poorest of the poor,” but her desperation was evident.¹³⁶ In his reply, Di Domenico wrote that he understood the need for raising the money quickly but stated it was materially impossible for this to happen in a short time. The paper’s readership had not forgotten the arrested comrades and were doing everything they could to find the means to raise the funds.¹³⁷ Goldman was to continually press Di Domenico on issues of money. Between early December 1939 and mid-February 1940, she wrote six letters to the publisher of L’Adunata asking if more money could be sent and expressing her concern over whether Cohen’s fee would be paid.¹³⁸ After Cohen was able to negotiate Bortolotti’s release on \$4000 bail with J.S. Fraser of the Department of

¹³⁴ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 22 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹³⁵ Di Domenico, NYC, to Goldman, Toronto, 22 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹³⁶ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 22 Oct. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹³⁷ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 4 Nov. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹³⁸ Goldman, Winnipeg, to Di Domenico, NYC, 7 Dec. 1939; Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 19 Dec. 1939; 12 Jan., 25 Jan., 6 Feb., 15 Feb. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

Mines and Resources, Immigration Branch, Goldman's concern was expanded to include worries over raising the bail money.¹³⁹ However, it must be stated that Goldman did not single out L'Adunata dei Refrattari in this regard; she was constantly writing comrades, whether Italian or not, to find out what they were doing to raise money and when she could expect it. In fairness to Goldman, her persistence was more the result of her great concern for the arrested anarchists, which was exacerbated once Bortolotti and Confalonieri were ordered deported, than an overbearing personality. She began to loathe her constant reminding of comrades for contributions and began to fear that they were beginning to think that all she cared about was money.¹⁴⁰

To demonstrate the continued need for contributors, L'Adunata printed an article that featured part of a letter Goldman had sent to the publishers of the Spanish-language anarchist paper Cultura Proletaria. Goldman had recently returned from a lecture trip in Winnipeg to find that no new contributions had come in. The letter expressed Goldman's exasperation and indignity at the anarchist movement's apparent indifference to the fate of Bortolotti and Confalonieri. As she stated,

I must say that the enthusiasm and generosity demonstrated by the comrades at the beginning of this struggle has now almost completely disappeared. During my trip to Winnipeg and after my return I have received little correspondence and no contributions for this endeavour. You understand, comrades, that because of this indifference it becomes extremely difficult to continue ... with the deliberate intention of getting the hostages from the hands of the jailers. Frankly and sincerely I don't ... understand the reason of this change of attitude¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 6 Jan. and 9 Jan. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹⁴⁰ Goldman, Toronto, to Di Domenico, NYC, 19 Dec. 1939, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹⁴¹ "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 6 Jan. 1940: 3.

Letters of a similar tone had also been received by L'Adunata dei Refrattari. The article reiterated Goldman's concerns and invited readers to continue their urgent work in saving the anarchists from deportation.¹⁴²

Creating a framing process that receives mass support is important in determining the success of a particular social issue. It would be ideal for a social movement to draw in as many different actors from as wide a segment of the population as possible. However, as an anarchist Italian-language publication, L'Adunata dei Refrattari's focus appears to have been directed solely at its readership and not to the wider Italian population nor the larger non-Italian society in Canada or the United States. More wide-ranging campaigns to solicit aid from outside of the Italian anarchist *milieu* were conducted by the Bortolotti and Confalonieri defence committees based in Toronto. The articles L'Adunata printed on these events stressed the urgency of raising the required funds to successfully mount the struggle to save the two anarchists. Within less than five months, the paper and its readership was able to raise more than \$700.00, the largest single sum of all the contributors, almost one-fifth of the total amount spent by the Bortolotti-Confalonieri defence committees.¹⁴³ This was quite an accomplishment considering the modest means of most Italian anarchists in North America.

The Italian anarchist movement did not have a stable source of funding outside of the movement. Its survival and ability to support various causes was only possible through the contributions of its supporters. As mentioned above, L'Adunata dei Refrattari played an important role in mobilizing its readers to financially support the Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation struggle. The different Italian anarchist circles that

¹⁴² "Gli arrestati di Toronto," AdR 6 Jan. 1940: 3.

¹⁴³ Dorothy Rogers, "Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement," nd, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

were allied to the paper raised funds in a variety of ways. *Il Gruppo I Liberi* of Chicago held a spaghetti dinner on 2 December 1939 and raised \$56, while *Il Gruppo Libertà* of Needham Heights, Massachusetts, organized an event that earned \$24 for the defence funds. On 25 February 1940, *Circolo Volontà* coordinated a three-act play and a dance at the Galilei Club in Brooklyn. The drama was written by F. Cavalotti and presented by the *Filodrammatica Volontà*. All money raised was sent to L'Adunata on behalf of Bortolotti and Confalonieri.¹⁴⁴

Methods of social change are often comprised of activities such as education, direct aid, and direct action.¹⁴⁵ During the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case, the Italian anarchists used education to raise awareness of the two anarchists' plight and direct aid to cover legal expenses. As mentioned above, L'Adunata dei Refrattari published updates on the case as events unfolded keeping its readership informed. Though it does not appear as though L'Adunata itself was involved in disseminating information of the deportation case amongst the larger non-anarchist Italian communities of Canada and the United States, it is possible that groups like *Il Gruppo Liberi* and *Circolo Volontà* may have reached non-anarchist Italians in their respective cities through the events they held to raise money for the two anarchists. It was typical for Italian workers to attend radical theatre productions not only as a means of social interaction with others but also as a diversion from lives of hardship.¹⁴⁶ Again it is difficult to make the claim with certainty, but the plays presented by *Filodrammatica Volontà*, for instance, may very well have

¹⁴⁴ Goldman, Toronto, to Anna Olay, Chicago, 24 Nov. 1939, and Leo Becchetti, Needham, to Goldman, Toronto, 3 Feb. 1940, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor; *Il Circolo Volontà*, "Pro Gli Arrestati del Canada," AdR 24 Feb. 1940: 8.

¹⁴⁵ McCarthy, 257.

¹⁴⁶ Marcella Bencivenni, "Italian American Radical Culture in New York City: The Politics and Arts of the *Sovversivi*, 1890-1940," diss., City University of New York, 2003, 204-205.

attracted members of the Brooklyn Italian community who did not identify as anarchist or even considered themselves sympathizers. These events also could have drawn community members, whether on the left or not, who wanted to help two Italians seen as facing discrimination in Canada.¹⁴⁷ L'Adunata dei Refrattari also became the vehicle for direct aid by collecting the money raised by different Italian groups and individuals and then forwarding the funds to the Bortolotti-Confalonieri defence committees in Toronto.

Epilogue

In the end, the struggle to prevent the deportation of Attilio Bortolotti and Agostino Confalonieri to Italy was successful. Bortolotti was allowed to remain in Canada as long as he maintained a clean record.¹⁴⁸ Confalonieri, on the other hand, could not challenge his deportation order because of his illegal entrance into Canada. But, he was also spared a return trip to Italy thanks to the efforts of Augusto Bellanca of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union (ACWU) and Frank Tannenbaum, a former anarchist and Wobbly who had served as an advisor to the Mexican government during the 1930s.¹⁴⁹ These men, both from New York City, were able to persuade the Mexican government to allow Confalonieri to reside there. However, complications arose for Confalonieri when the American Consul in Toronto refused to grant the anarchist a transit visa to allow him to travel to New York City to board a ship sailing for Mexico.¹⁵⁰

Bortolotti contacted some smugglers who could help Confalonieri get into the United

¹⁴⁷ In a personal interview Libera Martignago Bortolotti stated that events held by the Italian anarchists in Sault Ste Marie were attended by Italians who did not identify as anarchists. Libera Bortolotti, personal interview, 6 June 2005.

¹⁴⁸ FC Blair, Ottawa, to Cohen, Toronto, 29 Apr. 1940, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa.

¹⁴⁹ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices* 507; Pernicone, *Carlo Tresca* 76-7.

¹⁵⁰ Cohen, Toronto, to Augusto Bellanca, NYC, 3 Apr. 1940, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa.

States via Niagara Falls so he could make his way to New York City.¹⁵¹ Confalonieri arrived in Mexico on 8 April 1940 with \$150 supplied by Cohen and the contact for a Jewish anarchist who had fought in Spain given to him by Emma Goldman before his departure from Toronto.¹⁵²

Conclusion

As part of their decades-long struggles of resistance, Italian anarchists established networks to aid Italian veterans of the Spanish Civil War who wanted to leave an increasingly repressive Europe. This network involved anarchists from France, Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, and the United States, and was funded by Italian anarchists in Europe and most likely North America. The money raised for this endeavour was used to help cover travel costs and pay for transit visas. Both Attilio Bortolotti and Agostino Confalonieri were involved in this network though in different capacities. After the arrest of the two men, along with their anarchist comrades, in

¹⁵¹ Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream 2." In Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930, Franc Sturino mentions that channels existed whereby Italian migrants in Toronto could pay \$300 to a "mafia" member to be smuggled into the United States. Franc Sturino, Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to North America, 1880-1930 (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1990) 158.

¹⁵² Cohen, Toronto, to Louis Fitch, Ottawa, 25 Mar. 1940, JLCP, MG30, A94, Volume 14, File 2761, LAC, Ottawa. It is possible that the Jewish anarchist living in Mexico was Simon Radowitzky. In Kick It Over Bortolotti explains that the contact in Mexico given to Confalonieri was a Jewish anarchist who had assassinated a president of Argentina and fought in Spain. Bortolotti, "Guardian of the Dream" 2. I have been unable to find any reference of a Jewish anarchist killing an Argentine president though an attempt was made on the life of Manuel Quintana, president of Argentina from 1904 to 1906, by a Catalan anarchist named Salvador Planas y Virella which was unsuccessful. Radowitzky, on the other hand, did successfully assassinate Colonel Ramon Falcon, a police chief who ordered a cavalry charge against workers on 1 May 1909 in Buenos Aires which killed twelve and wounded 100. Radowitzky was disgusted by Falcon's actions and later threw a bomb into the colonel's coach. The anarchist was imprisoned for twenty years before being released and expelled from Argentina. He went to Uruguay where his anarchist activities again caused his deportation. Radowitzky went to Spain in 1936 to fight in the revolution but fled to Mexico via France after Franco's victory. "Radowitzky, Simon, 1891-1956," libcom.org., <http://libcom.org/history/simon-radowitzky-1891-1956> (accessed 23 Mar. 2008). Whether Confalonieri contacted Radowitzky upon his arrival in Mexico City is unclear. But, in a letter to his cousin Stefano, Confalonieri mentions that he is living with a friend in a house in the city. Agostino Confalonieri, Mexico City, to Stefano Confalonieri, Monza, 17 June 1940, Agostino Confalonieri, busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.

Toronto in October 1939, the Italian anarchist movement was quickly mobilized to prevent Bortolotti's and Confalonieri's deportation to Italy. Though this campaign was spearheaded by Emma Goldman, the Italian anarchists played an instrumental role in this struggle. They, through appeals in the Italian-language publication L'Adunata dei Refrattari and autonomous fundraising activities, were able to supply the defence funds of Bortolotti and Confalonieri with the largest single financial contribution: \$1437.37 of the \$3540.76 total, just over 40% of all expenses.¹⁵³ If not for the involvement of the Italian anarchists, the ability of Goldman and others to mount their campaign would have been jeopardized. However, the conflicts among the Italian anarchists in North America had consequences for the wider deportation struggle. Had the conflict between L'Adunata and Carlo Tresca not existed, it is possible that the Italian anarchists could have raised even more money more quickly for the two anarchists. Or perhaps Tresca would have been more involved in approaching non-anarchist contacts within the labour movement and media, thus expediting the process. Tresca refused to involve himself in aiding anarchists aligned with L'Adunata, and those responsible for publishing the paper were unwilling to tarnish their integrity by cooperating with the anarcho-syndicalist. Still, even with a part of the Italian anarchist movement involved in this case, their contribution was sizable.

The transnational character of the Italian anarchist movement was such that in a time of crisis a smaller number of anarchists based in Canada could call upon the aid of

¹⁵³ This figure is a total of the following amounts: L'Adunata/New York - \$733.54, Chicago - \$135.25, Detroit - \$436.00, East Boston - \$44.58, Rouyn, Quebec, - \$47.00, and Windsor - \$41.00. Anarchists from Toronto also contributed but their amount is unknown and lumped into a general Toronto total. The other cities listed may also include monies from non-Italian anarchist sources, but these localities were centres of Italian anarchist activity. Thus it seems likely that the majority of funds raised in these cities came mostly from Italian anarchist sources. Dorothy Rogers, "Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement," nd, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

other anarchists in the United States. If these networks and relationships had not existed, those anarchists in Canada who were involved in the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case would have been hard pressed to cover legal fees and other expenses associated with preventing the deportations to Italy since the greater share of the expenses were paid by United States-based comrades.¹⁵⁴

In much the same way as contemporary websites for Anarchist Black Cross¹⁵⁵ and the Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network¹⁵⁶ keep anarchists abreast of the movement's political prisoners and ways to support them, the Italian anarchist press was an important means by which information on issues such as the deportation of comrades could be disseminated. In this particular instance, L'Adunata dei Refrattari acted as the main source of news on the development of the Bortolotti-Confalonieri case as well as a destination point for all monies being raised by Italian anarchists throughout the United States. The Italian anarchist press played an indispensable and central role in linking the autonomous groups that comprised this transnational movement. It acted as a unifying presence that was able to organize Italian anarchists to come to the aid of comrades in crisis.

¹⁵⁴ Dorothy Rogers, "Bortolotti Defence Committee Financial Statement," nd, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

¹⁵⁵ www.abcf.net

¹⁵⁶ www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk

Conclusion

As the 1940s wore on, the Italian anarchists in North America grew older and their children, who had assimilated into Canadian and American culture, did not replenish the movement's ranks. Anarchist militants who had been in their twenties and thirties during the interwar period were now in their forties and fifties and did not necessarily have the same energy as in their younger years for political activism. In 1943, Carlo Tresca was murdered and *Il Martello* ceased publication shortly afterwards. Of the two major Italian-language anarchist newspapers of this period, only *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* continued to appear weekly into the 1960s and then bi-weekly before ceasing operations in 1971 due to a lack of subscribers.¹ Following the Second World War, the transnational Italian anarchist movement was on the decline.

The Italian anarchist movement in North America had its roots in Italy. There, following the *Risorgimento*, Bakunin, Cafiero, Costa, Galleani, Gori, Malatesta, and others began to organize and put anarchist principles into action. Their activism among Italian workers, attempts at insurrection, congresses, debates over theory and practice, and the vicious repression they experienced at the hands of the Italian state, created a distinct political and social culture. As these anarchists began to leave Italy in the late nineteenth century, either in search of work abroad or to escape persecution, their anarchist philosophies and culture migrated with them. And it was through anarchist and non-anarchist migration networks that Italian anarchist *circoli* in other parts of Europe, northern and southern Africa, Australia, the Middle East, and South and North America were established. In the Italian communities of these regions, Italian anarchists re-

¹ Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) 317.

created the political and cultural *milieux* they had left in Italy. They began to organize unions, lead strikes, publish newspapers, and sponsor a myriad of social events that included dinners, dances, and theatrical performances. These activities were central to maintaining and building local anarchist movements. Italian anarchists also replicated the antagonisms over organization that fuelled so much debate in Italy. In the North American context, this enmity existed between the anarcho-syndicalists and the anti-organizationalist anarchist communists. Though this rift was largely limited to Luigi Galleani and Carlo Tresca as well as their adherents in New York City, it did, to some extent, affect cooperation between both factions in times of crisis, such as the Bortolotti-Confalonieri deportation case.

Another aspect of Italian anarchism transplanted to Canada and the United States, among other countries, was the gender roles between men and women. A central tenet of anarchist political philosophy is that no one had the right to oppress another. Yet not all of the Italian movement's men saw female comrades as equals. In fact, at least a few felt women had no place at all in the anarchist movement. In many cases, women were relegated to the domestic sphere; they were involved in food preparation during social events and expected to raise and educate the next generation of anarchist militants while the men edited newspapers, lectured, and led. As repressive as the Italian movement may have been for women, it did provide a space for them to resist gender oppression, address specific issues of concern, and, in a few cases, become well-known for their abilities.

At this point in studies about leftwing movements in the early twentieth century, it is common for the scholar to lament that particular movement's passing or attribute the

movement's death to a particular point in time.² While it is true that the Italian anarchists in North America were on the decline following the Second World War, the Italian anarchist movement itself did not die. Instead, the centre of anarchist activity shifted back to Italy. In 1949 and 1950, anarchist congresses were organized by the *Federazione Anarchici Italiana* (FAI) and held in Livorno and Ancona, respectively. Further research would need to be conducted to find out whether Italian anarchists from North America were present at these conferences. At the very least, anarchists in North America were kept informed of developments in Italy. A 1949 letter from Pio Turrone, a Cesena based anarchist who had fought in Spain during the civil war, to Armando Borghi in New York City explained what happened at the first convergence in Livorno: the Italians were still split over the issue of organization.³ At Livorno, Pier Carlo Masini, a former Communist who was then the editor of *Umanità Nova*, and a contingent of Italian youths argued for the formation of a libertarian party based on anarchist principles that were to be adapted to the economic, social, and political realities of postwar Italy. It is unclear whether Masini and his adherents wanted to build a political party to run in elections, but they did want to establish a strong presence among Italian workers.⁴ Turrone, an anti-organizationalist, was disappointed in the direction the anarchist movement was taking. As he lamented to Borghi, "[T]he ... youth ... don't understand anarchism or how we

² Michael Miller Topp, for instance, dates the death of the Italian syndicalist movement in the United States to the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. Michael Miller Topp, *Those Without A Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2001) 264.

³ Pio Turrone, Cesena, to Armando Borghi, NYC, 6 Mar. 1949, Federico Arcos: Emma Goldman Papers (FA:EGP), Labadie Collection (LC), Ann Arbor; P. Sensini, "Pio Turrone," *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani*, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 635-638.

⁴ "Obituaries: Two Historians of Anarchism – Roland Biard and Carlo Pier Masini, Anarchist Federation, <http://www.afed.org.uk/org/issue50/obit.html> (accessed 30 May 2010); F. Bertolucci, "Pier Carlo Masini," *Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani*, eds. Maurizio Antonioli et al., vol. 2 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 121-125.

understand it. And the ‘old-timers’ they don’t exist any more.”⁵ By 1954, Masini and his group broke away from the FAI over the issue and Borghi had returned to Italy to take over the editorship of Umanità Nova.⁶

And what of the other Italian anarchists? Ernesto Bonomini, who served a prison sentence in France for the murder of an Italian Fascist and had entered the United States illegally in 1939, became an upholsterer and was employed by Twentieth Century Fox in Hollywood. He wrote for various anarchist publications under the pseudonym Dick Perry and eventually retired to Florida.⁷ John Vattuone stayed active with the anarchist movement in New York City. He aided the anarchists involved in the fledgling English-language publication Why? by helping deliver issues with his truck. Some of the young Italians who were part of the Why? group was on good terms with Raffaele Schiavina, the editor of L’Adunata dei Refrattari. This relationship led to financial support from the older generation of Italian anarchists and access to the print shop that printed L’Adunata.⁸

Relations between Italian anarchists and the new left of the 1960s were less harmonious. In his memoirs, Sam Dolgoff, the Russian-born writer and anarchist activist, recalls a meeting between the secretary of an unidentified Brooklyn-based anarchist circle and members of New York City’s Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers (UAWMF). The Motherfuckers identified as anarchists and wanted to conduct a guerrilla war against the police, fire department, and all state institutions. Needing money to help with legal costs, members of the Motherfuckers approached Dolgoff who, hesitantly, put

⁵ Pio, Cesena, to Borghi, NYC, 6 Mar. 1949, FA:EGP, LC, Ann Arbor.

⁶ “Armando Borghi,” Dizionario Biografico degli Anarchici Italiani, eds. Antonioli, Maurizio, et al., vol. 1 (Pisa: Biblioteca Franco Serantini, 2003) 234; “Obituaries: Two Historians of Anarchism – Roland Biard and Carlo Pier Masini,” Anarchist Federation, <http://www.afed.org.uk/org/issue50/obit.html>, accessed 30 May 2010.

⁷ Avrich, Anarchist Voices 131.

⁸ “Giovanni ‘John’ Vattuone, 1899-1994,” David Koven Papers (DKP), File 131, International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, 14-15.

them in contact with the Brooklyn group's secretary. The meeting did not go well. The Italian anarchist understood the UAWMF's hatred of the police but could not understand why they wanted to destroy the fire department considering the useful role it played in putting out fires and saving lives. The secretary also had a problem with the group's name. As Dolgoff explains, "The Italians respect and revere motherhood. They violently object to the term 'Motherfuckers' and would indignantly refuse to help anyone using such language." The meeting ended with UAWMF receiving no aid from the Italian anarchists.⁹

As for the transnational anarchist networks, they were still operational in the late 1940s if not later. Near the end of the Second World War, Armando Borghi had originally been deported from the United States having resided illegally in that country since 1927. Once he arrived in postwar Italy, Borghi, now sixty-three, found conditions too difficult and wanted to return to the United States. He along with John and Elvira Vattuone and Attilio and Libera Bortolotti collectively worked out a plan to get Borghi back to New York City. It is unclear how someone like Borghi, who was deported from the United States, could be allowed into Canada, but this is what happened. He arrived in Montreal at some point during 1948 and was met there by the Bortolottis who then brought him to Toronto. The plan was for Borghi and Libera Bortolotti to cross the Canada-United States border on a bus that traveled between the Canadian and American sides of Niagara Falls. In order to get past United States border security, Borghi would have the passport of Umberto Martignago, Libera Bortolotti's father. At the crossing, Borghi, possibly as a result of his age and being well-dressed, was lucky enough not to be

⁹ Sam Dolgoff, Fragments: A Memoir (Cambridge: Refract Publications, 1986) 102.

asked for his papers. Once he and Libera Bortolotti were safely through customs, the Vattuones drove Borghi back to Brooklyn.¹⁰

If one is to judge the success of the transnational Italian anarchist movement based on its ability to rid the world of capitalist exploitation, governments, states, and religion, then the only possible conclusion is that the movement was a failure. Of course, such a judgement would be selling the activism of these radicals short. Within Italian migrant communities in many parts of the world, anarchists attempted to build a movement to challenge the oppressive institutions that prevented people from living lives free of oppression, misery, and want. This movement was susceptible to internal strife and gender divisions, its tactics did not always prove successful, and opportunities were doubtless missed. Nonetheless, the Italian anarchists built an impressive movement that spanned the continents and the Atlantic Ocean. Its adherents were militants of the first order who gave their lives to making the world a more bearable place.

An identifiable Italian anarchist movement in North America no longer exists. Anarchism has long since moved beyond the Little Italies and other ethnic communities of Canada and the United States. Though it is beyond the scope of this project to explore anarchism in North America from the 1940s to the 1960s, it does appear, even in a limited way, that the disconnection between first and second wave anarchism was not as great as is generally believed. The Italian anarchists did not just pass into history after Sacco and Vanzetti were murdered, nor did the anarchist movement end after the victory of the fascists in Spain in 1939. Instead, anarchist militants stayed involved to the best of their ability and helped pass along their knowledge and experience to a new generation.

¹⁰ “Giovanni ‘John’ Vattuone, 1899-1994,” DKP, File 131, IISH, Amsterdam, 12-13.

Unfortunately, a great deal of the history of these first wave militants has never been recorded and the historical legacy of these anarchists is generally not well-known. Many contemporary anarchists are not aware of the past one hundred and fifty years of anarchist history that preceded their involvement in the movement. Though there are aspects of life in the twenty-first century that differ dramatically from that of the early twentieth, there are still many important lessons we can learn from the first wave – especially about movement building and the articulation and celebration of a specifically anarchist culture.

The Italian anarchists demonstrate the importance of culture in movement maintenance and expansion. Their journals sought to educate readers about anarchist theory, practice and history, report local and international news important to anarchists, and record the activities of anarchist *circoli* in North America. The numerous plays anarchists wrote and performed explored themes of liberty, free love, revolution, and militancy. In addition, there were innumerable dances, dinners, and picnics almost always accompanied by a speaker to celebrate anarchist “holidays” or raise money for an anarchist cause. These social events were vitally important in sustaining the movement and attracting new members by appealing to the wider non-anarchist community. Anarchist culture was instrumental in creating a vibrant and militant anarchist movement.

Radical/resistance cultures are also worth creating and celebrating in order to challenge the hegemony of the current rightwing/pro-capitalist culture pervasive among North America’s corporate media and national governments. Of course, the left has been under attack in Canada and the United States for more than one hundred years, and I have explored some instances of the state repression experienced by anarchists in particular.

However, the right appears to be working even harder today to destroy social justice movements and public dissent against governmental policies. If we take Canada as an example – ruled by a minority Conservative Party government led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper since 2006 – there are both covert and overt examples of this.

In early 2009, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Campus Association (OPCCA)¹¹ held a series of workshops at Ontario university campuses to educate members on how to take over student government and destroy non-profit organizations like the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)¹² and the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG)¹³ which are seen as a threat to the Conservative agenda at university campuses. In addition to students of the OPCCA, these workshops were attended by members of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party and Conservative Party Member of Parliament of Kitchener-Waterloo Peter Braid. During these meetings, “Presenters and participants [were] caught on tape advocating for the creation of front groups for the Conservative Party to masquerade as non-partisan grassroots organizations, influencing the political discourse on campus, stacking student elections with Party members, and conspiring to defeat non-profit organizations because of political differences, all with the intention of hiding their affiliations to the Party.”¹⁴

¹¹ The OPCCA is the university wing of the Ontario Progressive Conservative party. It seeks to involve conservative students in campus politics and groom them for careers in the Party following graduation.

¹² The CFS was founded in the early 1980s and is Canada’s largest student organization. In addition to pressuring provincial and federal governments to make post-secondary education more accessible, it also involves itself in social justice issues.

¹³ PIRGs are active on university and college campuses in both Canada and the United States. They are autonomous non-profit organizations run and funded by university students. PIRGs conduct research and develop educational programs on social and environmental justice issues.

¹⁴ The OPCCA workshops occurred on 31 January 2009 at the University of Toronto, 7 February 2009 at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, and 21 March 2009 at Carleton University, Ottawa. Peter Braid participated in the 7 February workshop. The information on these workshops was provided by activists who posed as OPCCA delegates, recorded the proceedings, and leaked the story to wikileaks.org. “OPCCA workshop on how-to take over student governments, 2009,” wikileaks.org,

In addition to the covert tactics the Conservatives employ on Canadian campuses, they are also behind the overt criminalization of dissent. During the 26-27 June 2010 G20 summit in Toronto, the federal government spent nearly one billion dollars on security. The result: a combined security force of local, provincial, and national police numbering 10,000 which led to the arrest of more than 900 people – the largest mass arrest in Canadian history.¹⁵ The majority arrested were later released without charge.

Then, in early August 2010, Kingston, Ontario, was the site of another crackdown – this time against members of the Save Our Prison Farms (SOPF) coalition.¹⁶ The SOPF had converged outside the city's Frontenac Institution in order to prevent the removal of the prison farm's dairy herd. In the course of two days, twenty-four members of the SOPF coalition were arrested – including a fourteen-year-old girl and an eighty-seven year old woman. During the protests, a combined force of 300 Kingston Police and

http://wikileaks.org/wiki/OPCCA_workshop_on_how-to_takeover_student_governments,_2009 (accessed 27 Aug. 2010).

¹⁵ More people were arrested during the Toronto G20 than during the so-called October Crisis of 1970 when British Trade Commissioner James Cross and the Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte were kidnapped by members of the *Front de Libération du Québec* (FLQ). The FLQ was a leftwing and nationalist revolutionary group that sought a socialist and sovereign Quebec. Following the kidnapping of the two men, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, then the Liberal Prime Minister, implemented the War Measures Act. With the Act in place 465 arrests were made. Jill Mahoney and Ann Hui, "G20-related arrests unique in Canadian history," *The Globe and Mail* 29 June 2010, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/g8-g20/news/g20-related-mass-arrests-unique-in-canadian-history/article1621198/> (accessed 26 Aug. 2010).

¹⁶ The SOPF was formed after the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), overseen by the federal Conservatives, announced in February 2009 that the country's six prison farms would close within two years. The farms provided inmates an opportunity to learn farming practices and skills that would aid them in finding employment upon release. The food produced by prisoners was used to feed inmates and also sold to the local community. The impetus for the CSC ending the prison farm program came from a review panel hand-picked in April 2007 by then Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day. The CSC Review Panel found that closing the farms and selling the land in Ontario alone would net the federal Conservatives \$2.2 million which they could use to help fund a proposed "super jail" at the existing site of the Millhaven Institution located near Kingston. This proposed super jail would contain 2200 cells which is equal to the size of five prisons. End the Prison Industrial Complex, *Superprisons [sic] in Canada: What They Are [and] How to Stop Them* (Kingston, n.d.) 2; Rob Tripp, "Prison farm closures irk union," *Kingston Whig-Standard* 24 Feb. 2009, <http://www.thewhig.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?archive=true&e=1448291> (accessed 27 Aug. 2010).

Ontario Provincial Police were on hand to insure that the young and the old were dealt with accordingly.¹⁷

It seems clear that the actions of the Canadian far right are designed to remove those organizations or movements which oppose its reactionary and pro-capitalist plans for the country. Not only are the Conservatives trying to destroy these groups on university campuses, they are also criminalizing the same within the wider society. The long-term goal appears to be the destruction of the left – the erasure of any trace of progressive thought or resistance – as a means to insure that the rightwing agenda can be introduced further without protest. This is a cultural attack. If what remains of progressive institutions cease to exist and individuals fear to take to the streets because of the very real possibility of arrest and detention, the far right will have won. If this assault continues, it is conceivable that over time resistance to neo-liberal policies will itself be a lost memory.

It is my hope that this project, in addition to demonstrating what a transnational radical history might look like, will help contemporary anarchists to understand the role that culture can play in creating vibrant and militant movements. We need to be less disconnected from the anarchist past and have a better sense of those who came before us, their tactics, and their debates. And we need to do this not only to avoid repeating some of the same mistakes but also to understand how such activists created an anarchist culture and were able to build upon it. How contemporary anarchists attempt to create a culture or cultures is up to them. Perhaps there could be a return to commemorating important events in anarchist history with a social gathering of some kind. Or different

¹⁷ Save Our Prison Farms, “Update August 8, 8:00pm” and “Update August 9, 10:15pm,” <http://saveourprisonfarms.ca> (accessed 27 Aug. 2010); Kristyn Wallace, “Cattle removed from Frontenac Institution despite protests,” *Kingston EMC* 12 Aug. 2010: 1, 11.

kinds of social events – plays, dances, concerts – might target those outside of the anarchist movement. However this is done, two things are obvious: we will need a culture of resistance to challenge and act as an alternative to that of the far right, and we must reach out to larger numbers to pose a serious challenge to capitalism.

Appendix A: Photos



Attilio Bortolotti

Busta 772, Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC), Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome.



Agostino Confalonieri

Busta 1438, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Ernesto Gava

Busta 2317, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Mario Mantovani

Busta 3002, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Carlo Tresca
Busta 5208, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Luigi Galleani
Busta 2241, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Raffaele Schiavina (Max Sartin)
Busta 4690, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Osvaldo Maraviglia
Busta 3017, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Armando Borghi
Busta 755, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Virgilia D'Andrea
Busta 1607, CPC, ACS, Rome.



Armando Del Moro
Busta 1698, CPC, ACS, Rome.

Appendix B: Mastheads

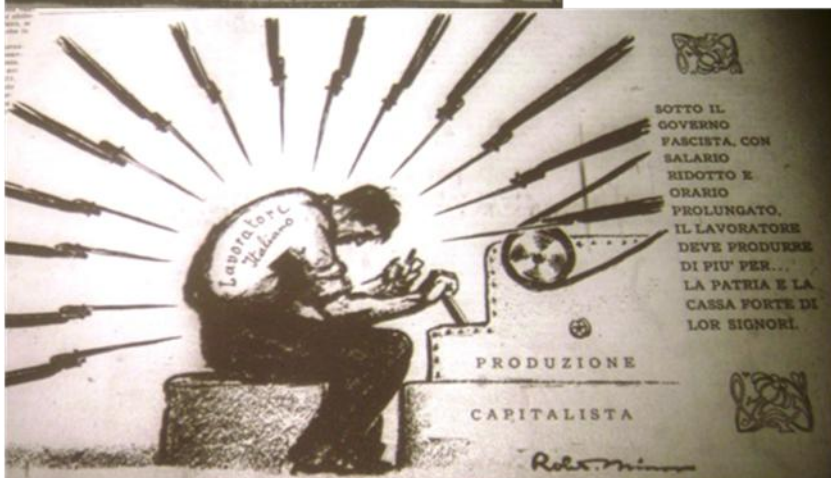




Appendix C: Political Illustrations



Il Martello 27 Jan. 1923



Il Martello 26 Apr. 1924



Thomas Nast Illustration #1



Thomas Nast Illustration #2

Bibliography

Archival Sources

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome

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 Artico Egidio, busta 202
 Baldi Ugo, busta 273
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