

# 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITY OF ITALY

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

ITALIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE - DUBLIN



**CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO ATTEND THE FOLLOWING EVENTS**

## LECTURE

Tuesday 1st November 2011

at 7:30pm

Trinity College Dublin,  
Emmet Theatre.

**“Italy: Myths and Memories of Unification”**

by Professor Lucy Riall

Birkbeck College,  
Department of History, Classics and Archaeology, London

## EVENT

Thursday 3rd November 2011

at 7pm

Italian Institute of Culture  
11, Fitzwilliam Square East,  
Dublin 2

Chairman: Patrick Geoghegan, Senior Lecturer,  
Trinity College Dublin

**Patrick Geoghegan interviews Kevin B. Nowlan,**  
Emeritus Professor of History, University College Dublin,  
and contributor to the volume *Ireland and the Italian Risorgimento*.

**FOLLOWED BY TWO TALKS:**

**“Ireland, Garibaldi and Italian Unification”**

by Anne O'Connor

Lecturer in Italian,  
National University of Ireland, Galway

**“Women's Places in a United Italy”**

by Emer Delaney

IRCHSS scholar,  
Trinity College Dublin



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### “ITALY: MYTHS AND MEMORIES OF UNIFICATION”

Italy celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. It has been a spectacular occasion, marked by official celebrations, publications and public events, but it has also provoked much soul-searching and criticism and led to a widespread perception that Italy is in some sense a failure, or in some way less of a nation than its European partners. What are the problems of the Italian nation and to what extent do these reflect difficulties with its ‘Risorgimento’ and unification, as is often claimed? Why is the past the subject of intense debate and disagreement in Italy? What myths of Italian nationalism remain 150 years later, and is Italy really that different from other European nations? My lecture will attempt to answer these questions.

**Lucy Riall** is Professor of History at Birkbeck, University of London. She has worked widely on the cultural, social and political history of modern Italy. Her publications include *Sicily and the unification of Italy, 1859-1866. Liberal policy and local power* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998); *Garibaldi. Invention of a hero* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2007); and *Risorgimento. The history of Italy from Napoleon to nation state* (London, Palgrave, 2009).

### “IRELAND AND THE ITALIAN RISORGIMENTO”

**Kevin B. Nowlan**, Emeritus Professor of History, University College Dublin, and contributor to the volume *Ireland and the Italian Risorgimento*, published by the Italian Institute of Culture (Dublin, 1960).

**Dr. Patrick Geoghegan** teaches in the Department of History at Trinity College Dublin and presents the award-winning ‘Talking History’ on Newstalk radio. He has written books on Robert Emmet, Daniel O’Connell, and the Irish Union, and is currently the College’s Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

### “IRELAND, GARIBALDI AND ITALIAN UNIFICATION”

Giuseppe Garibaldi was a nineteenth-century international hero, celebrated around the world for his actions in support of Italian unification and other independence movements. This talk will examine however the decidedly frosty reception that Garibaldi received in Ireland and will look at the factors which influenced this negative perception of the Italian hero. I will examine how Garibaldi’s difficult Irish relationship highlights the role of the Irish Catholic Church in influencing the reaction of the majority of the population in Ireland to unfolding events in Italy. The Italian (unbeknownst to himself) became a focal point for the venting of Irish Catholic disapproval of the Risorgimento. Italian unification was a seminal event in nineteenth-century Europe and Garibaldi was one of its central figures - by examining reactions to Garibaldi in Ireland, light can

be shed on the influence of Italian events on domestic disputes in Ireland and the evolving definition of Irish nationalism in this period.

**Dr. Anne O’Connor** is a lecturer in Italian Studies at National University of Ireland, Galway. A graduate of University College Cork, Johns Hopkins University and the University of Birmingham, she specialises in nineteenth century Italian literature and history. Her publications include *Florence: City and memory in the Nineteenth Century* (Florence, Città di Vita, 2008) and she is currently editing a volume entitled *Nation/Nazione: Irish nationalism and the Italian Risorgimento* (forthcoming UCD Press, 2012). She is a co-editor of IRCHSS-funded *The Correspondence of Paul Cullen* and has particular responsibility for the Italian language letters.

### “WOMEN’S PLACES IN A UNITED ITALY”

In the course of the Italian Risorgimento, female figures became mythologised in various ways: as exceptional warrior women (like Anita Garibaldi), as sacrificial mothers (like Adelaide Cairoli), and as emblems of the imagined nation in all its protean forms, from the weeping maiden in chains to the triumphant Italia Turrita. After unification, however, the hopes of those who had harnessed together their commitments to nationalism and feminism were disappointed; in legislative, economic and political terms, the myths did not translate to an egalitarian reality.

This talk will consider the problematic intersections of ‘Italian’, ‘female’ and ‘feminist’ identities as articulated in

post-unification Italy. In particular, I will examine some uses of the Risorgimento within the debate on female suffrage. As the twentieth century advanced and the suffrage question heated up, the Risorgimento, I contend, functioned as a narrative and rhetorical touchstone for those negotiating specifically Italian forms of femininity and feminism.

**Emer Delaney** is a postgraduate student of Italian and Gender Studies in Trinity College Dublin. She holds a Moderatorship in Italian and Psychology and an MPhil in Literary Translation. Her present research, funded by the IRCHSS, concerns the relationship between language and gender in the construction of an Italian suffrage movement (1900-1922).