

Il Portfolio

PRIMA SETTIMANA

30/6/2008

Today was our first lecture, and the topic was *Religion and Politics in Italy and Europe*. The lecture was held at Pontifical University Saint Thomas, Largo Angelicum from 10 am to 12 pm, and the lecturer was Sister Helen, Dean of Social Sciences. During class we discussed many important points relating to both politics and religion. A few main concepts include: the separation of church and state, the fact that religion is generally a private sphere while politics is generally a public sphere, and the formation of political parties in Europe. Sister Helen was very nice and informative; I would definitely recommend her lecture in the future. She presented the course in English to allow the students to better grasp some difficult concepts.

After class, we returned to the residenza where we met with Professor Semplici, Professor of Social Ethics at the University of Rome Tor Vergata and Director of the Residenza, for lunch. During lunch, we had a very intelligent and politically-challenging conversation about socialism in Italy and democracy in America. Our primary focus of discussion was the differences of the health care systems in both countries. Students had the opportunity to express their opinions and challenge each other to a friendly debate. I enjoyed the lunch and would recommend it to future Programma Ponte programs.



1/7/2008

Today we had a lecture by Stefania Torresi, Consultant in Euro-Med TDS and teacher at Ateneo Impresa, right in the lecture hall located on the main floor of our residenza. The topic of discussion was *Mediterranean: Past, Present, Future*. At the beginning of the lecture, the professor had an interactive activity planned for us in which we located the 24 Mediterranean countries on a blank map. We learned about the Barcelona Process, the functions of the Mediterranean Union, and the objectives of partnership. Overall, I thought this lecture was all right, but it got a bit dry at points.

In the afternoon, we went over to ANSA which is the official Italian news agency with 22 offices in Italy and 77 offices in 74 countries. ANSA handles all aspects of journalism such as media, press, and photography. Professor Baldi gave us a guided tour of the news facility and

allowed us to see the making of a news story. Overall this visit was informative, but the speakers could have been a bit more interesting and interactive. I would recommend this visit in the future.



2/7/2008 & 3/7/2008

We spent the past two days we at FAI CISL in which Professor Bianchi lectured about Italian labor unions. Professor Bianchi teaches labor & economics and the history of labor law at the scuola di informazioni. In the two days at FAI CISL, learned about the history of Italy in relation to the labor history. We also learned the five major objectives of labor unions (collective bargaining, welfare, job market, political economy, and political problems/relationships. Bianchi also made a comparasion chart that explained the similarities and differences between CGIL and CISL.

I really enjoyed these two days and I HIGHLY recommend it for the following years. Professor Bianchi is extremely informative and easy to understand (the English and Italian really helped). Bianchi and his colleagues also provided us with excellent hospitality. I really appreciated that they provided us with lunch during both visits. It was also pretty neat to receive certificates after our completion of study.



4/7/2008

Today we met with Marco Sassano, a senior journalist, specializing in writing about the President of Republic. Sassano is always up-to-date with the President activities, and accompanies the President when he travels in Italy and abroad. Sassano talked about three major newspapers that are area-specific in Italy: Il Giorno (Milano), Il Resto Del Carlino (Bologna), e La Nazione (Firenze). I enjoyed this meeting, it was to the point and informative. Professor Sassano was very kind in purchasing snacks and coffee for us at the bar after his lecture. I would recommend this lecture for the future.

SECONDA SETTIMANA

8/7/2008

Today we met with Professor Gaetano Orrico, the President of CLAVIS, the Foundation

set up by Confesercenti, the Italian Confederation of Businessmen active in the trade and services sector. Professor Orrico lectured about Tourism in Italy and provided very interesting statistics. Orrico told us that there is a huge market for tourism in Italy. There are over 4,000 museums, 30 national airports, 5,000 religious facilities, and 30,000 hotels. I thought that his lecture was very interesting, and I was very happy to receive copies of his books. I really enjoyed this visit and I would recommend it in the future.



9/7/2008

Today's visit to the European Commission was one of my favorites thus far. We met with Pier Virgilio Dastoli, the head of the European Commission Representative Office in Rome. I was very interested in Dastoli's lecture; he thoroughly explained the role of the European Commission and European Union as well as elaborated on some current events and recently

encountered problems. What I found particularly interesting was the criteria that is necessary for a country to join the European Union, such as that to be a member the country must respect all of the 23 spoken languages of the Union, and the prospective member country must not violate human rights. I definitely think that this visit should be continued in the future.

In the afternoon, we met with Francesco Lioci who works in the Studies & Research Department of the Confcommercio. The General Confederation of Trade, Tourism, Services and SMEs is the largest enterprise-representative in Italy with over 800,000 members. Professor Lioci lectured about the role of Confcommercio, an independent political subject, which promotes the development of the business sector. Although the lecture was a bit dry and uninteresting, I do appreciate the kindness of them providing us with gift bags as a token of appreciation.

10/7/2008

Today we only had our afternoon lesson at the residenza. Massimo Pasquini, Press Attaché of Rome Auditorium Parco della Musica, spoke to us a bit about his role at the Parco della Musica and how the publicizing of current shows worked. He also spoke a bit about the current shows that were playing during the summer. Although he did offer us a chance to see a complimentary show, I thought this lecture was not relevant to our Programma Ponte experience and should not be continued in the future.

11/7/2008

Today we had an early morning lecture at the residenza with Professor Semplici called *Ethics, Religion, and Politics in Europe and America*. Dr. Semplici covered a great deal of information that was simple to understand. One particular point that he emphasized was that God is almost everywhere in politics in America (“In God We Trust on the dollars, swearing on the

Bible during court, etc). He said that in Europe that principle is impossible because there is such a distinct separation between church and state (ex. The Vatican being its own city-state). I think Professor Semplici is a brilliant man who is very passionate about what he teaches. I would without a doubt recommend his lectures in the future.

TERZA SETTIMANA

14/7/2008

Today was our first lecture with Professor Muntoni at the residenza. Professor Muntoni spoke about the early foundations of Rome as well as the Roman legend of Re and Romolo. He also provided examples that helped us see how we still use some ancient Roman traditions in our present day. I think Professor Muntoni is a great teacher who is very knowledgeable and passionate about his studies. I especially liked how he speaks slowly and uses entry-level words to explain difficult concepts. I would definitely recommend this lecture in the future.

For our afternoon session, we visited Caritas which is a voluntary action promoted by the Church to assist poor people and immigrants. Carlo Virtù provided us with a short introduction to the mission statement and the role of Caritas. I found it particularly interesting to learn the demographics of the homeless people in Rome. We were then asked if we could volunteer a bit and assist in the mensa. I was stationed to check the people in and provide them with meal tickets. Others in the group assisted in serving and speaking to the people. I really enjoyed this visit, it was a nice chance to help out and feel good about giving back to others. I definitely would recommend this visit to other Programma Ponte students.

15/7/2008

Sadly, today was my least favorite day of lectures so far. In the morning we met with Architect Erminia Sciacchitano is leading, in the Ministry, the sector related to Landscape

Architecture and Contemporary Innovative Art. I could not really understand her; she spoke very fast and used vocabulary that was difficult to comprehend. After her lecture in the museum, she took the group to Piazza Del Popolo and gave the group a tour of the architecture. Although I appreciate her passion, I would not recommend this to future Programma Ponte students because it really did not fit in with the rest of the program

In the afternoon we had class at the residenza where Vincenzo Piergentili, an Antiquarian in Rome and expert on War and Military antiques, lectured us about war artefacts found in Anzio. He brought in some helmets and ID tags to pass around. I thought he was very passionate about his expertise and very nice, but I do not feel like his lecture was relevant to the program.

16/7/2008

I absolutely loved today's visit to the Parliament. It was quite a privilege for us to meet with the Camera dei Deputati. First we were able to take a tour of the library and learn about the ancient frescos of St. Catherine located in each room. Then we had an opportunity to sit in on a session and watch the representatives vote on issues concerning privacy. It is amazing to me how chaotic it is; many of the representatives were reading or using cell phones during the voting session. It was certainly interesting to have the opportunity to experience that. After we left the session, we had a brief lesson and a nice coffee and snack break. Then we were able to meet individually with some of the representatives in an open question and answer session. It was certainly an honor to meet and speak with such highly regarded individuals. Overall, everybody was extremely nice and informative in their lectures. I felt that this event was very well organized and it was fun to dress up in formal attire. I would without a doubt recommend this visit in the future.

In the evening, during the second part of the day, we had another lecture in the residenza

with professor Muntoni about the Roman government structure and how it was organized. Today was a great day of classes, I really enjoyed the Parliament visit.

17/7/2008

I also really enjoyed today's lectures as well. In the morning, we went to ICE (Istituto Italiano per il Commercio Estero). We met with Pier Alberto Cucino who is the assistant director of training activities at the institute. The role of the institute is to provide small businesses with information on foreign markets, promote Made in Italy and Made by Italy through promotional programs, promote cooperation between Italian and foreign companies, and finally training for Italian companies, students and foreigners. I found this lecture to be interesting because I am a business major and I plan on contacting the institute in the near future about training and furthering my education with them. I would highly recommend this visit in the future.

During the second half of the day, we met with Professor Muntoni for an on-location lecture and tour. Professor Muntoni gave us a tour and a lecture of the ancient Colosseo as well as the ancient forums. Although the majority of us were drained and tired, it was a great tour and lecture of the history. I really enjoy lessons with Professor Muntoni, and I recommend this for the future. However, I would suggest that the admission for these locations be provided by Programma Ponte or addressed with advanced notice.

18/7/2008

During the first half of today, we were given a guided tour of the Auditorium at the Parco della Musica which was very enjoyable. We were taken into various rooms which were used for different types of performances. There is even an outdoor set up for outdoor concerts and shows. I would recommend this again for students in the future, but I would suggest combining the lecture and the tour as one class instead of breaking it into two that are over a week apart.

In the afternoon, we met with Professor Muntoni after lunch at the residenza for a lecture on the history of the Roman Repubblica as well as the social classes of ancient Rome (I patrizi, le plebei, e lo schiave). I really always enjoy Professor Muntoni's lectures, especially since he always makes it interactive and entertaining. I highly recommend Professor Muntoni in the future.

L'ULTIMA SETTIMANA

21/7/2008

Today in the morning, Professor Bazzichi came to speak to us at the residenza about the Italian educational system and how it compares to other countries. In his opinion, he is very disappointed with Italian public schools in comparison to other surrounding countries. One prominent reason behind this is because there is very little time dedicated to instruction. Professor Bazzichi was very passionate in his teachings, but I felt that he talked too fast for me to understand some important concepts and that he went on way too many tangents. I am not sure if I would recommend this lecture in the future.

In the afternoon, we met with Professor Muntoni, and he first gave us a brief history of the palestra in which the Roman gladiators used. Then, he took us to the Chiesa di San Clemente and Chiesa dei Santissimi Giovanni e Paolo. I really enjoyed visiting these sites. It is extremely interesting and truly a unique site. There were levels beneath levels in each church from different centuries. This shows that ancient Rome is still "preserved" in a unique manner; modern Rome is built on top of ruins of Ancient Rome. I really enjoyed and appreciated this visit and I would definitely recommend this visit in the future.



Parole Nuove

Non c'è campo qui - I don't have service here

Cocomero - Watermelon

Ditone - Big Toe

“Ci va a Termini quest'autobus?” – Does this bus go to Termini?

Rapporti – Relationships

FINE – PROGRAMMA PONTE 2008