

Sicily 150 Years After Garibaldi

From ancient times many people came to live in Sicily with the native Sicilians or tried to conquer Sicily because it was a beautiful country with a nice climate especially for agriculture. Throughout its long history Sicilians did not leave Sicily. That is until after the Italian Unification which Sicilians contributed so much to. When Giuseppe Garibaldi began to implement the dream of Unification of Italy as it was for many centuries during the Roman empire, he first landed in Sicily with one thousand volunteers. He was joined by twenty thousand Sicilian volunteers and proceeded with this army and others that joined in to successfully unify the various Italian city-states and republics. Then after Unification many Sicilians started leaving Sicily for the first time in history. We know that many of these immigrants with their strong work ethic became small business owners and landowners within ten years of arriving in America with nothing except clothes. We know many immigrants lived to see grandchildren and even children graduate from universities. This Essay may help us understand why leaving Sicily happened. It is not possible to understand how the Italian government did not foresee how its policies could lead to such a huge migration of important working citizens. The Essay is written in English and Sicilian language.

Victor P. Musso

Essay

Sicily 150 Years After Garibaldi

by Gaetano Cipolla, PhD

2011 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Italian nation. Although Italy boasts of a much longer history (Rome was founded in 753 BC), the unification of the country we know as Italy today occurred only in 1861, exactly on March 17, 1861. But even then Italians had to wait until 1870 to see Rome declared the capital of the country. So this year, at the encouragement of President Giorgio Napolitano, hundreds of celebrations have taken place in Italy and wherever Italians reside to wish happy birthday to one of the oldest young nations in the world, parading the tricolored flag and proudly singing the “Inno di Mameli,” the Italian National Anthem. It’s true that a number of people have not celebrated the event. Umberto Bossi’s Lega Nord (The Northern League), for example, made a point to boycott such celebrations. The league has for years threatened to secede from the union. Its members have vowed to separate the productive North from the stagnating South, casting it adrift into the Mediterranean sea. Others have perhaps gone overboard by glorifying the figures that are considered the fathers of the country,

such as Giuseppe Garibaldi, and Victor Emanuel II, glossing over some of the nasty events through which unification was achieved as inevitable, a sacrifice required for the good of a unified, single political entity to stand alongside the other single European nations. After all, they reason, those events happened 150 years ago and they have no bearing on today's Italy. Unfortunately, that is not the case. The Northern League has forgotten what the South and Sicily contributed to Italian unification and the others who celebrate the event have forgotten that for Sicilians and other southerners becoming Italians has not improved their lot. Today, after 150 of unity, in terms of the standard of living, employment, social

Saggistica

A Sicilia 150 anni dopu Garibaldi

di Gaetano Cipolla, PhD

U 2011 segna u 150esimu annivirsariu dâ nascita dâ nazioni taliana. Puru ca l'Italia si pò vantari di na storia assai chiù longa (Roma fu funnata ntô 753 aC) l'unificazioni dû paisi ca canuscemu cu nnomi d'Italia oggi succidiu sulu ntô 1861. Ma i Taliani appiru a aspittari finô 1870 ppi vidiri Roma dichiarata a capitali dû regnu. Pi cchissu av'annu i Taliani, siguennu l'esortazioni dû Prisidenti Giorgio Napolitano, hannu organizzatu cintinara di celebrazioni in Italia e in ogni postu unni vivunu Taliani pi augurari "Bon cumpliannu" a l'Italia, una dî chiù vecchi nazioni novi dû munnu. Facennu parati mustranti u triculuri e cantannu cu orgogliu l'Innu di Mameli, l'innu naziunali talianu. E' veru ca un certu numiru di pirsuni nun hannu voluto celebrari l'eventu. A Lega Nord di Umberto Bossi, pir esempiu, boicottau i celebrazioni. A Lega minazza di tanti anni di sipararisi dâ nazioni. I so membri giuranu ca vonnu siparari u produttivu Nord du Sud stagnanti, mannannulu a deriva ntô mari Muditirranu. Autri invece hannu strafattu glorificannu ê pirsunaggi ca sunu cunsidderati comu i patri dâ nazioni, comu a Giuseppi Garibaldi e Vittoriu Emanueli II, passannu di leggeru supra a certi eventi pocu gluriosi comu inevitabili e giustificati pi l'unificazioni, nu sacrificiu nicissariu pû beni di na singula nazioni unita capaci di stari a latu di l'autri singuli nazioni di l'Europa. Dopu tuttu, raggiunanu iddi, ddi eventi successiru 150 anni fa e non hannu nenti a chi ffari cu l'Italia di oggi. Sfortunamenti, chistu non è veru. A Lega Nord sù scurdau chiddu ca a Sicilia e u Sud cuntribbuerunu a l'unità d'Italia e l'autri chi celebranu l'eventu si scurdaru ca pî Siciliani e l'autri miridiunali divintari taliani nun purtau nu miglioramentu dâ so vita. Oggi, dopu 150 anni d'unità, pi quantu riguarda u standard dâ vita, l'occupazioni, i sirvizi sociali, l'infrastrutturi, a qualità dû viviri, u

services, infrastructures, quality of life, bank credit for investments and for personal use, the northern regions are far better off than the southern regions and Sicily. The differences between the North and the South that existed in 1860 have been reduced somewhat, but enormous disparities remain. You can see the disparities almost everywhere you look. One example will suffice: In the Sunday issue of *America: Oggi* of July 17, 2011, there appeared an article carrying this title:

Aumenta il divario Nord-Sud nel credito alle PMI. (For small firms Credit Disparities between North and South Are Growing). While the rate of growth for financing in the manufacturing sector in Italy barely grew by 0.3%, the manufacturers located in Monza and Brianza (Lombardy) received 21.4% more than last year, while the same sector operating in Siracusa, Sicily was slashed by 62.5%. This confirms what we already know that the banks, mostly in the hands of northern institutions, as a matter of course lend more easily to companies located in the North than they do to those located in the South. The same disparities exist also for credit to families and individuals.

In Sicily the unemployment rate is usually the highest in the country: 25-30%, per capita income is much lower than the national average, and young people have little hope of finding a job locally. Their only hope is to emigrate, following the millions of their compatriots who were forced to find a better life elsewhere when the promises made in order to gain their support for unification were not kept. Throughout their long history, Sicilians never knew what it meant to emigrate. The people of the Mediterranean came to Sicily because of its climate, beauty, and fertility. Phoenicians, Greeks, Byzantines, Normans, French, Spaniards, and many others came to Sicily as conquerors and as colonizers. Sicilians only learned what emigration was after they became part of Italy. The newly formed Italian nation failed to address the many problems Sicilians faced and added even more serious ones of its own:

Excessive taxation. To give an idea of the problem one figure is sufficient: Sicily paid about 7.6 million lire for taxes on lands and buildings before 1860. In 1877 the tax burden had risen to 36.3 million for the same holdings and on top of that an addition 141.5 million on consumption taxes. Sicily, whose wealth actually helped Garibaldi to finance

creditu bancariu pi l'investimenti e pi usu pirsunali, i regioni dû Nord stannu assai megghiu dî regioni miridiunali e dâ Sicilia. I differenzi ntra u Nord e u Sud ca esistevanu ntô 1860 foru ridotti nanticchia, ma enormi disparità ancora restanu. Sti differenzi si ponnu vidiri unni talii talii.

N'esempi vali pi tutti: Nta l'edizioni di duminica di

America Oggidû 17 lugliu 2011 vitti n'articulu ca annunziava

“Aumenta il divario Nord-Sud nel credito alle PMI” Mentri u tassu di criscita dû finanziamentu ntô settori di manufatturi a liveddu naziunali crisciu sulu di 0,3%, i fabbrichi situati a Monza e ntâ Brianza (Lombardia) riciverunu finanziamenti di 21.4% chiossai di l'annu pricidenti, mentri a fabbrichi ntô stissu settori situati a Siracusa in Sicilia i finanziamenti foru ridotti di 62.5% rispettu a l'annu pricidenti. Chistu cunferma chiddu ca già sapiamu, ca i banchi, oramai tutti ntê mani di istituzioni dû Nord, finanzianu chiù facilmenti i cumpagnii situati ntô Nord a scapitu di chiddi situati ntô meridiuni. A stissa disparità veni praticata pû creditu ê famigghi e a l'individui.

Ntâ Sicilia a disoccupazioni è usualmenti a chiù auta dâ nazioni:

25-30%, u rennitu per capita è assai chiù basciu dâ media naziunali e i giuvini hannu poca spiranza di truvare un travagghiu localmenti. L'unica spiranza è di emigrari, siguennu i miliuni dî so cumpatrioti ca foru custringiti a truvare na vita chiù decenti in altri posti quannu i prumissi fatti pi ottiniri u so sustegnu ntâ lotta pi l'unificazioni nun foru mantinuti. Nta tutta a so storia, i Siciliani mai canuseru chi voli diri emigrari. I populi dû Mditirranu vinniru ntâ Sicilia pâ so biddizza, clima e fertilità. I Finici, Greci, Bizzantini, Arabi, Nurmanni, Francisi, e Spagnoli, assemi a tanti altri vinniru ntâ Sicilia comu cunquistaturi e colonizzaturi. I Siciliani mpararunu chi era l'emigrazioni dopu ca divintaru parti di l'Italia. A nova nazioni appena funnata non potti dari risposta ê tanti prublemi ca i Siciliani avianu a affrontari e cci nni iunceru altri ancora.

Tassi eccessivi: pi dari n'idea dû prubema na cifra sula basta: a Sicilia pagava 7.6 miliuni di liri pi tassi supra a terra e edifici prima dû 1860.

Ntô 1877 dda tassa aumintau a 36.3 miliuni pi li stissi terri e edifici.

Dicchiù i Siciliani appiru a pagari 141.5 miliuni in forma di tassi supra u consumu. A Sicilia, chicâ so ricchezza aiutau a Garibaldi a finanziari a so spidizioni—a prima cosa ca u Generali fici na vota ca pigghiau cuntrollu di Palermufu di pulizzari i cassi dû Bancu di Sicilia ca cuntinevanu na

his expedition –the first thing the General did when he took control of Palermo was to empty the vaults of the Banco di Sicilia which contained a fortune in gold and silver coins—contributed only 136 million lire to the national debt of the newly formed nation which was handsomely offset by the 163 million the State received from the auction of the expropriated land holdings of the Church. The total national consisted of 3.6 billion (most of it from Piedmont and Lombardy), yet when it came to pay for the debt, Sicilians were asked to pay as though they had contributed to the debt;

The establishment of conscription to Sicily which had never had such a tradition, made tens of thousands of deserters of peasants whose absence from their farms would mean starvation for their families; the deserters turned to banditry to survive, creating serious security problems; Lack of real support for the agriculture even though the South had been designated as the producer of agricultural products. Sicily which was once known as the granary of Rome became unable to meet the demand for wheat to feed its own increased population;

Failure to distribute land to farmers as promised by Garibaldi. In 1871 there was an opportunity to actually distribute the large estates known as latifundia expropriated from religious institutions—another immense source of Sicilian wealth that ended up in the State coffers—but instead of going to individual small farmers the lands apportioned in such a way as to create even larger latifundia in the hands of a few very wealthy absent landowners;

Reinvestment of the wealth of the South to develop industries in the North was a precise choice of the Italian governments from the beginning.

According to a statistic provided by Benini the disproportion in the redistribution of State income derived from taxes is clear. In the period from 1886-1889 for every 100 lire of taxes received from Sicily, the State spent only 67 lire there. In every other region for every 100 lire received the State spent 97 lire. The economic and political policies of the Italian government have clearly favored the Northern regions, primarily Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria. The obvious conclusion is that the North's progress was financed in part by shortchanging the South.

In Sicily, the enthusiasm for being part of a brand new country

furtuna in muniti d'oru ed' argentu—cuntribbuiu sulu 136 miliuni di liri ô debitu naziunali dâ nova nazioni chi vinniru ripagati in bedda manera attraversu i 163 miliuni ca u Statu guadagnau dâ vinnita di li propriet àespropriati a li istituti riligiusi. U debitu naziunali in tuttu era di 3.6 miliardi di liri (principalmenti debitudû Piemunti e dâ Lom bardia), eppuru quannu vinni ura di pagari u debitu, i Siciliani appiru a pagari comu si avissiru cuntribbuitu ô debitu.

L'istituzioni dâ leva militari ntâ Sicilia ca non avia sta tradizioni, criau migghiara di diserturi dî cuntadini ca non si putevanu pirmettiri di alluntanarisi dâ so terra pi tanti anni. Pi li famigghi chistu voleva diri la fami. E pi chistu tanti cuntadini si desiru a fari i banditi pi sopravviviri, criannu grossi problemi di sicurezzapû Governu. I banditi siciliani nun eranu ladri e dilinguenti cumuni. Ernu poviri cuntadini ca nun volevanu fari i surdati pi non fari moriri di fami i so famigghi.

A mancata distribuzioni dî terri dû latifunnu comu Garibaldi avia prumittutu. Ntô 1871 ci fu l'opportunitati di distribbuiri grossi proprietà espropriati a li istituzioni riligiusi—nautra immensa funti di ricchezza siciliana ca iu a inchiri i cassaforti du Statu—ma invece di dariccilli ê cuntadini i terri foru divisi in maniera tali ca foru criati autri latifundia ancora chiù granni ca foru accattati di ricchi feudatarii ca vivevanu in autri posti.

A ricchezza dû Sud fu investita di novu pi sviluppari l'industrii dû Nord. Chista fu a scelta precisa dû Governu Talianu dû principiu. Secunnu statistichi preparati di Benini a sproporzioni ntâ ridistribuzioni dû rennitu statali dirivatu dî tassi è lampanti. Ntô piriudu dû 1886-1889 pi ogni 100 liri di tassi ricevuti dâ Sicilia, u Statu spinniu sulu 67 liri ntâ Sicilia. Pi ogni autra regioni pi ogni 100 liri ricevuti dî tassi u Statu nni spinniu 97. A pulitica economica e politica dû Governu Talianu ha sempri favuritu i regioni dû Nord, primariamenti u Piemunti, a Lombardia e a Liguria. I conclusioni ovvii sunu ca u prugressu dû Nord fu finanziatu in parti livannucci ô Sud chiddu ca ci spittava.

Ntâ Sicilia l'entusiasmumu di fari parti di na nova nazioni cuminciau a squagghiari ntô mumento ca u novu regnu d'Italia fu proclamatu. I sissant'anni siguenti foru i chiù difficili pâ Sicilia. Na serii di calamitati successiru ca rinneru a vita assai difficili pâ Siciliani: u collassu di l'industri

started waning at the moment the new Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. The next sixty years proved to be the most trying for Sicily: A number of other calamities occurred that made life very difficult for Sicilians: the collapse of the citrus industry, the terrible blight that practically destroyed the Sicilian wine industry, the stagnation of the latifundia, the collapse of the textile industry, of the leather tanning, production of soap and other activities. Combined with the other reasons mentioned earlier Sicily was a cauldron ready to explode and it did so several times, which the State crushed with overwhelming force. Emigration was the valve that released the tensions. In the last decades of the 19th century Sicilians started leaving their island in search of better places. They started slowly at first, but in a few years the stream became a flood. From 1876 to 1925, 1.42 million Sicilians left their home in the direction of North America, Argentina and Brazil. As an indication that the problems Sicilians faced in the 19th century were not solved, the wave of emigration resumed again after the end of the Second World War, but this time they went mostly to Australia. So are Sicilians happy to be Italians? Should they be happy to celebrate their identity as Italians? I think the answer is undoubtedly yes, but... The reservation is primarily made because you cannot ignore the fact that Sicily had a long history as a separate nation before becoming Italian. While they may have been ruled by others, Sicilians have always had a sense of their own separate identity, of their difference from other Italic provinces, a difference in language, customs, and values. Italy, in fact, confirmed this truth by granting Sicily a Statute that recognizes its diversity and autonomy in the context of the Italian Republic. No doubt the Statute was approved not only in recognition of Sicily's past history but also because Sicilians after World War II supported a movement to separate from Italy. They wanted to become part of the United States, but international politics would not allow it to happen. The Statute also recognized Italy's debt to Sicily for all the difficulties it faced in becoming part of Italy. Article 38 of the Sicilian Statute which was approved by the national government, specifically requires the Italian State to pay a sum of money every year intended to bridge the disparities in infrastructures between the island and the mainland. It is understood as a "contribution of national solidarity" that must be revisited every five years to determine

di l'agrumi, na terribili malattia ca praticamenti distruggiu l'industria dû vinu, a mancanza di produzioni dî latifundia, u cullass u di l'industria tessili, di l'industria da conza di peddi, dâ produzioni dû sapuni e di autri attività. Iuncennu tutti sti calamitati a chiddi minziunati prima a Sicilia era na coddara pronta a esplodiri e infatti na para di voti lu fici, ma lu Statu li stutau usannu forzi esaggrati. L'emigrazioni fu a valvula ca diminiu i tensioni. Nta l'ultima deca dû 19esimu seculu, i Siciliani cuminciarunu a lassari a so isula in cerca di nu postu chiù accuglienti. Lentamenti a l'iniziu, ma dintra na para d'anni ddu ciumicceddu divintau na china. Dû 1876 ô 1925, 1.42 miliuni di Siciliani lassaru a so casa diretti versu u Nord America, l'Argentina e u Brasili. Na indicazioni ca i problemi ca i Siciliani avianu ntô 19esimu seculu nun foru eliminati fu ca l'unna di l'emigrazioni ricuminciau di novu dopu a secunna guerra mundiali, ma sta vota versu l'Australia.

Allura, putemu diri ca i Siciliani sunu cuntenti di essiri Taliani?

Cridu ca a risposta avi a essiri certamenti di sì, ma...i riservi hannu a chi fari cu fattu ca non si pò ignorari ca a Sicilia ha avutu na longa storia separata prima di divintari taliana. Puru ca iddi hannu statu guvirnati di autri, i Siciliani hannu sempri avutu u sensu dâ so identità siparata, dâ so diffirenza di l'autri pruvinci taliani, na diffirenza di lingua, tradizioni e valuri. L'Italia infatti cunfirmau stu fattu dannu a Sicilia nu Statutu ca ricanusci a so diversità e autonomia ntô cuntestu dâ Repubblica taliana. Senza dubbiu, u Statutu fu appruvatu nun sulu comu ricanuscimentu dâ storia passata dâ Sicilia, ma puru picchè i Siciliani dopu a secunna guerra mundiali sustinevanu nu movimentu pi sipararisi di l'Italia. Vulevanu divintari parti dî Statu Uniti, ma a pulitica internaziunali nun vosi appruvari stu disidderiu. U Statutu ricanusciu puru u debitu di l'Italia versu a Sicilia pi tutti i problemi ncuntrati ntô caminu di divintari taliana. L'Articulu 38 dû Statutu Sicilianu, appruvatu dû governu naziunali, priscrivi specificamenti ca u Statu talianu havi a pagari na summa di sordi ogni annu pi livellari li diffirenzi ntra l'infrastrutturi tra l'isula e u cuntinenti. E' cuncepita come nu attu di "cuntribbutu di solidarietà naziunali" ca divi essiri rivisiatu ogni cinqu anni pi determinari chi havi a essiri canciatu. Di ricenti, u Governu Talianu ha circatu di ridduciri a summa dû cuntribbutu di solidarietà, senza pigghiari in cunsidderazioni

what changes need to be made. Recently the Italian government has tried to drastically reduce the size of the solidarity contribution, notwithstanding that the disparities that the article was intended to bridge have not been corrected. Indeed in some cases they have gotten more severe. So are Sicilians happy to be Italians? Again the answer has to yes, but...For Sicilians, there is no going back. They are Italians now and they will remain Italians, but there are those who think that the Sicilian Statute, which grants the Sicilian Parliament ample autonomy in its own affairs and which was signed before the new Italian Constitution, should be abided more faithfully in order to improve the lot of Sicilians. The problems exist and will not go away by themselves. In the last 64 years since the Statute was approved much has been done to improve the lot of the population. Some highways have been completed finally. The Palermo-Messina which was started over thirty years ago finally was opened last year. The Catania-Siracusa was also finished as were a number of smaller projects. The Berlusconi government has vowed to build the bridge over the Strait of Messina, but many people do not see this as a panacea for what ails Sicily. Problems still remain: unemployment, little or no industrial development, tens of thousand of college graduates that cannot find work, and the persistent shadow of the mafia that continues to plague the island even though things are changing in this area. For Sicilians to be happy to be Italian someone must address and solve the problems of unemployment, of the lack of infrastructures, the lack of an effective system of transportation (a train ride from Messina to Palermo today will take five hours), easier access to credit, the lack of investment in tourism, railroads, airports, health facilities. One encouraging sign from the present Sicilian Parliament was the recent passage of a law authorizing the teaching of the Sicilian language in the public schools. And for this Arba Sicula congratulate the Sicilian Regional Assembly for an act that late in coming but certainly welcome. I remember that a few years ago the employees of the ARS were prohibited from speaking Sicilian while on the job. That was a misguided and self inflicted wound. A lot more needs to be done in this area if we want to erase the stigma that is still attached to speaking Sicilian. What we need to do is to make it more acceptable to walk into a bank in the big cities and speak Sicilian to the

ca i diffirenzi ca l'Articulu 38 avia a curreggiari nun sunu ancora curretti. Anzi, in certi casi hannu canciatu pù peggju.

Allura i Siciliani sunu cuntenti di essiri Taliani? A risposta havi a essiri sempri di sì, ma...Pî Siciliani nun c'è modu di turnari arreri. Oramai sunu Taliani e Taliani restanu, ma ci sunu chiddi ca diciunu ca u Statutu Sicilianu ca duna ô Parlamentu Sicilianu granni autonomia d'azioni ntê so affari e ca fu firmatu prima dâ Costituzione Taliana, avissi a essiri mplementatu cu maggiuri fedeltà in modu di migghiurari a vita dî Siciliani. I problemi esistunu e nun scumparunu pi cuntutu so. Nta l'ultimi 64 anni di quannu u Statutu fu appruvatu assai cosi hannu miglioratu a vita dî Siciliani.

Quacchi autostrada finalmenti vinni cumplitata. A Palermo-Missina ca fu cuminciata trent'anni arreri finalmente fu inaugurata l'annu scorsu. A Catania-Siracusa fu finiuta puru assemi ad autri prugetti chiù picciriddi. U Governu Berlusconi prumetti di costruiri u ponti ntô Strittu di Missina ma tanti nun vidinu ntâ stu prugettu na panacea di tutti i mali dâ Sicilia. Ci sunu ancora assai prublemi: sviluppu industriali picca o nenti, dicini di migghiara di giuvini lauriati senza travagghiu, e l'ummira dâ mafia ca cuntinua a criari piaghi nta l'isula puru ca i cosi stannu canciannu nta stu campu. Pi fari cuntenti i Siciliani quaccadunu avissi a risorviri i problemi di l'occupazioni, a mancanza d'infrastrutturi, a mancanza di nu sistema di trasportu efficienti (pi ghiri di Missina a Palermu cu trenu ci si metti ancora 4-5 uri) accessu ô creditu bancariu chiù facili, mancanza d'investimenti ntô turismu, pi ferrovii, pi novi arioporti, e novi spitali. C'è un segnu ncuraggianti ca pruvani dû Parlamentu Sicilianu.

Ricentementi appruvau na liggi autorizzannu l'insegnamentu dû sicilianu ntê scoli pubblici. Pi chistu Arba Sicula offri congratulazioni a l'Assimblea Rigiunali Siciliana pi sta liggi ca è in ritardu ma assai gradita. Io mi ricordu ca quacchi annu fa l'impiegati di l'Assimblea Siciliana nun putevanu parrari sicilianu mentri eranu ô travagghiu. Era na cosa assurda, na firita fatta chî so stissi mani. Assai resta di fari nta stu campu si vulemu eliminari u stigma ca ancora s'attacca a chiddi chi parranu u sicilianu.

Avemu a fari in modu ca si pozza ntrasiri ntâna banca ntê granni città e parrari sicilianu cu l'impiegati, o iri ô spitali e parrari chî duttura in sicilianu. Avemu a farilu divintari nurmali parrari in sicilianu cu autri siciliani, macari ca nun si canuscianu. A pratica di oggi ristrinci l'usu dû sicilianu

clerks, or go to the hospital and talk to the doctors in Sicilian. We need to make it normal to talk to other Sicilians whom you do not know in Sicilian. The current practice basically restricts the use of Sicilian to family members and acquaintances. We finally need to tell the children of Sicily that Sicilian is their language. The current excuse that they need to learn Italian and neglect Sicilian on the basis that learning Sicilian is an obstacle to learning Italian is not valid. Being bilingual is certainly preferable to being monolingual. Indeed knowing more languages, in addition to giving a person more resources through which to express himself, gives him/her an added protection against Alzheimer's disease, according to some studies. Maybe we should use this bit of information for a publicity campaign: "Learn Sicilian and postpone senility!" Joking aside, I am encouraged that the atmosphere seems to be changing as regards the Sicilian language. I only hope that the Sicilian politicians who in the past have done little take up the fight that has been at the core of Arba Sicula's reason for being: studying, preserving and spreading the Sicilian language.

ê membri dâ famigghia e ê canuscenti. Avemu a diri ê nostri picciriddi cau sicilianu è a so lingua. A scusa usata oggi ca mparari u sicilianu rappri senta n'impedimentu a mparari l'italianu nun è chiù valida. Canusciri du lingui è certamenti preferibili a aviri sulu na lingua. Canusciri chiù di na lingua, oltri a dari a na pirsuna chiù risorsi pi putirisi esprimiri megghiu, ci duna na prutezioni contru a malatia di l'Alzheimer, secunnu quacchi studiu. Forsi avissimu a usari sta nutizia nta na campagna pubblicitaria cu la scritta: "Mparàti u Sicilianu e ritardàti a senilità!" Scherzi a parti, sugnu ncuraggiatu vidennu ca l'atmosfera canciau pi quantu riguarda a lingua siciliana. Speru sulu ca i pulitici siciliani ca ntô passatu hannu fattu picca o nenti accettunu di isari a bannera ca Arba Sicula ha tinutu auta pi trentadui anni e chi ha statu l'obiettivu primariu di l'organizzazioni: studiaru, priservari e promoviri a lingua siciliana.