



Explanatory Sheet

ENGLISH

1) The Origins of Italian Emigration

The phenomenon of mass migrations in Italy has its origin in the emigrations that occurred in several pre-unification Italian states, from the middle Ages to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In fact, even before the Unification of Italy, numerous Italian workers, moved to Europe and, from there, to America. This first stage of migration is, however, partially unknown due to the lack of accurate dates. This initial disinterest also characterized the new Kingdom of Italy, since it only began statistically recording migrants from 1876.

However, it is estimated, that from 1861 to 1875 about 2 million Italians migrated abroad.

From the mountainous triangle between Emilia, Liguria and Tuscany, beggars, musicians, street artists and animal trainers departed for every country in Europe, and would soon be followed by people from Abruzzo, Molise, Calabria and Lucania. Most of the time it was a juvenile migration, since families believed the young were more suitable to bear the journey fatigue, but also more likely to be employed or being pitied, if surviving on begging.

Among the migrants of that time there were architects, engineers, gardeners, marble workers, carpenters, glass makers and artists, tailors, weavers and silk merchants and other craftsmen who helped to decorate palaces and mansions throughout Europe.

The Italian Unification and Migration

In the situation of economic, civil, and social backwardness in which the newly unified Italy found itself, migration is the only way to escape; either *bandit* or *migrant*.

The context in which the Italian migration developed, and which within a few years became mass migration, is due to several factors: unemployment, the high infant mortality, violence, common crime and political unrest, illiteracy, social conflicts and the subsequent repression of the rising Trade Unions and political movements, and compulsory military conscription imposed by the new national government. Those that left early on were not the poorest, in fact, they were able to pay their way and maintain themselves abroad until they settled. However, soon even the poorest were tempted to migrate, albeit overcoming great difficulties.

These migrants plan to save the necessary capital to buy land in their places of origin and allow their return home in the shortest possible time.

Reaction the State dealt with Emigration

The post-unification migration phenomenon quickly assumed a social and political relevance and already in the first decade, after the unification of Italy, its political representatives started to question themselves on the phenomenon and wondered what to do.

The first reaction was to apportion blame: the migrants were deserting the process of national development and endangering the nation. However, the possible advantages of this human exodus soon began to be seen: economical remittances, social reconciliation (the departures were like vents for social conflicts) and even penetration in markets and areas that previously seemed unattainable.

In 1868, Prime Minister Luigi Federico Menabrea issued a circular whereby, to be able to emigrate, a contract of employment or adequate means of subsistence was required. In the following twenty years, the State dealt with this phenomenon in a fragmentary way: police authorities were required to enforce ordinances or circulars, however, often, rather than protect these individuals, often hindered their departure.

After the approval of the Italian Emigration Law of September 1901, the migration from Italy continued and actually increased in numbers, peaking in 1913. For the next 18 years, the Emigration Law remained the law par excellence, as it laid the foundations for a real protection of migrants, until the Consolidated Act of 1919 replaced it.

2) Mass Emigration (1876-1915)

From 1876 until the Great War, more than 14 million migrated. In the first ten years the majority leaves towards European countries, but from 1886 the Americas prevail, especially Argentina and Brazil. In the early twentieth century, however, emigration increases towards the United States of America. In the collective imagination of this period are the usual scenes of steamships heading overseas, of the landing on Ellis Island, the Italians in the *fazendas* in Brazil. It is rare, however, to see images of Italian emigration to Europe. Yet, from 1876 to 1915, while nearly 8 million people immigrate to the Americas, more than 6 million move towards France, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland and Germany, while few are the migrants who head to the more distant Great Britain and Belgium.

The Departure: The Ports

At the beginning many Italians emigrated from the European ports of Le Havre, Marseille, Hamburg, Antwerp. To escape controls and the mandatory military conscription, many were departing without passports, as clandestine. With the liberalization, due to the Emigration Law of 1901, most of the flow shifted to Italian ports. From Genoa, the ships sail to South America; from Naples, the ships sail to North America.

Although the great migration is often represented as a family emigration, in fact, those who travelled to the United States were mainly single individuals. Unlike major European ports equipped with *shelters for emigrants*, the ports of Genoa, Naples, and Palermo were totally inadequate to manage the huge crowd of mi-

grants who turned up, waiting to board. Of course, migrants ended up being exploited by the companies, by the agents, by the innkeepers who would double their earnings. Alongside the authorized inns, there were the unauthorized inns, often situated in the filthiest neighborhoods, in old houses, with little air and little light, where, according to a sanitary report of 1903 «50 migrants slept, the majority on the floor, in two airless, dirty, damp, smelly rooms». Throughout this phase, State action is absent. Only in 1911, following the cholera epidemic in Naples, the Government institutes proper shelters.

The Trip: Ships and Shipwrecks

The transport of migrants to South America is the prerogative of the Genoese companies, which use the classic sailing ships. The mass of traffic to North America is managed above all by foreign companies, who are more organised and technologically advanced.

Of course, the transport of migrants is assigned to sea ships, with an average 23 years of navigation. They are steamers in disarmament, called *death vessels*, which could not contain more than 700 people, but often loaded with more than 1000, which departed without the certainty of arriving at their destination.

Many migrants perished in those tragic journeys towards hope: they were usually stowed in the third class, in pitiful conditions with very little hygiene: «*crouching on deck, near the stairways, with plates between their legs and a piece of bread between their feet, they ate their meal like beggars at the doors of convents. It is humiliation on the moral side and hygienic danger on the other, because everyone can imagine the deck of a steamer buffeted by the sea, on which is spilled all the voluntary and involuntary rubbish of those people traveling*». To sleep «*the migrant lies down dressed and shod on the bed, the bed makes a storage place for bundles and suitcases, the children leave urine and feces; the most vomit; all, in one way or another, after a few days, have reduced it to a dog's basket. At the end of the journey when it doesn't get changed, which often happens, it is there as it was left with dirt and insects, ready to receive the new passenger*». (Theodorico Rosati, a health inspector on the emigrant ships in 1908).

In such conditions, to contract a disease was common, and there were many deaths on board. Among the more infamous cases on these *ghost ships*, there are deaths from cholera and measles, asphyxiation and starvation, as well as diphtheria. Between 1897 and 1899, more than 1% of migrants who arrived in New York, were refused entry and sent back to Italy; this because of their poor conditions, due to the difficulties and sufferings of the journey.

3) The Arrival

Between 1892 and 1924, Ellis Island, in the gulf of New York, recorded the arrival of 22 million immigrants thus becoming an icon of immigration. Because Customs Officials board ships at the harbour entrance and check papers, only second-class passengers received permission to go ashore without going through immigration on the island. Third class migrants, however, have to go down to the harbour and get on boats that take them to Ellis Island, where they receive a medical examination. Those who do not pass the examination were quarantined in the local hospital, after which they receive the clearance to enter the United States. However, the lame, humpbacks, the maimed, those who had eye or skin diseases or alleged

psychic defects were sent back.

Single women, even if engaged to be married, were not accepted unless they were married on Ellis Island. Unaccompanied minors were forced to find guarantors, and orphans to be adopted, otherwise they were rejected.

In 1931, Edward Corsi who was appointed Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island, where he had landed in 1907, said: «*Our laws on repatriation are unrelenting and in many cases inhuman, particularly when referring to honest behaving men and women whose only crime is that they dared to enter the Promised Land without conforming to the law. I've seen hundreds of such people forced to return to their countries of origin, with no money and sometimes without jackets on their shoulders. I have seen families separated, that are never reunited again: mothers separated from their children, husbands from their wives, and nobody in the United States, not even the President himself, could avoid it*».

In Brazil, the reception and employment agencies that dealt with immigrants were organised worse than those of the United States, and the way they were received was appalling. In Rio de Janeiro, the sanitation aspect was especially unsatisfactory. The *Hospedarias* were full to overflowing with immigrants and all kinds of epidemics, easily erupted.

Work

The only wealth that Italian immigrants brought with them was the strength of their arms: they did the hardest jobs, which others rejected, such as building roads or railways, work that guaranteed immediate earnings to be sent to the family, back in Italy. Commissioner A. Rossi, in the investigation of 1901, described the situation of the *fazendas*. «*Even in the not so bad areas and under bosses who pay on time, who do not rape the women and whip the men, the condition where the Italian and his family are employed, is such that any savings are made at a cost of thousand sacrifices. The absolute lack of schools and churches, great distances from any large town, extortionate prices for visits to doctors and purchase of medicines often makes a fazenda seem like a colony of convicts sentenced to house arrest*».

One of the most tragic aspects of emigration was the exploitation of children. Between 1800 and 1900, tens of thousands of children were sold for 100 lire each to traffickers who sell them on to the American mines, Swiss building sites, or French glassworks. The diplomat Raniero Paulucci di Calboli, recalled that in the United States alone, it is reckoned that at the end of the nineteenth century 80,000 Italian children of both sexes, were left to their own devices, destined to become criminals and prostitutes. These children, in fact, collected firewood or coal from the rubbish heap, sold newspapers on the street, brought work home from the factory, most lived more in the street than at home or at school, and many ended up doing illegal jobs.

4) Living Conditions: Discrimination and Rejection

In the biggest American cities, the living conditions of Italian immigrants are terrible because of the unsafe overcrowding of men, women, and children living in promiscuity and disorder.

«*In Bayard street, in the Little Italy of New York, 1,324 Italians were living within the area of just one city block in a total of 132 rooms; most of them were Sicilian males, sleeping piled up ten people per room or more [...]. There*

are not less than 360,000 rooms, with no windows, just in New York, occupied mostly by Italians [...]. Often, at its worst, ten or more people were sleeping in the same room, some of them having consumption or other contagious diseases. In many of these houses they worked in unsafe activities, such as treating rags or adjusting clothes. Due to the necessity and the habit of keeping the windows closed for most of the year, it is very easy to imagine in what an unhealthy environment they live». (Jacob Riis, American photographer, 1849-1914).

Often overexploited these immigrants are considered *undesirable people* by the host society. Their segregation into ghettos, called Little Italy, was justified by the impossibility of the southern Italian hicks, coming from a static and rural civilization, to join an urban, dynamic, innovative contest.

The ethnic communities phenomenon of self defense sometimes degenerate in some kind of urban banditry or in organized delinquency, especially for those groups that already were refused by their community of origin. The initial attitude to anti-Italianism turns quickly into a real racial prejudice: this way, Italians become, in the collective imaginary: criminals, dirty, ignorant, quick to use a knife, *mafiosi*, tramps, muscle-bound workers at most able to sell peanuts.

Xenophobia produces many cases of violence against Italians.

«Generally, they are small and dark skinned. They don't like water, many of them smell because they wear the same outfit for weeks. They build their own huts that are made out of wood and aluminum in the suburbs where they live, close to each other. As soon as they are able to go closer to the center of town, they rent an expensive apartment that is in very bad condition. First, they come in, two people asking for a room with the use of a kitchen. A few days later they become four, six, ten. Among themselves, they speak in incomprehensible languages, probably ancient dialects. Many children are sent to beg but sometimes in front of churches there are men and women in dark dress, almost always elderly, asking for charity, insistently lamenting. They give birth to many children, although being hardly able to feed them, and they are very united among themselves. Rumors say they are thieves, they become violent if obstructed. Our women avoid them not only because they are wild and not very attractive, but because they have heard rumors of some rapes that happened around peripheral streets when women returned home from work. Our authorities have opened the entrance at our borders too widely, but, most of all, they were unable to select between those who enter our country to work and the ones that think of easy living, or, even worse, of criminal activities. I suggest we give preference to the immigrant from Veneto and Lombardy, still dumb and very ignorant, but more available to work than the others. They adapt themselves to houses that Americans normally would refuse to live in, and they don't dispute their salaries. The others, the ones to whom the first part of this report referred, they come from southern Italy. I ask you to check the documents for provenance and to send those [from southern Italy] back home. Our security has to be our first concern».

(Report of the Immigration Office of the American Congress about Italian immigrants in the United States, October 1912).

5) Immigration between the two World Wars (1916-1945)

The new destinations

During the First World War, the sending of the male population to the front line and the increased danger involved in departures functioned as a barrier to immigration, which started again immediately after the end of the conflict. The introduction of restrictive rules in the USA and the 1929 economic crisis increased the expatriation toward Europe and Argentina, (where 80% of immigrants to Latin America converged), as well as toward Canada and Australia.

During the twenty years of Fascism, because of the gentrification of the capital and the redevelopment of many territories, internal migrations and migration toward the African colonies were promoted. In this period an Antifascist migration was also starting. Although not being able to use legal ways to expatriate, these immigrants were able to reach the pre-existing Italian communities abroad illegally. This change of migratory habits corresponded to a difference in the balance between the two sexes. The female incidence increased between the two wars: from a female percentage situated between 20% and 25% of the whole migrating flux before the First World War, it arrived at higher than 63% at the beginning of the thirties and higher than 77% at the end of that decade, due mostly to family reunions.

In 1917 the United States adopted *Literacy Tests* in order to prohibit the entrance of people who couldn't read and write in their own language. From 1921 on then the United States Congress voted on and approved a series of laws to assign to each country the chance to send a fixed number of immigrants per year, inferior to the previous year quotes. During the following years the legislation was partially imitated by other western hemisphere American countries, in order to privilege the immigration of French and Belgian people to French Canada, of Spanish and Portuguese people to Latin America.

Around 1930, the reduction of immigration blocked the mechanism of temporary return from the Americas, that before then always favored the possibility of going back and forth as many times as one wanted. First because of the war, then because of new arrivals, Italian communities started, therefore, to crystallize.

Migration to Europe

Between the two wars, Europe becomes the most important destination for Italian Immigrants. Within the old continent, the most important destination is France, which attracts almost 70% of the whole expatriation toward Europe and 36% of the whole migratory flow of that period. Besides, France doesn't see any decline on the demand, even during the 1929 crisis, because it offers a lot of agricultural occupation, when lacking on industrial or construction ones. Consequently, the Italian presence is already increasing in the 20's, reaching the figure of 880,000 present in 1931, about a third of the total of foreigners. This record is kept for the whole decade. Although over the strong opposition of the Fascist regime, Italian immigration to France stabilizes, with an increment of mixed marriages and of naturalizations.

The Italian community goes through rejection phases from the French community, but also integration, thanks to the participation of Italian immigrants in

union organizations and then to their resistance against the German invasion.

The second European destination is Switzerland, although in the proportion of five times less. The other European countries are at an even lower rate. In particular, the end of the Habsburg Empire and the crisis of Germany, before the advent of Nazism, explains the limited attractiveness of these two areas by comparison to the previous period. Some immigrants arrive in Belgium and Great Britain but not in a significant number.

6) Fascism and Migration

The Fascist Regime's strategy toward migration often proved ambiguous. The regime was strongly opposed to the departures but, in fact, the twenty years of Fascism turned out to be the most significant period for Italian migration. The Government tried, unsuccessfully, to increase the movement toward the African colonies and toward internal destinations. The *industrial triangle* absorbed workers from southern Italy and from the Northwest, but even more noticeable was the development of Rome, strongly favored by the Government. In addition, the re-development allowed the re-distribution of the population, sending the Diasporas of Veneto, Friuli, and Romagna, toward Sardinia and Agro Pontino.

These movements changed the migratory habits and facilitated the transformation of old, temporary moves into definitive ones, although not sufficient to satisfy the increasing need for workers. In the years 1938 to 1941, more than 400,000 Italians were sent to work in Germany, under a special agreement between the two governments. In this way, excess manpower was officially exchanged for natural resources, especially coal, necessary for Italian economic development.

The Fascist government was interested in having political penetration among the migrants. The Party itself was involved in trying to regiment Italians abroad, forming appropriate *Fasci*, Youth, and After-work leisure organizations. The attempt to substitute the old State and private run structures, in particular the Catholic ones, to assist migrants, met with little success. On the one hand, migrant communities had formed closer ties to their new homeland, on the other, many of them, especially in Europe, but also in the United States, Canada and Argentina, had left to escape from Fascism.

Criminals and Anarchists among Italian Immigrants

«America became the promised land for Italian delinquents» New York chief of Police stated, at the beginning of the 20th century. «The problem is that you can't find an honest one» Richard Nixon reiterated in 1973. In 1967, the United States Justice Commission denounced the presence of 24 criminal cartels, almost completely formed by members of Italian origin. It was clear that among 29 million honest immigrants there were some delinquents, who found in the United States mafia the shortcut to reach the American dream. In this panorama, characters like Al Capone, Frank Costello, and Lucky Luciano obscured the millions of honest working migrants. The Hollywood cinema industry, famous for having created two stereotypes, the screaming Indian and the shooting Italian, also took the *mafia* as one of its favorite themes. The movie *The Godfather* was the most striking example.

The late 19th and early 20th century saw a wave of polit-

ical violence inspired by anarchist ideals, which were soon labeled anarchist terrorism; assassinations and bombings led to fear among governments of a vast anarchist terrorists international conspiracy, and most took a hard line to deal with the problem. The United States, in the years immediately following the First World War, vigorously hunted the anarchist, socialist and communist migrants, with the goal to prevent a replica of the Bolshevik revolution in the USA. Consequently, after the arrest of 9,000 presumed subversives, more than 500 were deported.

One must remember that global public opinion regarded Italian anarchism, especially in its violent form, as one of the most important elements that lead to a stereotypical characterization of Italians. It is sufficient to bring to mind the several homicides and attacks committed by Anarchists against politicians and private citizens as well. In this climate, the Apulian Nicola Sacco and the Piedmontese Bartolomeo Vanzetti, arrested in 1920 and accused of a bloody robbery, paid the consequences of the frightened American people toward Italian Anarchists. The evidence was insignificant, but the trial turned into a strong, repressive and xenophobic campaign, wanted by President Woodrow Wilson to combat anarchist subversion. The reaction of indignation from all around the world, the collection of ten million signatures of protest, proved useless because Sacco and Vanzetti were executed in 1927 and only rehabilitated in 1977.

7/8) Italians were seasonal workers, exploited as needed and destined for the hardest and most dangerous work in the steel industry, in mines and in construction. Many tragedies can confirm the dreadful conditions, sometimes attribute to natural disasters, but often due to human error or employers' negligence at the work place; however, there were also episodes of racism and xenophobia. Strangely, many of the episodes cited below remind us of tragedies which still occur to migrants today, in other countries.

1891 - New Orleans - United State of America

The chief of police in New Orleans was assassinated in an ambush. Five Italians were accused of the murder. By order of the Mayor 250 Italians were arrested and many of them were beaten in prison to the point where the Italian Consul had to protest, asking that those arrested be treated like those of other nationalities. The day after the trial and the acquittal of the accused, thousands of citizens stormed the prison where the Italians were being held, screaming «hang the dagos». Eleven were killed, some were shot, and others beaten to death, others still were hung.

1891 - Gibraltar

The English ship *Utopia* sank in the bay of Gibraltar with more than 800 passengers on board: 3 illegal aliens and 815 migrants from Naples and Calabria; 576 of them drowned with their hope of a better life in America.

1893 Aigues Mortes - France

A large settlement of Italian workers had found employment in the salt mines near this city. These migrants lived approx. 10 km from the town, settling in as best as possible in large thatched roof huts. The majority of them however slept in the open, under tarpaulins. The

distrust of the French population towards the Italians was very tangible, and tensions were always high. The situation rapidly degenerated, and on August 17 a riot broke out in the town. The reason for the outbreak was that a worker from Piedmont attempted to use drinking water to wash a handkerchief dirty with salt. The furious hunt for the Italian lasted two days. It was not possible to establish an exact count of the victims because many dead bodies had been thrown without pity into the marshes never to be found. Some sources even speak of hundreds of victims and more than one hundred wounded.

1898 - Nova Scotia

549 emigrants, many of them Italians, died in the sinking of the French ocean liner *La Bourgogne*.

1899 - Tallulah - United States of America

Five Italians, accused of being members of the *mafia*, were acquitted, following a regular trial, but the population of New Orleans, incited by a lawyer, stormed the prison and hung the prisoners. Between 1875 and 1915, 39 Italians were lynched and killed because of racial motives.

1901 Ferryland - North America

Many Italian emigrants died in the dramatic shipwreck of the English steam ship *Lusitania*.

1906 - Mediterranean Sea - Spanish coast

SS Sirio was an Italian merchant steamer that sank off the Spanish coast - at Cape Palos - on 4 August 1906. The passengers, mainly illegal immigrants, did not have cabins but only large rooms where they lived like animals for the entire 30 days of the crossing. The ship was supposed to reach Brasil, but they did not have enough lifeboats, double propellers, a double bottom, or nautical charts.

1907 - Monongah - United States of America

The disaster of Monongah, a small town in West Virginia, had been practically ignored for more than 100 years by both Italy and America, and only remembered by the victims' relatives. On December 6, there were a series of powerful explosions in the coal mine caused by gas. The blasts caused considerable damage to both the mine and the surface. The ventilation systems, necessary to keep fresh air supplied to the mine, were destroyed along with many railcars and other equipment. Inside the mine the timbers supporting the roof were blown down which caused further issues as the roof collapsed. Within a few minutes, hundreds of miners were swept away and crushed by the collapse of the tunnel, burned in the flames, suffocated by the smoke. After a century, it is still not possible to establish the exact number of victims. 171 of them were officially recognized as Italians, mainly migrants from Molise and at that time the Americans considered them more like blacks than whites.

1911 - New York - United States of America

A fire devastated the top floors of a building, which housed a shirt factory where 500 women worked in inhumane conditions, with the doors locked from the outside: of the 146 victims 39 were Italian.

1912 - Atlantic Ocean

There were many Italian emigrants among the 1513 dead in the shipwreck of the *Titanic* after hitting an iceberg during its inaugural voyage from Southampton to New York.

1913 - Dawson - United States of America

On October 22 an explosion disintegrated the local carbon mine: of the workers' casualties, 146 were Italian (11 people from the same family died). Everyone knew that these mines were dangerous for various reasons, but the miners continued to work in order to support their families. Only two days before the disaster an inspection by the authorities expressed a positive opinion regarding the safety of the working conditions.

1915 - The Sicilian Channel - Italy

In November 1915 U-38 caused a diplomatic incident when it sank the Italian passenger liner *Ancona* off the coast of Tunisia, while sailing under the Austrian flag. The steamer *Ancona* was on its way to New York. 173 crew members and 332 passengers were on board: among them were 234 emigrants: there were 206 victims.

1922 - Alabama - United States of America

An Italian woman was put on trial; the records of the trial describe her as not a part of the white race.

1923 - Dawson - United States of America

On February 8, a devastating fire caused the death of 123 miners, 20 of which were Italian. Many of those that died, were the children of the miners who had perished in the accident 10 years earlier, therefore many of the widows had to bury their sons next to their husbands in the town cemetery. The mines closed down in 1950 because of declining demand for coal. Within a few months, the city of Dawson became a ghost town. The only significant remaining landmark in Dawson is the cemetery, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The cemetery is filled with iron crosses painted white, marking the graves of many miners who died in the mines.

1927 - Atlantic Ocean

The ship *Principessa Mafalda* sank while transporting our emigrants to South America: 385 died.

1927 - Boston - United States of America

Prejudice against Italians played a great part in the tragic outcome of the trial against the anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti who, in 1920, were accused of murdering a guard and a paymaster during the armed robbery of a shoe factory in a suburb of Boston.

The proof was inexistent but the trial was transformed into a viciously repressive and xenophobic campaign, wanted by President Woodrow Wilson, against anarchic subversion. The reactions of disdain from the entire world with a collection of 10 million signatures of protest were of no avail. The two were put to death on the electric chair, even though there were many doubts about their guilt at the time of the trial and the confession by the Puerto Rican prisoner Celestino Madeiros had exonerated the two. In 1977, the governor of the state of Massachusetts officially recognized the errors committed during the trial and completely rehabilitated their memory.

1934 - Australia

The city of Kalgoorlie was the theater of a violent riot aimed at the persecution of immigrants from Southern Europe, mainly Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs (all of them called *dingos*, wild dogs). The riot was caused by a brawl between a barman of Italian origin and a drunk customer who had refused to pay for his numerous drinks. The revolt against the immigrants soon spread throughout the entire city. Hundreds of commercial businesses and private homes were looted and destroyed. When the police managed to restore order to the city, three migrants were dead and ten had been injured. Officers went to the desert to recover the many foreigners who had sought refuge there. However, upon their return, the migrants had the bitter surprise of finding almost nothing of what they had left behind.

1940 - United Kingdom

Requisitioned as a troop ship in 1939, shortly after the outbreak of World War 2, *SS Arandora Star* was assigned the task of transporting German and Italian internees, who had been accused of espionage, to Canada, after Mussolini declared war on France and Great Britain, in June 1940. In fact, the majority of the internees were indifferent to politics, had lived in England for a number of years, and some had sons enrolled in the British army. A large proportion of them were exiles, refugees, or Jews who had fled from Italy and Germany. A German submarine intercepted the ship on July 2, torpedoed and sunk her. The Italians who disappeared amid the waves were 446.

1953 - Belgium

In January, of the 21 miners who had died in an accident at the Wasmes mine, in Borinage, 12 were Italian. In September, it was the turn of the Quaregnon mine, also in Borinage, where there had been accidents, involving Italian, in previous years; 12 miners, 7 of which were Italian, met an atrocious death, crushed by the elevator cage. Again, there was an accident in October, where 26 died, 14 were of which Italian.

1954 - Belgium

In January, 23 Italians died in the Mousen Fontaine mine. Following this accident, in February of the same year, Belgium signed a second protocol of intent with Italy, for the Prevention of Accidents in the workplace, geared toward assigning a different work contract for Italian miners. However, the accidents continued. In May, another 7 died at Quaregnon where, two years later, following another disaster, 8 miners died, 7 of which Italian. This latest tragedy provoked the intervention of the Italian Government, which blocked the hiring of miners, causing protests from the Belgians.

1954 - France

The war in Indochina ended; it had begun in 1946 between the French colonial troops and the movement for the liberation of Vietnam, known as Viet Minh. At that time, approximately 10,000 Italians, who were enrolled in the Foreign Legion during, were mostly illegal immigrants to France as, in this way, they would have been able to obtain French citizenship. When the Dien Bien Phu fortress fell, there were more than 5,000 Italian legionnaires; more than 1,000 had been held as prisoners of war by the Viet Minh and more than 1,300 had been killed in action since 1946.

1955 - Belgium

In April, another 39 victims were recorded in Sclessin, 14 of which were Italian.

1956 - Marcinelle - Belgium

On August 8th a fire broke out in one of the coal mine shafts in Bois du Cazier, near Marcinelle, causing the death of 262 workers of twelve different nationalities: 136 were Italians. However, other accidents were reported in the five other Belgian coal mining pits (Borinage, Centre, Charleroi, Liège, Campine), causing the death of 867 Italian workers between 1946 and 1963. To this long list of casualties, those who died from silicosis contracted in the mines and only recognized as an occupational disease in 1964 must be added.

1960 - France

The French foreign minister published data according to which from 1945 to 1960 more than 50% of the Italian workers in France were illegal emigrants and 90% of their family members who had joined them had illegally emigrated. In the long hopeful trip across the Alps, many of them died of frostbite or by falling into the ravines. In 1962, 87 Italians found their death at the *Devil's pass* in Ventimiglia trying to enter France illegally.

1965 - Switzerland

On August 30, at Mattmark one hundred workers, of which 59 Italians, were buried underneath an avalanche while working on a job site to construct a dam. The site, located below the Swiss Glacier *Allalin*, days earlier had given signs of an impending landslide.

1970 - Australia

Up until 1970, Italian immigrants were registered as *semi-white*, in other words half-black, due to the color of their skin.

9) Emigration after the Second World War (1946-1976)

Migration as Italy Waits Reconstruction

Soon after the Second World War ended, migration from Italy resumed vigorously. The country lay in ruins, ravaged by war. Some people left because they were either dispossessed or out of work. Due to the new regime in the region, Italians from the Balkan area had been expelled. Some people were considered fascists and therefore afraid for their own lives, while others had been labeled Socialists or Communists, therefore had few possibilities to find work after losing the 1948 election and the failure of occupying the land.

Europe remained the privileged destination of the Italians, in fact, it was here that 68% of migrants had gone during the last 30 years, 12% went to North America, 12% to South America and 5% to Australia. At the same time, internal migration, especially from the South to the North, reached important numbers and changed the human geography of the country: the countryside and the mountains were abandoned and great masses moved from the south and the northeast towards the industrial triangle and the nation's capital. Furthermore, some emigrated towards the northern borders, since this allowed continuing to reside in Italy and to work each day in France, or the Principality of Monaco, Switzerland or Austria. They were the so-called border workers.

At the beginning in the 1970's all migration decreased,

internally and externally: even movement towards the border progressively decreased.

The New Emigration Policy

During the post war period there was a return to the fascist strategy, with a series of bilateral agreements between Italy and other European states, requiring labour for the reconstruction. In 1946 with France and Belgium, in 1947 with Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Great Britain, in 1948 with Switzerland, Holland and Luxembourg, in 1955 with Germany. At the same time, agreements were also signed with non-European countries: Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, Australia and Canada. The Italian government exchanged workers for raw material and at the same time profited from emigration to guarantee an escape valve from social conflicts, just like the Fascist regime's policy.

Underground migration for Italians, however, remained active, so much so that after 1876 at least 4 million citizens were thought to have left the country without documents. In the United States the boss of *Cosa Nostra*, Alberto Anastasia, stated that in the 1950's he'd let at least 60,000 countrymen enter the United States without documents, avoiding any control. After World War II, the route towards France, Switzerland and Belgium was less daring and in general entrusted to a network of guides and smugglers who made them climb over the Alps. The 1946 Italian-French agreement stipulated the arrival of 20,000 miners; however, another 10,000 migrants arrived in Paris independently, between January and May, and by the end of the year, illegal Italians in France numbered 30,000. Three years later that number doubled. In fact, the red tape was such that many were resigned themselves to expatriate illegally, helped by French entrepreneurs who considered illegals as labour that could be blackmailed and ultimately less costly. Incredibly, even the administrative authorities favored illegal entry by the Italians preferable to legal entries by the Algerians.

Underground migration across the Alps towards France, in those years was a route taken by Italian migrants, not only from Piedmont but also from Sicily.

In 1962, 87 Italians died at the *Passo del Diavolo* (Saint Gotthard) near Ventimiglia, as they tried to enter France illegally.

In the mid-1970's approximately 30,000 Italian children were kept hidden at home, forced «*not to laugh, cry, or make a noise*» by their parents, migrants in Switzerland, who were afraid of being repatriated because the Swiss government prohibited seasonal workers to be accompanied by their family.

Destinations, Jobs and Living Conditions

The exodus towards Europe had alternate phases; this depended on the economic performance of each single country and agreements made between individual countries and Italy. The large flow, at the beginning of the 1950's towards France and Belgium, decreased during the second half of the decade and reached its minimum after 1963. The exodus towards Great Britain never completely took off. In the meantime, migration increased toward Switzerland and Germany, but this remained almost exclusively seasonal.

During the same period, the number of people moving abroad decreased, compared to internal migrations, particularly of people moving from the South to the more prosperous North, even led to the depopulation of some areas of the country. The Americas remained

the dream destination, but South America was facing economic and political/social problems while North America, which was much safer, only allowed foreigners to enter, following complicated bureaucratic red tape. Many, therefore, opted to migrate to European countries first, hoping to obtain permission to cross the Atlantic at a later stage.

Working conditions in general were hard, not only in Italy, but also in Europe, in the Americas and in Australia. The work was hard and not always well paid; furthermore, the workers continuously lived in a state of marginalization. Especially in the beginning, the males mostly lived in barracks, which at times were the very same that had been used to house prisoners of war. There were no guarantees that workers' rights would be honoured; many were illegal immigrants or the Italian government was too weak to defend them and the local Trade Unions saw foreign labour as a threat to the local workforce.

10) New aspects of Italian Migration (1977-2013)

The characteristics of Italian migration in the world changed considerably during the last decades of the twentieth century. Thanks to the social and economic progress made in this country, emigration no longer involved large groups of population, but selected, qualified personnel and technicians who either migrated with their companies or looked for work independently, to which number students and university professors must be added. The movement within the regions of the central-north and that from the south to the north of the peninsula is still significant: 95,000 Italians emigrated in the year 2013, an increase of 55% compared to 2011.

Today, the descendants of those who emigrated in the 1800-1900's, the so-called foreigners of Italian extraction, can be calculated at approx. 60-70 million; another Italy spread out around the world. The 24 million in Argentina represent more than 50% of the local population. Additionally, there are 20.5 million in Brasil, 16 million in the United States, 1.3 million in Canada, 760 thousand in Australia, 690 thousand in Uruguay, while in other continents they do not exceed 2 million. In Africa and in Asia they are a few thousand, and the rest are spread out in various European countries.

In 2008, there were 3,734,428 worldwide, who had kept their Italian citizenship.

Migrants in Italy: Work and Integration

In these last few years, Italy has gone from a country of emigrants to a country of immigrants.

During the 1970s-80s, especially Tunisians, found work as hired hands in the fishing and agricultural sectors. Women from the Philippines, Eritrea, Cape Verde, Somalia and Latin America were hired as domestic servants and Yugoslavs in construction industry; there were also political refugees and foreign students.

For the first time, in 1996 residence permits issued to foreign citizens were over one million. As of January 1 2011, foreigners residing in Italy numbered 4,570,317, representing 7.5% of the population. 2,441,467 came from European countries and represented 53.42% of the foreigners residing in Italy. 986,471 immigrants were citizens of African countries. There were 766,512 Asian citizens in Italy and they came especially from China, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka. Lastly, 372,385 were citizens of an American country.

The majority of immigrants in Italy were employed in domestic work or personal care, in the building sector, industry and agriculture, but usually non qualified work.

According to INPS, (Italy's Social National Insurance Agency), each year approx. 5 billion Euros are paid to the National Insurance Agency by foreign employees or those self-employed. Furthermore, the immigrants contributed to the growth of the gross domestic product so that in the year 2007, foreigners gave the gross domestic product a contribution equal to 9.1% of the total. There has been an increase in immigrant families and mixed families. In 2006, 14% of the marriages celebrated in Italy, were mixed marriages. The majority regarded male Italian citizens who married foreign female citizens, mainly Rumanians, Ukrainians, Brazilians and Poles, while marriages of Italian women to foreign citizens were much fewer. In 2008, 575,000 babies were born in Italy, of which 72,000 were born to foreign parents, which is to say 12.6% of the total babies born in Italy. In the same year, there were 862,453 foreign minors or children of immigrants in Italy, that is 22.2% of all foreigners. The majority of those were born in Italy, and as they had not immigrated, represented a *second generation*, since foreign citizenship only applies because the parents were foreign. While the others had come to our country together with their parents.

There were 629,000 foreign students during the school-year 2008-09, which corresponded to 6.4% of the total scholastic population in Italy, and are consistent with the entire school system. The majority of these students, the so called *second generation*, had the same schooling in common with Italian children, spoke the same language, had similar tastes and interests. They did not present scholastic problems, different from those of their Italian counterparts. Often, it was the colour of their skin, their religion, their origin which made them different.

11) Monghidoro: from a town of migrants to a town of immigrants

At the beginning of the 20th century, the town of Monghidoro, with its houses clinging onto the Tuscan/Emilian Apennine mountains, was a poor small town of only about six thousand inhabitants. The weekly market and fairs were well known and attracted many people from nearby villages and from further afield, some even making the journey from Romagna. The town stands on the State route to the *Futa* pass and through the centuries, it has been an important stop-over place for business travellers and pilgrims coming from or going to Florence. The manufacture of straw was very extensive; many dealt in commerce, while others owned small businesses. The town boasted many wine bars (*osterie*) and there were even three hotels. The territory, characterized by high peaks, was more appropriate for farming and woodland cultivation, rather than intensive agricultural activities. Thanks to an abundance of torrential streams and steep cliffs, there were a large number of mills. There were also a number of consumer and agricultural cooperatives: four in 1920, seven in 1929, all forced to cease their activity during the Fascist period.

In Monghidoro, just like in many other places, emigrants started to be registered from 1875, in other words only after the unification of Italy. They were migrating toward France, Germany, and Belgium, mainly hired on short-term contracts. It was almost exclusively a male

migration, often happening during the winter period, given the adverse climatic conditions. Many inhabitants of Monghidoro migrated clandestinely, for political reasons, during the Fascist era.

In 1946, a formal agreement was signed between Belgium and Italy, setting a quota of 50,000 Italians to be employed in the coalmines of Belgium; in exchange, Belgium offered favourable terms for buying coal. Some thirty-three workers left Monghidoro to work in the mines of porphyry in Rebecq. During the following years, their parents would join them. It is for this reason that there is still a large community of Monghidoresi in Rebecq, which later became Monghidoro's twinned town.

Women also migrated: they left at a young age to work as house cleaners and maids in other Italian towns or in rice fields. One of them is cited in an Eugenio Montale's poem. In the poet's Florentine house, in fact, there was a girl from Monghidoro, working as a servant.

... a clicking of clogs (the limping
Servant of Monghidoro)...

Those who went to work in the rice fields were called *risaiole* or *mondine*. They had to plant rice and clean the small plants, knee deep in water, for hours under the baking sun or in bad weather, supervised by the caporali who, from the edge of the swamps, urged them to work harder, often using harsh language.

Women, though, migrated mainly to reach their fathers or husbands; once they reached their destination, they found employment as maids or as factory-workers. Just like many other migrants, the Monghidoresi also had to suffer discrimination and prejudice, and they were forced to accept the most humiliating and hard jobs.

Today by contrast, Monghidoro welcomes immigrants: almost 10% of residents are of foreign origin. The largest ethnic group is Moroccan, followed by the Rumanian and Macedonian.

All of them, migrants and immigrants, suffered the same fears, the same discomfort. They left in search of better living conditions for themselves and for their children; all of them tell the same stories, full of nostalgia for the country they left behind and many worries about an uncertain future, made of hard choices.

According to the testimonials we gathered, all of them, yesterday and today's immigrants, led broken lives.