

**The National Institute for the History of the Liberation Movement in Italy (INSMLI)
and the Network of Associated Institutes:
Fifty Years of Life**

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The completion of fifty years of life of the national Institute cannot constitute merely an occasion for celebration, even if the Institute can be proud to have reached this maturity despite the great difficulties which accompanied and frequently obstructed its path. Half a century of life must also inspire the Institute to reflect critically and self-critically on its positive accomplishments, on objectives not met or not pursued to their completion, as well as on prospects for the future based on those past experiences. The birth in 1949 of the national Institute, on the preexistent base of three regional Institutes – those of Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria – which were created in the preceding two-year period, occurred in a moment of great political and social turmoil in Italy. The expression “liberation movement” (*movimento di liberazione*) itself, which was proposed as a name for the Institute, was intended to offer a concept and a point around which to unify all elements of the Resistance, transcending the conflicts and disagreements of the political struggle. The Institute’s fifty years of life are inevitably intertwined with fifty years of Italy’s history. Although the Institute has remained faithful to the commitment of its founders, particularly Ferruccio Parri, not to involve itself in political struggles, its course could not remain completely unaffected by the development of political events and the influence of changing circumstances.

The fact that it has managed to preserve the two basic tenets at its core – autonomy from political power and the scientific rigor of its work – does not mean in any way that it has abandoned the strongly ethical inspiration that has accompanied it from the beginning.

Born out of the private initiative of Resistance men, with the decisive contribution of professional historians, the Institute immediately put itself in a unique position among national historic institutions, not only in its role as guardian of the values of the Resistance but also as a depository of a public legacy, the archives of the Resistance. Indeed, the Institute and its branches deserve credit for having guarded these archives against the dispersion that could have resulted either from the organizational inefficiency and sluggishness of public organisms or from the disinterest (if not contrary interest) of political powers. It is, therefore, clear, as

can also be seen from the presence of representatives of state archives and libraries at the national Institute's constituent assembly, that the public function of the Institute was recognized from its beginnings.

The recognition of this function, however, has never been matched by adequate patronage on the part of the State for its mission and for the material means necessary to sustain it and its work. The culminating moment of this period can be found in the act of recognition of 1967, which assured the Institute of a stable annual financial contribution from the State. It is no mystery to anyone that the State's financial assistance, along with the promise – generally honored by the State– to lend teaching staff on temporary assignment from the schools, has from that moment represented the essential requirement for the material existence of the Institute. Nevertheless, the limits of this assistance became evident at the moment in which the State stopped adjusting its financial contribution to meet growing expenses resulting from a rising cost of living and from the expansion of the Institute's activities. The situation has been aggravated by constant delays in disbursement of public payments and a gradual but steady decline in the State's concern for the fate of cultural institutions. In the case of our Institute, a divide has become particularly evident between the State's growing interest in its public function on the one hand – especially in the field of education – and, on the other hand, the advancement of a philosophy of privatization of all cultural entities, which constrains them to undertake drastic options of transformation in the short term.

In the more than thirty years that have passed since the act of 1967 was put into effect, the Institute has encountered a trial of extraordinary growth. Already the Tambroni crisis in July of 1960, which placed the Institute at the center of initiatives aimed to respond to young people's demand for knowledge of the last fifty years (at that time) of Italy's history – demands to which the orientation of the schools did not allow a satisfactory response – provided an example of the ridge between research and social commitment along which the life of the Institute would constantly move. The Institute played the same role in the face of new entreaties for knowledge in the field of contemporary history expressed by the student protest of 1968. This last circumstance contributed profoundly to the maturation of new orientations in research, decisively shifting the axis of study from the epicenter of the Resistance toward the problems of post-war reconstruction, perhaps as a way to understand the long-term consequences and the legacy of the crisis of 1943-45.

The new orientation also brought about an ever-increasing involvement of the national and associated Institutes in the numerous initiatives of both educational and popular character that had their start at that juncture. Also increased in this context was the role of the Institute as a reference point for the promotion of research in the general field of Italian contemporary history. At that time, the Institute almost even functioned as a substitute for the university, which was having difficulty -- for financial, organizational and structural reasons -- fulfilling the

requirements for research in general and particularly in the field of contemporary history,

The tendency of the national Institute to favor the practice of research over the production of research tools and the publication of bibliographies and sources can, I would say, be linked to the scarce stimuli coming from university-level contemporary historical research at the time. (Let's keep in mind that only in the mid-1960s was there a substantial increase in contemporary history faculty in the universities.) The General Program elaborated in 1972 can be considered a paradigm for the approach toward problems of Italian contemporary history because, overcoming the limits of a simple factual reconstruction and documentation of the Resistance movement, narrowly defined, it set the more ambitious aim of examining the impact of the break made by the Resistance during the transition from the struggle for liberation to the establishment of the Republic or, as would be said today, from fascism to post-fascism, where the central unifying theme of the research was not the assumption of a specific historical or interpretive point of view but a methodological framework.

Despite additions and new problems arising over time and the increasing awareness of their relevance, the index of problems contained in that general Program, with the important addition of the scientific Program in 1988, has remained valid. What nevertheless has changed – and profoundly – is the cultural-political context in which the Institute finds itself operating. If at the end of the 1940s its message could have been considered a way to solidify the country's bonds with the forces of the Resistance, preparing to make itself a depository of their memories, today the Institute has to radically rethink its position in the country and in the field of study from within a political panorama in which powers, which just twenty or thirty years ago stood at the extreme right of the opposition and which openly take inspiration from the forces against which the Resistance fought, could find themselves once again in government seats. For these powers, there is a risk that the message of the Resistance will no longer be received as a unifying message for the conscience and the political culture of the country.

Much has been said and written about the divided memories of this country. As recent events demonstrate, this is not a problem that concerns only Italy but one which now rises to the European level. The Institute cannot succumb to any political exploitation, but neither should it be eternally on the defensive as keeper of a legacy that could be considered obsolete or simply cumbersome. The Institute has no political position to defend; this is its strength but can also be its weakness. It, in fact, must know how to translate in new conceptual and operational terms the values of the cultural legacy of which it is bearer. The history of the Resistance in the context of the Second World War is still far from being reconstructed in its entirety and in all its implications, and the archives of the Resistance are still full of materials that could be transformed into new documentary volumes. The fact that the national Institute has never encouraged a united effort with associated institutes to compile a great history of the Resistance also cannot escape our reflection on the past fifty years. Because of the vast

amount of knowledge and physical and financial energies that such an enterprise would require, its accomplishment could result only from the collaboration of center and periphery. The presentation of *L'Atlante della Resistenza* ("The Atlas of the Resistance"), which is finally about to go to press, could be used as an occasion to reflect on the opportunity for producing a great concentration of energy around a shared objective. Among the people in charge of the Institute today are remnants of the second generation of scholars who guided the work of the national Institute. In the course of a few years, all those entrusted with the task of managing the Institute will come from a generation that has no direct connection with the struggle for liberation. I believe that during the passing from one generation to another it is important to deliver a mandate that is not limited to the rhetoric of memory but that indicates the main path for the preservation of memory in the realization of a concrete research project, with the awareness that the path of historical research does not and cannot allow shortcuts.

Safeguarding the memory of a season which held the highest expectations of the Italian people after fascism, expansion of research, the commitment to education, and the work of documentation will constitute, even for the future, the guidelines along which the activity of the national Institute and the activities of the institutes associated and connected with it must move.

An awareness of what the Resistance represented in the context of European history was evident from the Institute's first days. Collaboration with other institutes that were arising at the time in other contexts and participation in the first international conferences were part of a historiographical updating effort and of an attempt to build a shared foundation for a historiography of the Resistance. The presidency, which Parri held for a decade, of the *Comité de liaison* and then of the *Comité International d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale*, was not a mere formal matter. Under its auspices, important conferences were held (Let's remember, among others, the conference in Milano in 1961 on "*Resistenza europea e Alleati*" (European Resistance and the Allies), and contacts and exchanges with historians from both the West and the East were assured during times in which relations between the two worlds were not at all easy. While we don't want to exaggerate the importance of these meetings, neither can we negate that they opened the door to fruitful cultural exchanges and made possible meetings on subjects mistakenly considered to be neutral (for example, a conference in Prague on systems of occupation of the Axis powers during the second world war or more than one meeting in the Danube-Balkan capitals on the Balkan politics of the Axis powers). The national Institute, in part due to the authority and authoritativeness of Parri, was an active participant in these international initiatives and lent them all the collaboration of which it was capable.

Among the peculiar characteristics with which the national Institute positioned itself on the stage of national historic institutions is its federative and associative structure, which served it

well from the very moment of its founding.

This is a peculiarity that derived in the beginning, not from intention but from the spontaneous tendency to reproduce on the ground the rootedness and extensiveness that the resistance movement itself had. This structure did not originate in intellectual exercise or invention at the drawing table. It derived from the desire of those cross-generational participants who had been committed in the freedom struggle to construct, via a diffuse and widespread structure, an institution which could uphold their intention to organize and transmit the memory and values of the Resistance. In addition to Ferruccio Parri, we must not forget that it was Resistance men who were at the same time distinguished scholars – Mario Dal Pra, Mario Bendiscioli and Giorgio Vaccarino – who constructed the scientific-organizational nucleus on which, in the following ten years, the Institute as a whole would grow.

The diffuse structure, which makes the Italian Institute different from similar institutions abroad, was not and surely is not without its problematic aspects. Nevertheless, in the Italian situation, this structure has provided a real possibility that the enormous documentary inheritance of the Resistance not be lost. This inheritance is strongly tied in its nature to the very character of a Resistance movement, which was spread across the land and had centralized aspects as well as aspects of spontaneous political activism. Certainly, the widespread local institutes have become reference points not only for the collection of materials but also for the creation and growth of consensus around the values of the Resistance. It was inevitable, however, that the local institutes, not necessarily all but certainly most, would also focus predominantly on unearthing local memories and episodes, regionally circumscribed and part of a social and political fabric as complex and varied as the Italian one, producing perhaps even the perception of an excessive splintering of initiatives and publications, for which the cult of the "*piccola patria*," narrow allegiances, and provincial isolation are perhaps partly to blame. In such a complex and articulated organism exist diverse conditions, complex personal relationships, and local trade-offs which make impossible -- and perhaps not even desirable -- full synchronization of projects and timelines. The autonomy of the peripheral Institutes is surely a great resource for the whole network headed by the national Institute: for the energies it harnesses, for the resources it produces, for the confrontations it stimulates. This autonomy, though, cannot imply the absence of minimal standards of relationships and conduct to which all should conform (common goals, democratic statutes, standard criteria for the preservation of documentation and bibliographical materials – even more crucial in the information age.)

However, I am also convinced that the national Institute, which has scientific responsibility for the whole network, must exert not only a coordinating function but also, where necessary, a controlling and guiding function. This has not always occurred in the past for various reasons, including an in-my-opinion misguided sense of respect for the autonomy of others. Central and

centralized control of the national Institute, on the other hand, legitimates its function as guide, in the sense that the national Institute cannot be seen only as the distribution center of various services nor simply as a mere expression of the sum of the peripheral Institutes. The national Institute is not and does not want to be simply a member of a confederation of institutes but must be the animating and inspiring center of a shared cultural project in the sphere of which the particular plans and cultural specifics of the associated Institutes' find their space.

I don't think that the national Institute can exercise its function with bureaucratic meticulousness or by merely administrative means -- even if a component of this type does exist in its work, as it does in any complex organization. I believe that the task of promoting ever-increasing coordination must come about instead through the effort of involving the peripheral Institutes to the widest possible degree -- not necessarily all of them, of course, but certainly those that have material resources and available staff -- in scientific initiatives of a national character, overcoming the automatic patterns that are often caused by prejudice and a lack of communication. Similarly, when initiatives of the peripheral Institutes have a reach beyond local interest, as has already occurred repeatedly, they should find in the national Institute a natural reference point, the preferred partner, rendering it co-responsible for decisions that would otherwise risk remaining provincially circumscribed.

A greater circulation of communication and experience, a closer collaboration between center and periphery, is certainly the basis from which to eliminate the problems of provincial isolationism, exploitation of advantages stemming from entrenched position in the status quo, and resistance by special interest groups. This collaborative foundation would mobilize people's energies to a greater degree than ever before, making them co-responsible participants in the management of the national Institute through an active and constant osmosis that would rise above the rivalry sometimes seen between local and national Institutes and instead supply a permanent source of recruitment for managers of the national Institute.

The occasion of privatization, which necessitates among other things the formulation of a new statute for the national Institute, should also be the opportune moment to reflect on the experience of the last fifty years and to redesign the relationship between the national and the various associated Institutes. In other words, it is a chance to renew the federative pact and to encourage a redrawing of the map of associated Institutes and of the reciprocal obligations between them and the national Institute. In the absence of a reciprocal conviction that the national Institute without the network of associated Institutes would be a structure without foundation and that the associated Institutes cannot do without the national Institute, there would be no need or reason for the federative bond to exist. A scientific-cultural orientation respectful of the autonomy and the needs of the individual Institutes can result only from a consistent and determined practice of shared work and from dialogue, not from focusing on

local interests and selfish jealousies.

The life of the national Institute has suffered the fickle repercussions of political developments as was inevitable. Focus on the preservation of documentation and, with it, the possibility of writing the story of the Resistance and conserving its memory was correlated from the beginning with the interest of the majority then in political power to obliterate the significance of the Resistance as a global engine of ethical and political renewal of Italian society, favoring instead its patriotic component. It was the height of the Cold War and also of a bitter internal confrontation between political forces which had lived through the season of the Resistance together, though not necessarily with the same intensity and the same programmatic objectives. The governing coalition then in power was certainly uncomfortable with the framing of the Resistance as a unified effort of the parties of the CLN (*Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale*), and therefore, as a unifying factor for the forces that were mobilized not only against the German occupation but also against the residues of fascism. Above all, it was not in the coalition's interest to underline the fundamental role in the Resistance of the Italian Communist Party, which based its antifascist and democratic legitimacy on that participation. The Italian Communist Party itself, and the historians who supported it, stressed the coherent character of the Resistance, even beyond correspondence with historical reality, to illustrate the inseparability of the destiny of the ICP from that of the other political forces that gave life to the new Italian democracy. (In actuality, the Resistance in Italy was born out of a preexisting tradition of antifascism, in that distinguishing itself from other European components of the Resistance.)

Only the thawing of the Cold War allowed the resumption of a dialogue that was not dialogue between deaf people but which allowed the search for a synthesis taking into account a broad range of appeals and interpretive parameters.

The Institute rose from a pluralistic foundation -- with a prominent cultural component from the *Partito d'azione* (as a reflection of the weight that it had in the liberation struggle and also in Italian culture during the immediate post-war period), a prominent Catholic component, and a prominent communist component (which, however, only later showed greater attention to the existence of the national Institute, perhaps because it was too involved in battles of an immediate political nature during the directly confrontational years of the Cold War). The prospective adherence to a CLN-like formula arose from an attempt to engage all the parties that had participated in the Resistance as participants in the foundational phase of the historical studies of it. But let's not forget either that then, apart from the declared neofascists and the varied *qualunquiste* fringe, there were no political-cultural groups that did not look to the legacy of the Resistance for inspiration. In particular, the actions of Ferruccio Parri were always accompanied by a concern for making the Institute a pluralistic center of discussion while, at the same time, impeding it from becoming bound to any political side. Parri was very

clear that the Institute should be neither a veterans' club nor a club of those frustrated by politics and looking for a substitute; rather, it should be an institute of study. If we could deepen the contacts, something which the state of the documentation possessed by the Institute unfortunately does not yet make possible, that Parri himself urgently pressed for and cultivated at the time with Federico Chabod -- Resistance man but, above all, master of Italian historiography -- perhaps we could know something more about the beginnings of the founding phase of the Institute, beyond that which the Institute's own review or our personal memories permit. The relationship with the State and with representatives of public institutions was not cultivated as a sign of political subordination but grew from a recognition of the scientific and social commitment that the Institute was prepared to act upon. The act of recognition of 1967 codified the autonomy of the national Institute and its definitive placement among national historic institutes, acknowledging its specific features. The role the Institute assumed with this public recognition greatly fulfilled the expectations in the law, creating the basis of an active teaching presence that today sees the national Institute and the network of associated Institutes on the front line in the fight to promote teaching of 20th century history.

In addition, the expansion of the Institute's activity was a response both to new demands for knowledge and to the need for new tools that could quickly overcome the constraints of public financial assistance. The Institute cannot throw on the insufficiency of government aid all the blame for its own insufficiencies, for delays in studies, for missed opportunities, for not having developed an organizational model that does not render it hostage to the financial contributions of the State. But the very insufficiency of public aid with respect to the multiplicity of tasks the Institute finds itself facing, also and especially in the last ten years, highlights the necessity to modify well-established structures -- beginning with the availability of an adequate and dignified headquarters and the employment of a congruous number of workers -- to secure the continuity of activities and services offered by the Institute, resting on a minimum structure not to be reduced beyond certain limits in order not to compromise its operational capacity.

The imbalance between the size of the Institute's achievements and the comparative scarcity of resources and operating equipment was the *leitmotiv* that accompanied the life of the Institute with moments of particular tension, thwarting activities, such as the international ones, that were among the missions of the national Institute at its very origin, or paralyzing services, such as the library, which is a unique asset of our country.

The Institute could not count on its own self-sufficiency in the area of resources, which were compensated according to a typical Italian custom by contributions from various special acts of law passed by the parliament to mark periodic recurrences (from the act marking the one hundredth anniversary of the unification of Italy, which authorized a sizeable contribution to the library in 1961, to the successive acts marking every ten years the anniversaries of the

liberation and of the Constitution). Nor could the Institute count on its own cultural self-sufficiency. It never claimed a monopoly on study of the Resistance nor promoted a single interpretative model of the Resistance and of the story of contemporary Italy before and after fascism, because even the legitimate inspiration of the values of antifascism as a shared foundation could not bring about a leveling of opinion onto a single interpretation, which would be impossible by definition due to the commingling, ingrained in the very character of the Institute, of scholars characterized by a plurality of backgrounds and cultural orientations, the dialogue between whom constituted its strength and its richness.

It can be said that almost all the historians who have worked in the study of Italian contemporary history in past decades, with few exceptions, have collaborated in initiatives of the national Institute and its associates. The fact that only a relatively small number have participated directly in the management of the Institute is due in part to structural factors (the limited possibilities for internal employment offered by the Institute) and in part to organizational and personal factors (individual choices in the face of the burden of commitments that a different involvement would carry). Not identifying itself with a single interpretation of the Resistance nor claiming to cover the terrain of the entire contemporary historiography, the Institute has been, nevertheless, a safe reference point for anyone who tackled the study of the Italian crisis of 1943-45.

In the transition from the presidency of Ferrucci Pari to the presidency of Guido Quazza (1972-1996), the Institute even overcame its original politico-cultural background, to rely no longer only on Resistance-man historians but primarily on historians coming from academic backgrounds. This also marked the passage from a conception of relying essentially on the work of volunteers to a more structured vision of the presence of the national Institute, even if the financial conditions never permitted the creation of a fully functional structure adequate to its role. The positive experiment in the creation of a Research Group at the Institute, accomplished in the first half of the 1970s, was doomed to remain an isolated example, due to the inability to permanently fund a stable scientific staff. Even the possibility to take advantage of the services of a qualified scientific director, Massimo Legnani, for the almost twenty years (from 1982 to 1998) derived from his university position which allowed the national Institute to shoulder only a part, the smaller part, of the burden of his employment.

Compared to similar institutions in other countries, the Institute has survived on a minimal infrastructure, forfeiting the possibility of employing internal researchers, except where such was allowed by the allocation of teachers on loan (*comandati*) from the ministry of public education, and relying primarily on qualified collaborators from outside the Institute. This is one of the reasons the Institute, after the too-brief exception of the Research Group, gave up on grand projects, limiting itself to publishing important works of scholars not necessarily matured under the umbrella of the Institutes. Similarly, it also discontinued the policy of

research grants, at the beginning one of the most promising forms of incentive for Resistance studies. Let's not forget that such grants gave birth to works that have a secure place in the historiography, such as "*Storia di Clnai*" by Franco Catalano ¹.

The fruitfulness of the Research Group's work and method, as manifested in its two great works – the first on the interregnum of the Badoglio government after the coup d'etat of 25 July at the beginning of the Resistance ², the second on workers and peasants in the Italian crisis of 1943-44 (*Operai e contadini nella crisi italiana del 1943-44* ³) – was not replicated in any other initiative. Even the important publications of sources springing from collaboration with other institutions (the publication of the papers of the Garibaldi brigade ⁴) or from collaboration among the Institutes associated with the national (the publication of the papers of the CVL ⁵, the CLNAI ⁶, the CLN of Genoa ⁷, of the GI ⁸ and of autonomous groups ⁹) were constantly conditioned by the difficult material conditions of the Institute, in that it could not pursue such initiatives with the continuity that really would have been desirable and necessary.

The vitality of the Institute is seen in the participation of its contributors and of its leading scholars in the historiographical debate. Difficult and important works of historiographical controversy or of a profoundly innovative character, such as Guido Quazza's *Resistenza e storia d'Italia* ¹⁰, Claudio Pavone's *Una guerra civile* ¹¹, and Luigi Ganapini's very recent study, *La Repubblica delle camicie nere* ¹², are part of the constant renewal of studies that springs from the uninterrupted dialogue created not only in daily work but also in the relationships between the diverse participants in the life of the Institute and in the world of the Resistance. This development of the research and its interpretations illustrates quite well how studies of the Resistance have undergone a progressive thematic enrichment in step with the urgings that new historiographical reflections and new political developments induced in the society and in the academic world, even if much still remains to be done, as a memorable critical review by Claudio Pavone well argued some years ago.

The debate on the boundaries of the operational terrain of the Institute must surely be counted among the turning points in the life of the Institute, for its impact on historiographical and not only organizational orientation. Changing the title of the review in 1974 from "The Liberation Movement in Italy" (*Il movimento di liberazione in Italia*) to "Contemporary Italy" (*Italia contemporanea*) was the most obvious indication of the maturation in progress toward a broader perspective and a wider spectrum of observation and analysis. With that, the Institute placed itself decisively in a field which would embrace the horizon of contemporary Italy in its complexity, overcoming the reservations and reticence of those who argued that it should not abandon the more limited but also more "protected" perspective of its initial mandate. Events proved right those who wanted to allow the expansion of our work, facing without hesitation

the terrain of Italian contemporary history. Re-examining the story of the Resistance in a broader context, considering both the period of fascism that preceded it and the following period, thereby studying its ramifications on republican Italy, was not a simple expedient for overcoming the thematic difficulties and time limits; it was the way to respond to the requirements of a broadened historiographical horizon resulting from the new questions posed by the scientific community and encouraged by political developments. It was also a way to take part in debate on current events without losing the strong sense of the historic and cultural roots of our work. That brought perhaps an imbalance between the national Institute and the associated Institutes, in which the push to have a real presence not only in studies but also in society was stronger (and probably remains so) because of the pressure resulting from their closer relationship with place and, therefore, from a different sensitivity nurtured not only in the historiographical debate but also in more general civic and cultural ideas. This push also reflected the expectations of many local stakeholders and was acknowledged by the variety of names of many of the associated Institutes; they were called Institutes for the history of the Resistance and of contemporary society or Institutes for the history of Italy from Fascism to the Resistance or Institutes for the history of anti-Fascism and contemporary Italy, to list the most frequently recurring typologies in the formulation of names of the Institutes. This is an important example of the exchange and interaction that was established in the relationship between the national Institute and the associated Institutes, but it would be incorrect to reduce it to a formula distinguishing between a conservative center and a periphery more open to innovation.

In its fiftieth year of life, the season of its full maturity, the Institute finds itself, yet again with a skeleton too fragile to bear the weight, facing growing responsibilities, among them the task of equipping secondary school teachers with the skills to teach 20th century history. The Institute finds itself living today in a profoundly different political-cultural climate, with the prospect that the values and the story of the Resistance could easily be shut away in the attic by a change in the political majorities – which highlights how they have not become unifying factors in the civic conscience and the democratic awareness of the country, judging from the now daily repetition of journalistic and other attacks and of attacks by a wide front of mass media that aims to disempower attitudes and critical behaviors that draw their nourishment from the Resistance-based roots of republican Italy. It's not just distance from the events that attenuates the resonance of the many meanings of the Resistance; it is, above all, the widespread wish to free oneself from an uncomfortable history that implicates the most uncomfortable exercise of memory and that holds open the space for initiative and for critical knowledge.

It is in such a context that the Institute must rethink its function and even take drastic actions to face the era of privatization, that is, a future in which we can presume that public resources will be allocated with ever increasing parsimony. Don't expect me to indicate here and now

which legal solutions it will suit the Institute to adopt – I have expressed my opinions in another context – but it is my firm conviction that the financial and institutional reorganization of the Institute must be implemented in contextual coordination with a relaunching of its cultural project. Starting from a strong position but moving without bravado, the Institute must know how to make the most of its special history and facilities, renewing even the modes and language of its communication that have caused it difficulty more than once in its approach to the outside world, on top of the isolation provoked by other's choices, television-related or not.

The imminent transfer to new and more functional offices is a prerequisite for the Institute to be able to fulfill with renewed energy the function to which it aspires, as reference point for the history of contemporary Italy and, prospectively, of the 20th century. It will not be able to serve this function only by guaranteeing its presence in the historiographical debate but must also regain the strength of its research structures and guarantee, in addition to its continuing involvement in the educational system, the re-qualification of its specialized tools. It will have to invest more than in the past to raise the quality of services it offers to the community of scholars, teachers, and students. These services include an archive, which is the only one of its type in Italy, as well as a highly specialized library that awaits revitalization after the difficulties that have impeded its growth in the last ten years. The Library has the capacity to become the center of scientific and educational consulting activity, which is required today also for the educational revival of the school system.

This is not the place to suggest organizational solutions for structural planning of the Institute – however light or heavy they may be; among them, however, will be imposed that which is considered most suitable to guarantee the preservation and use of a set of tools and facilities to which is trusted the memory of an unrepeatable phase in the story of Italy and of Europe, that phase which one could well say established a common identity for post-war Europe. This is a task for which the Institute must prepare itself, with the awareness that it is operating in a context in which it will not be permitted to take advantage of any privileges consolidated through its position in the status quo.

Note:

This paper was presented by the author at the international study conference, "Cultural Politics and Historical Research in Europe," in Milan, 18-19 February 2000, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of INSMLI.

1 Bari, Laterza, 1956.

2 *L'Italia dei quarantacinque giorni. Studio e documenti*, written by Nicola Gallerano, Luigi Ganapini, Massimo Legnani, introduction by Ferruccio Parri, Milan, INSMLI, 1969.

3 Written by Gianfranco Bertolo, Claudio Della Valle, Nicola Gallerano, Luigi Ganapini, Antonio Gibelli, Libertario Guerrini, Massimo Ilardi, Massimo Legnani, Mariuccia Salvati, preface by Guido Quazza, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1974 (INSMLI series),

4 Giampiero Carocci, Gaetano Grassi, Gabriella Nisticò, Claudio Pavone (edited by), *Le brigate Garibaldi nella*

- resistenza. Documenti, agosto 1943-maggio 1945*, 3 vol., Milan, Feltrinelli, 1979 (InsmlI-Istituto Gramsci).
- 5 Giorgio Rochat (edited by), *Atti del Comando generale del Corpo volontari della libertà, aprile 1944-giugno 1945*, preface by F. Parri, Milano, Angeli, 1972 (INSMLI series).
- 6 G. Grassi (edited by), "*Verso il governo de popolo*". *Atti e documenti del Clnai 1943-1946*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1977 (INSMLI series).
- 7 Paride Rugafiori (edited by), *Resistenza e ricostruzione in Liguria. Verbali del Cln ligure 1944-1946*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1981 (Isr Genova).
- 8 Giovanni De Luna, Pietro Camilla, Danilo Cappelli, Stefano Vitali (edited by), *Le formazioni GI nella resistenza. Documenti, settembre 1943-aprile 1945*, Milan, Angeli, 1985 (INSMLI-Italian Federation of Partisan Associations).
- 9 Gianni Perona (edited by), *Formazioni autonome nella Resistenza. Documenti*, Milan, Angeli, 1996 (INSMLI series).
- 10 Milan, Feltrinelli, 1977.
- 11 *Saggio storico sulla moralità della Resistenza*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 1991.
- 12 Milan, Garzanti, 1999.
- 13 C. Pavone, *La Resistenza oggi: problema storiografico e problema civile*, "Rivista di storia contemporanea", 1992, n. 2-3, republished in Id., *Alle origini della Repubblica. Scritti su fascismo, antifascismo e continuità dello Stato*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 1995.