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The *Italian Historical Society Journal* aims to provide, to those interested in the history of Australian-Italian communities, an outlet for the circulation of news and reports, the exchange of information and the notification of future activities. We invite readers to contribute newsworthy articles and short notes. Guidelines for contributors are available on application.

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FRONT COVER:

Giuliano-Dalmati on their way from Trieste to a camp for displaced persons near Naples. From there the men left for Australia. The photograph was taken at Termini Railway Station, Rome, 1955.

The photograph features in *Per l'Australia: the story of Italian migration*, published in June 2005 by the Italian Historical Society and Melbourne University Publishing. You can read all about *Per l'Australia* in the News section of this journal.

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an australian mazzinian: andrew inglis clark

by **ROS PESMAN** ROS PESMAN IS PROFESSOR EMERITUS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY WHERE SHE WAS PREVIOUSLY CHALLIS PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR FOR THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. SHE HAS WRITTEN EXTENSIVELY ON ITALIAN HISTORY FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO MODERN TIMES. HER NEW BOOK *FROM PAESANI TO GLOBAL ITALIANS: VENETO MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA* CO-WRITTEN WITH DR LORETTA BALDASSAR FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, WILL BE PUBLISHED BY UWA PRESS IN NOVEMBER 2005.

This year marks the two hundredth anniversary of the birth in Genoa of Giuseppe Mazzini, the Italian revolutionary forever linked with Giuseppe Garibaldi and Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, as the founding triumvirate of the Italian nation state. Mazzini was the most radical and visionary of the leaders of the Risorgimento, the nineteenth century liberation movement to free the Italian peninsula from Austrian rule in the north and Papal and Bourbon despotism in the centre and south and to create an independent and united Italy. He was also the most fervent, articulate and prolific theorist of Italian independence and unification.¹ But his activism was not confined to words; he and his followers were also the instigators of plots and conspiracies to further the cause; plots and conspiracies that failed but nonetheless contributed to the creation of martyrs, myths and legends.



Giuseppe Mazzini

Mazzini was above all a republican, a humanitarian democrat who believed that no race, gender or individual was superior to another. He was thus a champion of the rights of the working classes and was among the foremost advocates of the equality and rights of

women in Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century. He also believed that the nation was a higher form of association which would allow its citizens to develop their capacities and reach a higher plane. Although his life was dedicated to the creation of the Italian nation, Mazzini was an internationalist as well as a patriot. The nation was a stepping stone towards the eventual goal of the uniting of all humanity. Mazzini acknowledged the existence of God but rejected Christianity which, he believed,

had served its purpose; the religion of the future was democracy. If he repudiated Catholicism and the Catholic Church, Mazzini was critical of the Church's bitter enemy materialism in both socialist and Marxist forms. While accepting the doctrine of universal rights, the revolutionary patriot emphasised duty rather than rights, the obligations that individuals owed to each other and to society. His new Italy was to be the virtuous republic resurrected or reborn through suffering, self sacrifice and love, based on association and sustained by bonds of fellowship and love.

While Mazzini's goals of independence and unification of Italy were achieved by 1870, he died two years later a disappointed and disillusioned man. Instead of being created by sacrifice and popular revolution, Italy was united largely as a result of big power diplomacy; instead of taking the form of a democratic republic, the new Italy was a conservative constitutional monarchy that excluded peasants, workers and women.

Not long after Mazzini's death, a citizen of Tasmania hung the portrait of Mazzini in every room of his Hobart home.² The citizen was Andrew Inglis Clark (1848-1907), Tasmanian lawyer and politician, and one of the important players in the making of the Australian nation at Federation. Clark was an unusual colonist in that he was, like Mazzini, a republican.

The last decade of the twentieth century saw the development and failure of a movement to transform Australia from a constitutional monarchy under the British Crown to a republic. The movement was far from being the first stirrings of republicanism in Australia and, while Italy played no part in the debates and discussions of the 1990s, the events and heroes of the Italian Risorgimento were reference points for some nineteenth century Australian republicans. This paper explores some of the Australian links and connections with the Risorgimento with a particular focus on Andrew Inglis Clark. This Tasmanian republican and his role in the making of Federation were relatively ignored until the present republican movement reclaimed him as an important figure in Australia's republican heritage.³

The Italian struggle for independence and unification fired the imagination and gained the support of liberals and democrats everywhere, and in no place more so than in Britain. Echoes of the British enthusiasm were to be found in Britain's Australian colonies where local reformists and radicals responded with the added awareness that ruled from Britain, under the British Crown, their own land was neither free nor independent.⁴

Enthusiasm for the Risorgimento in both Britain and Australia was partly fuelled by Protestant bigotry and bitter anti-Catholicism and anti-Popery. When the Pope was driven from Rome and the short-lived Roman Republic established under Mazzini's leadership in 1849, the Sydney fire-breathing Presbyterian parson, John Dunmore Lang, sent forth to Europe his *Address to the Senate and People of Rome*, congratulating them on their revolution.

Right and honourable and right worthy descendants and representatives of an illustrious ancestry. Permit me, a humble individual from the utmost ends of the earth, to present you on behalf of the friends of freedom and of the best interests of mankind in the southern hemisphere my respectful and sincere congratulations on the noble achievement you have recently effected with so much honour to yourselves and with the prospect of such benefit to your country in the re-establishment of a popular form of government in the ancient and renowned city of Rome.⁵

The letter concluded with an appeal for freedom of religion in the new Roman state. What the Senate and people of Rome thought of this message from 'the utmost ends of the earth' is unknown.

John Dunmore Lang was also a leader in Sydney's mid-nineteenth century republican circles, of those who looked to a democratic and independent Australian future free from British rule. Past and contemporary Italian history was enlisted in their cause. The radical newspaper, *The People's Advocate*, proclaimed in an article in 1854 that the greatness of Renaissance Florence was based on her freedom, independence and republicanism, and that, if New South Wales became a republic, it would not only rival Florence in its grandeur, wealth and greatness but would also 'astonish the world with its rapid progress in the arts, sciences and manufacturing'.⁶

Among Dunmore Lang's parishioners was a highly educated and talented young woman, Adelaide Ironside, who from an early age published poems and prose in *The People's Advocate* and shared in her pastor's republican and radical views. In the words of Lang's biographer, Ironside was 'one of those native-born Australians who a generation before the nationalists of the 1890s believed her country would blast the rulers of all despotic nations and by advancing liberty provide a nucleus of light for the rest of the world'.⁷ She too gave her allegiance to the Italian patriots and linked the causes of Italian and Australian independence in her poetry and paintings.

In 1855 at the age of 23, Ironside went with her mother to Rome to develop her talents as a painter. Describing Garibaldi's abortive approach on Rome in 1860, Ironside wrote to Lang that 'come what may, I shall go on with my Art and cry 'Viva Italia' (sic) with the Republicans'.⁸ At the time, she was creating a visual public statement of her political sympathies: at work on her large Biblical painting, *The Marriage at Cana*, which now hangs in the Art Gallery of New South Wales, she informed Lang that 'the portrait of the bridegroom is that of Garibaldi'. The face of Christ has a strong resemblance to that of the bridegroom and may also be modelled on him.⁹

Ironside was making her portrait of Garibaldi-Christ in the period just after Garibaldi and his *Mille* had marched south and delivered the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily to a united Italy; when he had become the much feted and celebrated Romantic hero of the British world, including the Australian colonies. In Melbourne, for example, over one thousand citizens, British Australians and Italian immigrants, some of whom had participated in the battles of the Risorgimento, subscribed £350 for the purchase of a silver presentation sword for the Italian hero.

Enjoying the utmost political freedom themselves, the subscribers to this sword are anxious to offer their homage to that heroic Italian who has done so much for the enfranchisement of Italy, and the expulsion of the stranger from the garden of Europe.¹⁰

Some colonists were closer to the action. William Henry Embling, who returned to Europe to study medicine in Bonn and London, went out to Italy in 1860 to fight with Garibaldi in the English brigade.¹¹ The meeting of Gideon Scott Lang, a wealthy businessman, writer and journalist and member of the colonial elite, with Garibaldi was accidental. Touring Switzerland in 1859, he passed through Como then occupied by the guerrilla leader and his troops. In a long letter to *The Times*, not at that time a newspaper favouring the Italian cause, Lang described his meeting with Garibaldi.¹² Expecting to find a swarthy bandit chief, he had on the contrary encountered a brave and patriotic gentleman who comported himself as a British officer. Back in London, the Australian gentleman and his wife became active in raising support for the Risorgimento. In a second letter to *The Times*, Lang appealed for more British aid for Garibaldi's occupation of Naples.¹³

Thirteen years after Garibaldi met Lang, his death was the occasion of another outpouring of admiration in the Australian colonies. Some 10,000 people, including the Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales and the Mayor, gathered in Sydney to attend a function to commemorate 'the greatest man of the century'.¹⁴ Again Italian residents were prominent in the organisation. The speeches and the role played by Masons in the ceremony are a reminder that anti-Catholicism and anti-Popery lurked in the celebration of the Risorgimento and of the fiercely anti-clerical Garibaldi. David Buchanan, a member of the New South Wales parliament, elaborated on the hero's greatest moment: 'when he drew his sword with a view to destroying the temporal power of the Pope'.¹⁵

Compared to the effusive enthusiasm for Garibaldi, the champions of Giuseppe Mazzini in Britain — where he spent most of his adult life as an exile — were few, confined to educated radicals who shared in his republican and democratic vision, his beliefs in the equality of the sexes and his rejection of institutional and hierarchical religious organisations.¹⁶ But what Mazzini's British network lacked in numbers was more than compensated by the total devotion of his followers and their important roles in reform movements such as anti-slavery and feminism. Interest in Mazzini and his Young Italy movement extended in the British world as far as Tasmania, where the colony's young liberals took up his ideas; and none more so than Andrew Inglis Clark, who like the English acolytes, referred to Mazzini as 'the Master'.¹⁷

Born in Hobart in that European revolutionary year of 1848, Clark was the son of Scottish migrant parents with interests in the reformist movements of their day. On leaving school, he entered the family engineering business but abandoned it in 1872 for the study of law. Clark had wide ranging cultural and political interests and his home became a centre of liberal intellectual life in Hobart. According to one contemporary:

[Clark was] devoured by passionate enthusiasms for knowledge and liberty, and was one of those rare beings who really love their fellow men. His house prior to the establishment of the Tasmanian University, was a centre of original thought for the Island, and many men from many countries visited the ardent circle which met every Saturday night in the library of the padre, as his friends liked to call him.¹⁸

He edited the short-lived Tasmanian journal, *Quadrilateral*, which took a progressive stance on political and social issues and was the founder of The Southern Tasmanian Political Reform Association which advocated universal suffrage and electoral reform.

In 1878, Clark won a seat in the Tasmanian Legislative Assembly and served as Attorney General in the Tasmanian parliament in the 1890s. He left politics in 1898 to become a judge in the Supreme Court of Tasmania, becoming the senior judge three years later. From 1901 to 1903, he was also Vice-Chancellor of the University of Tasmania.

The 1890s were the period when the rival leaders of the British colonies in Australia, men both driven by ideals and by instrumental ends, undertook the both delicate and rumbustious negotiations that culminated in the proclamation of the Federation of Australia in 1901.¹⁹ Clark was elected by the Tasmanian Parliament as a delegate to the Australasian Federation Conference in Melbourne in 1890. His crucial role in the drawing up of the Constitution in Melbourne and in the ensuing Federation Convention in Sydney in the following year has led to his being characterised as 'one of the chief architects of Australia's constitution'.²⁰

Clark was the only republican among the inner group of the founding fathers of Federation.²¹ When he had stood for election to the Tasmanian House of Assembly in 1878, the local newspaper, the *Mercury*, wrote of him 'holding such very extreme ultra-republican, if not revolutionary ideas that we hardly think he will prove acceptable to the electors of Norfolk Plains'.²² While his dream was an independent and republican Australian Federation free from subordination to Britain, he did not push his republican views at the federation conventions. But they were implicit in some of his speeches.

We are asking for the political autonomy of a United Australia, in order that the national life which we believe will exist under these conditions, may be produced and may bear the best fruits.²³

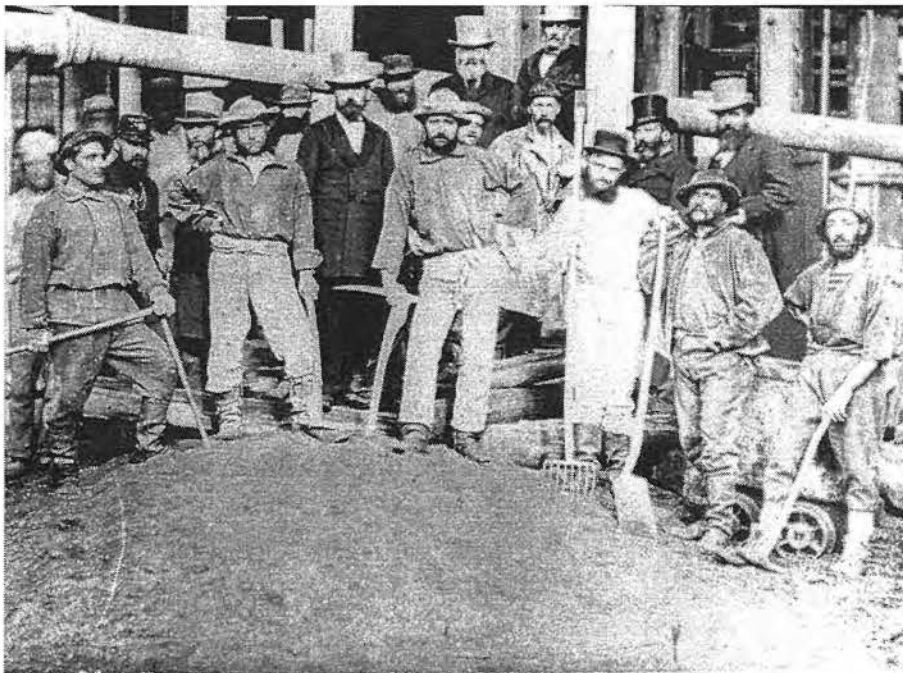
In a speech to the 1891 Convention, he acknowledged that he did not expect his 'ideals to be realised in the federal constitution about to be framed', and in his closing remarks alluded to his disappointment that the delegates had not met to create an 'independent nation'.²⁴ But if Clark could not secure an independent

Australia, he worked with considerable success in Tasmania for more progressive, humanitarian and equal political and social systems.²⁵

The main influences on Clark's political ideas were the American Revolution and Constitution and the Italian liberation movement and the teachings of Mazzini, whom he described as the 'holy prophet of humanity'. It is clear that he had some knowledge of Italian and sought out Italian contacts. When the Italian warship, *Garibaldi*, called at Hobart in 1873, he offered hospitality to some of the officers and corresponded with at least one of them, Luigi Blotto. In a letter sent from Yokohama, Blotto complimented him on his 'progresso nella lingua italiana'; his letter was 'molto ben scritto'.²⁶ Clark was also clearly steeped in the history of the Risorgimento and in Mazzini's ideas. Mazzini's *Doveri dell'Uomo* (*The Duties of Man*) had been published in an English translation in 1860 and subsequently went into multiple editions.

Clark shared in Mazzini's democratic republicanism and in the moral underpinning of his ideas. As John Hirst has shown, the creation of the nation was a progressive and sacred cause for some of the founding fathers including Clark. However, Clark went further than others

and moved closer to Mazzini in his belief that only through independence from the British monarchy could Australia fulfil its destiny, take its citizens to a higher plane.²⁷ As long as Australia remained an appendage of Britain, 'it would never contribute to the history of the world the ideas and achievements which a distinctively Australian nation would add to the common stock of human experience and accomplishment'.²⁸ Federation for Clark, like the nation for Mazzini, was not an end but a staging post on the way to wider and wider circles of federations which would carry humanity to a higher stage of development. And like Mazzini, Clark abhorred privilege and inequality. Rights were universal, and again like Mazzini, Clark was ready to admit and welcome women into the nation. In his essay *Why I am a Democrat*, he demanded an equal vote for all and argued that the doctrine and practice of one man one vote 'without regard to sex is the logical formula of a genuinely democratic suffrage'.²⁹ When Clark made a second trip to America in 1897, he was armed with letters of introduction to some leading feminists.³⁰ In language equally as mystical as that of Mazzini, he believed it was the bonds of mutuality that would bind men and women together in the future society, that 'love shall conquer all at last'.³¹



Visit of H.B.H. the Duke of Genoa,
AND THE CAPTAIN AND OFFICERS OF THE ITALIAN FRIGATE "GARIBOLDI,"
To the No. Three "Band of Albion Consols G. M. Co's" Min.
AT BALLARAT, APRIL 29, 1873

The captain and officers of the Italian warship *Garibaldi* pose for a photograph with miners, during the official visit of the Duke of Genoa. Ballarat, April 1873. The ship also called in at Hobart. Courtesy, Ballarat Historical Park Association.

In 1890, Clark achieved his ambition to tread on the holy soil of the new Italy when he visited the peninsula en route to London to appear before the Privy Council.

Long years I craved to see the distant land
Made sacred by the toils and tears and blood
Of men who bore engraved upon their hearts
The name of Italy.³²

These are the opening lines of a long unpublished poem of over one hundred verses, *My Pilgrimage*, which Clark wrote about his time in Italy and which so clearly gives witness to his admiration for the Mazzinian Risorgimento. The Italian liberation movement produced a plethora of English writing in prose and poetry, and while much of it is superior in style to Clark's verse, falls short of his evocation of the martyrs and heroes.

The Italian tours of the late nineteenth century colonial bourgeoisie usually took the form of pilgrimages to the monuments of antiquity and art. Clark's Italy was something else. He did not come 'to behold the ruined monuments', 'the monuments of thy dead past'. What his 'eager eyes desired' was:

Some trace or record of the holy war
Fought to expel the Austrian and the priest,

and

The new and living Italy that taught
A doubting world the immortality
Of human aspirations.

Clark's sacred sites were those of his Risorgimento heroes and above all of Mazzini. In Genoa where Mazzini was born and buried, 'every pad of earth is holy ground'. Clark visited the house where:

... the feeble child
Who grew to be the prophet of his age
First saw the light of day:

From Mazzini's birthplace, Clark's pilgrimage took him on to the Camposanto which held the 'sacred dust', the shrine:

Where reverent feet may come
To find and bear away new hope and faith
For the eternal warfare fought between
The flesh and the spirit to obtain and hold
Possession of the world.

On his arrival at the tomb of Mazzini, Clark had astonished the custodians by taking off his boots and socks, telling them 'that it was Holy Ground'.³³

My Pilgrimage might be best described as a rollcall of the heroes, martyrs and sacred sites of the Risorgimento. Among those recalled were Aesilio Milano, executed in Sicily in 1856 after he tried and failed to assassinate King Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies. Milano had resigned his place.

At life's rich banquet, and to Italy
Gave all that future years might hold for thee
Of earthly love and joy.

and the Bandiera brothers, Attilio and Emilio, officers in the Austrian navy, whose plan to foment an insurrection in Naples and the Papal states in 1844 was betrayed and who were subsequently arrested and executed:

The brothers Bandiera faltered not
Nor closed their eyes before the Austrian guns,
Because across the mists of death they saw
The same unfading dream.

Among the holy places that Clark visited was the cell where Mazzini's close friend, Jacopo Ruffini, had killed himself in 1833 by driving a nail into his throat so that he could not betray his companions.

I saw the prison where Ruffini died,
Seeking in death a refuge from the dread
Of failure of his mortal frame to keep
The secrets of his soul.

If Genoa for Clark was the city of Mazzini, other cities were recalled for their Risorgimento pasts: Milan, not for its Cathedral or Opera House, but as the city where the republicans Enrico Cernuschi and Carlo Cattaneo fought in the insurrection of 1848; Venice, not for its canals and bridges, but for Daniel Manin, who led the revolution of 1848 in that city; Florence, not only for Dante and Savonarola, but for the tomb of the English poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

Who sang the song of new born Italy.

From Florence on his trip, Clark took a detour to visit Lendinara — where Alberto Mario was buried — to meet Mario's widow, Jessie White Mario, a close friend of Mazzini who had campaigned for Italian liberation in Britain and conspired and nursed in Garibaldi's army in Italy and who was a propagandist for the cause:

Who shared his aspirations and his toils,
And whose writing pen
Has told the story of the master's life,
And gathered up the deeds and precious words
Of men who thought and spoke and
toiled and bled
To make new Italy.

Clark shared in the general British hostility to the Papacy and Catholic Church. Thus he did not loiter 'beneath St Peter's spacious dome':

Where cruelty and lust revelled in scenes
Of human agony and secret deeds
Of shame.

The Rome he sought was the 'later and grander Rome', capital of Italy reborn.

At the conclusion of his poem, Clark looked to the future of Australia. His memory and experience of 'the new and living Italy' would 'revive' his 'drooping faith' in the eventual triumph of an independent and republican Australia,¹ when:

Australia, thou alone
Our sovereign lord shalt be
No other land shall own or claim
Thy children's fealty.

Both Mazzini and Clark died with their visions for independent and republican homelands unfulfilled. It was not until the end of World War II and the experience and fall of Fascism that Italy became a republic based on universal suffrage and the political equality of all its people, men and women alike. Universal suffrage and social justice came much earlier to Australia, but the final steps to Andrew Clark's hopes for a republican Australia have yet to be taken.

NOTES

¹ On Mazzini, Gaetano Salvemini, *Il pensiero religioso politico sociale di Giuseppe Mazzini*, Messina, 1905; Denis Mack Smith, *Mazzini*, New Haven & London, 1994; Roland Sarti, *Mazzini: A life for the religion of politics*, Westport, 1997. The clearest expression by Mazzini on his ideas is his *Doveri dell'uomo* (*The Duties of Man*), published in many editions.

² Henry Reynolds, 'Andrew Inglis Clark (1848-1907)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol.3, Melbourne, 1969, p.401.

³ On the rediscovery of Clark in the context of the republican movement and the centenary of Federation, Michael Roe, 'Reviewing Clarkiana and Clark at Federation's Centenary', *A Living force: Andrew Inglis Clark and the ideal of the Commonwealth*, ed. Richard Ely with Marcus Haward and James Warden, Hobart, 2001, pp.1-13.

⁴ On Australian connections with the Risorgimento, Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', *Rassegna storica del Risorgimento*, LXX11, 1985, pp.205-215.

⁵ John Dunmore Lang papers, Vol. 2, Mitchell Library Sydney. MS A2222, quoted in Roslyn Pesman Cooper, 'Australian images of Rome', *Bollettino del Centro Interuniversitario di Ricerche sul 'Viaggio in Italia'*, 23, 1991, p.54. On Lang, D.W.A. Baker, *Days of wrath: A life of John Dunmore Lang*, Melbourne, 1995.

⁶ *The People's Advocate*, 8 April 1854.

⁷ Baker, *Days of wrath*, p.412. On Ironside, Jill Poulton, *Adelaide Ironside: The pilgrim of art*, Sydney, 1987; Ros Pesman Cooper, *Duty free: Australian women abroad*, Melbourne, 1996, pp. 41-47; Ros Pesman, 'In Search of professional identity: Adelaide Ironside and Italy', *Women's writing*, 10, 2, 2003, pp.307-328.

⁸ Adelaide Ironside to John Dunmore Lang, 3 November 1860, Lang papers, vol.9, p.210; Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', p.63.

⁹ Poulton, *Adelaide Ironside*, p.91.

¹⁰ *List of subscribers to the Sword of Honour presented to General Garibaldi by his admirers in Australia*, Melbourne, 1861; Lurline Stuart, 'Fund raising' in Colonial Melbourne: The Shakespeare Statue, the Brooke Bust and the Garibaldi Sword, *La Trobe Library Journal*, 8, 1982, pp.8-11; Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', pp. 204-206.

¹¹ Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', p.208.

¹² *The Times*, 20 June 1859.

¹³ *The Times*, 1 January 1860.

¹⁴ Pesman Cooper, 'Garibaldi e l'Australia', p.205.

¹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 June 1882; *ibid.*, p.211.

¹⁶ On Mazzini in Britain, Emilia Morelli, *L'Inghilterra di Mazzini*, Rome, 1965; Franco Della Peruta, *Mazzini e i rivoluzionari italiani*, Milan, 1974; William Roberts, *Prophet in exile: Joseph Mazzini in England, 1837-1868*, New York, 1989; Harry W Rudman, *Italian nationalism and English letters*, London, 1940; Maura O'Connor, *The Romance of Italy and the English political imagination*, New York, 1998.

17 John Williamson, 'Andrew Inglis Clark — Liberal and Nationalist', *An Australian democrat: The life and legacy of Andrew Inglis Clark*, ed. Haward and Warden, Hobart, 1995, p.126. On Clark, Reynolds, 'Clark, Andrew Inglis (1848-1907); pp.397-401; John M. Williams, 'With Eyes Open: Andrew Inglis Clark and our Republican Tradition', *Federal Law Review*, 23, 1995, pp.149-179; John Hirst, *The sentimental nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, Melbourne, 2000; *A living force: Andrew Inglis Clark and the ideal of the commonwealth*, ed. Richard Ely with Haward and Warden, Hobart, 2001.

18 Williams, 'With Eyes Open', p.155.

19 On the role of ideas, ideals, and the sense of the making of the Australian nation as a sacred cause, see Michael Roe, 'The Federation divide among Australia's liberal idealists: contexts for Clark', *An Australian democrat*, pp. 88-97; Hirst, *The sentimental nation*, pp.4-25.

20 Haward and Warden, 'An Australian democrat: The life and legacy of Andrew Inglis Clark', *An Australian democrat*, p.1.

21 Hirst, *The sentimental nation*, p.11.

22 Williams, 'With Eyes Open', p.156.

23 Roe, 'The Federation divide', p.88.

24 Williams, 'With Eyes Open', p.166.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 159.

26 Andrew Inglis Clark Papers, University of Tasmania Archives, Correspondence, C/4/e.17. The papers contain two letters from Blotto.

27 Hirst, *The sentimental nation*.

28 Quoted in Williamson, 'Andrew Inglis Clarke - liberal and nationalist', *An Australian democrat*, p.131.

29 Andrew Inglis Clark, 'Why I am a democrat', *An Australian democrat*, p.204; see also Williams. 'With Eyes Open', p.158.

30 Reynolds, 'Andrew Inglis Clark', p.401.

31 Andrew Inglis Clark, *My Pilgrimage*, manuscript poem, Andrew Inglis Clark papers, Correspondence C/4/h8.

32 *Ibid.*, I thank John Hirst for drawing my attention to this poem.

33 John Williams, 'Andrew Inglis Clark: The republican of Tasmania', *Makers of miracles: the cast of the Federation story*, ed. David Headon and John Williams, Melbourne, 2000 in Headon, p.49.

features of early ethnic italo-australian newspapers: a case study of *l'italo-australiano* (1885)

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY DR AMEDEO TOSCO WAS RECENTLY FEATURED IN *AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISM MONOGRAPHS (AJM)*, CENTRE FOR PUBLIC CULTURES AND IDEAS, GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY, BRISBANE, NUMBER 7, JULY 2005. IT IS REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE *AJM*'S EDITORIAL TEAM: DR JACQUI EWART, DR SUSAN FORDE, DR CATHY JENKINS, DR JANE JOHNSTON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MICHAEL MEADOWS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR STEPHEN STOCKWELL.

DR AMEDEO TOSCO IS AN ITALIAN SCHOLAR AND JOURNALIST, NOW WORKING IN AUSTRALIA AS A HISTORIAN AT THE SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS, GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY. BEFORE SETTLING IN AUSTRALIA HE WORKED FOR MORE THAN 15 YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL JOURNALIST, FIRST AT *IL MESSAGGERO* IN ROME AND THEN AT RADIOTELEVISIONE ITALIANA (ITALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION).

HIS RESEARCH FOCUS HAS BEEN JOURNALISM AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL CONTROL AND THE ANALYSIS OF BOTH THE ITALIAN PRESS UNDER THE FASCIST REGIME AND THE ITALO-AUSTRALIAN ETHNIC PRESS FROM ITS ORIGINS UNTIL 1940. AT PRESENT HE IS UNDERTAKING RESEARCH ON THE SOCIALIST, ANARCHIST AND ANTI-FASCIST ITALIAN LANGUAGE PRESS PUBLISHED FROM 1900 TO 1939. THE NEWSPAPERS BEING INVESTIGATED ARE THOSE PUBLISHED IN AUSTRALIA, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA AND SOUTH AMERICA.

THIS ARTICLE ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN-ITALIAN PRESS FROM THE LATE 19TH CENTURY THROUGH TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR MAKES AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO RESEARCH ON THIS ASPECT OF AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISM HISTORY.

ALL TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ITALIAN ARE BY THE AUTHOR.

Dr Tosco can be contacted by email at tosco@griffith.edu.au

by
AMEDEO TOSCO

Introduction: Considering the role of the ethnic press

Although it was never considered an important element of mass communication in Australia, the ethnic press has always had an important function in all non-English speaking background communities — that of driving its own readers toward choices and decisions which often differed from the mainstream of their 'host' country.

When considering ethnic newspapers published in Australia between the turn of the century and 1940, we cannot speak about 'mass' communication because of the relatively small numbers of people belonging to ethnic groups at that time. However, if we consider the social microcosm in which ethnic newspapers were circulating, we are able to see how these papers have had an important influence as an element of 'mass communication' inside their own communities. Undoubtedly, ethnic newspapers were important for immigrants, since each newcomer required information on their new society. But in spite of that, the ethnic press has been either ignored, or received little attention from scholars.

In the field of journalism and media, mass communication takes on specific characteristics. Apart from the creation of a mass culture — an homogeneous way of thinking and responding to various topics at a national level — mass communication is used as a process of standardisation of market consumption, creation of the supremacy of specific multinationals or political groups, and as a way of producing new systems able to drive masses toward particular ideological and economic choices.

In considering the ethnic press, it is important to acknowledge the environment in which these newspapers operate. I am particularly referring to the 'host' country, where the dominant ethnic group has specific attitudes towards subordinated ethnic groups. The aims of the dominant ethnic group are to protect, and often, to impose its own image and social values through the national mass media. So there are social and economic pressures which change in magnitude from host nation to host nation.

Andrew Jakubowicz¹ identifies three types of social relationships between dominant society and groups of cultural minorities. At one extreme is 'assimilation'. This occurs when subordinated ethnic groups are denied any sort of cultural expression such as the use of their own language and, as a consequence, the newcomers blend into the existing society with no trace of their previous cultural identity.

The second form of social relation is called 'integration'. This allows ethnic minorities to establish cultural institutions, schools, newspapers, radio and television networks that theoretically have the task of helping new immigrants to live alongside members of the dominant society. Integration is the policy that was pursued by the United States and Australia in the 1970s.

The third type of relationship between dominant and subordinated groups is more contemporary and is found today in England, Canada and Australia. Sociologists identify this as a 'culturally pluralist' approach. 'Host' countries protect the cultural and traditional customs of ethnic minorities, helping and supporting them legally and economically. Under this system not only does the dominant ethnic group have an influence on minorities, but the dominant group also experiences cultural changes due to the influence of minorities. Often, these changes are the synthesis of various elements coming from different groups, creating new habits and a new cultural world—better known as 'multiculturalism'.

According to Jakubowicz, the media in a multicultural society has to be considered with three elements in mind. The first is ownership and the way in which the final product is created and presented. Secondly, the content of newspapers should be considered, particularly in terms of the relationship with other ethnic groups. In the particular case to be covered in this monograph, the ways in which the Italo-Australian press was dealing with the dominant ethnic group is of interest. Lastly, the reaction of ethnic readers and the impact that it has on newspapers and on their contents should be considered. It means the reader is a consumer, interested in stories which can involve him/her directly. The ethnic reader, in particular, purchases a newspaper for those stories that are a type of diary of events and issues in his or her native country.

Journalists build and present stories according to codes which are able to link

the minds of readers to specific stimuli in order to provoke reactions. When a newspaper has to present news items to its readers — at a geographical, cultural, ideological and emotional level, far from the experiences of their daily lives — it needs to find familiar links, or 'stereotypes'. Italian journalists call these elements 'valori notizia'.² These are used to attract the attention of readers in order to stimulate personal emotions, either for the dramatic component of the story or for the prestige of the milieu involved.

We can argue that the foreign language press grows spontaneously out of the needs of an ethnic group living in an alien country. The term 'ethnic group' may indicate a group of people creating, in terms of language, traditions, customs, culture and a way of life—a different *milieu* in a 'host' society.

Newspapers in non-English languages appear where ethnic people join in large numbers and develop their own activities. Newspapers in the Italian language in Australia, for example, were established where a large concentration of Italians was present, primarily in Sydney and Melbourne. The circumstances differ, however, for those ethnic groups living in remote areas.

In Queensland, even though there is a large number of Italians, an Italian language newspaper does not currently exist as the community is not as concentrated as in Victoria and New South Wales, but is scattered across the state. The vast size of Queensland alone would require considerable coordination and resources to properly service the Italian community, unlike the strong concentrations that occur in the urban areas of Sydney and Melbourne. In Queensland until the 1960s, a large part of the Italian community was involved in agricultural activities, living in small rural towns far from larger centres. Clearly, an organisation which could service such a dispersed community would have required a large investment of money—something an ethnic newspaper could not afford.

In spite of all these problems, there was an exception in the later half of the 1930s, with the emergence of a newspaper called *L'italiano*, published in Brisbane. This publication had other aims, apart from capturing the attention of Italians in Queensland. Its owners were looking to compete with two established southern newspapers: *L'Italo-Australiano* and *Il Giornale Italiano*.

Besides, a local detailed chronicle — not just a general one — was needed. But what is a 'local detailed chronicle' of an ethnic community? Certainly not stories of police or daily events, apart from those where the community or members are involved directly or indirectly — such as, for instance, Italians involved in crimes or details about the opening times of shops, and so on — but the events and the daily life of the ethnic community. This would include activities of clubs, organisations, cultural meetings, births and marriages, activities of prominent people in the community and, of course, the most important Australian news items dealing with political and social issues. In other words, a newspaper that functions as a 'connective tissue' for an ethnic community living in a specific town or regional area.

The 'connective tissue' function of the ethnic newspaper is particularly important. The psychological trauma for immigrants living in a new society filled with cultural, ideological and, in particular, linguistic barriers, is significant. As soon as they reach Australia, many immigrants feel like deaf-mutes because they have very limited means — often no means at all — to communicate with locals. On this point, the community takes care of new arrivals through an ethnic newspaper, which becomes the first and major process of interaction and liaison between an immigrant and a new country.

The majority of Italian immigrants did not move overseas in defiance of the motherland, but primarily to find a job or to escape difficult economic conditions at home. So there is always a sentimental and affectionate link to the homeland. Through an ethnic newspaper, an immigrant is able to recover their own personality as an Italian and as a member of a non Anglo-Celtic community. The approach of the ethnic person to their chosen newspaper is always an assertion of their own identity after a day of work in an often hostile alien environment. This was particularly the case in the period between 1900 and 1940.

An important characteristic of ethnic newspapers was their consistent and chronic lack of money, particularly between 1900 and 1918. Many newspapers were staffed by volunteers and members of the community wrote news items and articles in their spare time. The owner was often a journalist, the publisher, the editor-in-chief and the company director. Frequently, journalists were members of the owner's family. At the *L'Italo-Australiano* and



Oceania, for example, the coordinator was Antonio Folli, Giovanni Pullè's son-in-law, who managed the *Italo-Australian* some years later. Often the sole means of income was through subscriptions. This was common with the socialist and anarchist press, with very limited success. It explains the short and hard life of many of these newspapers.



In addition, there were publications produced by clubs, churches and social groups in Australia. Sally Miller defines them as 'the papers of the fraternal organisations'.³ Their lives were less precarious and more stable because they were financially supported by members of the associations. Classified advertisements and, in small numbers, advertisements of companies and products, were the only permanent source of income for ethnic newspapers, and often they filled up to 50 percent of the entire newspaper. Albert Scandino suggests that a constant increase in the number of readers came from the classifieds, which guaranteed a steady income for the editor 'at \$2 for a two-inch ad'.⁴



Undoubtedly, classified advertisements were one of the elements which tempted readers to be faithful to ethnic newspapers for many years, even after they were fully integrated into the host society. Scandino uses the example of the *Polish Daily News* published in New York: 'The circulation of the paper has remained constant for 5 years at about 20,000, but the number of pages has doubled from 8 to 16 because of increased advertising'.⁵

The main characteristic of the Italian press from 1900 to 1918 was its role as a centre of attraction around which the community revolved. The four Italian newspapers published in Australia at that time were not only a source of information, but also represented a way of exchanging points of view among people with the same cultural background, living in a foreign country. We must remember that these newspapers were run as family businesses and were not linked to political parties or power groups. Generally, they reflected the ideologies of the owner. As a result, publishers could not take advantage of money coming from political or power organisations in the same way as national newspapers. Only after the rise of Fascism did the ethnic press get some financial help.

While anyone was free to write and have their articles published, there were three important rules. The first was that one must write in good Italian. Secondly, one must emphasise Italy and Italian sentiments. Thirdly, articles had to be written voluntarily. There were columns where readers could express their points of view, like 'Voce del Pubblico' in *L'Italo-Australiano*, where, under the title, it advised: 'The editor does not accept any responsibility for the content published in this column'.⁶ These features were maintained in newspapers of the 'fascist period' but articles had to be

approved by fascist organisations or authors had to be well known for their political point of view.

From the content of ethnic newspapers publishing articles on Australian political and social issues, it is evident that there was a push toward social integration. Newspapers tried to help their readers in organising and starting new commercial activities. Editors asked for a better standard of living, more profitable jobs for immigrants, and fought against discrimination in work places. At the same time, ethnic newspapers opposed any sort of cultural integration. Editors gave all their support to ethnic organisations like schools, hospitals and clubs and encouraged the maintenance of Italian language and culture, rejecting any scheme for naturalisation. In the fascist era, mixed marriage was often condemned as well.

All that may seem contradictory, but ethnic newspapers really only tried to help immigrants to 'sail' into an unknown world in order to survive. In other words, the newspapers made suggestions to Italians on how to better survive in a new and at times hostile society, but they did not formally try to create a structure for integration.

These newspapers had the function, completely at odds with the mainstream press, of creating cohesion within their own communities. As a result, they were the main obstruction to integration policies that all guest countries tried to impose on immigrants. So the choices made by the ethnic press allowed the maintenance of the Italian language inside families — and often in many work places, even if it caused discrimination.

Baily⁷ suggests that ethnic newspapers had limited usefulness in the creation of the idea of a 'good new citizen'. The level of integration, he argues, is a result of many elements which have little to do with the ethnic press. Social integration is the consequence of various elements immigrants experience in their environment, such as attitudes of the host society, its institutions and, of course, the influences of their own ethnic groups.

The ethnic press has always carried such contradictions and doubts that have prevented it evolving like the mainstream press. Practically, ethnic newspapers were not able to develop a coherent policy and were always influenced by political and social situations existing inside the host countries along with stimuli coming from the motherland — often representing elements of contrast.

The Italian press in Australia

The political ideologies of individual editors had a strong influence on the content carried in Italian newspapers after 1900. A typical example of this is the newspaper *Uniamoci* (*Let's unite*), edited by Giuseppe Prampolini⁸, whose socialist and anti-religious attitude, mixed with a strong nationalistic background, is evident. Prampolini writes in the leading article of the first issue of his newspaper:

Let's Unite! This is the cry, more general and harmonic, that today bursts out from the heart of all civilised peoples. They are calling for mankind to unite, in order to walk together, on the road of progress, toward the conquest of the common good, which is the supreme and unique goal of life. Peoples and nations gnawed at by domestic discords impoverish, they fall into disrepute and, finally, they lose their independence and become easy prey for other nations. The history of our country is irrefutable proof. Separated we were slaves, united we are free.⁹

From this, we can see the use of *Uniamoci's* emphatic language, characteristic of early socialist political meetings where the socialist ideology was mixed and confused with the experience of Italian *Risorgimento*¹⁰ and the love for the motherland. Clearly, *Uniamoci* was an extreme example and not all contemporary newspapers were so passionate.

It is possible to find more moderate ideas and style in Giovanni Pullè's newspapers, *L'Italo-Australiano*¹¹, and later *Oceania*, and they, of course, mirrored the social and political sentiments of their publisher. In fact, Count Giovanni Attanasio Pullè¹² represented the Italian liberal-conservative mentality at the turn of the last century and the expansionist dreams of the post-*Risorgimento* middle class. In other words, Pullè represented that part of Italian society which identified itself with *Il Corriere della Sera*¹³ and its owner and director, Luigi Albertini.

These two papers always provided unconditional support for *Il Corriere* and its colonialist policy. The article, 'Tripoli and Italy', is an example in which, commenting on an editorial published on the front page and signed by Albertini, Pullè wrote:

For many years, we wished to have the land of Tripoli in our hands. Down there, about 500,000 Italian immigrants would find a fertile soil to grow the most varied and profitable cultures, in a healthy and mild climate. If Italy misses the chance to seize its part of this treasure, it means we have completely lost not only any initiative and any energy, but also the sense of opportunity and we are not able to take advantage of the chance to develop our commerce, consolidate our industries, to profit from our resources and our exuberant population ...¹⁴



L'Italo-Australiano and *Oceania* became the champions of Italian language and culture and they responded to attacks from a certain xenophobic section of Australian society. They published articles not only in Italian, but also in English in which Italian society and traditions were presented in the most positive way. They were generally written by British journalists. For example, a novel by Richard Bagot was published in instalments in *Oceania*, starting on 12 August 1913. It was entitled 'Gens Italica' — a glorification of Italy.

The newspapers published after 1922 were completely different because of the installation of a Fascist Regime in Italy. They became the official voice of Fascism in Australia and also the main tool of propaganda and regimentation of the Italian community.

Fascism had two very important channels of propaganda overseas. These were the newspapers in the Italian language, which had a wide circulation throughout all Italian communities — particularly in the United States and South America where large communities were established — and many British and American daily newspapers, in which Fascism seemed to experience a remarkable ascendancy through their correspondents in Italy. Furthermore, the Italian consulates acted as propaganda offices.

These elements allowed for the circulation of an extremely positive image of Italy with minimal negative news. In 1937, the Direzione Generale per la Stampa Italiana,¹⁵ a branch of Ministero della Cultura Popolare,¹⁶ regularly checked the majority of Italian language newspapers published overseas. Each month, it sifted through 81 daily newspapers, 123 political publications,

3,860 magazines, 7,000 parish bulletins and the news items of 32 foreign press agencies operating in Italy.¹⁷

As a result, when Mussolini rose to power, the ethnic press lined up politically with the newspapers of the mother country, already regimented according to the PNF's¹⁸ regulations. In those years, for the first time, newspapers were used extensively as a tool for 'mass formation' and consensus-building in order to create a homogeneous way of thinking on political and social grounds. This sort of regimentation was not only an element of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, but also was present in Anglo-Saxon countries, particularly in the United States, where the 'American way of life' became a type of national religion.

Furthermore, the newspapers believed the reporting of such incidents would ensure Italian residents overseas would receive more consideration from host countries. Folli, in a leading article, did not hesitate to support Mussolini's colonialist and expansionist policy. He wrote: 'Italy does not have any imperialistic ideals, except when it needs to keep its routes of trade free and well protected'.²¹

The use of ethnic newspapers as an element of propaganda and a means to regiment the Italian community in Australia escalated when, in 1932, the Italian Department of Foreign Affairs decided to change some members of its consular corps.

Antonio Grossardi, Consul General for 12 years, who created and consolidated the fascist structures inside the Italian community, was assigned to New York and replaced by Marquis Agostino Ferrante. Ferrante represented the new aspirations of Fascist Italy. So he did not put forward more ideology and nationalism, but rather Italy's right to expand itself territorially and to find its 'place under the sun'²² by conquest.

The appointment of Ferrante as Consul General was not accidental. In fact it coincided with the establishment, on 19 March 1932, of a new newspaper, *Il Giornale Italiano* under the editorship of Franco Battistessa. *Il Giornale* replaced the *Italo-Australian* as a channel of fascist propaganda and supported in full the colonial aims of Italy, the racist attitudes of Fascism, and Mussolini's policies.²³ Both these papers survived with the money earned from classified advertising and with an annual grant sent to them by the PNF and the Ministero della Cultura Popolare. They were forced to close down at the outbreak of the Second World War on orders from the Department of the Army.²⁴

Not all Italian newspapers in Australia were linked to fascist propaganda and in regimenting the community. Some opposed Fascism with strong articles, recruiting many Italians to the anti-fascist cause. There were socialist newspapers such as *La Riscossa*, *Il Risveglio*, and *L'Avanguardia Liberatoria*. These newspapers were established by exiled left-wing intellectuals like Franco Carmagnola, Mario Tardiani and Giovanni Perrini. Omero Schiassi should also be mentioned— while he did not create any left-wing newspapers, he was involved and linked to parties and anti-fascist Australian organisations.



Fascism and the Italian-Australian press

In the 1920s, Fascism found channels of propaganda in Australia through two newspapers: the *Italo-Australian*, established in August 1922 in Sydney by Francesco Lubrano (major shareholder) and Antonio Folli (co-editor), and the monthly magazine *Italian Bulletin of Australia*. The *Italian Bulletin of Australia* was published by the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Australia, based in Sydney. The *Italo-Australian* was closed down by the Australian authorities at the outbreak of the Second World War. In all their issues, both newspapers gave a very easygoing and positive view of history and events of the *marcia su Roma*¹⁹ and about Fascist Italy. Also, they highlighted fascist ideology and published articles which emphasised Mussolini's domestic and foreign policy, printed in both Italian and overseas daily newspapers.

For instance, the *Italo-Australian* gave its full support to the 'Corfu incident'²⁰, thinking it would act as a warning to all European nations to show respect for Italy.

Samuel Baily²⁵ divides ethnic newspapers into two main categories: 'radical' and 'bourgeois'. It was not only an Australian characteristic, but also one applicable to all countries with Italian émigrés between the turn of the last century and the Second World War. There is a strong presence of 'radical' publications in the Americas, particularly in the United States and Canada where anarchists and socialists, persecuted initially by the national-bourgeois regime of the Savoia Royal Family and then by Fascism, found shelter and freedom:

Many of the numerous anarchist and socialist papers were of the highest intellectual calibre and were edited by some of the major figures of the Italian anarchist and socialist movements.²⁶

Unfortunately, these newspapers had a very short life with a limited circulation due, above all, to a lack of money, so their influence on the Italian community was not great. The main aim of these publications, particularly in the 1930s, was to fight the bourgeois nationalist regimes established in many European nations. They also gave their support to labour organisations and succeeded in helping workers from non-English-speaking backgrounds to join Australian trade unions. Besides this, anarchist and socialist publications indirectly helped their own fellow countrymen to integrate into the life of the new host society. They suggested immigrants should be naturalised in order to take part in the political and social evolution of a new motherland.

The 'bourgeois' press, particularly the Italian press, had a more stable and lasting life after the rise of fascists to power. Eugenio Gallavotti, who defines fascism as a regime of journalists, writes:

... what is defined here is a 'regime of journalists' ... the press becomes the first and the more authentic expression of power, the main tool to win consent, a phenomenon that arrives to identify itself with Fascism.²⁷

So non-socialist Italo-Australian newspapers had the full moral and financial support of Italian diplomatic representatives, notables in the ethnic community, and Australian governments, which were often reactionary like some European regimes. Hence the 'bourgeois' press had some influence on the behaviour and political choices of the Italian community in Australia.

The Australian government was supportive of the Italo-Australian pro-fascist newspapers until the Abyssinian war, mainly



because of their anti-communist behaviour and its propaganda value. Despite the Abyssinian War, no restrictive action was taken against these newspapers until the outbreak of the Second World War. Most foreign language newspapers, with few exceptions, were closed down in 1940—in particular, those belonging to ethnic communities of enemy nations (Italy, Germany and Japan) and those supporting their policies. In addition, all pro-communist newspapers were blacklisted. In one Australian newspaper,²⁸ eight local publications were listed and charged with being sympathetic and 'which are not official organs of the Communist Party': *Common Cause*, the newspaper of NSW coal-miners; *The Guardian* (Melbourne); *The Tribune*, *Soviet Today*, *The Communist Review*, *The Wharfie* (Sydney); *The Workers' Star* (Perth), and the *North Queensland Guardian* (Townsville). On their pages, news items about war or Australian industry and political or ideological editorials were not allowed and each issue had to be approved by the censors. The article 'Communist press to be muzzled' argues:

Both Sir Henry Gullett and the Commonwealth Police, it is understood, were reluctant to forego the time-established British practice of allowing the maximum freedom to the Press on a uniform basis to all newspapers, irrespective of their political creed or color.²⁹

But often, the ethnic press, in the time span analysed in this monograph, was not a source of cohesion with a strong influence on the choices offered to the Italian community. In the history of journalism, the interests and goals of the editors have not always overlapped with those of readers. In Australia's case, the naturalisation 'affair' was one such example.

Discussions of 'naturalisation' in the ethnic press

The three Italian language newspapers published in Australia in the period between 1900 and the First World War³⁰ treated naturalisation as a news item, focusing on policy decisions of the Federal government, limitations, and attitudes.

Pullè and Prampolini's 'big battles' were about a re-evaluation of Italian culture and traditions and the xenophobic attitudes of a certain part of the Australian community which was 'strongly nationalist in order to conceal their inferiority complex'.³¹

The problems of naturalisation came out with the insertion of the Italo-Australian newspapers into the structures of the Fascist Regime. Under the administration of Consul General Grossardi, newspapers dealt with fascist ideology, nationalism and the world mission of Fascist Italy. So in the 1920s, Italian ethnic newspapers contained a wave of nationalistic feelings which denied space to the possibility of naturalisation. Not only that, the Italo-Australian press, like the national press in Italy, equivocated over the equation 'Italy = Fascism'. The *Italo-Australian* wrote: 'It is evident, fascism has prevailed and today ... it [fascism] is synonymous with Italy'.³²

Neither the *Italo-Australian* and the other newspapers, nor Grossardi, openly opposed naturalisation but words like 'Italian sentiments' and 'patriotism' became very common. Antonio Folli wrote that 'religious events overseas often became a demonstration of Italian pride' or that 'those priests, who come frequently to Australia, are not only missionaries of religious faith, but they are apostles of a true patriotism'.³³ Undoubtedly the axiom *Dio, Patria e Lavoro*³⁴ was forged to feed Italian immigrants as well.

The campaign against naturalisation took shape in 1928 when the Fascist Party promulgated the Statute of Fascists Abroad. That policy, which the Italian ethnic press supported in full, alarmed the Australian government. It emerged when the British Embassy in Rome announced the intention by the Fascist Regime to discourage Italian immigrants from changing their nationality. As a result, the Italian Department of Foreign Affairs instructed the Consul General in Australia to reduce the rate of naturalisation of Italian immigrants.³⁵ It was suggested to all consulates that they encourage immigrants to travel to Italy, with a visa and travel support, ensuring their return to their

nation of origin. Undoubtedly, it was a clever move, because many Italians took advantage of these privileges and when they returned, became the best propagandists for the Fascist Regime and its ideology. Mussolini joined this campaign, stating that an Italian who left Italy could not be deprived of their Italian citizenship even if they acquired citizenship of the country where they lived.³⁶

The true battle by the Italo-Australian newspapers against naturalisation began when Ferrante replaced Grossardi as Consul General in the latter half of 1932. In that same year, Fascism moved to the second stage of its evolution—the regime was looking for territorial expansions with the aim of creating an empire. So it was important to discourage any change of nationality, pushing Italian immigrants, even if naturalised, to go back to Italy. The Italo-Australian newspapers supported that political choice unconditionally, reporting speeches of the vice consuls, publishing articles sent by the Press Office of the Fascist Party and statements by fascist leaders in Australia. *Il Giornale Italiano* wrote:

The Consul's speech [Anzillotti, Vice-Consul in Melbourne] was listened to in silence, emphasised by intentionally powerful strong approvals and also by frantic applause, particularly when he ordered that those few fascists, fearful and cowardly, who became Australian subjects, have to be expelled from the Party at once.³⁷

In the following issue, *Il Giornale Italiano* published Anzillotti's full speech, which emphasised that the anti-naturalisation campaign was justified because of the political situation existing between Italy and England over the conflict in Abyssinia. Anzillotti wrote:

For those people who are applying for naturalisation in this peculiar moment, I have only contempt. I consider their action more dishonourable for our country than a military defeat ... no excuse could justify this open rejection of the motherland when the motherland needs the physical and moral support of all her sons.³⁸

After reporting Anzillotti's speech, *Il Giornale Italiano* dealt with naturalisation in a bombastic article where Battistessa wrote:

... the faith of the Italian people brought the arrogant sanctionist countries to their knees and routed 52 nations armed against us. Italy won all along the line, the superb Duce like a Caesar *redivivus* has again imposed on the world, willy-nilly, the Italian supremacy ... In the town halls throughout Italy, a plaque of marble, as a memento of that great infamy, was erected to

hand down to posterity the perennial reprimand: 'On 18 November 1935, E.F. XIII³⁹, the world besieged Italy. Perennial shame to whom supported that absurd crime'. It's all right. But we would like to suggest to the Fascist Party that, side by side with that plaque of marble of disgrace, another should be erected with the names of all Italians living abroad who, at the moment of the main effort, have REPUDIATED their own MOTHERLAND by naturalising in war time. This sort of cowardice cannot be forgotten, eternal shame to the cowards who perpetrated this crime.⁴⁰

Generally, the bourgeois Italo-Australian press was passionately encouraging Italians in Australia to maintain their Italian citizenship, to avoid confrontations with Australians, and to attempt to remain outside Australian social circles in order to reduce the chances of being 'polluted' by ideologies hostile to Italy and Fascism.

But the response of the Italian community was negative, in spite of the massive propaganda campaign organised by Italian political and diplomatic representatives and amplified by the ethnic press.

In 1938, the percentage of Italian immigrants who applied for naturalisation in Australia was the highest among all ethnic communities. The Australian Department of Interior Affairs emphasised that, from 1933 to 1938, 'Italians formed forty-five per cent of the total persons to whom Certificates of Naturalisation were granted'.⁴¹

Why was there this level of disparity between newspapers and their readers?

Firstly, in Italy under the Fascist Regime, propaganda was homogeneous—newspapers, radio and mass media featured news items in the same way, reaching the same conclusions.⁴² Other views which might present different conclusions were non-existent. Outside Italy, even if the content of the ethnic press was homogeneous, there was always the press of the 'host' country, which, in various ways, presented different ideas and assumptions.

In the 1930s, the main point of disagreement between the Italian community and its newspapers was related to the Abyssinian war, harshly condemned by England and consequently by Australia. As a result, there was heavy international political tension, which had repercussions for Italian immigrants. If the Abyssinian crisis resulted in a war between Italy and Great Britain, it would mean confinement in internment camps or deportation for Italian immigrants and, as a consequence, the loss



of all their goods and properties. All these fears and doubts played a part in an increase of applications for Australian naturalisation.⁴³

L'Italo-Australiano (1885): a case study

Apart from being the first Italian language newspaper published in Australia,⁴⁴ *L'Italo-Australiano* was also the first of a long series of newspapers aimed at the Italian community. This is the first-ever analysis of *L'Italo-Australiano* because the only known available copies of the newspaper were donated by the owner to the Biblioteca Fardelliana in Trapani at the turn of the last century. *L'Italo-Australiano* came back to Australia in 2001 on microfilm. I received it in February 2002, when W. & F. Pascoe Pty. Ltd. — a NSW company that produces microfilm — gave notice of the existence of this rare item.

The owner and publisher of *L'Italo-Australiano*, Francesco Sceusa, arrived in Sydney in 1877 and, as a socialist, he preferred exile to the political compromises that the Italian government of the post-Risorgimento tried to impose on their own citizens. Certainly, the experience of the Italo-Australian ethnic community was unusual because in the entire region of New South Wales, there were no more than 500 Italians, half of them resident in Sydney. It was a small group living in a handful of streets. Undoubtedly, Sceusa devoted himself to organising his fellow citizens, establishing in 1881 the Italian Benevolent Society and in 1890 the Italian Workingmen's Benefit Society. Finally, in 1893, he set up the Socialist Australian League, which he represented at the International Socialist Congress held in Switzerland in 1893. Sceusa did not stay

out of politics — on the contrary, he was always ready to 'go over the top' and often supported, in full, the policy of the Australian Labor Party. He was particularly active when Australian capitalism tried to restrain the power of unions by pushing for the immigration of unskilled labourers from southern Europe.

L'Italo-Australiano had a short life. It was published for just seven months and in that time produced six issues plus a supplement to the fifth issue published on 6 June 1885.⁴⁵ The newspaper was discontinued when Sceusa, a surveyor and cartographer with the Department of Lands, was transferred to Orange, in regional New South Wales. In 1908, health problems forced Sceusa to return to Italy.

L'Italo-Australiano was laid-out over eight pages. Each page was divided into three columns. In the first issue, the heading was in bold italics — later, it changed to Roman type — and under the masthead was a description of the newspaper as a 'monthly magazine' with its role in Australian society described as an 'organ of Italians spread throughout Oceania's lands'. The printing was clear, with a variety of fonts and font sizes used, particularly for headlines which, at that time, were manually composed. Administrator Cesare Carpena underlined in an article in the first issue that for financial reasons, the newspaper was printed using the lithographic system. The first edition of *L'Italo-Australiano* was handwritten and the advertisements were drawn by Sceusa.

The lead story for the inaugural issue discussed the cholera epidemic which affected southern Italy where, according to the data presented by *L'Italo-Australiano*, 21,519 people were infected, the number of deceased was 11,563, and 772 villages were kept in quarantine.⁴⁶ According to the newspaper, the cholera epicentre was the area surrounding Naples. On this matter, Sceusa seized the opportunity, as a socialist, to reveal his anti-religious bent. He argued:

It seems that in Naples, during the cholera epidemic, the local authorities allowed the populace to take their idols out from the hiding places in order to impose them, again, to the public veneration, sticking them on those street corners from where, according to civilisation, they were banished the day after the escape of the Bourbons. The authorities would like to give just a religious comfort to the ignorant plebs who are not able to live without the supernatural. Christs, Virgin Maries and saints are, at last, objects to take out in the days of danger. So, the priest will have another important topic on the manipulation of his war against progress.⁴⁷

Often, Sceusa's anti-religious attitude reached strange heights such as in the column 'Italian News' where he once wrote: 'Bologna— In Savena Creek the dead bodies of two priests and two mules were found. Poor mules!'⁴⁸

Undoubtedly, *L'Italo-Australiano* was a newspaper with a strong political feeling and like all its socialist counterparts in those years, it was, on religious grounds, a *mangia preti*⁴⁹ paper. From a social point of view, *L'Italo-Australiano* was a strenuous defender of the working class against capitalist exploitation— themes which were repeated some years later in *Uniamoci*, edited by Prampolini.

Sceusa himself had little fear of extreme radicalisation, which could have a negative impact on readers. In the fifth issue, he writes:

Publishing *L'Italo* we had feared that the radicalism of our opinions could be an obstacle to gain credit from the moderate groups of our fellow countrymen and we despaired, at the beginning, of its success. But our fears had a short duration and they disappeared very soon. Our fellow citizens supported us, indiscriminately, and gave us a lot of help.⁵⁰

It seems that some entrepreneurs who understood the importance of the newspaper tried to take over *L'Italo-Australiano* through the creation of a company⁵¹ to transform it into a weekly commercial enterprise. Generally, Sceusa did not seem opposed to such a change, but he expressed his doubts about the future control of the newspaper and, consequently, of the content of articles: 'The gentlemen who have suggested the creation of the company, inspired not by personal or peculiar aims or hidden purposes, but by the public interest, have nothing against our points of view. So we await the number of shares pledged to us before announcing the establishment of the company'.⁵² The company was probably constituted, or at least there was some basis for the statement because in the July issue of 1885, the newspaper announced: '*L'Italo-Australiano*, at present a monthly newspaper, will be weekly when sales allow'. At the end of the article, the administrator, C. Capena, adds '*L'Italo-Australiano* ... will very soon be published, twice per month, and the price will be reduced when sales allow'.

Thus, the change in *L'Italo-Australiano*'s management took place, but the transfer of Sceusa to Orange perhaps terminated the development of the newspaper. The masthead remained unused and Italian

voices remained unheard in the print media for 20 years until the company — or what remained of it — was taken over by Giovanni Pullè. *L'Italo-Australiano* began publishing again in 1905 under new ownership, with a completely different political point of view. It is interesting to examine the reasons for Sceusa to establish *L'Italo-Australiano*. Even if our hero was a socialist, the image of a 'very far away mother country' was always present with accents on lyricism and nostalgia. After all, these sorts of feelings were typical of socialists and socialism at the turn of the last century. Sceusa wrote:

... we had a country — with nature as beautiful as its smile — one of the few countries in the world where life is poetry and enchantment; but from this country of our birth holding our dearest memories and our most sacred bonds, we were forced to move, and, as orphans, to roam throughout the world.⁵³

This type of written expression was part of the Italian language and culture of the second half of the 19th century. Only 15 years had passed from the Unity of Italy and the conquest of Rome, which marked the end of clerical dictatorship in Italy and the beginning, according to our great grandfathers, of a free and democratic nation. Sceusa, like Prampolini, basked in these dreams. So for his generation, even if many of them were socialists or anarchists, certain words and some symbols had no negative connotations. In those years, bamboozlers of the people like Mussolini and Berlusconi were unthinkable. Sceusa concluded:

... it is our sacred duty to point out to Italian workers, the middle classes and industrialists, this unknown Australia, miles and miles away. We can fulfil this duty only with the use of the press. Here lie the reasons for our newspaper. This magazine, written by immigrants to immigrant victims of a set of aristocracies who never will emigrate, will imbue them with democratic principles.⁵⁴

Unfortunately *L'Italo-Australiano* was a newspaper in its infancy. Six issues plus a supplement are not enough, from a journalistic point of view, to mould a journal. In fact, the journal did not have a constant structure. Each issue contained new elements which, in time, had to be developed. However, it is possible to identify some basic features which characterised *L'Italo-Australiano*.

A section was headed 'Notes of the Month'. Generally set on the front page, in the June issue it was printed on page two and totally excluded from the following issue. It contained comments about the most

important events of the past 30 days, clearly Sceusa's point of view. They were politicised comments in which the left radicalism of the columnist was evident. Commenting on the British military expedition in Sudan and the offer from the Italian Government of an alliance, *L'Italo-Australiano* wrote:

England has had the good taste to not accept the Italian offer in order to settle its own dispute with Sudan. So it saves the history of our 'Risorgimento', from the shame that our government wanted to inflict upon it ... The Italian soldier is not a mercenary, by Jove! ... Italy, which has fought and suffered so much to reach its independence, cannot use its honourable army against a nation (apart from its ambiguous civilisation) that fights fiercely for its own independence.⁵⁵

Sceusa was more critical of the decision by the New South Wales government to send a contingent of 700 soldiers to Sudan. Sceusa's anti-militarism is more and more evident, because he believed that it was useless to send 700 men to death, spending an enormous amount of money when 'the government doesn't have sufficient men to develop its own resources'.

Undoubtedly, Sceusa had a keen mind and a flair for politics. I believe that he was one of the first to identify, in general terms, what was years later, during the Cold War, labelled a 'strategy of tension'— to magnify conceivable dangers using continuous and heavy propaganda organised by the media in order to create fears and phobias in the masses in such a way as to control and to drive them toward specific choices.

On the improbable Russian invasion of Australia, Sceusa wrote:

The danger of a Russian invasion, on which so much press has spoken and persists in speaking about, is far from being a serious matter. It is a scarecrow shown off in front of the eyes of Australians in order to rouse them from their notorious indifference.⁵⁶

In the section 'I figli del popolo',⁵⁷ intended to show, using a set of biographies, the uselessness of the aristocracy and the function of the proletariat in the evolution of human society, Sceusa wrote:

They say that the aristocracy is essential to progress and that it will be a bad day for humankind when the working class will have the monopoly of the commonwealth ... We will appeal to history and we will prove that human knowledge is derived from labour ... We will give as a demonstration a series of short biographies of the brightest stars (sic) of the human Pantheon.⁵⁸

The first two *figli del popolo* presented are not unknown people—quite the contrary: they are Jesus and Mohammed. These biographies are very short, between 15 and 20 lines and set out to underline the proletarian origin of the chosen characters. In the article, 'Jesus or Christ', Sceusa writes: 'Born in a cave in Bethlehem... Christ was the son of a poor carpenter. He was one of the biggest reformers who influenced the destiny of humans'.⁵⁹ The item on Mohammed has a similar approach and reaches the same conclusion. In the following issues, five and six, Sceusa deals with more straightforward but equally prominent characters—Socrates, Cincinnatus and Garibaldi are covered, and later, Cimabue, Giotto and Leonardo da Vinci. The latter three have less proletarian origins than the others,⁶⁰ but are still very important for the political goals of *L'Italo-Australiano*.

News and perspectives

L'Italo-Australiano contained a wealth of news and journalism-styled feature articles. It was organised into three columns: 'Australia in General', 'Oceanic News' and 'Italian News'. The first was a simple account of Australian history. In the first issue it contained a general geographic description of the country, and in later issues, spoke about the country's natural resources. In the May issue, Sceusa described the discovery of alluvial gold on the banks of Meroo Creek in New South Wales, where a gold-digger, 'from splinters of ancient rock, extracted three nuggets which gave him one hundred English pounds of gold! One of the three nuggets contained 60 pounds of fine gold!'⁶¹ The article tells of the mythical gold in Ballarat 'which is found in beautiful small bullion, between five and eight ounces'.⁶² In this way, folklore and myth were delivered to Italian readers in those roaring years, preserved untouched in the adventurous history book of pioneering Australia.

'Oceanic News' included short notes, a couple of lines long, separated by a line of punctuation. The column was divided according to Australian states. There was also news from New Guinea, New Britain, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Caledonia and the Hebrides. The notes were presented without any chronological order or a system of priority. An example was a segment of news from 'Queenslandia':

Many requests for enlistment and a huge amount of money arrived for the Queensland Government in the event of a dispatch of an expeditionary force to Sudan. In Dalby, three children drowned in a swamp. The botanist and explorer Mr Edelfelt has returned from New Guinea. Day labourers hired for the construction of the tramline in Brisbane go on strike.⁶³

Undoubtedly, the brief news columns were an excellent solution, since the monthly publication of *L'Italo-Australiano* meant many news items were 'aged' by the time the paper was published. However, there was still a need to inform the readers who did not have access to the Australian media. *L'Italo-Australiano* was a mirror of some Italian newspapers from those years with a very limited circulation which, due to a lack of money and journalists, had to use stories already published by other newspapers.

The 'Italian News' column had the same structure as the 'Oceanic News'. Each issue had an average of 35–40 stories, no longer than three or four lines, which summarised domestic and political events. Sometimes there were more complex stories with their own headlines. Even if those stories were very short, Sceusa gave them, wherever possible, a political slant—'I have already alluded to the story of the priests and the mules drowned in the Savena creek'.⁶⁴ In each edition, he attacked the clergy and anyone who supported the Vatican politically. Speaking of the statue of Giordano Bruno erected at the centre of Piazza Campo de' Fiori in Rome, Sceusa wrote:

What a slap in the face for the conscience of the Papacy! Jesuits and monks have flooded our country again and the government doesn't think to stop those pestilent invaders. In fact, instead, it grants facilities to the common enemy. The incident of the blessing of the flag of the 'Brigade Roma' shows how improper Hon. Depretis' attitudes are towards the Vatican.⁶⁵

But contacts with the Italian community were not limited to the 'Tribuna Pubblica' only. There was another column which could have become an important element of *L'Italo-Australiano*. It contained news of the arts, which, in the first issue, was published with the title 'Art and Theatre Notes', later changed to 'Art and Theatres'. In both cases, the stories dealt with Italian artists. Sceusa wrote, for example: 'We have seen the bronze statue of Mercury in front of the new office of the *Evening News* in Market Street ... This Mercury was modelled by Mr Sani, who used a different and more

modern style'.⁶⁶ In the same issue, he wrote about another statue, 'The Art', created by Simonetti, which was to be located inside the third niche at the north-west corner of the Colonial Secretary's Office. In 'Art and Theatres' in 6 June issue there were four news items, three of which concerned the activities of Italian sculptors resident in Sydney. Among those mentioned are Fontana and Simonetti. Fontana was a well-known artist in Australia at the end of the 19th century who created the bronze statues of Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales located in the hall of the Colonial Secretary's Office. Simonetti had also sculpted the bust of Mr George Allan, MP. The last item deals with an art auction of tables, marble art works and statues from Florence and Carrara, organised by the Italian company Guerrieri & Company and held at the auction room of Ackman & Harris.

Another element that gives us an idea of the circulation of the newspaper is the advertising that *L'Italo-Australiano* presented on page eight. In general, the advertisers, who were always the same, were Italians, with the exception of Gordon & Gotch, agent for a sewing machine company; the Oriental Line, 'a steamboat shipping line from England to Australia via the Suez Canal, with a landing in Naples'; and G. Stansell & Co., 'merchants of colonial wines'. Two hotels also advertised in the paper: Carter's, owned by Oscar Mayer, and Solferino, owned by G. B. Bassetti, which offered bocce tournaments for Italian customers.⁶⁷ In addition, there are advertisements from artisans and small to medium entrepreneurs such as jewellers, tailors, confectioners, importers of wine, olive oil, Italian food products and so on.

Sceusa, with the seven issues of *L'Italo-Australiano*, left a very detailed picture of the Italian community in Australia at end of the 19th century, orphaned — if I can be allowed to use this term — from the mother country. This orphan status is evident in the newspaper and in Sceusa's articles when, for instance, he writes about the anniversary of Garibaldi's death: 'I don't know how I can correctly express in words how my heart feels for this supreme Patriot, who is the idealisation of the Italian people, the synthesis of the unity and liberal aspirations of Italy'.⁶⁸ One hundred and twenty years from its publication, *L'Italo-Australiano* reveals a hard-working industrious Italian community in Australia with a deep sense of nostalgia and a sense of longing for home.

Conclusion

In this article, I have explored the way in which the Italo-Australian press was established and how it was linked to the daily political and social Australian realities of the first half of the last century. I have also tried to identify what filters were used by the ethnic media in order to present the news to their readers, the ways in which they were 'dressed', and what sorts of redundancies were used — in other words, how events were manipulated and changed in newspaper articles.

It is not easy dealing with the ethnic press because it cannot be framed in terms of the theories created to analyse the 'big' press, which is almost confined by schemes mirroring the view of the major political power groups and organisations with wide influence. On the contrary, especially between 1930 and 1940, the Italo-Australian press often sent messages to its readers that were in contrast to those sent by the Australian newspapers. The Italian ethnic press, in the decade before the Second World War, had to manage itself, influenced by the pressures coming from Italy and taking account of the political realities of the British Empire.

Can we say that this was a fascist Italian community? It is easy to be drawn towards newspapers and articles which glorified Italian people, often despised and considered second class citizens by some strata of the host society. When journalists like Battistessa or Lubrano 'howled' from their newspapers that Italians were great people, the creators of western culture, they were not words just thrown about, especially if they were repeated over a long period of time.

It is evident that journalists, as 'pure intellectuals',⁶⁹ identify themselves with the dominant classes. We find that same characteristic in the Italo-Australian press during the fascist regime in Italy. We could consider the Italian language press in Australia between 1920-1940 as an appendix of the Italian press and its journalists as 'pure intellectuals' of the dominant regime. Their function was to unify the Italian community ideologically and they used all available communication and propaganda tools to reach this goal. The result was the manipulation of readers, exploiting techniques based mainly on the emotional nature of messages linked to traditional and national values, presented as a popular view and as a myth, with simple, often bombastic language, accessible to all. These elements, and many others, were

used in Italy to develop a fascist mass culture which the regime tried to smuggle overseas.

It is also evident that members of the Italian community read their newspapers. This is borne out by the number of letters sent to the editors. Obviously, there is some differentiation between those published in the *L'Italo-Australiano*, in 1885 and those from the second half of the 1930s, published in newspapers like *Il Giornale Italiano*. However, there is a constant presence of a discourse between readers and editorial staff. Besides, the Italo-Australian newspapers were thought of as an oasis of the Italian character.

The question that emerges from this discussion is to what degree the ethnic press manipulated and drove ethnic communities toward particular goals and choices? It is important to underline the fact that newspapers published in Italy during the Fascist Regime did not have any political differentiation— all of them were managed and regimented by the PNF which controlled the media.

This did not happen in Australia where ethnic newspapers had to deal with the parallel existence of the Australian press. Australian mainstream newspapers followed British policy. After the Abyssinian war they were not very positive towards Mussolini and Italian foreign policy. Therefore, Italian immigrants did not experience brainwashing like their fellow citizens living in the mother country. And so they had the chance, at the right moment, to make their own choices. Australia has long been a country of permanent migration different, for example, from France, Belgium or Germany, where migration consisted largely of seasonal workers. Many of those who settled in Sydney, Melbourne or elsewhere in Australia knew that it was unlikely that they would

ever permanently return to their home country, so the choices of Italo-Australians were influenced by economic and social situations completely unknown to seasonal Italian migrants in Europe.

Clearly, seasonal workers did not have the same interests and goals of permanent immigrants. The former were looking for temporary arrangements and they had no interest in being inserted into the host society, while the latter sought a social position in their chosen new country. For those more permanent settlers, ethnic newspapers became the primary source of information and contact and often the principal means of communication with non-Italian speaking societies.

L'Italo-Australiano was too short-lived to have a permanent influence on Italians. However, it achieved a very important outcome. It introduced, for the first time, the Italian community to the Australian stage as a group with its own social and cultural characteristics. Undoubtedly it was a great accomplishment. Hitherto, Italians had been usually treated as second-class citizens. Through the pages of *L'Italo-Australiano*, Italians were able to identify themselves as members of a community with unique characteristics.

Unfortunately its editor was not destined to build upon the huge benefits that his newspaper brought to the Italian community at the time, or in future years. After relocating to the New South Wales regional town of Orange, Sceusa dedicated himself to his profession as a surveyor and cartographer, and he abandoned any journalistic activities. *L'Italo-Australiano* was closed down and 20 years later, Pullè took over the masthead and began publishing it again — this time in a completely different political and social environment.

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- ¹ A. Jakubowicz, 'Media in multicultural nations', *Questioning the media: a critical introduction*, Sage Publications, London, 1995, p. 170.
- ² An approximate translation could be 'News-items values', the combination of those anchorages and common places used in communication.
- ³ S. M. Miller, *The ethnic Press in the United States*, Twayne Publisher, New York, 1975, p. xvi.
- ⁴ A. Scandino, 'A renaissance for ethnic papers', *New York Times*, 22 June 1989, late edition, pp. D1 & D8.
- ⁵ op. cit.
- ⁶ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 11 March 1905.
- ⁷ S. Baily, 'The role of two newspapers in the assimilation of Italians in Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo, 1893 -1913', *International Migration Review*, Vol. 12, 3 (43), 1978, p. 339.
- ⁸ *Uniamoci* was established in 1903 and did not survive for very long. Prampolini was one of the small group of emigré rebels (socialists and revolutionary socialists), such as Pietro Munari, Francesco Sceusa, and Adalgiso Fiocchi. These men had some influence on the Australian Labor Party.
- ⁹ *Uniamoci*, 8 July 1903, 'Let's unite'.
- ¹⁰ *Risorgimento* is the name given to the Italian independence movement. The *Risorgimento* ended with the capture of Rome in 1870.
- ¹¹ *L'Italo-Australiano* was published in Sydney from 11 March 1905 to 30th January 1909, *Oceania* from 13 July 1913 to 31 February 1915. In 1885, from January to July, another newspaper, with different political aims, was published with the same title (*L'Italo-Australiano*), edited by Francesco Sceusa.
- ¹² Giovanni Pullè emigrated to Australia in 1876, at the age of 22, becoming a rich businessman. At the beginning he lived in Brisbane. At the turn of the century, he moved to Sydney where he established the 'Excelsior Macaroni Company', specialising in Italian style noodles.
- ¹³ *Il Corriere della Sera* is still the most influential Italian newspaper and one of the most important in Europe. It was established in 1876 by a group of businessmen and a journalist Eugenio Torelli-Viollier. At the turn of the last century Luigi Albertini, and his brother Alberto, took over the *Corriere*.
- ¹⁴ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 8 July 1905, 'Tripoli e l'Italia'.
- ¹⁵ The 'Direzione Generale per la Stampa Italiana' was the body placed in control of the Italian press.
- ¹⁶ The 'Ministero della Cultura Popolare' was the department in charge of cultural expression in Italy: schools, cinema, press, books, music, art paints and so on.
- ¹⁷ Ministero della Cultura Popolare, official report dated 3 April 1937.
- ¹⁸ PNF was the abbreviation of Partito Nazionale Fascista (Fascist National Party).
- ¹⁹ March on Rome: term used to describe the events of 10 October 1922, when the Fascist Party seized control of Italy.

²⁰ On 27 August 1923, the inspectors of an Italian military commission checking the borders between Greece and Albania, were massacred by the Greek Army near Janina. After his request for reparations to the Greek Government was ignored, Mussolini ordered an air strike and the military occupation of Corfu.

²¹ *Italo-Australian*, 31 May 1924.

²² The sentence 'un posto al sole' was an icon in Fascist Italy, which referred to the establishment of colonies and settlements in Africa.

²³ Australian Archives, Series: A981/1, Item: cons 365. Essentially, the Consul General Ferrante and his successors Paolo Vita-Finzi (1935-1937) and Amedeo Mammarella (1938-1940), acted as informers. Ferrante sent letters, often slanderous, to the Australian Department of External Affairs, on socialist and anarchist Italians, who were opposing Fascism.

²⁴ *Il Giornale Italiano* and the *Italo-Australian* were closed down by order of GOC Easter Command under N.S.(G)R. 24B. Australian Archives, Series: SP109/3, Item: 323/06 PT1, letter of the Commonwealth of Australia from the Department of Army to the Department of External Affairs, Canberra, 1 June 1940.

²⁵ S. Baily, 'The role of two newspapers in the assimilation of Italians in Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo, 1893-1913', *International Migration Review*, Vol. 12, 3 (43), 1978, p. 325.

²⁶ R. Pascoe, *Buongiorno Australia: our Italian heritage*, Greenhouse Publications, Richmond Vic., 1987, p. 86.

²⁷ E. Gallavotti, *La scuola di giornalismo fascista*, Sugar, Milano, 1982, p. 28.

²⁸ Australian Archives, Series: SP109/3, Item: 322/06 PT 1, newspaper clipping, probably from the *Age*, glued on a sheet of paper headed 'Department of Information of Melbourne'.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Uniamoci, L'Italo-Australiano and Oceania*.

³¹ G. Cresciani, *Fascism, anti-Fascism and Italians in Australia 1922-1945*, A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1980, p. 4.

³² *Italo-Australian*, 28 October 1922.

³³ *Italo-Australian*, 15 November 1924.

³⁴ The slogan 'God, motherland and work' was created by Mussolini to express the aims of Fascism. Another was '*Credere, obbedire e combattere*' (Trust, obey and fight).

³⁵ Australian Archives, CRS: A1, Item: 28/294, Attorney-General, Department of Home and Territories, letter of 26 April 1928.

³⁶ *Italo-Australian*, 24 November 1928.

³⁷ *Il Giornale Italiano*, 21 August 1935.

³⁸ *Il Giornale Italiano*, 28 August 1935.

³⁹ Thirteenth year of the 'Fascist era'. Mussolini established a new calendar starting from the March on Rome on 22 October 1922.

⁴⁰ 'The cowards', *Il Giornale Italiano*, 24 June 1936.

⁴¹ Australian Archives, CSR: A461, Item: A349/3/6, 27 September 1938.

⁴² Cf. Master of Arts thesis: 'Press and consensus in Fascist Italy' by A. Tosco, University of Queensland, March 1994.

⁴³ Australian Archives, CSR: A461, Item: A349/3/6, 27 September 1938.

⁴⁴ The first newspaper in a foreign language was the *Die Deutsche Post für die Australischen Kolonien* (German post for the Australian Colonies). It was published in Adelaide in 1848.

⁴⁵ The first issue was published on 1 January 1885; the second on 3 March 1885.

⁴⁶ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 12 January 1885.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ In those years socialists were called in Italy *mangia preti* (priest eaters) after their violent battle against the Catholic church.

⁵⁰ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 June 1885.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 June 1885.

⁵³ From an article entitled 'Perché' in *L'Italo-Australiano*, 12 January 1885.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 3 March 1885.

⁵⁶ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 May 1885.

⁵⁷ According to the early socialist political language, *figli del popolo* means 'the children of proletariat'.

⁵⁸ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 May 1885.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Leonardo da Vinci was the son of the notary Pietro Vinci, who moved to Florence in 1469.

⁶¹ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 May 1885.

⁶¹ *ibid.*

⁶³ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 3 March 1885.

⁶⁴ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 12 January 1885.

⁶⁵ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 1 June 1885.

⁶⁶ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 12 January 1885.

⁶⁷ A game similar to lawn bowls.

⁶⁸ *L'Italo-Australiano*, 6 June 1885.

⁶⁹ Quintin Hoare translates Gramsci's term 'Intellettuali organici' as 'pure intellectuals' who are 'acting as the elaborators of the most widespread ideologies of the dominant classes and as leaders of the intellectual groups in their countries'. *Selection from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, International Publisher, New York, 1971, p.390.

calabria in australia: customs and traditions of italians from caulonia

by
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At the beginning of the twentieth century Calabria, like many other southern Italian regions, was one of the most depressed in Italy. In 1905 the Italian government tried to

stimulate its underdeveloped economy through agrarian reform (*legge speciale*) which, instead of achieving its aim of dividing large estates among agricultural labourers, ended up depriving them of their rights and their land.¹ The failure of government intervention and the lack of class struggle, along with malaria and destructive earthquakes in 1905 and 1908, hindered the economic development of the region and contributed to large-scale emigration. In the first fifteen years of the last century over 600,000 Calabrians migrated to North and South America,² and between the two wars over 250,000 settled abroad.³ After the introduction of a quota system in the USA in the 1920s Calabrians began to consider other destinations, including Australia.

As late as the 1950s, in spite of massive intervention by the Italian State through the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* (State Fund for the South), Calabria remained one of the most underdeveloped regions in Italy and, with its social and economic problems, became known as *l'area depressa* (the depressed area). In 1951, a quarter of the population was still illiterate, two-thirds of the labour force were employed in agriculture and a third of families (the highest in Italy) lived in poverty.⁴ Between 1950 and 1953, with a yearly average of 18,000 departures, Calabria was the Italian region with the highest level of migration to overseas destinations.⁵ The migration of Italians towards Canada and Australia almost doubled that of the United States: this was in part due to the restrictive legislation introduced in the US in the 1920s, and to the launch of mass immigration programs by the Canadian and Australian governments.



Migrants from Caulonia at the port of Messina, waiting to embark for Australia, c. 1960.



View of the Town of Caulonia, c. 1960.



Vincenzo Raschella, left, with other Calabrian migrants on board the ship *Roma* bound for Australia, c.1960.

The Calabrian town of Caulonia has given more of its residents to Australia than any other in Italy. Between 1927 and 1940, of the 2,493 Italians who arrived in South Australia, 512 were from the region of Calabria. Of these, 87 were from Caulonia.⁶ Chain migration ensured that the Calabrian settlement in the post-war period mirrored the pre-war percentages. Calabria remains the second-most represented Italian region in South Australia. Today, there are 1,364 migrants from Caulonia.⁷

The ancient village of Caulonia is situated 121 kilometres north-east of Reggio Calabria and 64 kilometres south of Catanzaro. Perched high on a hilltop, and encompassed by the remnants of a city wall, medieval gates and sheer cliffs, Caulonia during the course of its history has been destroyed and rebuilt several times. Its name appeared in eleventh century documents as *Castelvetere*, from the Latin *Castrum Vetus* (old fortress). In 1862, after the unification of Italy, it changed its name back to Caulonia to celebrate its Greek origin.

Agriculture has been for centuries the primary means of subsistence of the whole village, and continues to play a major role in its economy. The primary agricultural products are citrus fruits, cereals, olives and vegetables. The industrial sector is particularly weak because of the lack of investment, and the unemployment rate is higher than the national average.

During the interwar period Caulonia was a small farmer-owned town characterised by economic and social inequality. On the one hand there were the few wealthy landowners who had been in power for centuries, and on the other there was the majority of the population who lived in a state of subordination and in the most impoverished conditions. Small farmers and

labourers had nothing at all, not even the bare minimum to avoid starvation. Many were forced to turn to migration in search of a better life. The situation was worsened by the disastrous flooding of 1951, which not only destroyed the already shaky livelihoods of a large number of farming families, but also revealed the inability of the State to intervene in any substantial way. Emigration became once again the only hope for thousands of *cauloniesi* who were compelled to leave in search of a more dignified future.

There is not a family in Caulonia that does not have one or more relatives who have migrated either to northern Italy or to other countries such as Australia, the USA, Canada, Argentina, Venezuela or France. Due to migration, the town's population has steadily declined from a peak of 13,838 in 1921 to just 7,756 in 2001.

At the beginning of the twentieth century migration from Caulonia was mainly directed to North and South America, whereas in the post Second World War period the most popular destination was Australia, which absorbed 69 per cent of *cauloniese* migrants, followed by the USA (17 per cent) and Argentina (13 per cent). Among the Australian states, South Australia was by far the preferred destination followed by Western Australia and Victoria.

The *cauloniesi* in Adelaide has become a well-known and enterprising community that is interested in the maintenance of its traditions, and which has a solid attachment to its roots and homeland. In order to examine how the migration experience has impacted on some socio-cultural practices of the *cauloniesi* in Adelaide, such as family structure, engagement and wedding rituals, a number of interviews were conducted with first-generation migrants in South Australia and in Caulonia.

Concern for family well-being, which drove many *cauloniesi* to migrate, shows how important the family has been and still is in their lives. The *cauloniese* family in Australia is a 'nuclear family' consisting of father, mother and dependent children, but characterised by strong ties and contacts with relatives. According to most of the participants in the study, this was also the structure that characterised the *cauloniese* family in Italy, before migration. In Italy in the past, apart from meeting for family milestones, such as birthdays, name days, engagements, weddings, Christmas and Easter, the family would come together when physical help was needed to slaughter the pig, harvest the wheat or pick the olives. Today the *cauloniese* family in Adelaide still maintains this same high degree of social cohesion through frequent family gatherings. Christmas, Easter and birthdays are usually spent together, and regular weekly or at least annual gatherings are also organised. Although most of the *cauloniesi* who live in Caulonia still meet at least once a year with their relatives, it is apparent that today in Australia the extended family is more close-knit than in Italy because of the busy Italian lifestyle that prevents family members from visiting one another.

Family honour, respect and parental authority were, and still are, central to the value system of first-generation *cauloniesi* in Australia, and they have influenced the code of conduct of family members in relation to important life-cycle events such as engagements and weddings. In the past, 'honour' for a man signified the ability to provide economically for his family, whereas for the woman it meant being a virgin before marriage and being a good and faithful wife.⁸ Double standards were therefore applied to sons and daughters in relation to freedom. Life for most girls was restricted by

codes of family honour and female chastity, the betrayal of which would have brought shame and dishonour to the whole family. Consequently, daughters had to be protected: they were never allowed, before marrying, to go out unchaperoned and were never left alone with a male other than a close relative.⁹

Other examples of parental authority reported for this study are the decisions made in relation to matters such as migration for the young sons, and the choice of marriage partners for the young daughters. One interviewee remembered:

My mother decided for me and told my uncle, who had already settled in Australia, to sponsor me because economically life was very depressed in Caulonia. I wanted to join the Navy, but my mother decided for me. Until I left, I thought that it was a joke.

In the past, it was not at all uncommon for parents to arrange marriages for their daughters. Four of the women interviewed had to accept their parents' decision to marry them to much older men. One girl in particular, who was only fourteen at the time, became engaged to a man eighteen years her senior:

I knew that I had to get married when I was not even fourteen because parents used to decide. My mother kept it hidden, but I noticed it ... and when I asked my mother how old my future husband was, she replied that it was none of my business. But the grown-ups thought that it was a good thing, so I went along with it.

The unfair treatment women were subjected to made them aware of the contradictions of their own patriarchal upbringing and of its inherent double standards. Thus, the women have sometimes become mediators between the authoritarian behaviour of their

Engagement party at the Nesci family home in Strano, hamlet of Caulonia, 1961.



husbands and their daughters' desire to gain more freedom.¹⁰ As one *cauloniense* woman recalls:

I treated my children [two daughters and a son] equally, unlike my husband who didn't allow my daughters to go out before getting married.

Today, although the idea of family honour, double standards in parental control and authoritarian fathers might appear out of date to the younger *cauloniense* generation in Italy, they remain fundamental values for many of the first-generation *cauloniesi* in Adelaide. Most of the married male interviewees admitted having applied double standards to the upbringing of their sons and daughters, especially in relation to the eldest daughter, whereas most of the informants interviewed in Caulonia said that young people are now much freer than they used to be.

The ritual of the engagement has been much modified by Australian practices over the years. While in the pre-migration past it was celebrated in a similar fashion by the Australian and Italian *cauloniesi* interviewed, today the event is more highly regarded by the *cauloniesi* living in Australia than by their counterparts in Italy. In the past, the ritual leading to the engagement was quite formal and included all the members of the two families. If a man wanted to become engaged to a woman, he could not ask her directly because he was not allowed to speak to her. He had to talk about his intentions to his parents who would then ask the woman's parents, who would occasionally ask their daughter's opinion. If the engagement was arranged, a *festicciola in famiglia* (small family party) would then take place, attended by close members of both families. Most of the interviewees in Adelaide and in Caulonia remember that during the period of the engagement the two fiancés could not talk to each other, much less sit next to each other.

Today in Australia, engagements are usually larger and more formal than the ones celebrated in Italy. Furthermore, they involve the participation of several hundred people, family members and friends, the hiring of a hall for the reception, the handing over of the engagement ring and the exchange of expensive gifts.

In Caulonia the engagement ritual is very rarely celebrated, and now consists of a meal shared at home by members of the immediate family. It does not include the exchange of gifts, but only the presentation of the engagement ring.



Mr and Mrs Nesci celebrate their wedding in 1935. Mrs Nesci was one of the first brides in Caulonia to wear a white dress because she was the daughter of l'Americano, a *cauloniense* migrant who had made some money in the United States.

The difference in size and importance of the engagement in Australia perhaps reflects the need for migrants to display symbolically their newly-acquired prestige and wealth, which compensate for the poverty from which they escaped.¹¹ As one informant observed:

Here the engagement is celebrated in the overly luxurious hall. It's a show off. Everybody tries to outdo the other.

Wedding celebrations have undergone significant changes over time. One of the trends that has changed the most is the age of the bride and groom. It was once common for young women of sixteen or seventeen to marry older men between the ages of twenty and forty. Most of the *cauloniesi* interviewed explained that in the past a woman was considered old when she was twenty. The tendency of the *cauloniense* families in the past to marry off their daughters at a very young age was motivated by economic and moral concerns. In Caulonia, as in Sicily, it was customary 'for families to marry all the daughters before the sons to avoid economic hardship. If the sons married first, they would have deprived the family of their earnings and left the parents with daughters who were not major wage earners'.¹² The other reason was linked to the concept of honour previously described: the earlier the daughter married the less the parents had to worry about preserving her purity.

Wedding of
Francesco Alvaro,
Caulonia, 1946.



The informants unanimously reported that villagers tended to marry other *paesani*, mainly because nobody travelled in those days and they did not have a chance to meet people from other places. The marriage ritual was generally divided into two parts: a civil ceremony, celebrated by the mayor at the town hall, followed by a religious ceremony celebrated in the local church. The wedding ceremony used to include, and still does, *il compare d'anello* (best man) who hands over the rings, and two or four witnesses chosen by the bride and the groom, who wear an outfit of their own choice.

The bride did not necessarily wear a white dress, but the best dress she had. One of the informants reported that, since her mother did not have enough money to buy her a new dress, she was obliged to get married at four o'clock in the morning in order to avoid the gossip and criticism of *paesani*. Another participant recalled that when she married in 1935 she was one of the first brides in Caulonia to wear a white dress because she was the daughter of *l'americano*, a migrant who had made some money in the USA and had the financial means to buy his daughter a nice white wedding dress. It was common practice for the *paesani* who had migrated to the USA to send to Italy wedding dresses that were subsequently altered for the local brides. Between the 1930s and the 1960s wedding receptions in Caulonia were organised either at the home of the bride's parents or at the local parish hall. Refreshments consisted of *paste alla crema* (cream pastries) and *rosolio*, a homemade liqueur made with alcohol and coloured essence. The refreshments were followed by *il ballo* (dancing). The attendance at the reception held at the parish was always larger than the

one that took place at home, but rarely exceeded a hundred guests. Gifts for the newlyweds consisted of small household items or foodstuffs such as salami, olives and cheeses.

All the informants interviewed in Adelaide indicated that over the years wedding ceremonies in Australia have been modified by local practices. They described the marriage in Italy prior to migration as simpler, less expensive, and characterised by lower levels of guest participation.

Italian weddings in Australia usually involve a religious celebration and are characterised by expensive bridal gowns, the hiring of *la sala* (the wedding venue) and expensive gifts. Today, Italo-Australian weddings have incorporated the British tradition of having bridesmaids and groomsmen who have to wear elaborate outfits usually chosen by the bride and groom. Receptions are attended by between 150 and 450 guests, including family members and other *paesani*. Many informants described marriages in Australia as *di lusso* (lavish) and as rituals that have become an occasion — as previously observed in the case of engagement practices — to show off the wealth and the respect acquired in Australia. This attitude is not only a one-sided concern on the part of the marriage makers, but also a social obligation felt by the participants themselves, who are generally expected to give a gift of a certain value. The importance of the opinions of other *paesani* as regards wedding receptions and the financial value of gifts shows that the *cauloniese* community in South Australia is very concerned with the question of public image: the need to *fare bella figura* and the concern with what people might say about one another.¹³



The Fanto family celebrates a wedding in Adelaide, c.1963.

The adherence to Italian family values and traditions has influenced parental attitudes towards de facto relationships and inter-ethnic marriages of their children. The majority of the *cauloniesi* interviewees living in Adelaide admitted that they would have been very disappointed had their children left home before marriage and they regarded it as a blessing when they did not.

There is a low rate of intermarriage between the Adelaide *cauloniesi* and Anglo-Australians or people of other ethnic backgrounds. In the small number of cases where children have married non-Italians, parents usually claim that:

In the beginning we were not happy. We would have preferred some Italians for the language and the traditions, but now we are happy because they are good people.

In the last three decades, Italian society has undergone significant cultural changes. While the pace has been slower in the South, industrial development has brought quality of life and acceptance of more open and modern models of behaviour and attitudes.¹⁴

One of the most profound changes in the *cauloniese* attitudes regarding wedding customs is the acceptance of the *convivenza* (de facto relationship). All the people interviewed in Italy admitted that living together prior to marriage is becoming increasingly more accepted even by the older generation.

In addition, in Caulonia people tend to marry later than the previous generation. Men and women are usually at least thirty when they marry. Many choose to complete university and then find employment before marrying. There is also a tendency to marry people from other towns or regions because young *cauloniesi* today travel for pleasure, study or work.

Today in Caulonia the marriage ritual still involves a civil and a religious celebration followed by a reception, usually held at a restaurant with the number of guests varying from 60 to 300. There is a common tendency 'to make up for the cost of the lunch' by giving a gift, usually money, to the same value as or higher than, the price of the restaurant meal. Most interviewees missed the intimate and familial tone that used to characterise the weddings of the past.

The *cauloniese* people interviewed in Adelaide displayed immense pride and attachment to their origins, to the family values, rituals and traditions that they brought with them at the time of migration. Some of these pre-migration customs, like engagements and weddings, have been, over the years, adapted to local Australian practices. Others, like the centrality of the family and the emphasis on gender differences have to a great extent retained their original traits.

Among the *cauloniesi* who have never migrated but have visited Australia, there is a general impression that the *cauloniese* family in Australia is more homogeneous and cohesive than the one in Caulonia. It seems that the maintenance of old traditions and the common migration experience 'have reinforced and strengthened the role of the family'.¹⁵ As two Italians in Caulonia explained:

Young people in Australia have grown up with the values of the 1950s. Young people over there [in Australia] are more attached to traditions, to friends; here they are more superficial.

Over there people are more united because they are in a foreign land; there is more respect, whereas here everybody leads their own life, everybody is more independent, there is more envy and people criticise each other more.

NOTES

- ¹ P. Cinanni, *Emigrazione e imperialismo*, Editori Riuniti, Roma, 1968, p.66.
- ² Ibid., p.61.
- ³ G. Rosoli (ed.), *Un secolo di emigrazione Italiana 1876-1976*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Roma, 1978, p.363.
- ⁴ The data referring to Calabria in 1951 is from the Paliamentary Inquiry in C. Arena, 'La disoccupazione in Italia,' Rome, 1953, cited in R. Cavallaro, *Storie senza storia*, Centro Studi Emigrazione, Roma, 1981.
- ⁵ G. De Bartolo, 'Aspetti dell'emigrazione italiana e calabrese negli Stati Uniti nel secondo dopoguerra', *Affari Sociali Internazionali*, XVIII, No. 3, 1990, p.97.
- ⁶ D. O'Connor, *No need to be afraid: Italian settlers in South Australia between 1839 and the Second World War*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town SA, 1996, p.118.
- ⁷ The data relating to migration from the Calabria region and from the province of Reggio Calabria between 1948 and 1971 is from the O'Connor database (36,357 names) derived from Alien Registration cards D4881/1, D4881/2, D4881/3, National Archives of Australia (SA), provided in *Memories and identities*, edited by D. O'Connor, Australian Humanities Press, Adelaide, 2004, pp.60-62.
- ⁸ L. Bertelli, 'Italian families' in Des Storer, *Ethnic family values in Australia*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1985, p.53.
- ⁹ R. Huber, 'What will the neighbours say?' in M. E. Poole, P. R. de Lacey and B. S. Randhawa, *Australia in transition: culture and life possibilities*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sydney, 1985, p.248.
- ¹⁰ E. Vasta, 'Gender, class and ethnic relations: the domestic and work experiences of Italian migrant women in Australia', in G. Bottomley, M. De Le Pervanche and J. Martin, *Intersexions*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991, p.172.
- ¹¹ E. Vasta, G. Rando, S. Castles and C. Alcorso, 'The Italo-Australian community on the Pacific rim', in *Australia's Italians: culture and community in a changing society*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, p.218.
- ¹² C. Cronin, *The sting of change: Sicilians in Sicily and Australia*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970, p.155.
- ¹³ L. Bertelli, 'Italian families', cit. See also: L. Baldassar, *Visits home: migration experiences between Italy and Australia*, Melbourne University Press, 2001; L. Baldassar, 'Marias and marriages: ethnicity, gender and sexuality among Italo-Australian youth in Perth', *Journal of Sociology*, vol. 35, No. 1, March 1999, pp.1-22; R. Huber, 'What will the neighbours say?' in M. E. Poole, P. R. de Lacey and B. S. Randhawa *Australia in transition: culture and life possibilities*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sydney, 1985.
- ¹⁴ L. Bertelli, 'Italian families', cit., p.36.
- ¹⁵ T. Gucciardo and L. Bertelli, *The best of both worlds: a study of second-generation Italo-Australians*, CIRC Papers, Fitzroy, Vic., 1987, p.13.

from our archives

antonio agostini: newspaper man

ANTONIO AGOSTINI GAINED NOTORIETY FOR WHAT WAS FOR DECADES AUSTRALIA'S GREAT UNSOLVED CRIME: THE MURDER OF HIS WIFE, LINDA PLATT, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE 'PYJAMA GIRL'. MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THIS CASE BY THE MEDIA AND BY VARIOUS AUTHORS. AGOSTINI WAS FOUND GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER AND GIVEN A SIX-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE, OF WHICH HE SERVED THREE YEARS AND NINE MONTHS IN PENTRIDGE PRISON, MELBOURNE.

WRITERS DESCRIBE AGOSTINI AS A HUMBLE WAITER, A MIGRANT WITHOUT AMBITION. HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER *IL GIORNALE ITALIANO*, AND HIS VISION OF ACHIEVING THE COMPLETE ASSIMILATION OF ITALIAN MIGRANTS INTO AUSTRALIAN CULTURE, HAVE NEVER BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED. EVEN LESS IS KNOWN ABOUT HIS AGRICULTURAL REFORM WORK IN ITALY.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EDITED VERSION OF AN 81-PAGE ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE, HANDWRITTEN IN ENGLISH BY AGOSTINI ON 25 DECEMBER 1947 TO ONE MR WHITWORTH IN SUPPORT OF HIS PLEA AGAINST THE ORDER OF DEPORTATION TO ITALY.

AGOSTINI'S ATTEMPT TO REMAIN IN AUSTRALIA WAS UNSUCCESSFUL BECAUSE HE WAS NOT NATURALIZED. HE WAS DEPORTED TO ITALY ON THE SHIP *S.S. STRATHNAVER* ON 21 AUGUST 1948. HE DIED ON THE ISLAND OF SARDINIA IN 1969.

THIS DOCUMENT IS PART OF THE SANTOSPIRITO COLLECTION HELD BY THE ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY. THE TEXT HAS BEEN ABRIDGED, WITH MINOR CORRECTIONS TO AID READABILITY. SECTIONS CONCERNING AGOSTINI'S MARITAL LIFE AND THE ACCIDENTAL KILLING OF HIS WIFE HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED. FOR DETAILED COVERAGE OF THE MURDER READERS CAN REFER TO, AMONG OTHERS, EVANS, R., *THE PYJAMA GIRL MYSTERY*, SCRIBE PUBLICATIONS, MELBOURNE, 2004.

Dear Mr Whitworth,

It would not be right nor fair neither to you nor to any one to whom you might speak on my behalf to do so, without at least a brief summary of my life. Therefore, following up our conversation of today, Xmas 1947, I shall endeavour to recall and convey to you the events and aims of the last thirty years.

I was born in Altivole, Treviso, Veneto Region on the 20th of May 1903, from Mario and Maddalena Bernardi Agostini, the last of four children (two sisters and one brother). My father was the Secretary of that town Municipal Council for 28 years.

Up to the age of nine I frequented the local elementary school, then I spent 3 years at the Castelfranco Veneto College, followed by 4 years at Polytechnic School of Venice. Then when 17 years old, my parents and brother-in-law suggested that if I felt so inclined I should take the diploma of wool-textile expert from the Industrial Textile School of Milan, to prepare myself to enter in partnership with my brother-in-law's firm, the Giulio Eger Spinning and Textile Mill of Noale, Venice (where my parents moved when evacuated during World War I from Altivole. Mother still live there with my eldest sister, my father and brother-in-law died since).

I did go to Milan but at the end of the 3 years course the country was in the throes of revolution and it was not the time to enlarge any industry— so at least thought my relations.

I was twenty then, I had already joined the Fascist Movement and was fired with its programme. I inspired in my father my own enthusiasm in what I thought should be our contribution for the moral and economic reconstruction for our country. I induced him to give me one quarter of the amount of capital he had been prepared to invest for my sake in the brother-in-law industry. In our district, like in hundreds of others, the conditions of agriculture in comparison with those of Lombardy that I had visited and studied, were primitive. Several were the factors, the main one that the agriculture was still left abandoned in the peasant's hands, who unaware of the march of progress and often hostile to it, still carried on as his forefathers had done. Our country peasants had not, up to then, any education, but for those 3 years, from the age of six to nine, when they were supposed to frequent the elementary school.

With my father's support, I rented six acres of land, enlisted the cooperation of the nearest Agriculture College of the region, and used those six acres for experimental plots on selected seeds, scientific fertilization, etc. Organised lecture and practical demonstration to farmers by the College's experts and opened in the town the first store of agricultural implements, machinery, seeds, and fertilizers. Obtained the agency of the Fordson Tractor, and in face to organised opposition, I gave demonstration with it and sold 25 in the first 18 months. Then, I obtained a depot for the Anglo-Persian Petrol Products.

At first, the usual wise old men of any town, shook their heads, made sarcastic remarks at me and thought that my father was a fool to back me. But not long afterwards they were with me.

At the end of the first 3 years, the production of all those hundred of farmers that trusted and joined my campaign went up from 20% to 40% and my business was a paying proposition. The experimental field a continuous source of study, wonder and admiration even by those that had been the worst denigrator.

Antonio Agostini in the uniform of the Fascist Party, Altivole, Italy, c. 1922.



In 1926, I still was a member of the Fascist Party— had been since 17 years old, when for the first 2 or 3 years [of the party's founding] to become a member was the choice of very few. Up to October 1922, three thousand youths had been murdered [in Russia], simply because they had dared to hope and to believe in a Christian democracy, as the Fascist Movement's

programme was then upheld to be, in opposition to Moscow's red ideologies. Before Fascism went to power (October 1922) the Fascists were very few, as it was not healthy to be one. Since 1922 they became millions— and many ideas and ideals changed with the invasion in its ranks of the greedy, opportunistic seekers of booty, power and other evils.

In June 1926 I was called up at the fascist headquarter of Venice and found myself in disagreement with the new policy and method of the Authorities intended to force on the farmers and peasant farm workers through the newly formed Agriculture Syndicate— on the eve of the first campaign to increase the wheat production named the 'Wheat Battle'. Soon afterwards I had reasons to express different views from those of the new set of ideas officially sponsored.

By the middle of 1927 the farmers of my district could no longer come to my store for their supplies because I had not joined the newly formed Fascist Syndicate, although I still was a member of the Party, and even when their tractors were immobilised in the middle of ploughing for want of petrol, which the Syndicate could not supply and I had in plenty, I was barred to give it to them.

Bitterly disappointed to see under my eyes the very example of what in larger scale was beginning to occur throughout the country, pressed on the ever growing octopus of a new army of sycophant Fascist bureaucrats that like locust were creeping on and on beneath those same slogans printed throughout on the streets, offices, factories of Italy to remind the Italians of all those virtues that the leaders themselves were daily destroying in their all grasping concupiscence either for power, money or incompetence.

I was then 24 years old. My parents were the most wonderful that any man could wish to have. The decision to leave them was a hard blow to inflict upon them, in spite that father confessed to me he would do the same I proposed to do, if in my position, because he understood how I felt. Having in 1918, then a boy of fifteen, lived one month with English-Australian soldiers billeted in my home (Altivole was near the battle front) I chose Australia as the country I would go to settle in. On 11 August 1927 I sailed from Genoa for Sydney, on the *Regina d'Italia*. I had 3 letters of introduction and the prospect of acting as wool-buyer for my sister's wool mill. (My brother-in-law had recently died).

I landed in Sydney on the 29 September 1927. The reception from the three persons I had letters of introduction was discouraging. All three seemed to find a lot of faults with the country and advised me to return with the same ship I had come which was due back from Brisbane in a few days.

The glances I had of Australia from the few days in Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne, the few contacts with its people — since the first morning of my landing I was boarding with an Australian family in Double Bay by the name of O'Rourke — had convinced me that my choice had been a happy one contrary to the opinion of my gloomy advisers. To cut myself out of any thought of return, I invested the money I had in a block of four acres of virgin bush land in the Nowra district as a token of faith. I never saw the land, I bought it through an Estate Agency and lost it years later because I could not fence it.

Next, I realised the importance of learning the English language. While doing so at the Sydney Conservatorium at night, I went pecking on the vegetable growing districts around Sydney. Three months after my arrival I was offered a temporary job as cloakroom attendant at Romano's Café, Sydney. I took it on and was dropped cold by those three naughty acquaintances I had been introduced to by letter from Italy. This fact made me notice the differences between the two worlds: the one I came from looked down on me because I dared to take any job; the other world, the one I came to, showed to the cloak-room boy kindness, helpfulness and treated him as an equal.

Many were the clients of Romano's that in the cloakroom would forget they had a guest waiting for them in the restaurant, while they were either trying to help me along with the language, or describing some part of the country or narrating episodes about the same. Some would even go to the trouble of bringing me books to improve my English.

Romano's of that period was the meeting place not only of Sydney society, but also of all the top figures of the commercial, industrial, political and artistic life of Australia. Many were the interesting anecdotes told me by some of those prominent persons. Of how humbly they had started and how great and generous were the opportunities of this truly democratic nation. Thus, it was natural that in such a friendly atmosphere I should have quickly grown strong fondness of my new environment. Fondness that became much deeper years later, when came the

opportunity to travel extensively through the continent, meeting friends wherever I went. I kept that provisory job for five years and a half!

Agostini goes on to talk about meeting Linda Platt at the end of 1928, their marriage in April 1931 and the difficulties that soon after emerged in their relationship.

By 1933 I had been approached by two Italians asking me to join them in the publishing of a new Italian newspaper.¹ There were already four, none of them any good and mostly existing on bluff.² As I could not see either the usefulness or the honesty of anyone of those four, I [initially] declined.



Three editions of *Il Giornale Italiano*, covering the period March 1932 to October 1937.

However, now that my wife wanted me to find work that would take us away from Sydney, I thought to study the newspaper idea. From few meetings with Filippo Maria Bianchi and Franco Battistessa, I was convinced that there would have been plenty of usefulness for a weekly paper aiming to lift-up the prestige of Italians as settlers by at the same time lifting up their own outlook, accelerating the process of Australianization of new arrivals by helping them to learn the language, habits, traditions, conditions of work wages and trade unions.

In few words, to help all those that by the conditions existing in their country of origin came to Australia unprepared to become quickly absorbed in the Australian way of life. Often the local press attacked the Italian settler drifting in community of his own and thus retarding his amalgamation with the

native population. It was then and perhaps still is true that such situation existed. In North Queensland, in New South Wales and in Western Australia there were country centres with such a high percentage of Italian population to constitute real islands of foreign element; that by its compactness maintained language, habit and tradition alive. As these so called islands were formed of people coming from the same Sicilian or Calabrian town, the old feud, pernicious superstitions and other evils born and bred from poverty and ignorance — mostly cunningly fostered by the local politicians and secret societies for better exploitation — were revived here in ... sunny Australia by the old foxes that had followed the flock overseas.

Sample of the cursed evils had from time to time come to the surface in North Queensland and also in Melbourne the seeds were nursed. Seldom, if ever would the local police be called to assist and even when the police had reason to investigate, a closed wall of shut mouths would be met. Why? Because that same fear that for centuries had made those peasants slaves of those parasites living off blackmail and extortion had them in their clutches even here 12 thousand miles from its source.

But there would not have been fear and from fear a rich harvest for the foxes if those peasants would master the language and full awareness and consciousness of their own freedom and protection of the law. Thus there were interested parties in keeping them isolated and dependent on the good offices of those self-appointed interpreters. The Australian authorities paid very little attention and hardly ever knew what was going on. The Italian Consuls were officials, here today and gone tomorrow. Their only concern was to be able to send to Rome glowing reports of national celebrations inspired by great patriotism and ovations to the Duce. Showing on paper that through

their own efforts the Italians here were imbued with very high admiration for the fascist Italy. They usually surrounded themselves with a few sycophants that helped them to believe that they were doing a great job. They would through their poodles pester the Italians in joining the Fascist Party, inducing them to do so with promises or threats of what could happen to their relatives at home [in Italy]. On nineteen different letterheads, representing as many pro-fascist associations, wonderful reports of activities only existing in the privacy of their offices were sent to one or another of the many ministries in Rome — and thus besides justifying their fifty pounds a week, they would be promoted to a higher position.

To the average Italian calling at the Consulate for any transaction, they were too busy to be disturbed. To crown all this sort of make-believe activity, in the year 1928 the then Consul General Comm. Grossardi started a weekly newspaper, *Corriere degli Italiani in Australia: Italian Courier in Australia*, which was the official organ of the Italian Fascists in Australia. This was one of the four papers I referred to earlier. In spite of the long name, this paper was not meant for the Italians in Australia although the Consul had collected a few thousand pounds from them, it meant once more to give further proof in Rome of the constructive activity of the Consul.

Of the other three newspapers, the one in Brisbane, called *L'italiano* was anti-fascist. The local Consul indirectly sponsored the one in Perth [*La Stampa Italiana*]. The fourth one in Sydney, the oldest of the lot had no policy, was the less harmful of the four [*Italo-Australian*]. But in spite of their flamboyant claims of representing the Italians in Australia, and each one canvassing advertising with rate cards claiming 10,000 and more subscribers, all four did not reach a thousand paid-up subscribers.

CORRIERE DEGLI ITALIANI IN AUSTRALIA (Italian Courier in Australia)

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Registered at G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by post as a newspaper. Tel. MA 4129 REDAZIONE ED AMMINISTRAZIONE: Tel. MA 4129 Abbonamenti: Annuale £ 12/6; 6 mesi £ 7/6; 3 mesi £ 4/6. Val. 4, No. 31. 22 CAMPBELL STREET, HAYMARKET, SYDNEY. Val. 4, No. 31. SYDNEY, MERCOLEDÌ MARZO 16, 1932.—A. X. Prezzo: 3d.

LE RICERCHE SCIENTIFICHE E LA RISOLUZIONE DELLA CRISI IN UN ARTICOLO DEL SENATORE GUGLIELMO MARCONI.

«... tutto questo è molto possibile...» ecco che il senatore Marconi, in un articolo che ha appena pubblicato, si occupa di risolvere la crisi. Il senatore Marconi, che è anche un grande scienziato, ha fatto un'analisi molto interessante della situazione attuale. Egli sostiene che la crisi non è solo un problema economico, ma anche un problema politico e sociale. Per risolvere la crisi, egli propone alcune misure che riguardano la riforma del sistema elettorale, la riforma del sistema tributario e la riforma del sistema giudiziario. Egli ritiene che queste misure siano necessarie per creare un clima di fiducia e di collaborazione tra i diversi partiti politici e per permettere al paese di superare la crisi in modo pacifico e ordinato.

DALL'ITALIA

Paolo Boselli, Vecchio Uomo di Stato e Venerando Patriota, È Morto.
IL COMPIANTO UNANIME DELLA NAZIONE.

Paolo Boselli, uno dei più grandi uomini di Stato italiani, è morto. La sua morte è stata accolta con dolore da tutta la nazione. Boselli era un uomo di grande intelligenza e di grande coraggio. Egli aveva dedicato tutta la sua vita al servizio del paese e aveva fatto molte cose per il bene della patria. La sua morte è una grande perdita per l'Italia. La nazione si commuove per la perdita di un tale uomo. Egli era un vero patriota e un vero uomo di Stato. La sua morte è una grande perdita per l'Italia. La nazione si commuove per la perdita di un tale uomo.

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An Interesting Exhibition in Italy of all Types of Bread Made Throughout the World.

Further interesting news from the Exhibition at Trieste, which is now open to the public. The exhibition is a very interesting one, showing the different types of bread made in different parts of the world. It is a very interesting exhibition, showing the different types of bread made in different parts of the world. It is a very interesting exhibition, showing the different types of bread made in different parts of the world. It is a very interesting exhibition, showing the different types of bread made in different parts of the world.

There really was the need of a few sheets of reading matter for our countrymen. The great majority, about 95%, could not read or write in English. To understand this you must know that, apart from the few professional or otherwise educated Italians, the bulk of our emigrants were peasant farmers, hard working men, sober, thrifty, enterprising in many cases, but lacking the most elementary foundations from which to learn how to write and read in another language. They all at the most had been to school from the age of six to nine, quite a few could hardly read or write in their own language.

Landing in Australia the main pressing task was to find a job and work, if on the land, from dawn to dusk, and unless employed by Australians, little chance they would have even of learning how to speak English.

Please don't think of those Italians you may have known in the cities. In spite of the fact that every second fruit shop of Sydney and Melbourne are run by Italians. The bulk of them are on the land, far away from populated centres. Whenever there is hard work you will find them. The fruit shops or fruiterers are a class apart. They all come from the Eolian Islands, those tiny islets on the northeast tip of Sicily. So small are those islands you may never have seen them on the maps of the Mediterranean Sea. They hardly play a productive role [in Italy] although as fruiterers [in Australia] they have proved successful.

Just imagine the usefulness, the comfort, the uplifting influence that a weekly journal would have had—the summary of world events, the chronicle of Italian news and of Italian events among the various communities scattered in the

Commonwealth, with information regarding trade, union rules, working conditions of some industries, laws and regulations touching their own activities, sports, etc. presented to them in a plain, easily understandable way. But what was going to be the most useful of all was a weekly English lesson specially compiled, to be easily grasped by any person that through no fault of their own, had the most rudimentary education, much lower than the minimum necessary to get any result from an ordinary English-Italian grammar. These lessons had to be phonetically as well as plainly written.

Another very deeply felt lack, particularly felt by the women, was the want of religious contact. This was only available to those few living in the vicinity of the two Italian priests then in Australia and of those few Australian clergymen speaking Italian.

In those days of 1933, when with Messrs Bianchi and Battistessa we were studying the task, the difficulty of accomplishing it seemed beyond our means, as none had any money to speak of.

To follow on the steps of all other Italian newspapers would have been useless. They did not reach the people we wanted to reach and needed to be reached, those in the country. To make subscribers of all those scattered from Cooktown to Albury, from Wyndham to Tasmania, the only way was to call and to canvass from farm to farm, mine to mine, camp to camp, wherever there was one no matter where, and how to get there. To assist us in the financing of this scheme came Mr Portous and Mr Seattow, the advertising experts of O'Brien Publicity Pty. Ltd., and Mr Hutchinson, manager of Lintas, the



ID papers issued by the journal I.C.V.O. to its agent Antonio Agostini, 1925.

Antonio Agostini, in a photograph possibly taken in his office in Swanston Street, Melbourne, c. 1935.



advertising agency for the Lever Bros organisation. Their advice, followed to the letter, proved so sound that after four years the *Italian Journal* had become financially secure—and through this soundness of its financial income had been able of reaching and by-passing all the goals that in 1933 seemed unobtainable. To the general opinion of the newspaper and publicity men of Australia, the Journal did high credit to the Italo-Australian [migrants]! This had been the aim and ambition when we were exploring the task ahead.

In May 1933 Agostini moves to Melbourne — with his wife Linda — to establish the Journal in Melbourne. His energies are devoted to widening circulation and selling advertising space.

We soon found a nice cottage on the crest of Punt Road, South Yarra and an office in the 'Shell Corner', Bourke and William Streets.

I went ahead from the very start, backed by the confidence that a happy heart and a congenial task can give. Linda would often look after the office, or travel to the country with me, meeting new people.

At this point Agostini writes about the increasing difficulties in his marriage, the events leading to Linda's death in August 1934 and his subsequent attempts to conceal the murder.

I shall not try to find words to describe the depth of my despair. Faith only prevented me from joining Linda where she had planned to take me. Faith that grasped my hand and at the crest of each wave of despair kept my sanity and urged me to go on with my job. A job that more than before I felt was the most worthy contribution I had to offer to my adopted country. Faith that

kept me here to face the ordeal whenever destiny would decide rather than seek refuge anywhere else. If I had been a coward once, no matter under what circumstances, I had to prove to myself that such an occasion would never be repeated.

Until then I had been successful in establishing a wide circulation of the Journal and securing a good share of advertising.

Religion was another problem to solve. The large majority of Italians as soon as they landed were like sheep without a shepherd. Only a few would come into contact with either an Australian clergyman speaking Italian or with one of the two Italian priests here at the time. Consequently this caused a breaking in the tie on which they had heavily leaned on in their home country. This left them guideless and the women particularly felt the harmful effects. The first remark I always heard, made by the many clergymen I came to meet during my travel was how poor the attendance of my countrymen was in the church. The cause of course was the same old one: language. Once astray their return to the church had to be assisted. One of the Italian priests, Father De Francesco, [was] stationed at St Ignatius, Richmond. I went to him offering all the space he needed to start a religious column in the Victorian edition of the *Italian Journal*. The interest shown by the readers was soon so remarkable and clearly pointed out how deeply was the need for a spiritual weekly guidance. Fr De Francesco's section was soon also included in the New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia editions.

Not long afterwards, with the prelates for the Melbourne Eucharistic Congress, arrived Monsignor Terzariol as Papal Master of Ceremonies. He was genuinely impressed by the column I had introduced. He encouraged me and promised support. Support which I had to enlist when a few months later, Fr De Francesco was called back to Italy and was not going to be replaced. This undermined what had been achieved. I collected over 2,000 signatures for a petition to S.J. Order in Rome, and sent it to Monsignor Terzariol. Father Dr Ugo Modotti was sent to replace Fr De Francesco [in 1938]. Fr Modotti was given the opportunity to produce a monthly magazine, exclusively dedicated to religion and to be edited by him. The magazine came to life under the title of *L'Angelo della Famiglia* (the Family Angel)³. Since the beginning of the war and the internment of all the staff of the Journal, the publication of the Family Angel was continued by the Advocate Press. In the same period the Journal had also achieved another of its

aims: an 8-page weekly section dedicated to women. This section, like the Journal, would gradually go from the Italian to the English language. This brings me back to when I and Monsignor Terziarol were talking to the secretary of Archbishop Dr Mannix, Dr Beovich (now Archbishop of Adelaide). Dr Beovich suddenly switched from English to a flawless and fluent Venetian dialect. His parents were Venetians like us!

At the beginning of 1936, with the Journal soundly established in Victoria, and through the creation of a Limited Company in possession of a printing plant, I left to go to Western Australia. In Perth I organized an office for the company and again took care to increase the circulation and advertising of the paper⁴. The local priests considered the religious conditions of the Italian miners in the main centres such as Kalgoorlie, Boulder and Wiluna shocking. Fr Ryan became my collaborator. Twelve months after, some religious celebrations organised in these centres and also in the southwest region of the state, the 'shocking' situation was wiped out. Money for altars, chapels, etc. was freely pouring in to the astonishment of the priests who were before quite disappointed. All that was needed was a link to reunite the broken chain.

I must say that credit for our success goes to Archbishop Duhig of Brisbane. As the staunchest champion of the Italian cause, he was since the beginning a guiding influence throughout the life of the Journal. Many pages were often honoured and blessed by his pen. Whilst I was not fortunate to meet him personally, even now I am glad that as the advertising manager of the Journal I have followed his advice of never having soiled its pages with advertisements morally and physically detrimental to the interest of the country, no matter how poor our resources were at the beginning.

At the end of 1937, I left Perth for Sydney where I lived until 10 June 1940—internment day.⁵ In Sydney, [before internment] as manager of that office, my efforts were then confined to coordinate the canvassing of advertising contracts in all the states where the Journal had established offices.

If you have read this rigmarole up to here, you may imagine that all Italians would have appreciated the work the Journal was pursuing. It was quite the contrary. Although a large number made up of authentic workers were sincerely grateful, other sections were antagonistic and in some cases quite bitter. The opposing factions were:



Father Vincenzo De Francesco served the Italian Community in Melbourne from 1922 to 1931.

- The Italian Consuls for their own reason.
- The official Fascists, mainly because they had to share the same views of the Consuls. They were also accusing the Journal of being fundamentally opposed to the Italian interests in Australia. They were not concerned with the interests of Italians permanently settled in Australia.
- The Communists because they accused and painted the Journal of being fascist.
- The so called 'Intelligentia' because they had to criticise anything in which they were not involved.

Put all together they were not many, but very harmful indeed. Under the sponsorship of the first [the Consuls], a lawsuit was lodged in 1938 against the Journal with the aim of sending it bankrupt through some artfully drawn legal expenses. From 1st April to the middle of June an employee [of the Journal] who was asked to leave his job, sued the Journal for insufficient wages. The case had to be fought in the Victoria's Law Court. The Journal could not have lost the case, but to be represented properly and oppose a similarly strong opposition, we had to face the fees of a KC, now Judge O'Brien, and of barristers Fazio and Adami. Every effort of the presiding Judge and KC O'Brien to reveal who was financially meeting the plaintiff legal expenses, estimated at 80 pounds a day, failed. The lengthy and rightful judgement in favour of the Journal did not help in recovering the expenses from the plaintiff who admitted to be penniless and of having been so all the time. Eight weeks of general disruption, and the huge cost had nearly bankrupted the Journal. The bank overdraft was stopped!

It was indeed a job of faith. The more bricks were thrown against my two colleagues and me, the more we were urged to continue with our work.

In those days there was no Bonegilla Reception Centre. No Federal Minister and Clergymen to welcome the several hundred Italian immigrants arriving with each boat. At the wharves the only committee of reception was of photographers from sensationalistic newspapers taking photos of those few unfortunate ones that did not possess a smart looking suit case, but only had a bundle to carry ashore, or of others who had no collars and tie. Their photos would be spread on newspapers and posters throughout the Commonwealth with contemptuous comments as if to be poor was a sin and a collar and tie the dormant wealth of this country. It was natural that under these conditions a large proportion of new arrivals would drift on to those districts where there were already too many Italians and where the process of absorption into the Australian way of life would practically become impossible and be always a source of friction with the average Australian that in those districts felt to be a minority: a "foreigner" in his own home.

Other migrants would be grabbed from the wharves by either the supposed unselfish sponsor or similarly enterprising persons (Italian, of course) and taken to work in farms or fruit shops, from twelve to sixteen hours a day paid at half and often much less than the basic wages. Years later, one word at a time — and never through the assistance of their employers — they would learn English and realise how they had been exploited by their good Samaritan employers who made them believe they had given them shelter and work out of pity.

But the Australian worker was told and firmly believed that his fellow Italian was coming here to cut his wages and lower his standards of living. Therefore he did not like him. While during these years the cases of exploitation that reached the law courts were quite numerous, they only represented a small percentage of the prevailing conditions.

Is it then any wonder that the work of the Journal was not popular with some of our so-called 'leaders of the community'?

Many practical suggestions on these and other matters were by us put to politicians and Federal authorities of the period, but a cocktail or dinner party at the Consul General's home usually attracted more attention. However it is now with great satisfaction that I have been able to look back on those years of enthusiastic endeavour and be more than ever grateful to God who gave me the strength to persevere and thus ease my sorrow in a right and unselfish task.

If you have followed me so far, you may also understand how it was possible to have lived so many years without feeling the need to a certificate [of naturalisation] to prove my loyalty to Australia. When the danger of war made me realise my position it would have been unfair to apply for naturalisation.

I am sure that when you asked me to give a summary of the story of my life, you did not expect such a ... punishment! But would a few dates and changes of address and occupation give you sufficient background to understand my life's view, aims, failure, tragedy and love for this country?

Sincerely yours,
Antonio Agostini

NOTES:

¹ *Il Giornale Italiano: The Italian Journal*. The first edition of the Journal was published on 19 March, 1932. Agostini joined the editorial team early in 1933.

² *La Stampa Italiana*, Perth, 1931-1932; *L'Italiano*, Brisbane, 1932-1942; *Italo-Australian*, Sydney 1922-1940; *Corriere degli Italiani in Australia*, Melbourne, 1928-1939.

³ The first issue of *L'Angelo della Famiglia* was published on 1 January 1939.

⁴ In the annual edition of *Vade Mecum degli Italiani in Australia: Illustrated annual of the Italian Journal*, 28 October 1937, Agostini is described as the director of the Perth office and as 'One of the youngest and most able collaborators of *Il Giornale Italiano* to whom goes the credit for the success achieved by the newspaper in Victoria'.

⁵ Agostini was interned on 11 June 1940 and released from the Wayville Camp, South Australia, on 2 February 1944. On 7 March 1944, he was charged with the murder of his wife Linda.

news

per l'australia: the story of Italian migration

'FINALLY WE HAVE A BOOK THAT IS FOR EVERYONE! *PER L'AUSTRALIA* TELLS THE STORY OF ITALIAN MIGRATION THROUGH THE EYES OF ITALIAN MIGRANTS THEMSELVES, ON THEIR TERMS. THIS IS THEIR STORY. WE ARE MERELY THE HUMBLE AMBASSADORS'. LAURA MECCA, MANAGER OF THE ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Per l'Australia: the story of Italian migration follows the lives of the many thousands of Italians who made Australia their home. So many stories, and all of them true: the canecutter who was bitten on the thumb by a snake, paused only to chop off the limb and then got on with the job; the woman who worked so hard her chiropractor said she had muscles like a man; the boy who met his father for the first time at the age of seven and picked up English so quickly, he became his father's interpreter in the search for work; the Italian POW adopted by an Australian couple who then sponsored his return to Australia after the war.

None of these stories would ever have seen the light of day without our donors — the migrants and their descendants — who have been so generous with their photographs, documents and heirlooms.

Both readers and the media have embraced *Per l'Australia*. Only three months after its launch, the 268-page full-colour book is now being reprinted for Christmas. The Newcastle Herald said: 'The photographs will win your heart in this big, warm book that celebrates the lives and experiences of Italian Australians ... far more than a coffee table book'. In addition to reviews in major newspapers, there have been interviews on the Conversation Hour with Jon Faine, on Radio National with Fran Kelly and SBS Radio, among others. Laura Mecca and author Julia Church have given presentations at the National Archives of Australia in Canberra, the Melbourne Writers' Festival, the Lyceum Club and local libraries.

The book has gained a wide readership that includes students of history, migrants from all over the world and members of the general public. The Sydney Sun-Herald voted *Per l'Australia* No. 4 in its Top 10 History listing. The Department of History at Melbourne University is one of a number of institutions to include *Per l'Australia* on its



The cover of *Per l'Australia*.
Design: Peter Long.

PER L'AUSTRALIA
THE STORY OF ITALIAN MIGRATION
JULIA CHURCH

reading list. Primary and secondary schools are now making use of the accompanying education guide, produced by the IHS in association with Rosaria Zarro from the Immigration Museum, Victoria.

The book has been a twinkle in Laura's eye for more than 20 years. In August 2002 the Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Publishing agreed to go into partnership on the project. With the arrival of writer Julia Church, production commenced just 14 months later. The publication process was supported by funding from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE) and the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC). Printing to the highest production standards was assured with generous sponsorship from David Barro and Rhonda Barro, Bruno and Pierina Grollo, Rino and Diana Grollo, Tony and Elda Schiavello, Sam and Christine Tarascio, Franco and Rosalie Vaccari and Carlo and Elsie Valmorbida.

Production staff and volunteers collaborated on the mammoth task of selecting 300 items which would serve to represent the story of Italian migration to Australia. These items were drawn from the Society's substantial collection of photographs, documents, oral histories and objects. Once the English text was written and approved, it was then

Passport showing
Rosa Bettale Cavedon
with children Giovanni,
Gino and Maria.
Issued in Italy, 1927.



such a pleasure to see so many donors at the launch. And to finally meet people we've corresponded with over the years or talked to on the phone', said the Society's Elsa Paulin, 'To meet them and thank them—especially people who were children in the book and are now adults, with their own extended families'.

Among the guests was Gino Cavedon, one of the many donors whose stories appear in *Per l'Australia*. Gino was a small boy in 1927 when he posed for a passport photograph on the eve of the family's departure for Australia. The children were later captured by a Sun News-Pictorial photographer as they stepped onto the dock at Melbourne's North Wharf. Now a man with children and grandchildren of his own, Gino proudly posed for photographs, holding the book open at the pages featuring himself and his family.

As we go to press, the book has been shortlisted for the Premier's Literary Award.

And as a result of interest generated by the book, SBS Radio has approached the IHS to work on a project about migration stories.

The IHS would like to thank Giancarlo Martini-Piovano and the Committee of Co.As.It for their enthusiasm and the faith to commit to such an ambitious project.

Copies of the book are available to members of the IHS for the special price of \$50.00 plus postage. As postal costs can be prohibitive, interstate members may prefer to order the book from their local bookshop. *Per l'Australia* is available Australia-wide and retails at \$59.95.

translated into Italian. The finished manuscript was handed over to book designer Peter Long, who treated each image and story as if they were his own.

On 16 June 2005, more than 350 people from around Australia converged at Zinc Restaurant at Federation Square to celebrate the launch of *Per l'Australia*. The excitement and pride was tangible. 'It was

TOP LEFT

[Left to right] Co.As.It Vice-President Bruna Pasqua with the Hon. John Pandazopoulos MP, Laura Mecca and Piero Genovesi, Director of the Australian-Italian Institute at La Trobe University.

TOP RIGHT

Italian Historical Society founder, Sir James Gobbo, launches *Per l'Australia*.
Photo: Melissa Thurgood.

BOTTOM LEFT

Donor Gino Cavedon with author Julia Church.
Photo: Rosanne Pirrottina.

BOTTOM RIGHT

[Left to right] Major sponsors: Rino and Diana Grollo, Pierina and Bruno Grollo.



family history

A MAN OF MANY TALENTS: ELIO FRANZ

This loving tribute was penned by their daughters Joy and Gloria Franz.

I FIND MYSELF ON A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY WHERE I LIVED MY TENDER YEARS IN THE SNOW-CAPPED MOUNTAINS OF MALEMASERIA, FRIULI. NOW AT THE SUNSET OF MY LIFE, I AM AT A CROSSROADS WITH MY THOUGHTS. THERE IS AN OVERWHELMING FEELING TO PUT TO PAPER, THE RECOLLECTIONS OF MY YOUTH. PERHAPS, WERE I TO TAKE STOCK OF MY PAST, I'D HAVE REGRETS ABOUT CHANCES MISSED, BUT THROUGH A SEA OF MEMORIES, I FIND THAT, NO MATTER THE EVENTS IN TIME, I WOULD HAVE DONE IT ALL AGAIN. LIFE IS A BIG ADVENTURE. (EXCERPT FROM ELIO'S MEMOIRS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH)

Elio Enrico Giovanni Franz was born in Siena, Tuscany on 28 October 1918, in the final days of the First World War. He was the oldest of four: sisters Vilma and Maria, and younger brother Danilo. While his father, Tarcisio, was fighting in the war, his mother, Scolastica, came as a refugee to Siena as a result of the fierce battles fought in Friuli against the Austro-Hungarian Army. The family eventually returned to Friuli and settled in Tarcisio's village, high up in the district of Malemaseria. On one side was Monte Stella, on the other Monte Bernadia. Early in his childhood Elio would roam, hungry for new places and adventures, making contraptions to catch birds. He would draw and paint animals and scenery, and climb dangerously high. You could not keep a boisterous lad indoors, much to his mother's frustration. Finding work as a builder, his father took the family to Romania. There they stayed for two years, before returning to Friuli, this time to the township of Codroipo.

Elio's sense of adventure did not leave him: he enlisted in the Italian Army. However, he found it rather uninspiring, and when the opportunity came to join the airforce, he immediately applied. Unfortunately, one couldn't transfer at whim. In desperation he wrote to Mussolini, the King and the Queen of Italy, his Colonel and also to the Pope, with the hope that they could do something. To no avail.

In 1936, he was commissioned to work on sensitive communications during the Spanish Civil War. He left Naples for Seville.

Already fluent in Romanian and French, he tackled the Spanish language by adding 's' at the end of each Italian word! Before long he was speaking proper *Español*. Meanwhile, a Spanish couple dancing to Ravel's passionate Bolero captivated his imagination forever.

In 1938, on the eve of the Second World War, he was recalled to accompany young troops to the Italian colonies in North Africa. Heat, dust, sand, hot days and cold nights. There the soldiers boiled pasta in petrol drums and the sandy winds of the Sahara ensured a crunchy *pastasciutta* that was not very appetising. After Italy had declared war in June 1940, on one of Elio's trips with a fresh shipment of Italian troops, disaster struck. In the darkness of night and in the chaos of war the ship was 'bombed'. Only 160 of the 3,500 on board survived, only to be captured and transported as POWs to South Africa. Elio was amongst them.

Despite the hardships of wartime, Elio capitalised on opportunities. At the time, clothing and toiletry items were hard to come by. Surrounded by farming communities, inventive Elio hatched up a scheme to cut the tails of horses and make them into bristles for shaving brushes. Tired of having threadbare undies, he approached the wife of a local farmer with his own design for *mutande*. She drafted the pattern, supplied him with cloth and a sewing machine and he was soon selling his 'designer underwear' and shaving brushes

Elio Franz in Italian army uniform.



Elio and Renza on the day of her arrival in Australia. Sydney, 1952.



at the local markets. Demand led to the establishment of a sweat shop employing thousands of Italian POWs and Black Africans. Multilingual Elio, with his quick wit and ready charm, became fluent in Afrikaans, English and Zulu languages. And his skills were again used in telegraphic communications.

At the end of the war, with a swag of war medals and the tragedies of war behind him, Elio returned home. The reality of Italy's poor employment prospects forced him to follow sister Maria and husband Ken, a British soldier, to England with his other sister Vilma. He worked on farms, but by 1951 he had enough of the damp and cold, and returned to Codroipo. His family introduced him to a beautiful local girl, Lorenza Benvenuto, and soon plans were made for leaving Italy. He tried to get passage to South Africa, a country he had become very

attached to. Tired of with waiting for emigration approval, he opted for Australia instead. His English speaking skills got him to the front of the line and he bluffed his way by claiming trade skills. He left Rome, for an eventful long

5 day flight on a DC4 to Australia involving 9 stops. One interesting stop was Bombay, where he enjoyed an elephant hunt with the local Indian maharajah.

His introduction to Australia was Darwin, where he was shocked by the sheer vastness of the landscape. A short time after his arrival in Sydney, Elio decided to try his luck at farming in Tenterfield, a town in north-eastern New South Wales. On 19 December 1952, Lorenza and Elio's sister Vilma, arrived in Sydney on the ship 'Australia'. Elio and Renza married on 17 January 1953. In nearby Riverstone, with their two children Joy and Gloria and their extended family, they grew tobacco and appeared to do well, until a severe hailstorm destroyed their crop, and forced them to move to Bundaberg. Undaunted, they worked hard to turn a piece of Australian bush into a farm for tobacco, and later sugar cane. On Fielding's Road, Alloway, the Golden Leaf Farm was born and soon became the centre of a social world of Sunday bocce, harvest dances in the tobacco shed and *zuiar le ciartis con amis* [playing cards with friends]. There, the Bundaberg Italian Club, 'Across the Waves' was also born.

In late 1970, the family moved to Brisbane and another era began in the big city. But it was in September 1986 that the greatest challenge was to be faced. Elio was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus.

Farming tobacco in Bundaberg, Queensland.



The outlook was grim. He battled with cancer for several years and survived numerous operations. Eventually his indomitable spirit won the race against time. He was still dreaming his destiny. Out of the blue, in 1993 at the age of 75, the rascal gave us one week to come to terms with his plans to connect with the extended family. His 6-month journey took him to Argentina and then on to his childhood connections in Malemaseria and Tarcento.

This very special man was a devoted husband to Renza and an extra-ordinary father to Gloria and myself. Although we thought we had him wrapped around our little fingers he had us wrapped around his heart. Scolastica's name for her son was 'the right one'. Elio is from the Greek word Helios, meaning 'god of the sun'. Elio did chase the sun in his sense of adventure, his inimitable sense of humour, his mischievous smile, his Sunday *briscola* [a card game] trips to the Newmarket Italian Club and his passion for astronomy, art and westerns.

And— he is probably advising John Wayne right now. A philosopher and a storyteller he lived a very full life. He lovingly gifted us all and did it his own way.

You have to feel that you live it, participate in it, experience it with a sense of humour and let your spirit follow your dream. Life is too short— clichéd but true. I realise that I have indeed learned from my mistakes.

My story is a record of my life. I am writing my memoirs for my family, in particular for my dear grandchildren with the purpose that they could one day know their Italian roots and secondly that they gain some knowledge about themselves through my own experiences. With love, to Christopher, Jonathan, Alex, Conor and Adrianna. This is for you. Bless you all. Papa e Nonno Elio

Elio died in October 2004 at the age of 86. His wife, Renza, followed him to the grave 3 months later. She was 74.



FAR LEFT
Elio and Renza on their wedding day. Tenterfield, New South Wales, 1953.

LEFT
Elio Franz teaching Italian at Adult Education night classes at Bundaberg State High School, Queensland, 1980s.

family history

TRUE STORY OF A GIRL: LINDA POLESEL (née Cengarle)

by Linda Poleisel

Translated by her son John

I was born in 1916 in Passariano, near the town of Codroipo in Friuli in northern Italy, at the time of the Great War. When I was a baby, we were forced to leave our home and flee to Florence as refugees for some months. We then returned to Passariano.

My parents, Carlo Cengarle and Emma Schiava, owned a small tavern and sold groceries. My brother Bruno and I were the youngest of 11 children— 6 girls and 5 boys. The older sisters looked after us. They were hard years. On Saturday nights, we would play *tombola* [bingo] around the hearth. We enjoyed it greatly.

I started school at the age of 6, doing three years at Passariano with my teacher Maria Rotaris. Then we left our village and went to live in nearby Codroipo, where I completed my 6 years of primary schooling.

My father did not have much work. I had a number of older siblings who were married. So at 10 years of age I was sent to Romans di Varmo to live with my oldest sister Nicolina and with my brother Sante who had taken over the tavern in Passariano. My mother would say, 'At least that way, Linda, you will get something to eat'.

Linda Cengarle
with her daughter
Fiorella. 1947.



As I grew up, I became tired of moving and I wanted to earn some money. So I decided to go to the nearby silk factory to ask for work. The manager, Mr Toniolo, looked me up and down because I was small and skinny and I was only 12 years old. He said nothing but the next day he sent his assistant to tell me I could start work. I was unbelievably happy. I had to wear high heels

to reach the workbench. I would run and slide along the floor keeping the weavers supplied with yarns. The manager said I was small but fast.

I would bring home 35 lire each fortnight, and my father was very happy because my sister Tina also worked in the silk factory and earned the same amount. It would all have been well, but there wasn't enough work to keep us going all year. We would get unemployment benefits for the first three months but then we had to look after ourselves. My father and mother did not receive any benefits or pension. So I would help out a local woman by looking after her children and helping around the house—not for pay, but for food. When I was 17 my sister Clelia, who was working as a maid in the southern city of Bari, asked me to join her to work on a large country estate. The family of a Marquis lived in the upstairs of the mansion and the servants lived below. There I learned to become a maid. I looked after the children of the Marchioness, while my sister worked as a cook.

After a year or so, I returned to Codroipo to work in the silk factory. When I was 19, I met a young soldier called Fiore whom I loved and with whom I became pregnant. I cried endlessly, I was devastated and did not know how to tell my mother and father. But Fiore came to my house one night and told them everything, stating that he had been ordered to leave for the Russian front in two days. He said I could go to live with his parents in Borgo Sabatino in Latina, a town 70 kilometres from Rome. We went immediately to the parish priest to arrange for our marriage. But luck was not on our side as Fiore's superior would not grant him permission to delay his departure for Russia. A few days later I left by train for Borgo Sabatino. Fiore sent me a letter asking me to pray that he might get leave for our marriage.

In April of 1943, I gave birth to a baby girl. Fiore's mother asked me to call her after her father, so I named her Fiorella.

A few months after the birth of our little girl, two officials came to our house to bring us the bad news that Fiore was missing in action in Russia. After some time he was declared dead, although this could only be confirmed after many years when we were finally given the location of Fiore's grave in Russia. Fiore's father was devastated. His other son had just returned from Russia where he had sustained horrific injuries resulting in the complete paralysis of the left side of his body.

Fiore's family was made up of good, honest people with hearts of gold. They had 11 children, 8 girls and 3 boys. Just before the war I had taken Fiore's last letter to the municipal offices in Latina. But because all the Council's records and archives had been destroyed during the fighting, I could not give Fiorella her father's surname. Fiore's parents wanted to adopt her but I did not want to lose my daughter.

I remember, not long after her birth, the Germans invaded. These soldiers were very malnourished and a young German would often come to ask Fiore's mother for food. She always gave him something. Later, the Americans arrived and there was a lot of fighting and we were in grave danger.

The American headquarters was near our town so they decided to evacuate us by boat to a town near Salerno. The Americans treated us very well, and gave us clothes and food and some money. As I had the little baby, they would give me a little more. We stayed in Salerno as refugees for a few months and then returned to Borgo Sabatino. We were pleased to be home and find our house still standing, although many others had been completely destroyed.

The more time passed, the more I felt lonely and understood I could not stay with them forever as I was not married. After speaking to my elderly parents in Friuli, I decided to go to live with them. I went back to work in the silk factory. I had lost a huge amount of weight because I had contracted malaria in Latina and was still coming down with bad fevers quite often. Fortunately, Doctor Ballico (God bless him!) managed to obtain from Venice a medicine which helped me a great deal.

After the war, I worked for two more years in the silk factory. One day I received a letter from my sisters, who had emigrated to Australia, telling me there was an honest and hard-working man who wanted to marry me if I would go and live there. He was aware of the fact that I had a little girl and did not see it as an impediment to our marriage. So I decided to join him in Australia.

It was 1947. It was very difficult to find a berth on a ship to Australia. I was anxiously waiting to hear confirmation of my travel arrangements from James Cook travel company when one day I was told that there was a ship leaving the next day from Genoa. I left with my daughter and a suitcase for Milan. There I met up with my

brother-in-law who the next day accompanied me by train to Genoa. At the port there were long queues. As the ship — a small merchant vessel — was about to leave, a porter helped us on. On board we met two women of Greek background, who disembarked in Bombay. There was a long row of cabins. My daughter and I were located in a cabin next to the one with the Greek women. However, as there was no key to our door, I preferred to sleep with them on a mattress on the floor.

When we arrived in Egypt, we were placed in the care of a very kind English couple who accompanied us by train to Alexandria, where we were met by a representative of the James Cook travel company. He took us to the Hotel Astoria, an English hotel, where we stayed for a month. Each day we would go to the travel agent to ask when we were leaving, but in 1947 there were very few ships available, so we had to be patient and wait.

Finally, we were told we were leaving for Australia but instead sailed to Singapore, where we stayed in another hotel for 20 days. At last we left for Australia. We arrived in Sydney, where we were greeted by my sister Clelia and her family.



Young Fiorella with fellow passengers and crew on board the ship that brought her and her mother Linda from Egypt to Singapore. 1947.

We travelled to Melbourne with them, where I met Francesco [Frank] Polesel, the man they had written about. He was very kind and handsome. The next day I learned that he had been married before and was awaiting a divorce. This provided me with a big problem to resolve.

All the same, the sun began to shine for me. He helped me a lot and sent Fiorella to St George's school in Carlton and later to the nuns at the Academy of Mary Immaculate. In the meantime, we got married in a registry office because we couldn't marry in a church. We lived at 54 Carlton Street, Carlton until 1959 when we moved to East Kew.

Then we decided to have a child. Unfortunately, we lost our baby, Francesco, a few days after his birth. The doctor encouraged us to try again. And so a year later John was born—I chose this name because a book I was reading said that John means a gift from God, and it was easy for me to pronounce in English! John is now working at the University of Melbourne and is married to an Irish girl. They have a son called Stephen.

My daughter Fiorella and her husband Tom have three children, Lisa, Belinda and Robert who are all university educated. My husband died 6 years ago and now I'm alone. My children come and see me often and I am happy—I ask for nothing and do not want riches. I only want my family to get on well and be happy.

Now I find myself embarrassed sometimes because I never tried to learn English, partly because I never worked in Australia. At home we always spoke Italian (or Friulano or Veneto) and so I speak no English. The years in Australia have flown—happy years with my family. I would go to the Fogolar Furlan Club on Saturdays with my husband, my sister and my brother and his wife. We played bingo and my husband would play cards.

My husband, Frank, was good and just. He had his own business, the Exhibition Bakery, in partnership with Carmelo and Elio Migliorini. In my first years in Australia I would help him make the dough. We saw many parts of Australia together and I can say that this country is very beautiful. Over the years we visited Italy twice, once with our daughter and once with our son, to see all the relatives—including my daughter's father's family who welcomed us most generously.

In the last few years all my brothers and sisters have died. Now I'm the last one.

Linda's siblings

Nicolina, b.1896, married to Bruno Benvenuti. Migrated to Australia in the 1920s

Sante, b.1897, married to Carmela

Giovanni, b.1899, married to Catalina. Migrated to Argentina early 1930s

Maria, b.1900, married to Maurizio Molinari. Migrated to Argentina early 1930s

Flaminio, b.1902, married to Este

Silvia, b.1908, married to Gino Baù

Clelia, b.1910, married to Antonio De Apollonia. Migrated to Australia early 1940 1940

Fausto, b.1912, married to Alice

Argentina, b.1915, married to Virginio Turco. Migrated to Australia in 1949

Bruno, b.1921, married to Carmen. Migrated to Australia in 1948

Reunion of the extended Cengarle family at the Fogolar Furlan Club, Melbourne, mid 1980s.



publications received

BOOKS IN ENGLISH

NERLI: AN AUSTRALIAN PAINTER IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

BY MICHAEL DUNN, AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY PRESS, NEW ZEALAND, 2005.

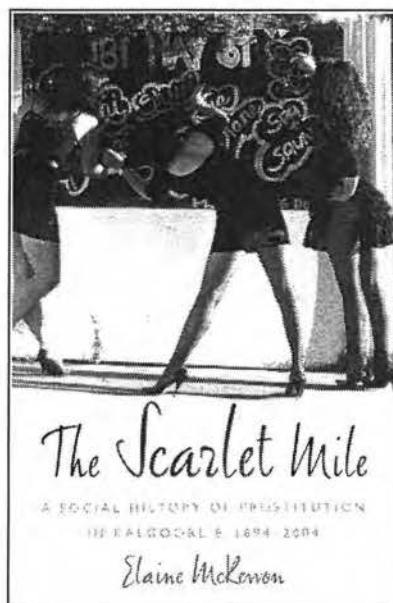
The Italian landscape and portrait painter travelled extensively throughout Australia and New Zealand during the 1880s and 1890s. A colourful and popular figure, he nonetheless had a significant influence on the work of the Australian Impressionists. Until recently however, his contribution has been largely overlooked. Richly illustrated with reproductions of photographs and art works, this folio restores the reputation of a significant artist and teacher, and provides an account of the life and the work.



THE SCARLET MILE: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF PROSTITUTION IN KALGOORLIE, 1894-2004

BY ELAINE MCKEWON, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA PRESS, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, 2005.

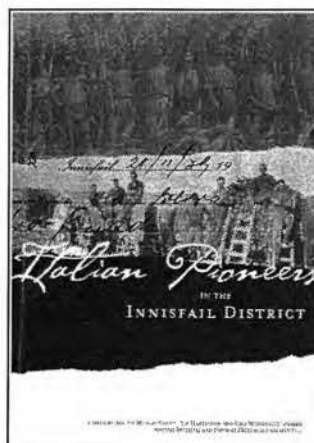
Kalgoorlie's ladies of the night have shared the same street with the local police station since 1902. The town is best known for two things: goldmining and prostitution. For more than a century, police and the local council turned a blind eye on the brothels that first made their appearance on the goldfields, where they serviced the lonely men who had left wives and lovers at home in Italy, China, Britain and the Baltic states. This lively and informative publication is the first official history of the Kalgoorlie sex industry, from its humble beginnings on the goldfields to the popular and highly successful tourist attractions of today.



ITALIAN PIONEERS IN THE INNISFAIL DISTRICT

EDITED BY ADA DE MUNARI CHOAT, ALF MARTINUZZI AND ILMA MARTINUZZI O'BRIEN FOR THE INNISFAIL AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC., MINERVA E & S, BRISBANE, 2003.

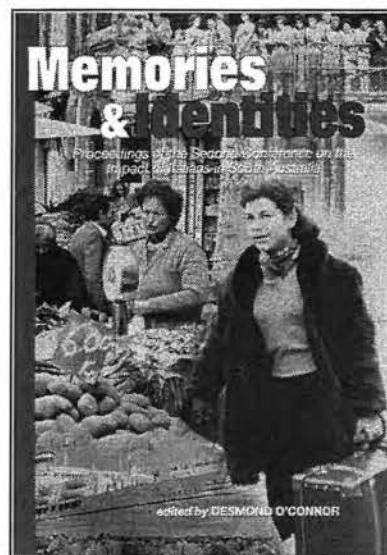
This publication covers the arrival of Italian migrants in and around the Innisfail area from the mid-1890s to the late 1930s. The pioneers who settled in the Johnstone Shire came in waves, first from the Veneto, then Sicily, Piedmont, Lombardy and Friuli. The book concentrates on the individual stories of these families as told through oral history interviews, research and photographs.



**MEMORIES AND IDENTITIES:
PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND
CONFERENCE ON THE IMPACT OF
ITALIANS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

EDITED BY DESMOND O'CONNOR, AUSTRALIAN
HUMANITIES PRESS, ADELAIDE, 2004.

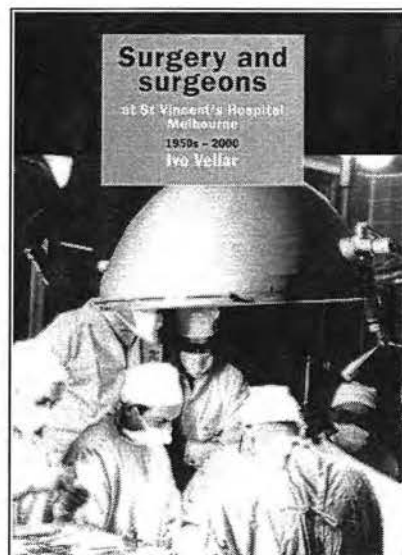
This book is the fruit of a conference held in 2003 which addressed the story of Italian migration to South Australia by people from Friuli Venezia Giulia, Calabria and Sangiorgio. Among the topics covered are the Catholic Church and its role in aiding Italian migrants, identity issues for first generation migrants, the teaching of Italian in South Australian schools and Italian regional languages in South Australia, the needs of the aged migrant population, and Italian-Australian women's culture and history.



**SURGERY AND SURGEONS AT
ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL MELBOURNE,
1950S – 2000**

BY IVO VELLAR, PUBLISHING SOLUTIONS, RICHMOND,
PUBLISHING SOLUTIONS, 2004.

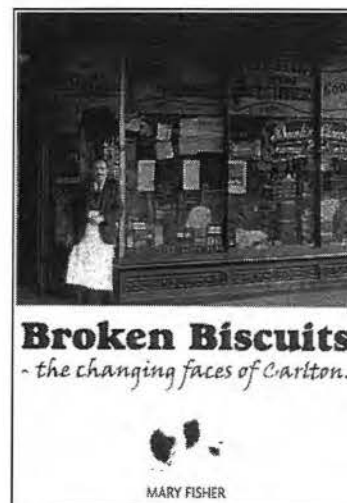
This is the second and final volume of the series in which Dr Ivo Vellar recounts the history of surgery at his alma mater, from its beginnings as a tiny cottage hospital in 1893 to recognition as a major university teaching hospital in 2000. This is, in part, a firsthand account by a doctor who was "an operating surgeon who happened to have lived through most of that era and witnessed first-hand some of the important events that influenced the development of surgery at St. Vincent's Hospital".



**BROKEN BISCUITS:
THE CHANGING FACE OF CARLTON**

BY MARY FISHER, YARRA-MELBOURNE REGIONAL
LIBRARY, COLLINGWOOD, 2005.

"Like broken biscuits, the lives of immigrants are often broken and brittle. In Carlton, the Italians and others, found fertile ground to re-establish their communities in the early 19th century to the present day". This is how Mary Fisher describes her account of life in Carlton from her arrival in Australia in 1927 as a young lady of 15. While the stories of post-World War II Carlton deal predominantly with the experiences of Jewish migrants, there are also glimpses into the Italian, Irish and Greek enclaves.



CESARE VAGARINI: SESSANTANNI DI PITTURA

BY PAOLO FOSSATI, ARTE CONTINUA, SIENA, 1993.

Many of our readers will remember the travelling exhibition *Cesare Vagarini: the work of the Italian painter at POW Camp 3, Tatura, during World War II*, held in March 1999 at the Benalla Art Gallery and later presented at the Italian Historical Society in Melbourne. As a follow-up, the Society established contacts with a nephew of Vagarini, who sent material and information on the life and works of the artist after his return to Italy, including this publication.

This beautiful full-colour homage to the artist was published to coincide with the launch of an exhibition of the same name held at the Galleria Continua in San Gimignano, Tuscany. Included in this retrospective are his Italian paintings from the early 1930s, work created in Palestine, and images produced during Vagarini's incarceration as an enemy alien at Tatura Internment Camp in Victoria. The artist was painting in Palestine when Italy entered the war on the side of the Axis. He was captured by the Allies in June 1940 and sent with other Italian nationals to internment camps in Australia. The text, in both Italian and English, provides an account of the life and work of the artist.



BOOKS IN ITALIAN

CON LA VALIGIA IN MANO: L'EMIGRAZIONE NEL FELTRINO DALLA FINE DELL'OTTOCENTO AL 1970

EDITED BY DANILEA PERCO, AGORA LIBRERIA
EDITRICE, FELTRE, 2004.

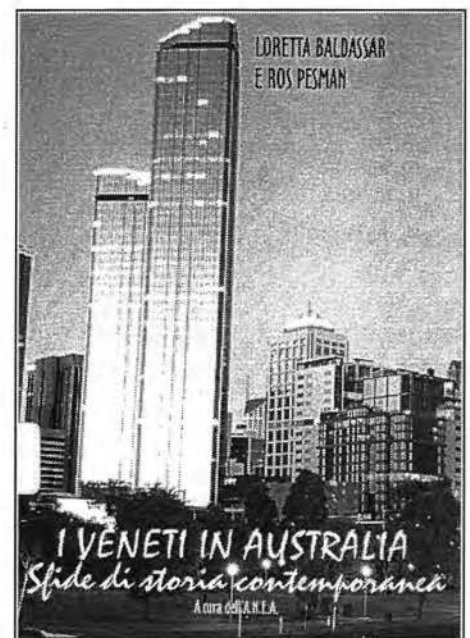
This publication draws on images and stories from the exhibition of the same name held in Feltre, Belluno in January 2003. It is a lively and eloquent presentation of the migration phenomena from this north-eastern Italian region. The book is wonderfully illustrated with photographs and documents gleaned from mostly private collections. Australia is represented and the text thorough and well researched.



I VENETI IN AUSTRALIA:**SFIDE DI STORIA CONTEMPORANEA**

BY ROSLYN PESMAN COOPER AND LORETTA BALDASSAR IN ASSOCIATION WITH ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE EMIGRATI ED EX-EMIGRATI IN AUSTRALIA E AMERICHE [ANEA], REGIONE VENETO, PADUA, 2004.

Migrants from the Veneto region began arriving in Australia in the 1850s and went on to make their impact in the fields of mining, agriculture, tailoring and hospitality. The veneti had for centuries travelled across Italy and the Alps in search of employment, always with the intention of returning home. The enormous distance between Australia and Italy shaped new patterns of chain and return migration, whereby an individual made frequent extended visits to Australia. The authors explore the changes wrought on the veneta community in Australia by time and by changing attitudes among the second and third generation.

**GLI ESPERTI DIMENTICATI DI MULTICULTURALITÀ,**

BY BENEDETTA BASTIANINI, ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE EMIGRATI ED EX-EMIGRATI IN AUSTRALIA E AMERICHE [ANEA], PADUA, 2003.

This publication ventures into rarely explored territory: that of the return migrant. What are the unique set of issues and problems faced by these people who, either by choice or circumstance, migrate twice: once to a foreign land and then, years later, back to Italy? In the words of the author, these migrants are "experts" in the field of multiculturalism as they have twice lived the migration process, with all its associated struggles and rewards. The research for this book was conducted in Australia.

**THESES IN ITALIAN****ASPETTI E PROBLEMI RELATIVI AI FENOMENI DI CODE-SWITCHING E CODE-MIXING NELL'AUSTRALITALIANO,**

BY ROSALINDA DI VIRGILIO, UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI "G. D'ANNUNZIO", CHIETI-PESCARA, 2004.

A thesis of this type demonstrates the readiness of university students in Italy to embrace Australian and Italian-Australian culture in particular. This candidate has investigated English language interference in the written and spoken Italian of first and second generation Italian-Australians. The thesis also investigates the reasons behind such a phenomenon.



FONDAZIONE CASSAMARCA
TREVISO



Australian Government

**Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs**

