
This volume is a collection of papers presented at the conference, “The Harvest of a New Life: the Italian Presence in Sudbury,” held at Laurentian University on 16-17 November 2000. Despite its title, the conference also focused on the Italian community in other parts of Canada, not only in Sudbury. The volume is divided into four sections: Chronicles of the Italian Presence in Sudbury, Formulation of Identity, Writing the Experience, and Community Leadership.

The first section provides a detailed and vivid picture of the Italian community in Sudbury and its neighbouring area. Iuele-Colilli reconstructs the business, institutional, cultural and athletic landscape of the Italians in Sudbury from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present; her research points out the key role of Italians in the development of Sudbury. Along with running their own family business, Italians were also employed by the railway companies and the nickel industry. What we discover is an active community, eager to provide aid to other Italian immigrants, to entertain themselves, and to maintain its language and culture. Noël Simard examines the role of the Catholic Church and its part in keeping Italian culture alive in Sudbury; his article offers several insights that will be very useful to scholars of the Italian-Canadian community. Sandra Battaglini brings the first section to a close with a rich and insightful report on women in production jobs at Inco during World War Two; her analysis is multi-faceted and shows a careful evaluation of the data gathered and consulted. The author also conducted personal interviews among previous women-workers at Inco and these could become valuable resources for future studies.

The second section, “Formulation of Identity”, delves into the delicate question of identity among Italian-Canadians. Francesco Loriggio uses the metaphor of a museum and its exhibitions to explain identity in Italian-Canadian writers; whether or not one agrees with the elaborate metaphor used, the author observes that Italian-Canadian literature is marked by a strong thirst for memory and is therefore prone to record and to illustrate its self-reflective vocation. Loriggio concludes by discussing a major feature of future Italian-Canadian authors; in order to become “the family scribe” (101), they will have to detach themselves from their friends, families and parents. Joseph Pivato offers a brief survey of the history of Italian-Canadian literature and its social role. His discourse is concise, straightforward, variegated and well-argued. Pivato begins his report by defining Italian-Canadian literature and its significant role within other ethnic minority literatures. Currently in Canada there are about 120 active writers of Italian background, who write in English, French or Italian. Pivato not only claims, but also proves that their literature is “paradoxically quintessentially Canadian and … foreign” (109). Furthermore, he draws a clear distinction between the positive and negative image of Italians in Canada and in the United States respectively; this facet occupies barely two pages of his presentation and is definitely worth further investigation and development. Jana Vizmuller-Zocco explores the role of lan-
language in strengthening one's identity and in making someone part of a wider social group. Her contribution is not focused only on Italian-Canadians, but also on Italian-Americans as she proposes two pivotal hypotheses. First, language is an important expression of a culture's identity, but not the only one. Second, ethnic identification can also occur when people have no knowledge of their heritage. Paul Colilli briefly discusses the concept of identity, its articulated aspects and its slippery logic to conclude that Italian-Canadian identity is based on an aggre-

The third section, "Writing the Experience", presents a few short stories by two Italian-Canadian writers: Nic Battigelli and Rosanna Battigelli. These pages offer a small, but representative sample of Italian-Canadian writings. Most of the main features emphasized and discussed in the previous articles can be identified and observed here; Italian-Canadians will be able to recognize memories from their upbringing and from their families and will appreciate the highly self-reflex-

The fourth section, "Community Leadership", concludes the collection by linking identity to leadership. As Paul Colilli keenly points out, the nature of this session encourages the speakers to provide an "autobiographical dimension to their presentation" (201). Rick Bartolucci, Sonia Del Misser, Peter DiPietrantonio and Paul Colilli share their personal stories as Italian-Canadians and reveal their active and tireless role within the Italian community in Sudbury. All the speakers amply communicate their genuine pride in being Italian-Canadians and in being part of a nurturing community of Italian immigrants.

This volume achieves what the editor, Diana Iuele-Colilli, promises in her introduction; all contributors link the idea of hard work to that of "a gift that renews a community" (viii). Their contributions to the volume demonstrate how Italians and their descendants managed to flourish in their new country thanks to their hard work and their determination. Italians integrated themselves well in Canada without forgetting their past, their culture, traditions and values. Not only did they adapt to a new culture and to a new country, but they also contributed in the material and moral growth of Canada, a welcoming land.

ANNA CHIAFEL

University of Toronto


Christopher Columbus could have never guessed that by the fourth centenary of his arrival in the Americas, an era characterized by economic distress and lack of opportunity, would eventually force over twelve million Italians to retrace his west-

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