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CO·AS·IT



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The *Italian Historical Society Journal* aims to provide, to those interested in the history of Italian-Australian 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 can be found on the last page of this issue.

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Cover photograph: V. Ciotti (at steering wheel), F. Carmagnola (standing, with hat), L. Bertazzon (child in back seat), and others near the Matteotti Club. Melbourne 1927.

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CO.AS.IT.'s first President, Mrs. Elda Vaccari sadly passed away on 7th August 2007 at the age of 95. The Hon. Justice Gaetano Pagone spoke of her work and legacy at a Memorial service held in her honour.

## **VALE ELDA VACCARI**

**Memorial service to celebrate the life of Mrs Elda Vaccari, St.  
Anthony's Church, 16 September 2007**

***G.T. Pagone, President, Co.As.It.***

Elda Vaccari was a remarkable woman. Most of you know that and need no reminder. I met her only once and it was earlier this year, on 27 March, when her son, Franco, kindly arranged a meeting with her at her home. It was important for me to meet with her because I had not long become President of CO.AS.IT. and wanted to meet the woman who had been its first President and whose presence I could still feel there. I have always been conscious at CO.AS.IT. of Elda Vaccari as a force in its creation and as a continuing part of its present dynamism. The meeting did not disappoint me. I found an elderly 95-year-old woman of extraordinary energy, determination and independence. Her hearing was not as good as it must once have been, but she was sharp in thought and determined that she, and not her youngest son, would make me a cup of coffee on the modern equipment in her kitchen. The determination paid off and I enjoyed some of the famous Elda Vaccari hospitality.

I also found on that day a woman of great generosity, willing to talk about whatever we felt like talking about without restriction or qualification. We spoke of CO.AS.IT. and of the land at South Morang which had been bought under the guidance of her husband. She recalled events with great clarity and I had no doubt about being in the presence of quite a woman.

One of her recollections is also recorded in the recently published biography *Gualtiero Vaccari: A man of quality* by Geoff Easdown. It was of the first meeting between the young Elda Nicoletti, as she then was, and her future husband, Gualtiero. Their first meeting occurred in the historical ruins at Pompeii in 1937 when Elda was reportedly remonstrating with a group of homebound Australian travellers. Elda was attempting to pay for her share of the costs of visiting the historic ruins at Pompeii but the Australians, they thought generously, were refusing to accept payment from her. A then as yet unknown gentleman sought to intervene. She remembered the gentleman as having "a lovely, lovely smile". He helpfully explained what the Australian was saying, but Elda maintained her view. The gentleman's assessment of

the young Elda was an admiration of her "independence". And independent she was. At 95, she still lived at home, able largely to look after herself and to make a coffee for a visitor.

That same independence is built into the very fabric of CO.AS.IT. and is part of the legacy that she has left the Italian community in Victoria. Between 1967 and 1970, the Italian Government established and funded a number of agencies to provide welfare services to Italian immigrants. One of those is CO.AS.IT. in Melbourne. In 1967, Elda Vaccari was invited by the then Consul General, Dr Ferrari di Carpi, to form a CO.AS.IT. in Victoria. She was, by then, already well known for her involvement with charitable bodies helping Italian migrants. She accepted the invitation but did so on two conditions. The first was that her "CO.AS.IT." was to be independent of the Italian Consulate, the second was that it should be a welfare agency structured according to the laws of Australia. These two conditions are fundamental to the success of CO.AS.IT. and explains its independence. They were also used as a model for other migrant organisations which later followed. CO.AS.IT. in Victoria today enjoys an important degree of independence from Italian or Australian Government interference, which enables it to mould its activities as it thinks best for the benefit of its community.

In remembering the contribution of Elda Vaccari, I do not want to lessen the importance of the many other people who were also part of the creation of CO.AS.IT. in its infancy. She could not, of course, have done it all on her own and without many other people with ideas, leadership, hard work and unthanked disappointments. However, my desire not to be unfair to others should not be at the expense of failing to recognise her contribution as one of those leaders. The times may also have contributed to some of the success of the opportunities which were taken up, but on any view she was part of the group providing leadership at a time when those opportunities were there to be moulded and accepted.

Elda Vaccari's involvement in CO.AS.IT. was not just at the Board level: She was very much a hands-on worker. In her early days, she taught Italian to the children of Italian migrants, some of whom may be present at this mass. Elda Vaccari believed that CO.AS.IT. had a role in teaching Italian and in 1968 the first CO.AS.IT. Italian language class for children of Italian migrants commenced at St Georges Primary School in Rathdowne Street. The number of students increased from that initial course year after year, and many will remember the annual "concerto di fine anno" at the Camberwell Civic Centre attended by more than 1,500 proud parents.

In 1968 the Australian Government was persuaded to provide a grant to pay the salary of a social worker employed by CO.AS.IT. This was a significant development and was the first grant of this kind in Australia and was to be the forerunner of many such grants for migrant communities in this country. Another outstanding achievement was to register CO.AS.IT. with the Hospitals and Charities Commission, which would allow tax deductible financial donations and would attract funding for the refurbishment of the new office in Drummond Street, which was officially opened in 1971.

In 1968 she was instrumental in forming a group of active and enthusiastic volunteers primarily to visit Italian families at home, individuals in major hospitals, in baby health centres and in various institutions where they

provided interpreting services. Families, especially children and mothers, were a priority for Elda Vaccari. Together with the late Mrs Linda Muscat, coordinator of our Italian language classes, Elda Vaccari organised the first "colonia marina" at the Don Bosco Holiday Camp in Dromana. This gave approximately 70 children of Italian origin the opportunity to enjoy a holiday they might not otherwise be able to have. A priority for children and mothers also saw the establishment of childcare centres, with the first childcare centre being established in 1977 in Brunswick with the financial assistance of the Australian Federal Government.

The social work activities of CO.AS.IT. often came in contact with dramatic problems, particularly where families were in conflict. This created a need to provide at least temporary accommodation, especially for women and children who needed to leave their family homes. Together with the social workers, Elda Vaccari looked for a house to rent close to the office so that the needed support could be provided in a safe environment. In 1976, the first migrant "half-way house" in Australia (later referred to as the women's refuge) was established. Furniture was generously donated and the house was painted by a group of American Mormons in exchange for meals.

Financial resources in the early days of CO.AS.IT. were scarce and its activities relied heavily on volunteers. Elda Vaccari was not only the President of CO.AS.IT., but an integral part of the volunteer network. I am told that some can still recall her coming to CO.AS.IT. every day in her white "Fiat 132". Some claim even to recall that she would occasionally find her car space occupied by one of the staff (probably a newly appointed staff member unaware of the reaction that this "unauthorised" occupation might provoke). On such occasions, I am told, staff would scuttle about finding things to do while the parking arrangements were being "sorted out".

I am also told that Elda Vaccari was famous for her working lunches with Government Ministers. In that regard, she and Mrs Gina Triaca would frequently cook at their place and bring their Italian specialties to the office. These "tempting" occasions gave encouragement for Ministers to give additional welfare services to the Italian community when convinced that the Government was not doing enough for the community.

In 1971, Elda Vaccari wrote in her report as President that:

*"... Initiated by the efforts of a few for the benefit of many, CO.AS.IT. Melbourne fulfils a duty, which is both humanitarian and civic. The work of CO.AS.IT. is a necessity because it fills a gap in this country. The help, understanding and encouragement of Australian society is the migrant's right. The experience and support of his co-nationals is of supreme importance in facilitating the migrant's integration. In its three years of activity, CO.AS.IT. has affirmed itself and it has laid sound foundations for the future".*

In 1978, Elda Vaccari wrote in her President's Report:

*"Entering into the second decade of CO.AS.IT.'s activities, we cannot resist looking back and judging this organisation, its accomplishments and failures. I invite people interested in the welfare of Italian migrants to think about CO.AS.IT. which started relying only on the goodwill of people and has grown to*

*become an agency of professional services for Italian migrants. My firm belief, after many years of close involvement, is that CO.AS.IT. has exceeded the expectations of its initiators through providing a wide range of welfare services such as counselling, welfare rights, employment, childcare, youth work, housing and emergency accommodation services, women's refuge and Italian classes. My last but not my least thought is to my late husband who, from the beginning, was always supporting me and CO.AS.IT., ensuring the growth of this organisation and, by promoting and then establishing the home for elderly Italians, "Gualtiero Vaccari", he made it possible to alleviate one of the major needs frequently confronted by CO.AS.IT. in the Italian community".*

Giancarlo Martini is recorded in the biography of Gualtiero Vaccari as referring to him as "Elda's rock" (p.142) in her work and commitment to CO.AS.IT. That may be, but for CO.AS.IT. the rock was Elda herself, and through the hard work and commitment described by Giancarlo Martini, she has left us with a legacy that is real, material and significant. The loss we feel now that she has gone is felt with a profound gratitude that she was who she was, that she has left so much, and that her presence is still felt.



# Refractory Migrants. Fascist Surveillance on Italians in Australia 1922-1943

*by Gianfranco Cresciani*

*Gianfranco Cresciani emigrated from Trieste to Sydney in 1962. He worked for EPT, the Ethnic Affairs Commission and the Ministry for the Arts of the NSW Government on cultural and migration issues. In 1989 and 1994 he was member of the Australian Delegation re-negotiating with the Italian Government the Italo-Australian Cultural Agreement. Master of Arts (First Class Honours) from Sydney University in 1978. Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, from the*

*University of New South Wales in 2005, in recognition of "distinguished eminence in the field of history". In 2004 the Italian Government awarded him the honour of Cavaliere Ufficiale dell'Ordine al Merito for facilitating cultural exchanges between Italy and Australia. He has produced books, articles, exhibitions and radio and television programs in Australia and Italy on the history of Italian migration to Australia.*

*There are exiles that gnaw and others  
that are like consuming fire.  
There is a heartache for the murdered  
country...*

*- Pablo Neruda*

*We can never forget  
what happened to our country  
and we must always remind those responsible  
that we know who they are.*

*- Elizabeth Rivera*

One of the more salient and frightening aspects of European dictatorships during the Twentieth Century, in their effort to achieve totalitarian control of

their societies, was the grassroots surveillance carried out by their state security organisations, of the plots and machinations of their opponents. Nobody described better this process of capillary penetration in the minds and conditioning of the lives of people living under Communist or Fascist regimes than George Orwell in his book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1), published in 1949 and warning us on the danger of Newspeak, Doublethink, Big Brother and the Thought Police. However, the process of mass surveillance of refractory subjects preceded the rise of totalitarianism. The Ochrana in Tsarist Russia and the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* (Directorate-General of Public Safety) in Liberal Italy, to give just two examples, had already begun this screening practice at the end of the Nineteenth Century (2). However, it was in the Twentieth Century that the obsession for pervasive, absolute control reached new heights. For instance, when in July 2003 the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) returned to the Federal Republic of Germany the so-called Rosenwood files, the archives of the *Stasi*, the Secret Police of the defunct German Democratic Republic, that the CIA had obtained in 1992 from a Russian KGB officer who had worked in East Berlin, it was discovered that the *Stasi* employed more than 200,000 secret agents and that over 2.4 million East Germans were placed under *Stasi* observation during Communist rule (3).

Fascist Italy, between 1922 and 1945, also set up a system of espionage over its enemies. In January 1924, Mussolini ordered the establishment of a Fascist secret police, led by one of his trusted thugs and Chief of his Press Office, Cesare Rossi, proposing to call it CEKA, "as the Soviet CEKA, it sounds good". It is reported that in June 1924 the future Duce, deeply irritated by the staunch parliamentary opposition by Giacomo Matteotti, asked what was the Fascist CEKA doing to silence the Socialist leader (4), who afterwards was kidnapped and murdered. In 1927, following the disbanding of CEKA, the Regime created OVRA, a menacing acronym, yet again coined by Mussolini himself, that was deemed to mean *Opera Volontaria di Repressione dell'Antifascismo* (Voluntary Organisation for the Repression of Anti-Fascism). It was loosely modelled on the Soviet internal security agency, the Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolutionaries and Saboteurs (CEKA), that in February 1922 changed its name to the Government Political Administration (GPU), to become after 1934 the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD). Also in 1927, the Italian Ministry of the Interior had its old security arm, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, restructured into seven Divisions (General and Confidential Affairs, Political Police, Personnel, Armed Forces, Police, Contracts and Supply, Border and Transport Police). OVRA was directly responsible to the Chief of the Division of Political Police (*Divisione Polizia Politica*) who, in turn, reported to the crafty and cunning Chief of Police, Arturo Bocchini. Until his death in 1940, Bocchini briefed Mussolini daily on the plans, or otherwise, of the anti-Fascists. In 1933, OVRA established a network of eleven Zones. Staff maintained surveillance activities, both at home and abroad, through a network of 380 informers, some of whom managed their own pool of sub-informers. The other Divisions also had their independent network of

informers, adding to the amount of intelligence gathered on Italian communities abroad.

The *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* had established in 1894 a *Casellario Politico Centrale* (Central Political Repository) that began maintaining files on the categories of "Anarchists", "Anarco-Socialists", "Socialists" and "Republicans". This system required an endless series of checks of 'subversives', real or imaginary. The files had to be constantly updated by the gathering of information, either discreetly or, when the subject was considered particularly dangerous, with overt, intimidating vigilance. Fascism added "Communists" and "Anti-Fascists" to the categories, and exponentially increased the number of people under its surveillance. By the end of 1927, the *Casellario Politico Centrale* comprised 130,000 files, an increase of 100,000 (5) over the number kept by the governments of Liberal Italy, to peak at a total of 158,000, contained in 5,570 *buste* (boxes) by the end of the Regime. The biographical notes included the dissident's education, profession, physical and alleged psychological characteristics, moods (whether he was excitable, irritable, easily led, etc.), and the 'moral tendencies', ranging from laziness to sexual tendencies (6).

Following the collapse of Fascism in 1945 and the defeat of the Monarchy in 1946, the Governments of Republican Italy continued to operate the system, albeit adapting it to the new political situation created by the Cold War. The *Casellario Politico Centrale* was restructured by General of the *Carabinieri* Giuseppe Pièche, a former OVRA collaborator who had led secret Fascist missions during the Spanish Civil War and after 1945 aided and abetted the formation of neo-Fascist groups (7). In February 1946 the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* established the *Servizio Informazioni Speciali* (Special Information Service, in short SIS), under the command of Leone Santoro, who in 1936-37 had been OVRA's Inspector-General in charge of training the Police of Portuguese Clerical-Fascist dictator Antonio de Oliveira Salazar in the techniques of screening dissidents and repressing political opposition (8). One of SIS's main tasks was that of maintaining the *Casellario Politico Centrale*.

In 1948 SIS was replaced by the *Divisione Affari Riservati* (Division of Confidential Affairs), still under the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, but now directly responsible to the Chief of Police. Its Head was Gesualdo Barletta, at that time Deputy-Commissioner of Police and former OVRA *Questore* (Inspector-General) in charge of the Rome region, who soon gathered around him other former colleagues and informers. Barletta remained in charge of the *Divisione Affari Riservati* until 1956. He was succeeded by Giuseppe Lutri, who, during the dictatorship, had been in charge of Turin's Political Police and in March 1934, with unmistakable anti-Semitic zest, rounded up Jewish supporters of Giustizia e Libertà. On 30 June 1960, as *Questore* of Genoa, Lutri authorised the police charge against the participants to a rally in protest of Christian-Democrat leader Fernando Tambroni's attempt to form a government in coalition with the neo-Fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano, an attack which wounded 83. Lutri led the

*Divisione Affari Riservati* until 1969. Two other glaring instances of chameleon-like political transformism were those of Saverio Polito and Guido Leto. Polito, who in the 'Thirties had been Chief of the 4<sup>th</sup> OVRA Zone (Umbria, Abruzzi, Molise), achieved notoriety when he received a 24 years jail sentence for "acts of aggravated indecency" (*per atti di libidine violenta*), for having forced Mussolini's wife, Rachele, to put her hand on his genitals (*tra le sue luride vergogne*, as Donna Rachele's charge read), while he was escorting her to Rocca delle Carminate in August 1943. Appointed *Questore* of Rome in the late 'Forties, Polito was compelled to retire in 1954 after his clumsy attempt to derail the inquest on the death of Wilma Montesi, a case that exposed internecine struggles within the Christian Democratic leadership. Guido Leto, who since 1926 had been a close associate of Bocchini, in October 1938 became the Chief of the *Divisione Polizia Politica* and kept his position under the infamous Repubblica Sociale Italiana, until 26 April 1945, when he offered his collaboration to the partisans and to the Allied Counter Intelligence Corps. In 1948 he was readmitted to the ranks and appointed Technical Director of the Police Academy. Leto retired in 1951, to be engaged by the Marzotto family as Director of the Jolly Hotels chain (9).

It would be expected that, after the liberation of Italy from Fascism, the records of the Regime's iniquities would be made public. This was not and – sadly – still is not the case. Many of the six thousand personal files of OVRA's and other agencies' agents, double-agents, informers, collaborators and spies were destroyed, some by Leto during his administration. Other incriminating records, in particular the personal file on Hitler and those on Nazi espionage in Italy, were confiscated by Herbert Kappler, the so-called 'butcher of the Ardeatine Caves'. The residue was deposited only in 1969 at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (State Central Archives) in Rome, which currently lists only 21 *buste* on OVRA for scholarly consultation, as well as 2,064 *buste* of the archives of the *Divisione Polizia Politica*. The record of the 380 Zone informers on OVRA's payroll, as well as the papers of the High Commission for Sanctions against Fascism, totalling 431 *buste* and 11 registers containing documentation on the trials of people highly compromised with the Regime, are still closed to researchers. Also, part of the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* papers is still unexplainably kept by the Ministry of the Interior. As well, the original list of informers on the payroll of the Division of Political Police is still considered top secret, although we know that the 622 names released on 2 July 1946 in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale* represent only a minority of the '*spie del Regime*' (10). It is difficult to understand the reason for this secrecy in the post-Cold War era as, for instance, it is hard to accept the restrictions imposed on access to the 1,200 files on indicted and – unlike the German and the Japanese ones – never tried Italian war criminals, files compiled by the United Nations War Crimes Commission after the Second World War and now kept in the archives of the United Nations Organisation (11).

Incredibly, under the governments of democratic, Republican Italy, the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was still maintained, and by 1961 contained

13,716 new files. Its use as an instrument for screening dissent would be reluctantly terminated only in the following years. Indeed, it is almost beyond belief that, as late as 22 September 1962, the *Questura* of Bologna was communicating to the Ministry of the Interior that, "considering his old age, this Office has determined to cancel today from the list of subversives (*lo ha radiato da questo schedario politico*)" Ignazio Spinelli, a Communist who since 1936 had been politically inactive and was then 68 years of age. Of these files, 12,491, or 91 per cent, were on people classified as left-wing extremists, 177 as Anarchists and only 626, or 4.5 per cent, as right-wing extremists (12). An indication this, of the continuity of the bias against the Left by the State Security apparatus, be it in Liberal, Fascist or Republican Italy. As well as in the files of OVRA and of the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, a wealth of information on the opposition to Fascism is available in the 12,330 files maintained on the *confinati*, the people who for different reasons were sent to *confino*, to isolation in God-forgotten villages of Southern Italy. This was the case for Carlo Levi, the author of *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, an account of his two-year detention in the Lucanian village of Aliano (13).

As mentioned before, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* carried out surveillance on the opposition to Fascism also among Italian migrant communities abroad, including in Australia. The Consulate-General in Melbourne, transferred to Sydney in 1928, the Consulates, Branches of the Fascist Party, the *Dopolavoro* (After Work clubs), the Italian Returned Soldiers Association, the Dante Alighieri Society, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Australia, were all institutions that aided and abetted the gathering of information on the whereabouts and the activities of Italian migrants who, for one reason or another, had been in trouble with Fascism in Italy or who had fallen foul of the Fascist representatives in Australia. They were assisted in their intelligence work by a network of Italian *confidenti*, informers and *agent provocateurs*. In addition, the *Direzione Polizia Politica* had placed at the main Italian border posts special agents who would tail migrants, especially if Communist, when they came back to Italy, to uncover possible contacts with members of the underground opposition, that often resulted in the arrest of the entire network of conspirators.

The *Casellario Politico Centrale* at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato contains records on 233 Italian migrants in Australia. It has been ascertained that files were kept on other migrants in Australia, but they have been misplaced, transferred to other agencies or simply missed in the search carried out in 1989 for the Author by staff of the Archives. Of the people signalled as worthy of police attention, 230 were men, and only three women, two from the Veneto and one from Friuli. The first observation that can be made is the relatively high number of people who, in far-away Australia, were still a concern to the Fascist authorities. According to Australian Census data for 1933, at that time there were in Australia 20,064 Italian males and 6,692 females (14). If one considers the scattering of migrants in remote rural areas of the vast Australian continent, the monitoring of over 1 per cent of them on the part of the Fascist authorities betrayed the Regime's deep sense

of insecurity, as well as its doggedness in pursuit of those it named as enemies. The opening of a file on these migrants was motivated by their real or alleged political persuasion and by the perceived level of threat that they represented to Italian interests in Australia or in case they would return to Italy. Of the 233, the greatest number were Communist (77), while 57 were Socialist, 31 Anarchist and 11 Republican. Another 56 were vaguely called 'anti-Fascists' and one was labelled a 'subversive' (15). The overwhelming majority (178) came from Northern Italy, while only 21 were born in Central Italy and 31 from the South. Of the Northern Italian component, almost half (83) originated in the Veneto. The birthplace of three people was not available (16). An analysis of their occupation is also indicative, because no less than 54 different trades and professions were declared. Most – as is to be expected – were working class occupations, dominated by farm workers of one kind or another (90) and followed by a good representation of tradespeople. People who could vaguely be classed as middle class or intellectuals totalled 16, while one person was entered in the file as *possidente* (property owner) (17).

Beside surveillance, the means used by the Fascist authorities to intimidate, control, repress or cajole into submission and collaboration refractory migrants varied considerably. The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain ample evidence of these methods. Sometimes the migrant was invited to come to the Consulate, where the Consul or his staff gave him a dressing down for his politically unacceptable behaviour. His parents, family or relatives in Italy were then visited by members of the Fascist paramilitary organisation, the *Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale* (Voluntary Militia for National Security) or by the *Carabinieri*, who confiscated letters, photos or other compromising literature sent by the 'subversive' to his next-of-kin. This material then ended in the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. On other occasions the correspondence of those anti-Fascists was intercepted and seized. This operation was facilitated by the fact that the Australian postal service relied on Italian consular authorities to trace the address of often itinerant Italian workers. Also, the Consulates availed themselves of the services of the Australian Police who obligingly located people who had escaped the Fascist dragnet. The Fascist Consuls lobbied Australian employers to dismiss prominent anti-Fascists, as was the case for Omero Schiassi in Melbourne in the 'Twenties, or denounced them to the Australian authorities as dangerous Anarchists or Communists, as was the case for Francesco Carmagnola, and requested that they be deported to Italy. There is also circumstantial evidence of an attempt to kidnap Omero Schiassi by some Italian sailors and return him to Italy. When the Italian cruiser *Raimondo Montecuccoli* berthed in Melbourne in 1938, an Italian distributing anti-Fascist literature was forcibly detained on board for some time by the sailors, provoking a diplomatic incident between the two countries. Italian migrants who were deemed particularly active or dangerous were registered in the *Bollettino delle Ricerche* (Search Bulletin), distributed to all law enforcement agencies with instructions to look for them and signal their whereabouts, as well as in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* (Border Register), with instructions to the police to search, either report their movements or detain

them immediately in case they tried to re-enter Italy. In extreme circumstances, diehard opponents had their Italian citizenship revoked and their property confiscated by the authorities under special law no. 108, promulgated on 31 January 1926 (18).



*The Italian cruiser Raimondo Montecuccoli during its controversial visit to Melbourne in 1938.*

The specific circumstances that brought people in Australia to the attention of the Fascist authorities varied. In most cases a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* had already been opened on them before their departure from Italy by reason of their previous dissident activities. Otherwise their names were sent by the Fascist Consuls to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* in Rome for inclusion in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, in response to allegations of their proselytising amongst migrants. While, during the 'Thirties, the suppression of Communism was foremost in the minds of the representatives of Fascism in Australia, in the 'Twenties the spectre of Anarchism concerned them most. An indication of the burgeoning Anarchism among Italian migrants is given by the number of Anarchist papers that appeared in those years, despite protestations by the Consul-General to the Australian authorities. In July 1927, Valentino Ciotti, a member of the

Anarchist Matteotti Club in Melbourne, edited *Il Risveglio* (The Awakening), but the paper was suppressed by the Attorney-General after the third issue, following strong representations made by an irate Consul-General, Antonio Grossardi (19).



*Members of the Matteotti Club and anti-Fascists. Melbourne, May Day 1928. Included are Isidoro Bertazzon (far left, second row from right) and Francesco Carmagnola (far right, standing at front).*

Between 1928 and 1932, Isidoro Bertazzon, also a member of the Matteotti Club, edited an impressive number of single issue newspapers, changing their name at every issue, in order to circumvent the censure of the Australian authorities. Thus, in August 1928 appeared *Il Calvario* (The Calvary), followed by *L'azione* (Action, September 1928), *Giacomo Matteotti* (10 June 1929), *Germinal* (July 1929), *In memoria* (August 1929), *Il Risveglio* (October 1929), followed by the multi-issue *L'Avanguardia Libertaria* (The Libertarian Vanguard, 14 June 1930-15 November 1932), granted permission to publish by the new Scullin Labor Government (20). In Ingham, North Queensland, charismatic leader Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola published another Anarchist sheet, *La Riscossa* (The Counter-Attack, June 1929-December 1931) (21).

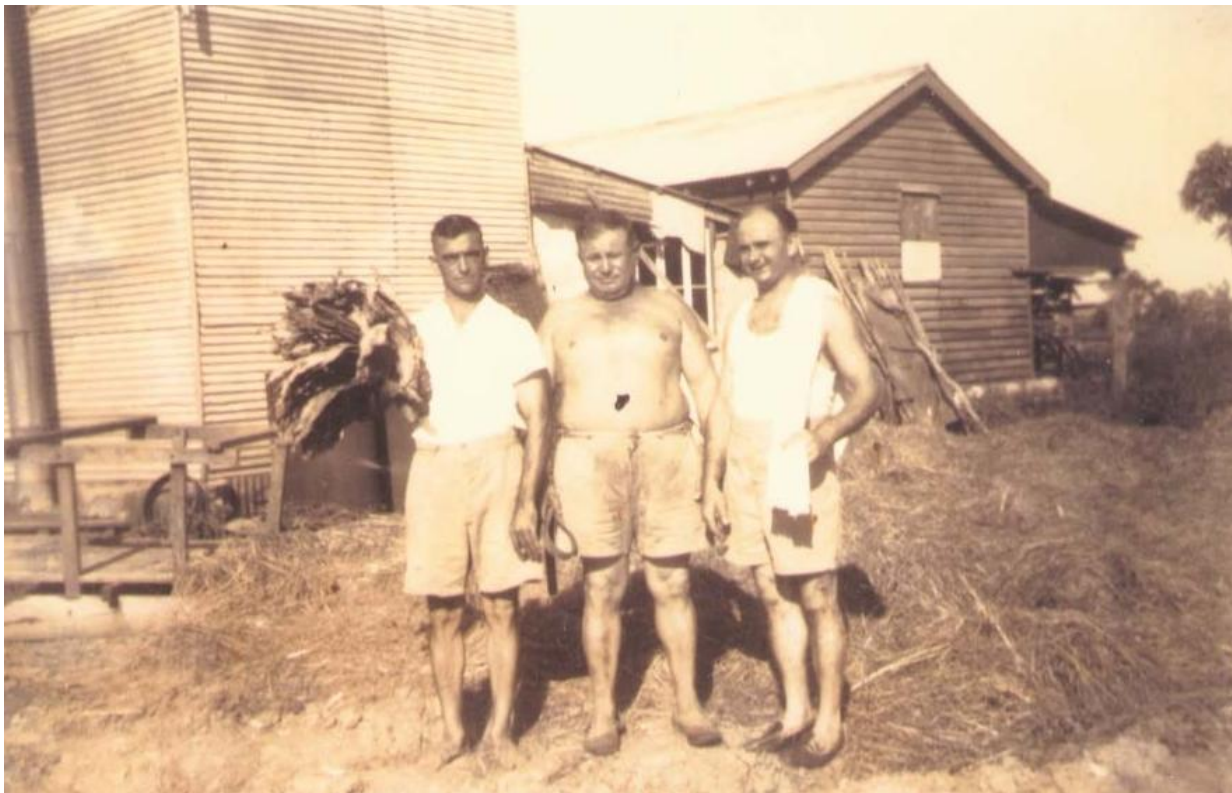




Issues of L'Avanguardia libertaria and La Riscossa.

However, migrants at times attracted the attention of Fascist authorities for reasons other than based on political opposition. The Consuls often based their judgement on generalised suspicion on whoever was reluctant to take part in Consular celebrations, functions and commemorations, and was therefore classed a 'subversive'. This fact was admitted by Consul-General Agostino Ferrante who, in a report dated 3 November 1932 containing a list of anti-Fascists to be included in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, stated: "I have the honour of forwarding a list of our nationals, resident in several States, best known for their Communist ideas or because we assume they are subversive. Despite the most diligent investigations, we were unable to ascertain for many of them their full personal data. Similarly, despite the fact that their Communist ideas and their propaganda activities are known to us, it was not always possible to find out whether they are card-carrying members of Australian Communist associations. The list that I am forwarding has therefore much gaps; this Consulate-General and its subsidiary offices will zealously continue enquiries to find out the missing information. Concerning the State of South Australia, and in part also the other States, some of the alleged subversives are totally unknown to us; others left the State long ago and we do not know their current address, others still are considered subversive simply because a third party raised against them accusations that cannot be easily verified and to which one cannot give much weight" (22).

Sometimes, larrikinism and innocent romping ended in attracting harsh Fascist penalties. This was the case for Pietro Acquasaliente, a peasant from Schio (Vicenza), who, in February 1926, together with seven very inebriated (*alquanto avvinazzati*) friends, broke in the primary school of his *paese*, defaced the portraits of Mussolini and the King and drew on the blackboard the hammer and sickle, accompanied by slogans praising Lenin. For this irresponsible prank he was sentenced to 3 months and 14 days jail and fined 416 lire. Soon after he emigrated to Mareeba, Queensland, where he began growing tobacco, and was put under surveillance by the Innisfail *Fascio* (Fascist Branch). Registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* for offences against the Duce, his name was not formally deleted from the *Rubrica*, "on account of his behaviour abroad", until 1939. Another migrant, Cirillo Hojak from Gorizia, was, as Bocchini put it, on 14 March 1928, in a cablegram to the Melbourne Consul, "suspected of professing Communist ideas that he made his own in Russia, where he was a prisoner during the war". This suspicion was confirmed in November 1927 when Hojak, before emigrating to Australia, visibly drunk in an *osteria* (wine bar) in Gorizia, began singing 'subversive' songs and lampooning Mussolini. For this deed, he was sentenced to one year and ten days jail term and a fine of one thousand lire. Because this was his only crime, his name was also later deleted from the list of subversives. The stigma of bearing a Slav-sounding name did not help Antonio Percich either. Before emigrating in 1927 from Fiume to Bendigo, to prospect for gold, Percich earned the insertion of his name in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* because, as the Prefect of Pola stated to the Ministry of the Interior, "he has shown overt Slav feelings...sympathising with the Slav cause, and although he was not politically active, he was considered a person hostile to our institutions" (23).



*Italian migrants at work on a tobacco plantation. Mareeba, c.1933.*

Frequently, migrants first ran foul of the Consuls for some infringement of the criminal law (*Codice di Procedura Penale*). Leonardo Altomare jumped ship in Philadelphia (USA) in 1923, was sentenced to 6 months jail and a 120 lire fine for mercantile desertion and registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera*, initially with instructions to arrest him, later to search and watch. His file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contains reports by the Consul-General in New York, detailing his activities as an agitator and contributor of funds to anti-Fascist organisations in Paris. In 1931, having been informed of Altomare's intention to emigrate to Australia, the Consul-General in Sydney asked his counterpart in New York to refuse him a passport, but Altomare was by then an American citizen. He settled in Port Pirie, South Australia, where, in May 1939, he was reported by a Fascist spy for being employed in the fishing industry, receiving anti-Fascist literature from the USA and "until recently, writing subversive articles that he was nailing to the poles of the wharves where our fishermen were berthing". The *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* was still interested in him in January 1942 (24). Another migrant who automatically earned his place in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was the Anarchist Carlo Bonfanti. Employed as a waiter in Folkestone during the First World War, Bonfanti in August 1916 was deported on the MV *Sturmfels* from the United Kingdom to Naples, following his conviction to three months' jail under Article 12 of the Aliens Restriction (Consolidation) Order 1916, for contravening Article 27 of the Defence of the Realm Regulation. He had been found guilty of writing articles against compulsory military service in the *Voice of Labour*. Despite Bonfanti's past, Consul-General Grossardi on 12 August 1926 was able to report that the conduct of Bonfanti, who after the war had emigrated to Sydney and was then living in Paddington (NSW), was good (25).

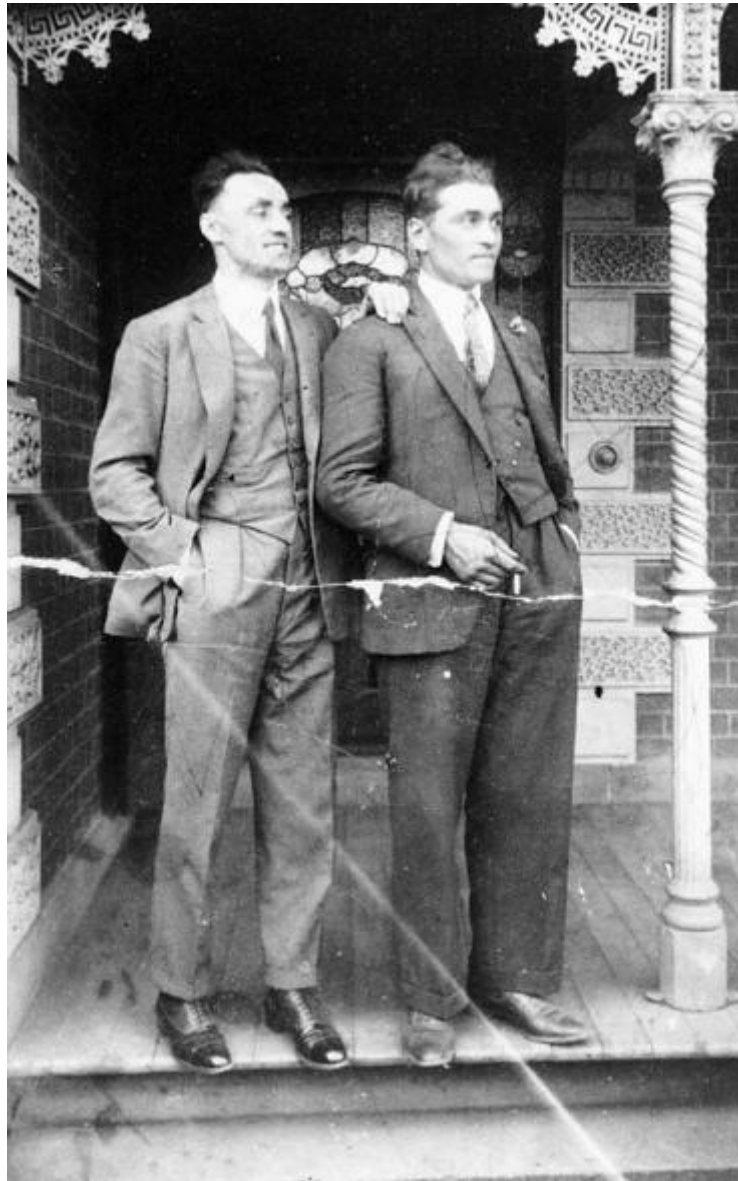
Information gathered by the vast network of informers reporting to Fascist diplomats was painstakingly analysed, cross-referenced and recorded in the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. Consular reports were often indirectly referring to the involvement of Fascist spies as *persona favorevolmente nota* (a well-regarded person), or *da fonte attendibile* (from a reliable source), or *è stato fiduciarmente segnalato* (it has confidentially been brought to our attention), or *dalle indagini esperite* (from enquiries made). Spies and informers, called by the representatives of Fascism, with a term that can only be defined as deeply ironical, *fiduciari* (trustworthy people), were to be found not only among Italian migrants, but also among Australian sympathisers, including some in the police. Sydney's Consul, Mario Carosi, in February 1928 reported to Rome that "I have spoken about Giovanni Terribile Antico [a known Anarchist] and his brother Giuseppe to Major Lloyd of the Investigation Branch and he assured me that he will gather the most detailed information by means of his special agents and will communicate it to me". Already in November 1926 Consul-General Grossardi relayed to the Italian Ministry of the Interior that his office was keeping Giovanni Terribile Antico under surveillance (*non manca di sorvegliarlo*) (26). The assistance afforded by Major Lloyd was not an isolated incident. Some members of Australian law enforcement agencies considered anti-Fascist Italians to be enemies of the

established order as well as an inferior breed, to the point that many migrants, after having long suffered Fascist persecution, during World War II were interned together with their Fascist persecutors. When, in December 1942, an appeal was lodged to release from internment fifty Queensland anti-Fascists, the Deputy-Director of Security for Queensland objected to free one of them, Manlio Signorini, on the vaguest of grounds, because "Signorini's background is such that he is more Italian than British" (27).

Sometime the *fiduciari* did not stick to their conventional role as passive and covert observers, moles within anti-Fascist organisations, with the task of reporting, disrupting, provoking and deceiving, but instead took the initiative to eliminate personally their victims. On 4 August 1931, the *fiduciario* in Broken Hill, Alvisio Oliviero, a person whom Grossardi described as "favourably known to this office...of proven Fascist faith", confessed to the Vice-Consul in Adelaide, Giuseppe Amerio, that he had been guilty of arson and attempted murder against Giacomo Pastega, a leading Anarchist in the mining centre. "The house where he was living with two other Italians" wrote Oliviero, "went up in smoke, together with all his possessions, prints, books, flags, photograph of [Anarchist chief Errico] Malatesta and comrades...In confidence I must tell you that the fire was lit by a single match...Pastega stored under the floor a box of gelignite, I was hoping that he also would be blown up, but the firemen arrived in time to put out the flames before the floor ignited". Pastega was already known to Oliviero before they both emigrated to Australia; in fact Oliviero had been instrumental in the arrest of Pastega and his accomplice, Giovanni Saccardo, when the two Anarchists threw some bombs into the textile mills at Schio (Vicenza) (28).

However, it was the threat of terrorist acts and plots against the life of Mussolini, King Victor Emmanuel III or of Fascist *gerarchi* (bosses) that most concerned the Chief of Police, Bocchini. In Australia, as in other countries where the *fuorusciti* (exiles) had established their conspiratorial networks, Mussolini's Consuls kept a close watch on whoever had a turbulent or violent past. The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain undisputable evidence that many anti-Fascists, who had been victims of Fascist violence before emigrating to Australia, once they landed in this country committed violent acts of reprisal against known Fascists, Italian diplomatic staff and sympathisers of the Regime. For instance, Luigi Betta and Silvio Gatti, former members of the Communist paramilitary formations *Arditi del Popolo*, described as "dangerous tools in the hands of the leaders", were reported on 14 August 1933 by the Prefect of Alessandria to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* as "Communists who beat up [in Australia] those nationals of ours who manifest patriotic attitudes" (29). The Prefect of Terni, reporting on 31 January 1931 to the Ministry of the Interior on the Anarchist Pietro Sebastiani, mentioned that "several times he had been beaten by the Fascists", while the Prefect of Treviso, in a note dated 5 October 1928, admitted that the Communist Graziadio Socal "had been the target of reprisals on the part of Fascist elements of Cavaso and Possagno...and forced to emigrate". On 18 November 1932, the Prefect of Udine reported that Carlo Simeoni had assaulted and injured in Melbourne Giona Zurini, a sailor of the

MV. *Viminale*, because the latter was sporting the Fascist Party badge on his lapel. The Prefect also added that Simeoni in Italy "was beaten up several times by the Fascists, because he was their sworn enemy" (30).



*Carlo [Carlton] Simeoni (right) and Bill Ermacora. Carlton (?), c.1930.*

Yet, it was the threats made by known 'subversives' like Giacomo Pastega that drove the Fascist espionage machine into greatest action. On 5 July 1932, following the execution in Rome of the Anarchist Michele Schirru after his failed attempt on Mussolini's life, Pastega wrote from Broken Hill to Guido Cristini, President of the Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State, warning him that he would meet an ugly death (*farete una morte brutta*) and boldly signing himself as "your implacable enemy" (*suo implacabile nemico*). Instructions were immediately imparted for Pastega's arrest in case he attempted to enter Italy. Similar apprehension orders were given on 12 February 1930 by Bocchini to all Prefects against Giovan Battista Perani, a

gold prospector in Western Australia, who "was reported of having expressed his intention to kill H.M. the King and H.E. the Head of Government" (31).

This was also the case for Giacomo Argenti, a casual labourer from Capoliveri, near Portoferraio on Elba, who aged 13, had already had a brush with the law when, in August 1897, he was fined 15 lire for bathing naked in the sea, and the following year for corresponding with the Anarchist paper *Il Libertario* (The Libertarian). In November 1911 Argenti emigrated to the United States and in 1912 he was classed by Liberal Italy's diplomatic representatives as a dangerous Anarchist to be put under surveillance. On his return to Italy, in October 1917, Argenti was sentenced to a jail term of three years after the Police found a cache of dynamite in his room at Capoliveri. In 1924, his name was found mentioned, as a subscriber of the Anarchist paper *Pensiero e Volontà* (Thought and Will), in the papers of Anarchist leader Errico Malatesta. In 1926 Argenti emigrated to Adelaide, where he found employment as a waterside worker, and in 1928 was joined by his wife Domenica and his son Gualberto. Incidentally, his wife had difficulty in obtaining her passport because, according to the Police, who did not miss an opportunity for casting uncorroborated aspersions upon the enemies of the Regime, "it was alleged that the Mayor of Capoliveri, who is her lover and who would suffer from her leaving the Kingdom...was recommending against the issuing her with a passport".

In November 1931 an anonymous letter alerted Adelaide's Fascist Consul that Argenti was plotting to kill Mussolini, but *Carabinieri's* enquiries ascertained that "Argenti, although an Anarchist, is unable to carry out or to organise such an act". However, when in February 1932 Argenti went back to his *paese* for a brief period of convalescence, upon his arrival in Genoa he was subjected to a thorough search of his luggage and sent to Capoliveri, where he would be kept under close surveillance, with a *foglio di via obbligatorio* (travel permit limited only to a destination approved by Police). In July 1932 Argenti returned to Adelaide, mentally depressed, politically demoralised and financially destitute. In 1936, while he was in a psychiatric hospital, his workmates assisted his family with a collection. Argenti's refractory life met with an inglorious and sad end. In May 1940, Consul-General Mario Luciolli reported that "he is no longer carrying out political activities; of late he seems to be sympathetic to the Regime, occasionally taking part in activities organised by the *Fascio*". In the same year, the once diehard Anarchist sent a petition to Mussolini, seeking his assistance to send his son, by then enrolled in the *Fascio's* school, to Italy to study singing (32).

Another migrant categorised in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as dangerous and to be arrested was the already mentioned Isidoro Bertazzon. The Prefect of Treviso, in a note in May 1929, described him as "voracious reader of Anarchist books and pamphlets ... Although he frequented only the primary school, he displays a quick and keen intellect". Already in February 1918, during World War I, Bertazzon, who had emigrated to the United States, attracted the attention of the Italian Military Censorship, that seized his subscription letter to the Anarchist paper, *Il Libertario* of La Spezia,



containing 12 dollars and his pledge "to contribute financially to the outbreak of a Bolshevik revolution in Italy". The Consul-General of New York was instructed to alert the American Department of Immigration, which immediately proceeded to raid Seattle's Anarchist *Circolo di Studi Sociali* and arrested Bertazzon and 31 other Italian emigrants at gunpoint. Soon after, Bertazzon was able to escape from detention and, for many months, eluded capture. Eventually, in 1919, he was deported to Canada (33). The transcripts of the interrogation of the 31 Anarchists were forwarded by the American authorities to the Italian Consul-General in New York and can be found in Bertazzon's file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, yet more evidence of inter-governmental collaboration against refractory migrants.



*A gathering at the Bertazzon family home, Carlton, in 1926. Included are Isidoro and Luigi Bertazzon.*

In June 1921 Bertazzon obtained a passport from the Consulate-General in New York and returned to Italy, where he was immediately put under close surveillance by the *Carabinieri* (*fatto segno ad attenta vigilanza da parte dell'Arma*), only to emigrate again, this time to Australia, in August 1922. In Melbourne he soon distinguished himself, in the words of Consul-General Grossardi, as "one of the most dangerous adversaries of the Regime". In January 1923 the Police raided his mother's house at Pieve di Soligo (Treviso) and seized an amount of "subversive correspondence". In

September 1927, Grossardi, in a telegram betraying his increasing frustration and his advocacy of a violent solution against the Melbourne anti-Fascist, reported to the Ministry of the Interior that "some Fascists are at present keeping under observation a Greek Club, frequented by Bertazzon, in the hope of finding him and giving him a good beating...It is a matter of time and patience before he will get a well earned punishment". Grossardi also took pains to vilify the Anarchist on moral grounds, claiming that "he works when he feels like...he is maintained by his brother... and it is rumoured that he is the lover (*sia in illeciti rapporti*) of his sister-in-law". As well, the Italian diplomat unsuccessfully tried to have Bertazzon deported by the Australian authorities. On 28 October 1929 he advised Rome that, "despite my efforts, I have been unable to persuade these authorities to proceed against him. Nevertheless I will continue to insist, and even today I made new representations to this effect".

Bertazzon represented a constant worry for Grossardi, the Melbourne *Fascio* and even the Chief of Police, Bocchini, who, in January 1929, ordered the Consul-General to "intensify measures of careful vigilance of the notorious Anarchist Bertazzon Isidoro, taking care to wire me every useful information and movements". Following Bocchini's instructions, Bertazzon was assiduously watched by Fascist spies, who determinedly recorded his persistent anti-Fascism (*mantiene cattiva condotta politica*). In 1929 an informer from Geneva reported that Bertazzon was subscribing to anti-Fascist literature and financially helping his comrades, and his name was also found mentioned in the papers of Camillo Berneri, the Anarchist treacherously befriended by OVRA's spy, Ermanno Menapace (34). In 1937, yet another informer signalled that Bertazzon was corresponding with the Anarchist *Pro-Spagna* Committee in Paris. His file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contains monthly reports, throughout the 'Thirties, on his movements and activities, even after his retirement in 1935 to an orange farm in Beelbangera, near Griffith (NSW) and the surveillance continued until Bertazzon's tragic death in October 1941, when his car was hit at a railway crossing by a passing train (35).

Another migrant who had his file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* stamped as *attentatore - pericoloso* (terrorist - dangerous) was Angelo Cunial. He was suspected of being behind the 1928 gelignite attack on the homes of some Broken Hill Fascists, and, in the same year, was found guilty of assaulting and injuring Giovanni Puccini, because the latter was a Fascist. Earlier Cunial had been sentenced *in absentia* by the Court in Treviso to a jail term of two years and six months and a fine of 3,000 lire for sending a letter to the Mayor of Possagno, in which he insulted "that snake, Mussolini" and declared that "our action must always be sustained by words, writings, the knife and dynamite" (36). A more puzzling case was that of Francesco Sannazzaro. On 25 June 1934, the Melbourne Consul, Enrico Anzilotti, cabled the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that "it has been reported to me that Francesco Sannazzaro is planning to go to Italy, to take the life of H.E. the Head of Government. Sannazzaro...has a knife scar on his left cheek and is affected by syphilis at its last stage. He would go to Rome on the pretext of



medical care for his illness. The attack would be made with a bomb". Anzilotti also disclosed the names of other alleged conspirators, Angelo Colladetti and Carlo Simeoni. Obviously briefed by a mole attending the meetings of the group, the Melbourne Consul was able to report three days later that "the project was planned in Simeoni's home...I was told that Simeoni is the main organiser and the major financial contributor to the project". On 24 September 1934, Bocchini cabled the *Direzione Affari Generali e Riservati* the information that another migrant, Mirko Da Cortà, a stalwart of the Matteotti Club in Melbourne and close associate of Carmagnola, also registered as *attentatore - pericoloso*, was an accomplice in Sannazzaro's criminal endeavour. When Da Cortà travelled to Italy in September 1934, the police were convinced that he was preparing the attack. Despite orders in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* to arrest Da Cortà, on 30 July 1934 the Ministry of the Interior instructed the Border Police to "let him freely disembark, search carefully his baggage only from a customs point of view and strictly watch him". Needless to say, the attempt on the Duce's life never materialised, and this scourge of Fascism inexplicably became a turncoat. On 16 July 1938, Da Cortà petitioned the Minister of the Interior to be removed from the list of subversives because, as he put it, "I confess my sin...I never shared the ideas of these people, I never subscribed to their political credo...I became involved in an incident and was unfortunately considered and card-indexed as an accomplice of these lost people". His name was soon after removed from the list. One wonders whether Da Cortà was 'worked on' by the police and persuaded to collaborate, as was the case for so many anti-Fascists at home and abroad at that time (37).



Carlo Simeoni (left) and Antonio Grotto taking part in a May Day rally. Carlton, c. 1938.

By the end of the 'Thirties, OVRA did not restrict its spying activities exclusively to the enemies of Fascism, but extended them to Italian society in general and to dissident, discontented and dishonest Fascists in particular. In order to avoid being obstructed by rival law enforcement agencies, in 1932-33 OVRA's *Zona 2*, based in Bologna, unleashed its officers against these new targets by providing them with a fanciful cover. Senior officers were given the title of *possidenti* (property owners), while agents got the less impressive qualifications of drivers, mechanics and manual labourers (38). In view of this novel approach, it is unclear whether the only self-declared *possidente* among Italians in Australia, Francesco Amendola, was an undercover OVRA operative. Amendola had a *Casellario Politico Centrale* file opened on him when in September 1938 the police intercepted a letter to his sister in Lipari, in which he complained that "Mussolini, by keeping too many irons on the fire, will end by burning his hands...he will ruin Italy...Business in Europe is so bad that one can expect any day a cataclysm". While many others would end badly for much less, Amendola not only emerged unscathed from this brush with Fascist 'justice', but Consul-General Amedeo Mammalella on 7 August 1939 vouched to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that Amendola was a "person favourably known to the Consulate-General in Sydney. He is held in great consideration by his compatriots and does not harbour sentiments contrary to Fascism" (39).

At times, the humiliation inflicted on the wives and the next-of-kin of indicted 'subversives' was distressing and unnecessary. If resident in Italy, they were subjected to vexing and intimidating searches by the police who seized any document which could be used against the refractory migrant or to trace his whereabouts. If returning to Italy, they were a victim of harsh treatment. Indicative of this plight was the case of the wife of Anarchist Giovanni Terribile Antico. When, in November 1927, Isabella Lievore went to Italy on board the MV *Caprera* to undergo surgery, despite the fact that, as acknowledged by the police, "she was a fervid Catholic", she was arrested in Naples, detained for four days, then allowed to proceed for Vicenza with a *foglio di via obbligatorio*. After the operation, on 10 August 1928 Isabella attempted to cross the Swiss border to go to Zurich, where she planned to meet her brother Giovanni and his gravely ill wife, but was sent back to Piovene by the Fascist border guards. Giovanni Terribile's brothers, Giuseppe, Luigi and Antonio, all in Australia, were also spied upon by *Fascio's* cronies. Giuseppe, who, according to disparaging remarks made by Consul-General Grossardi, "had been a Communist only because he wanted to get a job", was cut from the *Rubrica di Frontiera* in May 1930, and the same measure was taken in June 1930 with regard to his Anarchist brother Luigi, because they ceased being active in their opposition to Fascism. Antonio was now employed by Prince Alfonso Del Drago, a notorious Fascist and President of the Italian Returned Soldiers Association, and as an informer reported, had been "given a glowing

recommendation" by the Prince (40). Harassment of members of the Antico family visiting or living in Italy was not unique. In February 1936, Carmelo Arico, a Broken Hill blacksmith alleged that he had been included in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* because he was falsely accused of selling images of Matteotti and of being a Communist while in fact he was a devoted Catholic (*risulta essere molto religioso*). He complained to the Consulate-General that "his family in Italy is continuously raided by police officers for enquiries on his account" (41).

A special case was that of Ernesto Baratto, a peasant from Paese (Treviso) who in 1925 emigrated to Tully (Qld). His entry in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* classified him as "Socialist, dangerous, naturalised, to be arrested". In 1929 Baratto provoked the ire of the Fascist authorities in Treviso when he anonymously mailed copies of *Il becco giallo* (The Yellow Beak), a paper printed in Paris by the anti-Fascist organisation Giustizia e Libertà, to people in Italy who were investigated by the police, only to be found proven Fascists. His identity was established only following a calligraphic comparison with letters seized from his father in Paese. In January 1930 the Consul in Brisbane, Gabrio Asinari, Count of San Marzano, described Baratto as "one of the staunchest propagandists against the Regime...unrepentant, despite the appeals made by the Consular Agent,...capable of committing some hostile act against the Regime". In November 1933, the Prefect of Treviso endorsed the Consul's assessment and warned the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that "the opinion of him being exceptionally dangerous, beside his behaviour abroad, is based on the content of his letters to the parish priest of Paese in which he expressed dark ideas and a fierce resentment against the Duce and the Regime, and remarkable mental imbalance". However, Carmine Senise, who in 1940 would succeed Bocchini as Chief of Police, did not agree with the Prefect, and in December 1933 Baratto's name remained on the *Rubrica di Frontiera*, with instructions "to detain" (*da fermarsi*), but was taken off the list of "subversives, attempting to (*attentatori*) or capable of committing terrorist acts".

When, in January 1937, Baratto left Australia on the MV *Strathaird*, bound for Marseilles, to join the International Brigades in Spain – the money for the passage was lent to him by the Mourilyan Committee against War and Fascism –, the police intensified their interception of his letters to his father. In February 1938 Baratto wrote to his father that, "while you are telling me that you have not received news from me since last August, I have written to you every month; probably [the letters] have been lost". In fact, they ended in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* and are a poignant testimony on how he tried not to have his father harassed on his account. On 15 July 1937, Baratto advised "to write always in France [to a safe house address] to avoid persecution; [maintain that] you have nothing to do with me. Courage, always". When his suitcases were forwarded by mistake by the safe house to his father, rather than to his Spanish address, the old man refused to take delivery of them. They were seized by the Fascist authorities, who found them full of anti-Fascist literature. Baratto

despaired of seeing his father again. On 9 April 1937 he complained that "my passport is valid for the whole world, except for where I was born. I will stay in Europe a few years, then I will go back to Australia; English traditions are more suited to my temperament". On 4 April 1939, Consul-General Amedeo Mammalella cabled Rome that Ernesto Baratto had returned to Australia from Spain. He was the only Italian migrant in Australia who joined the International Brigades, although on 10 October 1938 the Prefect of Brescia made enquiries with the Ministry of the Interior to ascertain whether another migrant, the Communist Giovanni Poli, a resident of Boulder (WA), did "enlist in the Spanish Red militias" (42).

One of the most remarkable aspects of Fascist monitoring of dissent was the long, dogged pursuit and the perseverance shown by officers of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* in updating the files of refractory migrants, even of those living in far away, low risk, low priority Australia. Undoubtedly, the prize for being the most 'sought after' dissidents must go to Francesco Sceusa and to Ferdinando Bentivoglio. Sceusa, the archetypal Socialist battler, editor of Australia's first paper in Italian, Sydney's *Italo-Australian*, emigrated to Sydney in December 1877, returned to his native Trapani in January 1908 and died there on 21 June 1919. He was still technically under surveillance on 12 December 1935, when officers of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* complained to the Prefect of that city that they had not received an update on the 'subversive' since July 1913.

Ferdinando Bentivoglio, who had been administrator of Turin's Socialist paper *Il grido del popolo* (The People's Cry), emigrated to Sydney with his family in 1898. During that year, he and a small band of Socialists were indicted by Interpol and by the NSW Investigation Branch for their Socialist propaganda activities (43), and his name was entered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. After the First World War, Bentivoglio, who at that time was teaching Italian at Sydney's Conservatorium of Music, underwent a political conversion and joined the Fascist camp. In October 1929, Consul Mario Carosi described him as "nurturing very high patriotic sentiments, a sincere apologist of the Fascist Regime". Following this reference, his name was taken off the list of 'subversives'. However, he still remained under police surveillance. On 24 March 1942, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza*, obviously intercepting his correspondence, entered in his file the note that, "until 1935, Bentivoglio corresponded with his sister-in-law, but since then he has not sent news about himself" (44).

Even as late as 6 March 1943, on the eve of the collapse of the Regime and at a time when the fortunes of war were clearly not favouring the Axis Powers, the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* instructed the Prefect of Vicenza to find Primo Berlato, a Communist who, until 1939, was living in Cairns and in 1941 had moved to Portugal (45). Perhaps the most emblematic case is that of Giuseppe Carpigo, registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* with instructions "to arrest". Carpigo, who has an entry in his *Casellario Politico Centrale* file dated 31 August 1894, as "one of the most dangerous and fanatical Anarchists", emigrated to France in 1891, but was

deported in 1893 after a conviction for illegally printing currency (*per fabbricazione di monete false*). In 1894 he was put under house arrest (*domicilio coatto*) at Velletri, escaped, was recaptured in Naples, escaped again in 1895 and disappeared into thin air. From then on, he became a sort of faceless Anarchist Scarlet Pimpernel (the police had only one 1893 photo of him), his presence being signalled simultaneously in various places. On 16 April 1915, the Prefect of Rome was able to report to the Ministry of the Interior that "his relatives believe that he is in Australia, but have not heard from him from a long time (*da molto tempo non da più notizie dell'esser suo*). Melbourne Consul Emilio Eles, having duly enquired with the Commonwealth and State police, advised the Ministry of the Interior that Carpigo was not in fact in Australia. However, the myth of this dangerous terrorist roaming free down-under persisted, despite the warning received on 26 November 1934 from the French *Sûreté Nationale* that Carpigo was a resident of the United States and should be watched during the wedding of the Duke of Kent. Most probably, it never crossed Melbourne Consul Enrico Anzilotti's mind that, quite likely, Carpigo had never set foot on Australian soil. As late as on 29 October 1936, Anzilotti was still cabling Rome that the Anarchist's Australian address "is still unknown". Another elusive Anarchist, deemed dangerous by the Ministry of the Interior, was Umberto Maggiani from La Spezia. On 21 January 1927 Maggiani had been sentenced *in absentia* to 5 years' *confino*, to be served in Cologne (Teramo). However, he could not be traced, and remained a fugitive (*latitante*) until 14 February 1932, when he foolishly wrote a letter to his Anarchist comrade from La Spezia Pasquale Binazzi, a missive that was promptly intercepted by the Italian censors. By October 1932, Maggiani's whereabouts were located by spies of the Consulate-General in Sydney: he was quietly living in Woolloomooloo, employed as a fisherman, safely out of reach of Fascist justice (46).

Indeed, this obsession by Fascist detectives for knowing always, everything, everywhere, did sometime defy logic. For example, the day after the fall of Fascism, on 26 July 1943, in the midst of the understandable chaos, the Ministry of the Interior, blithely sought information on Avendrace Camba, a sail-maker who had emigrated to Fremantle in far off 1925. The Prefect of Cagliari replied the same day that "we are not able to give further information on the person in question, as the police records have been destroyed by enemy bombing" (47). Anti-Fascist migrants continued to be watched by the *Servizio Informazioni Militari* (Italian Military Intelligence) even after their internment by Australian military authorities after the outbreak of the Second World War. On 30 June 1943, the Ministry of the Interior cabled the Prefect of Alessandria that "the High Command advised that the *fuoruscito* [Mario Cazzulino], interned in Sydney, is trying to carry out – with the consent of the enemy – defeatist propaganda among our soldiers, prisoners-of-war in Australia". As a consequence, Cazzulino's classification in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* was upgraded from "search and watch" to "arrest" (48).

Surveillance was carried out by Fascist agents not only on activities organised by dissident Italians. It also encompassed the transfer of money by the enemies of Fascism in Australia to fund political initiatives in Europe. Remittances to Anarchist leader Malatesta in Switzerland by Bertazzon were closely monitored by Fascist informers and reported to the Ministry of the Interior. Another so-called *fiduciario* on 14 March 1935 cabled the *Divisione Polizia Politica* that "funds, for a total amount of 230 Swiss Francs, collected by Boito Antonio among Anarchists living in that region [Griffith, NSW], have been remitted to Geneva, to be used for the anti-Fascist struggle and for the *Soccorso Anarchico Italiano* (Italian Anarchist Relief)" (49).

Quite a lot of intelligence on the opposition to Fascism abroad was gathered by the Fascist authorities, through the interception, as well as the seizing, of correspondence. This was achieved either through a blanket search of all correspondence originating from cities with a high concentration of refractory migrants, like Paris, Geneva and New York, with the obvious consequence of long delays in its delivery, or by targeting selected recipients, whose relatives had a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. The task of intercepting, reading, copying and forwarding information and making recommendations to the *Casellario Politico Centrale* fell on the Prefects, who also used fanciful circumlocutions to justify their breach of privacy. For instance, when it was opened and its contents read by staff of the Prefecture, the letter "underwent a revision" (*è stata revisionata*) and, if the decision was taken not to forward it to the recipient, it was "taken out of its course" (*è stata tolta di corso*) There is also circumstantial evidence that, at times, the Australian postal authorities connived with the Consuls in this activity, which was clearly illegal in Australia. On 4 May 1934 and again on 24 July 1934, Consul-General Ferrante wrote to Mussolini that "anti-Fascist propaganda is being almost always seized and destroyed by Australian Customs in Townsville...It is upon my personal suggestion that the Officer-in Charge of Customs confiscates and burns similar material" (50) Also, many recipients, either because they were staunch Fascists or because they were too scared to hold onto compromising evidence, denounced their receipt to the local *Fascio*, the *Carabinieri* or the police. For instance, the mail directed to Baratto's father, Antonio, was routinely opened, even when the sender was not his son Ernesto (51), and a copy of the underground Communist paper *L'Unità*, sent in July 1937 from Halifax (Qld) by Oreste Bosco to his brother Alfredo, who happened to be the law-abiding sacristan of a local Parish church, predictably ended in the hands of the Police (52). Another migrant, Francesco Campanaro, a carpenter living in North Sydney, fell in disgrace in February 1936, during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, because an otherwise innocent letter to his father, opened by the Fascist censor, contained a reference to "that madman in Rome, who should be sent to those lands, and if someone would take him forever out of this world, it would be much better for everybody" (53). Yet another migrant, Achille Castelli, a subscriber to *Giustizia e Libertà*, who in August 1938 sent a letter to the Secretary of the Corfino (Lucca) *Fascio*, containing the

irreverent verse *Mussolini ha fondato un impero e l'Italia si ciba di pane nero* (Mussolini founded an empire, but Italy is eating black bread), sparked a flurry of activity to identify and punish the culprit. Only more than one year later, on 7 October 1939, was the Ministry of the Interior able to advise the Prefect of Lucca that "he is living in a farm called Vanget Station, in the district of Geraldton [WA]. It is not possible, at least now, to ascertain Castelli's political activities and behaviour, as he is living totally isolated, in a place far away from any township, where no other Italians are living". The Melbourne Consulate, on 4 January 1940, reassured the Ministry, with unintended irony, that "his abode is such that one can exclude any political activity" (54).

One of the main planks of the Regime's policy towards the anti-Fascist diaspora was of not opposing, indeed of facilitating the return to Italy, to visit or to re-settle, of the relatives of its declared enemies and even, in some cases, to favour the return of indicted 'subversives'. Its aim was to sow dissent among anti-Fascists, as well as to create conditions favourable to the enlisting, by means of bribery, blackmail or brainwashing, of disillusioned anti-Fascists in the Fascist camp. This policy was clearly enunciated in December 1930 by the Ministry of the Interior to the Consul-General in Sydney, when Grossardi was instructed that, "in respect of *atti di chiamata* submitted by subversives, the diplomatic and consular representatives must not hinder even politically compromised people who wish to be reunited with their next-of-kin. Contrary behaviour, in fact, would be against our political interests because, while it would not achieve the subversives' repentance, it would sow hatred and resentment, mainly among people with low education, and would deepen even further the cleavage between good and bad Italians living abroad, cleavage that our Royal representatives must instead and by all means eliminate and not deepen" (55). However, this policy had its exceptions. When Beniamino Zadra, brother-in law of one of Melbourne's most prominent anti-Fascists, Ottavio Brida, requested a passport to go to Australia, he was refused it by the Prefect of Trento on grounds that "it would be highly probable that Zadra, once abroad, will allow himself to be influenced by his brother-in-law and become an anti-Fascist" (56). It was this 'stick and carrot' strategy adopted by the Fascist authorities that enticed many once irreconcilable anti-Fascists, in Europe as well as in Australia, to cave in, compromise, even to change sides and become Fascist *fiduciari*. The history of anti-Fascism in Australia does record unfortunate cases of *voltagabbana*, of a turncoat who could now be taken out of the list of subversives because, as Mussolini's diplomats happily reported, "he is favourably known to this Consulate". It is also a history of disappointment, of crisis of ideas, similar to the other crisis in the late 'Thirties and early 'Forties, when, conversely, many young Fascists would become highly critical of the Regime and even join the Resistance, as vividly documented in the autobiographical works by Davide Lajolo, *I "voltagabbana"* (The Turncoats), and by Ruggero Zangrandi, *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo* (The Long Journey through Fascism) (57).



*Ottavio Brida (third from left) with his cousins in the village of Tres (Trento), 1924.*

The files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* contain ample evidence of scores of migrants in Australia who, during their long journey through Fascist persecution, conceded defeat, aided in their renunciation of the anti-Fascist cause by willing Fascist Consuls. When, in December 1930, Clemente Avanzini, a Socialist timberjack from Busselton (WA), was confronted by Consul-General Grossardi and reprimanded for his political stand, he replied, "with tears in his eyes", that he was now trying to convince his comrades to recant their Socialism, and begged the diplomat to send him Fascist propaganda literature to counter the anti-Fascist papers received in Western Australia from Paris and New York. On 12 December 1938, Avanzini's name was cancelled from the register of subversives. Another migrant who experienced the Consular wrath was the Communist Paolo Meacci. Upon his arrival in Perth from Pistoia in November 1927, Meacci "was warned (*diffidato*) by that Royal Office not to profess any longer subversive ideas". Having abstained from political activity following this effective consular intimidation, on 22 October 1929, Meacci's name also was taken out from the register of subversives (58). Another case in point was that of Francesco Bonaguro, a Communist from Broken Hill (NSW), registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as "dangerous, to be arrested", who, together with his brother Girolamo, in 1927 assaulted and injured the Sartori brothers, "only because he believed that they were Fascist". In December 1930, Bonaguro sought the Consul-General's permission to bring to Australia his wife Vittoria Santo. Grossardi cabled his consent to the Ministry of the Interior on grounds that "Bonaguro, having watered down considerably his subversive stand, is now showing respect for the Regime". Vittoria Santo left Italy for Broken Hill on 5 February 1931.



Even Giuseppe Manera, the well-known leader of Broken Hill anti-Fascists and President of the Lega Antifascista, cited as dangerous in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, and self-confessed participant in several acts of violence against Fascist Italians, upon his return to Treviso, on 22 May 1929, blatantly denied in a statutory declaration to the *Questura* having ever been involved in anti-Fascist activities. By contrast, Girolamo Bonaguro, also a Communist and registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* as "dangerous, to be arrested", remained unrepentant in his anti-Fascism. Described by the *Divisione Polizia Politica* as "the worst possible element, Communist and a rabid adversary of the Regime, violent, of exceptional strength, lording over the township", Girolamo, to the chagrin of Broken Hill Fascists incited the workers of the local copper and iron ore mines to strike in case employment was offered to the already mentioned Alvisio Oliviero, a Fascist newly arrived from Italy. On the other hand, his brother Giovanni Bonaguro, also living in Broken Hill, and with a file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* because of his anti-Fascism, by May 1934, as reported to the Ministry of the Interior by Consul-General Ferrante, "seemed to be favourably disposed towards the National Fascist Party". Accordingly, in January 1935 his name was deleted from the list of subversives (59).

Perhaps the most blatant attempt to ingratiate himself with the representatives of the Regime was that made by Antonio Canu, a Communist sailor, who in February 1927 deserted from the MV *Re d'Italia* in Brisbane and settled in Texas (Qld). Canu, who until 1931 was still publicly venting his spleen against the Regime and its Government, by July 1933 was, in Consul-General Ferrante's words, "managing a tobacco plantation known as *The Alalà Plantation* [from the Fascist war-cry] and was noted for his constant praises of the Authorities and the Regime". On 3 October 1934 his name was taken off the list of subversives (60). Another migrant more than ready to please was Albino Dalla Valle, once a Communist shopkeeper who, in June 1934, complained to the Italian Consul in Adelaide that the *Carabinieri* had visited his mother in Italy seeking a "lot of information on my account, asking for my photograph and whether I owned property". Instead, Dalla Valle proclaimed to the Consul his unswerving allegiance to the Duce, offering as proof the fact that, "on many an occasion I raised on the roof of my shops our tri-coloured flag" (61). Yet another repented 'subversive' was Filippo Maria Bianchi, a former Army Lieutenant, who, according to his file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, after the First World War turned to Communism, became a member of the *Arditi del Popolo* and a leader of punitive expeditions against Fascists. In 1923, he left Italy and reappeared in 1927 in Bombay, where he had inexplicably become Deputy Secretary of the local *Fascio*. In 1928 Bianchi arrived in Sydney. By June 1930 his standing in the Italian community of Sydney was such that the Prefetto of Ancona had no hesitation in recommending to the Ministry of the Interior that Bianchi be cancelled from the list of subversives, because "he always demonstrated feelings of a healthy patriotism and attachment to the Regime". Within 14 days, his active file in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* was closed (62).



*Filippo Maria Bianchi, Director of the newspaper 'Il Giornale Italiano' (first from left, standing) during an afternoon of tennis at the Santoro family home. Kew, c1938.*

Perhaps the most striking case of diehard opponents of the Regime recycling themselves as impassioned admirers of the Duce was that of Domenico Frizza. Frizza emigrated to Melbourne in 1898 but, during the First World War, was working as a miner in Broken Hill. On 3 September 1917 he was sentenced by the local Court to six months' hard labour for being a member of an illegal association, the Syndicalist Independent Labour Party. Having served his term, Frizza was deported to England and, throughout the voyage on the MV *Gaika*, was kept in irons. On arrival in Tilbury, London Police jailed him for a further two days, as he refused to speak to them, and he was then put in the charge of Italian Consular staff. Frizza returned to Broken Hill during the 'Twenties, but, at the time of the Italian aggression against Ethiopia, he began to sing the praises of Mussolini's imperialist policy in Sydney's Fascist press (63).

However, during the 'Thirties, Fascism in Australia did not always forgive the actions of its repentant enemies. Not all stray sheep were unconditionally accepted into the black sheep's pen. For instance, Pasquale Pompilio, a Socialist migrant from Saracena (Cosenza), in 1937 applied to become a member of Melbourne's *Fascio*. His request was rejected on grounds that in 1921 Pompilio, together with his father and brothers, according to the Prefect of Cosenza, incited the population of Saracena to revolt against the local Council, and in order to quell the uprising, the police were forced to fire upon the rioters (*la forza pubblica per sedare la sommossa dovette fare uso delle armi*) (64).

Disillusioned and dissident Fascists, or Fascists who clashed with the consular authorities also fell in the dragnet of Fascist investigations. Typical was the case of the former *squadrista* Franco Battistessa and of Benedetto Borghetti and Emilio Ligustri, who, in May 1928, at a reception at the Paddington Town Hall in Sydney in honour of the newly arrived Consul-General Grossardi, interrupted the ceremony by accusing Grossardi, in front of 300 people, of gorging himself while the members of General Umberto Nobile's expedition to the North Pole were still missing (65). Battistessa and Borghetti were immediately expelled from the Fascist Party, and Ligustri was suspended indefinitely. Ligustri, in a despatch dated 1 March 1929 by the Prefect of Brescia to the Ministry of the Interior, was described as "a character unwilling to work, inclined instead to laziness and debauchery...ambitious...leaving [in Italy] his old father, his wife and two young children in the most squalid poverty, and no longer taking care of them nor corresponding with them". However, when the reverberations of the scandal died down, all three would be forgiven and quietly readmitted to the Party during the 'Thirties (66). Another "Fascist of the first hour" investigated by the Italian Police was Lorenzito Cappellari, entered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* as a Republican, because he recanted Fascism after realising "it was not following Mazzinian theories". A disillusioned Cappellari then joined the anti-Fascist *Italia Libera* Movement, to become even more dejected when the latter was suppressed by the Regime. After this disappointing political experience, he laid low and opened with his brother a fruit shop in Neutral Bay, Sydney. Yet another "perfervid Fascist", Pietro Lanero, one of the founders of the *Fascio* of Cortemilio (Cuneo), emigrated to Melbourne in July 1927 and soon after joined the Anarchist Matteotti Club and during the 'Thirties the anti Fascist meeting place Villa Roma (67).



V. Ciotti (at steering wheel), F. Carmagnola (standing, with hat), L. Bertazzon (child in back seat), and others near the Matteotti Club. Melbourne 1927.

Sometimes people were branded with the mark of 'subversive' simply because a member of their family or some close friends served in anti-Fascist organisations. This guilty-by-association criterion was applied to the Carmignola family, who had no less than five of its members registered in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. The father, Lino, a Socialist bricklayer "of extremely limited culture" who in the early 'Twenties "sympathised with Communism", on 31 January 1940 was described by the Prefect of Vicenza as a dignified, almost heroic, figure. "Constantly watched", he was "cautious and reserved" and, throughout the Fascist period, showed no sign of "orienting himself towards the Regime". Thus, the Prefect regretted to inform the Ministry of the Interior, "it must be assumed that he is persisting with his ideas" (68).

Much has been written elsewhere (69) about his most famous son, Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola (he changed his surname in 1929), who was considered by the same Prefect to be "most dangerous" (*pericolosissimo*). A charismatic leader, engaging orator, indefatigable organiser, Carmagnola maintained his world-wide contacts with other Anarchists and his rage against dictators until his death in Lugarno, a suburb of Sydney, on 27 February 1986. In 1978, at the age of 78, he decided to go to Chile and see for himself, "what that dictator Pinochet had done to his people". Francesco's brother, Giovanni, who emigrated to Halifax (Qld) in October 1924, was also an Anarchist, venting his anger against the Regime mainly by mailing and distributing propaganda material. However, with the passing of the years, his anger subsided, and he retired to St Ives in Sydney, to grow tomatoes. On 6 December 1939, Consul-General Mammalella changed his classification from "to arrest" to "to search and watch" (70). Giovanni's sister, Antonia, emigrated to Australia with him in October 1924. Although not active politically, she was "considered generically suspect" because, as the Prefect of Vicenza put it on 16 December 1939, "she belongs to a family of subversives" (71). Her youngest brother, Silvio, who never emigrated to Australia, was also card-indexed, on grounds, as explained on 20 March 1928 by the same Prefect, "of the influence exercised on him by his subversive family". However, Silvio was a member of the Catholic Youth of his *paese*, San Vito di Leguzzano, was not considered dangerous by the local *Carabinieri*, was later a student at Milan's University of the Sacred Heart, and in 1930 volunteered to join the Air Force. On 30 June 1931, the Prefect of Vicenza admitted to the Ministry of the Interior that Silvio Carmignola "did never share the ideas of his family" and recommended that his name be taken out of the list of subversives. This was done on 12 July 1931 (72).

Fascist authorities quite often stated in their reports that the low level of formal education was the universal root-cause, the trigger of anti-Fascist behaviour. The Prefect of Livorno, reporting on an Anarchist labourer, believed that "he is deemed to be dangerous because he is ignorant and impulsive" (73). Government bureaucrats seldom ascribed to illiterate or semi-literate migrants the capacity to act intelligently, unless they were somehow endowed with this gift by having previously served in some branch

of the Establishment. For instance, in February 1934, the Prefect of Sondrio made an exception for one of the anti-Fascists living in Innisfail (Qld), because "he is a peasant, attended only the third primary, but for the fact that he served in the *Carabinieri* he was considered in his *paese* an intelligent person" (74). However, it was the intellectuals, the cultured enemies of Fascism who concerned most spies, informers, double-agents and servants of the Regime. The life-long campaign of misinformation, persecution and slander carried out against the most prominent anti-Fascist in Australia, the lawyer Omero Schiassi, has already been extensively documented (75). Yet, the efforts to demonise Schiassi were not an isolated instance. In May 1934, Ciro Caldera, a doctor and former member number 32 of the Masonic Lodge of Palazzo Giustiniani, dissolved by the Fascists in May 1925, was signalled by the Prefect of Turin to the Ministry of the Interior as "a very undesirable element, because his culture and his contacts in society allow him to badmouth Italy and Fascism in [Australian] intellectual circles". Caldera, who in February 1926 had been forced to leave Turin for Perth in order to escape squadrist violence, was indeed a refractory intellectual. In July 1930 the Perth Vice-Consul Renato Citarelli wrote to the Prefects of Turin and Verona that "I know that in Turin and Verona [he] has relatives and owns property. I am therefore asking for you to exercise on those relatives that well-meaning pressure that will compel Caldera to take a more honest attitude, more fitting to the honour of the Italian name. In case even these measures do not work, then I shall ask to apply against Caldera the special legislation that Fascist Italy has drafted in its defense [that is, legalising the expropriation of Caldera's property]". Soon after, at the end of 1930, Caldera sought and obtained a Certificate of Naturalisation, to thwart the Vice-Consul's plans (76).

The climate of mutual suspicion generated among Italians in Australia by covert Fascist surveillance is evidenced by many entries in the *Casellario Politico Centrale*. Migrants leaning towards the Regime were encouraged to watch over and report on their peers. Sometimes the charge did not stand a closer scrutiny, as it was motivated by vendettas or personal interest. Luigi Colbertaldo, for instance, a peasant living in Melbourne, was accused on 22 January 1931 by his employer, Ettore Passuello, of being "a wholehearted Communist propagandist" (*propagandista comunista di tutta forza*). The complaint was directed by Passuello to none less than the Secretary of the National Fascist Party in Rome, Giovanni Giuriati, not knowing that Giuriati on 7 December 1931 had been a victim of the much trumpeted 'Fascist change of the guard' and substituted at the helm of the Party by Achille Starace. Further enquiries proved the accusation groundless, as Passuello had shamelessly exploited Colbertaldo, refused to pay him three months' wages and was found guilty when sued by the latter (77).

It is in fact common to find in the files letters of complaint addressed to the Secretary of the *Fascio* of the migrant's birthplace, the Prefects, the Ministry of the Interior or even to the Duce. For example, in November 1929, a well known Melbourne Fascist, Vittorio Tabacchi, wrote to the *Fascio's* Secretary at Pieve di Cadore accusing his *paesani* Mirko Da Cortà and Giuseppe Ciotti of

anti-Fascism (78). Anti-Fascists retaliated by exposing known supporters of the Regime and former *squadristi* to the police, to left-wing organisations, Trade Unions, the Labor and Communist Parties. In September 1929 Giovanni Marchetti was assaulted and injured by anti-Fascists in Ingham (Qld) for his activities as a *squadrista* in Italy, and in, August 1936, the Fascist Giuseppe De Laurentis was reported to the Federal Government by Pietro Chemello, a cobbler from Wellington (NSW), as a "Fascist spy", with the result that the Investigation Branch put De Laurentis under surveillance and interviewed him about why he had not applied for a Certificate of Naturalisation (79).

Migrants could not even trust the institution to which they had traditionally been attracted, the Catholic Church. To their chagrin was soon found that some Church representatives had turned into Fascist apologists and even spies. On 20 April 1929, the Secretary-General of the Italian *Fasci* Abroad, Piero Parini, informed the Ministry of the Interior that "the Reverend Father Salza, who is carrying out in Australia an active and most effective work of Fascist propaganda...advised that Giuseppe Manera, former President of the Anti-Fascist League and well-known subversive, has returned to Italy. The Reverend Father Salza is bringing to our attention the opportunity for us to deny him permission again to leave the Fatherland" (80).

When a general picture of Fascist surveillance on the political activities of refractory migrants in this country is drawn, there are some aspects which are common to the *modus operandi* of Fascist espionage against its enemies in European countries, while other aspects are peculiar to the Australian situation. Of paramount importance was the role played by the Prefects in organising and directing anti-Fascist espionage. Although all spy agencies reported, through the Chief of Police, to the Minister of the Interior, that is, to Mussolini, it was the Prefects who were in charge of gathering and processing information on 'subversives', by feeding requests down the chain to Consul-Generals, Consuls, Vice-Consuls, *Fascio* Secretaries, *fiduciari*, informers, occasional whistleblowers and to people holding a personal grudge against anti-Fascists. The Prefects were also responsible of passing the information on to the *Casellario Politico Centrale* and to OVRA, as well as to recommend punitive measures against refractory migrants, to order the *Carabinieri* to search the homes of the relatives of anti-Fascists, to initiate legal proceedings, to deprive the 'culprits' of the Italian citizenship and to confiscate their assets. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the distinguished economist and future President of the Italian Republic, Luigi Einaudi, in an article with the provocative title of "Away with the Prefect!" (*Via il Prefetto!*), published on 17 July 1944 under the pseudonym of Junius, lambasted the institution of Prefects and advocated its suppression because "Democracy and the Prefect are deeply repugnant to each other...Democracy will never be possible until there will be in existence the centralist government, of which the Prefect is its symbol". Unfortunately, his lonely cry was ignored by the legislators of Republican Italy, and the institution of the Prefect was preserved, often keeping at its helm the same compromised people, who, for many years, had blindly served their Fascist masters (81).

Another common aspect was the international dimension of surveillance. It was relatively easy to get into trouble with Fascist justice. Many people ended in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* only because they subscribed to anti-Fascist literature from overseas, like *Giustizia e Libertà's* paper *Il becco giallo*. The lists of subscribers were surreptitiously obtained by OVRA agents in France and Switzerland and transmitted, for appropriate action, to Italian diplomats in Australia. Surveillance was constant, close and carried out in a professional manner. Letters from and to Australia were screened with the same zeal and servile dedication as those addressed to or received from France, Spain, Switzerland or the United States. Yet another peculiar element, common to Fascist intelligence in Europe and Australia, was its dogged perseverance in gathering information on the moral as well as political behaviour of its victims. Undoubtedly, one of the motives was to gather ammunition to demonise or to discredit, at the right moment, its opponents.

Also, the life experience of Fascist and anti-Fascist migrants in Australia bore close resemblance to that of Fascist migrants and the *fuorusciti* in Europe, where some migrants changed political sides, some several times, and recycled themselves in the former enemy camp with astonishing adroitness. By the end of the 'Thirties, the anti-Fascists significantly cut their activities, demoralised by the international achievements of the Fascist Powers and worn out after so many years of struggle. The undisputable success of Fascism's grass root intelligence work kept the lid on any major public expression of anti-Fascism, prevented possible acts of terrorism, and instilled in the anti-Fascist camp the fear of being always under close scrutiny, the nagging doubt on the trustworthiness of their comrades, the suspicion that every move of theirs was known beforehand to the Fascist Consuls.

On the other hand, one of the key elements that clearly distinguished the refractory migrants in Australia from their *fuorusciti* comrades in Europe was their different social background and education. Mimmo Franzinelli, in his fine book on the history of OVRA, makes the point that, within the anti-Fascist diaspora in Europe, "the most represented groups were journalists and lawyers. Almost absent were the peasants, and workers were almost exclusively represented by 'Communists'. The lower middle class was present in significant numbers, in particular clerks and small businessmen, anxious to spy because it gave them a sense of power" (82). By contrast, the opposite can be said about Italian migrants in Australia, where there was an overwhelming representation of peasants and workers, semi-literate or illiterate, often humbly pursuing in secret their struggle. For this reason, perhaps, Australia did not host or produce many crafty double or triple agents, intellectual *agent provocateurs*, like Dino Segre, alias Pitigrilli, in Paris, who could trick their opponents into hopeless and compromising endeavours, destined to failure. In Australia, opposition was more humdrum and basic, as were the characters involved in it. Who was, then, the typical Fascist informer in Australia? The characterisation made by Italian historian Aldo Garosci of the lapsed *fuorusciti* neatly applies to Fascist moles in this

country, when he wrote that "the spies of emigration were mostly poor devils who, often without realising the seriousness of their actions, after many years of deprivation and unemployment, were feeding police with information on those who were attending meetings or frequenting anti-Fascist clubs" (83).

Another distinguishing factor was a greater difficulty in Australia for the Consuls to monitor the movements and the plans of dissident migrants. In the first place, throughout the 'Twenties and especially during the Depression, migrants had constantly to move in search of work, any kind of work, often interstate, frequently did not have a fixed address, and often did not write home, because they were ashamed of their failure to make a fortune or even to pay for the voyage to Australia of their family still in Italy, or because they knew that their mail could be intercepted by the Fascist censor. Also, in constant fear of being deported as a result of persistent Fascist representations to Australian authorities, many anti-Fascists took the Certificate of Naturalisation, thus evading to some extent the Fascist grip on their lives and availing themselves of the protection of the laws of the Commonwealth. Yet, this difficulty is even further evidence of the remarkable efficiency of the Consul's espionage network in its unrelenting task of preventing and repressing dissent. Incidentally, the files of the *Casellario Politico Centrale* exhaustively document the desperate economic plight of many migrants, some resorting to unconventional professions in order to earn a living, like Federico Gemmi and his son Antinisco, who, although living "in the most squalid poverty", in May 1937 were reported by Consul-General Paolo Vita-Finzi to stage illusionist shows (*rappresentazioni di fachirismo*) at Sydney's Circolo Isole Eolie (84).

In the final analysis, Fascist surveillance on Italians in Australia, as in other countries of strong anti-Fascist presence, despite falling far short from establishing a totalitarian control over its subjects, exploited the weakness of its victims and used them mercilessly to achieve its goals. The jurist Antonio Repaci exposed this aspect of Fascist *modus operandi* in its quest to achieve total conformism to its diktats, when he noted in 1956 that "Fascism found in every sector of Italian society its champions and super-champions of espionage, financed by OVRA, whose officers, cunningly led by the infernal Bocchini, were most able to put their finger on the wounds of unfulfilled ambitions, of small and big lies to cover, of vanities to satisfy, of pent-up resentments to let loose. The Regime deepened its already bloodied hands in this dunghill (*letamaio*), and on human material of this kind erected the granitic edifice of its security" (85).

In an interview published on 6 and 13 September 2003 by the British journal *The Spectator*, the Italian Prime Minister, *Cavaliere* Silvio Berlusconi, in one of his characteristically flippant outbursts, claimed that another *Cavaliere*, Benito Mussolini, "did not murder anyone. Mussolini sent people on holiday to confine them" (*il Duce non ha mai ammazzato nessuno, semmai mandava la gente in vacanza al confino*) (86). The fact is that 31 people were executed by firing squad by the Regime for their anti-Fascist activities between 1927



and 1943 and a further 22 between 1943 and 1945. Moreover, the price paid in human lives by Mussolini's colonial and imperial wars in Africa, the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Spain, Greece, the Soviet Union, the complicity in the extermination of Italian Jews, validate the claim that, according to Australian historian Richard Bosworth, "Fascism too, shed an excess of blood... Mussolini's Italian dictatorship must have sent early to the grave at least a million people, and probably more" (87). Also, the 12,330 people who had their lives broken by being sent, in some cases for the duration of the Regime, to *confino*, the 160,000 "politically admonished" or put under special surveillance, the 4,596 sentenced to jail terms totalling 27,735 years, did not feel they were on holiday. Similarly, the even greater number of *fuorusciti*, estimated to total approximately 70,000 in France alone (88), who were forced to leave Italy because their lives had been made impossible by Fascist beatings, harassment, violence and persecution, did not believe that theirs was a pleasant holiday abroad. On the contrary, theirs was a much harsher *confino*, potentially for the term of their natural life. Far away from their beloved and from the environment of their dialect, customs and familiar settings, living in a foreign and at times hostile country, often unemployed, shifting endlessly from one boarding house to another, moving from State to State, hounded by Fascist agents, aware that their mail was censored or seized, mistrustful of their comrades, sometime fearful for their life, in some cases still licking the wounds inflicted by Fascist thugs before their departure for Australia, harbouring a repressed feeling of revenge and of hatred, it is surprising that their frustration did not explode in more acts of reprisal, violence and retribution. Ultimately, by the passing of the years, this frustration understandably turned into dejection, resignation and even recantation. Only the strong would persist in carrying on with the struggle, despite mounting and bombastic Fascist international successes. Only the brave, like Ernesto Baratto, would go on crying the desperate, pathetic cry *No pasaran* (They shall not pass), when indeed Fascism was inexorably rolling over many countries and conquering many a conscience. Only the crazy, like Francesco Carmagnola and his friends, would go in 1938 on board the pride of the Italian Navy, the cruiser *Raimondo Montecuccoli*, whilst in Melbourne, to distribute to the sailors anti-Fascist literature. Only the fanatical would lay down their life for the cause, like Francesco Fantin, murdered in 1942 in the Australian internment camp of Loveday (SA) by a Fascist inmate. Only the unflinching, like Omero Schiassi would, against all odds, go on hoping in a future of freedom, in liberation from oppression. The story, the plight of these chosen few, is only a small, and one could say, insignificant aspect of the wider context of Australian history, indeed, of world history. Yet, it is important, because their dreams, their hopes, their actions and their sacrifice made in part possible for us to tell their story, today, in freedom. For this, they will be remembered.

## NOTES

- 1) Orwell, George, *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Penguin Books, London 1990.
- 2) Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Lo Schedario Politico (1894), in:

- [http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000293.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000293.htm)
- 3) *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 11 July 2003.
  - 4) Fondazione Fratelli Rosselli, *Il delitto Matteotti*, Notes by Enzo Cicchitto, in: <http://members.xoom.it/larchivio/matteotti.htm>. Also, Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Dalla CEKA fascista all'OVRA, in: [http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000296.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000296.htm)
  - 5) On the OVRA, see: Mimmo Franzinelli, *I tentacoli dell'OVRA. Agenti, collaboratori e vittime della polizia politica fascista*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 1999. Also, Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. L'organizzazione dello Stato fascista 1925-1929*, Einaudi, Torino 1968, pp. 465-466.
  - 6) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 63-64. Also, Mario Missori, 'I fuoriusciti antifascisti della sinistra non comunista nelle carte conservate nell'Archivio Centrale dello Stato', in: AA.VV., *L'emigrazione socialista nella lotta contro il fascismo. 1926-1939*, Sansoni, Firenze 1982, pp. 305-325. Also, Emilio Franzina, 'L'emigrazione schedata. Lavoratori sovversivi all'estero e meccanismi di controllo poliziesco in Italia tra fine secolo e fascismo', in: Bruno Bezza (Ed.), *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia. Gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione (1870-1940)*, Franco Angeli, Milano 1983, pp. 773-829. Also, Mario Serio, 'Le catalogue informatique du Casellario Politico Centrale: instrument pour l'histoire de l'émigration politique italienne' and Eric Vial, 'Le fonds du Casellario Politico Centrale à l'Archivio Centrale dello Stato', both in: CEDEI, *L'immigration italienne en France dans les années 20. Actes du colloque franco-italien, Paris 15-17 octobre 1987*, Paris 1988, pp. 15-46.
  - 7) Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 473.
  - 8) Ibid., p. 362.
  - 9) Ibid., pp. 244, 474, 475n, 480. According to Franzinelli, Barletta was "one of the best officers of OVRA" (Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 251). Also, Ministero dell'Interno, Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale della Polizia di Prevenzione. Gli "Affari Riservati" nel dopoguerra, in: [http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip\\_ps/dcpp/s\\_000000298.htm](http://www.interno.it/sezioni/attivita/sicurezza/dip_ps/dcpp/s_000000298.htm). On Lutri, see Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 474n. On Polito, see ibid., pp. 475-477. On Leto, see ibid., pp. 416, 419n, 477.
  - 10) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 439, 458, 643-686. On the High Commission for Sanctions against Fascism, see Domenico Roy Palmer, *Processo ai fascisti. 1943-1948. Storia di un'epurazione che non c'è stata*. Rizzoli, Milano 1996.
  - 11) Brunello Mantelli, 'Gli italiani nei Balcani. 1941-1943: occupazione militare, politiche persecutorie e crimini di guerra', in: Brunello Mantelli (Ed.), *Quale storia*, Year XXX, No. 1, June 2002, pp. 19, 31n. On Italian war crimes, see: Davide Rodogno, *Il nuovo ordine mediterraneo. Le politiche d'occupazione dell'Italia fascista in Europa (1940-1943)*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2003. Also, Tone Ferenc, *La Provincia 'Italiana' di Lubiana. Documenti 1941-1942*, Istituto Friulano per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione, Udine 1994.
  - 12) *L'Indice*, No. 6, June 1996, p.5. Also, Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 479n. On Ignazio Spinelli, see ibid., p. 337.
  - 13) On this, see: Richard Bosworth, University of Western Australia, 'Everyday Mussolinism: friends, family, locality and violence in Fascist Italy', unpublished paper, 2003. Also, by the same author, 'War, totalitarianism and "deep belief" in Fascist Italy, 1935-1943', unpublished paper, 2003. Also, Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 61.

- 14) Ware, Helen, *A Profile of the Italian Community in Australia*, Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, Melbourne 1981, p.13.
- 15) See Table 1. Tables 1 to 4 are the outcome of an analysis of information contained in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* files on Italians who were living in Australia during the Fascist period. The data on computer printouts were prepared for the Author by staff of the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in 1989.
- 16) See Table 2. For a list of names by region, see Table 4.
- 17) See Table 3. The middle class and intellectual professions were the following: medical doctors (3), accountants (3), interpreters (1), lawyers (2), journalists (2), teachers (1), students (2), physicists (1) and agronomists (1).
- 18) Franzinelli, op. cit., p. 31. Also, Alberto Acquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, Einaudi, Torino 1965, p. 421.
- 19) Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism and Italians in Australia. 1922-1945*, Australian University Press, Canberra 1980, pp.101-102. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia', in: *The Australian Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 1, March 1979, pp. 4-19.
- 20) Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'Anarchismo*, Vol. 1, CP Editrice, Florence 1976, pp. 29-32.
- 21) Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism* etc., pp. 103-107.
- 22) Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, *Casellario Politico Centrale* (hereafter ACS/CPC), Berlato, Primo, *busta* 524, *fascicolo* 119333. For instance, Celestino Bosazza, a bricklayer from Townsville (Qld) who left Italy in 1910 and died in Randwick (NSW) on 1 November 1935, was listed in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* as "allegedly a Socialist" because, as the Prefect of Novara cabled the Ministry of the Interior on 13 February 1915, "it is assumed that he is a member of the official Socialist Party, however I cannot confirm it absolutely" (ACS/CPC, Bosazza, Celestino, *b.* 776, *f.* 34904).
- 23) ACS/CPC, Acquasaliente, Pietro, *b.*14, *f.* 79673. Also, ACS/CPC, Hojak, Cirillo, *b.* 2602, *f.* 46537. Also, ACS/CPC, Percich, Antonio, *b.* 3851, *f.* 96267.
- 24) ACS/CPC, Altomare, Leonardo, *b.* 80, *f.* 95162.
- 25) ACS/CPC, Bonfanti, Carlo, *b.* 726, *f.* 78984.
- 26) Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome, Ministero dell'Interno, Divisione Affari Generali e Riservati/J5/10, (hereafter ACS/J5/10), Antico, Giovanni Terribile. For the exchange of political information between the Commonwealth Investigation Branch, State Police agencies and Italian Consuls, see also: ACS/CPC, Capriotti, Vincenzo, *b.* 1055, *f.* 37267. Also, ACS/CPC, Canil, Pietro, *b.* 1005, *f.* 12542. Also, ACS/CPC, Cammerino, Pietro, *b.* 974, *f.* 46907. Also, ACS/CPC, Del Campo, Matteo, *b.* 1670, *f.* 46099. Further evidence of the exchange of political information between the Australian Authorities and the Fascist Consuls is given by the attempt, in June 1922, on the part of the Commonwealth, to prohibit entry to Australia of Giovanni Paglietta, because suspected of being a dangerous Communist. Eventually, he was allowed to settle on his brother's farm in Mareeba (Qld), following successful representations made by Consul-General Grossardi. It is interesting to note, however, that an entry in his *Casellario Politico Centrale* file, dated 23 November 1922, from the Prefect of Alessandria to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* still considered him to be "a fearful subversive" (ACS/CPC, Paglietta, Giovanni, *b.* 3657, *f.* 82164). Also, on 5 June 1935, the Melbourne Consul reported to the Ministry of the Interior that a Communist immigrant, Amico Petrilli, was denied a Certificate of Naturalisation. "From information verbally given to the Acting Vice-Consul in Perth by the Inspector of the Investigation Branch", the Consul, cabled, "Petrilli sought to obtain a Certificate of Naturalisation, but the competent authorities rejected his

- application in consideration of his political background" (ACS/CPC, Petrilli, Amico, *b.* 3903, *f.* 116294).
- 27) National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A367, Control Symbol C69630, Barcode 782834, Security Service Dossier containing names of 50 interned Italian antifascists, Deputy Director-General of Security for Queensland to Director-General of Security, Canberra, 3 December 1942.
  - 28) ACS/CPC, Pastega, Giacomo, *b.* 3772, *f.* 28052. On Errico Malatesta, see Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti, *Il movimento operaio italiano. Dizionario biografico*, Editori Riuniti, Rome 1975, pp. 246-255.
  - 29) ACS/CPC, Betta, Luigi, *b.* 592, *f.* 116842. Also, ACS/CPC, Guidi, Abele, *b.* 2586, *f.* 16509.
  - 30) ACS/CPC, Socal, Graziadio, *b.* 4852, *f.* 1685. Also, ACS/CPC, Sebastiani, Pietro, *b.* 4722, *f.* 87667. Also, ACS/CPC, Simeoni, Carlo, *b.* 4815, *f.* 114559. See also the aggression against Mario Melano, Acting Vice-Consul in Townsville, carried out on 26 December 1931 by Francesco Carmagnola, Mario Tardiani and Tommaso Saviane, in: Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia', *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14. Also, ACS/CPC, Tardiani, Mario, *b.* 5030, *f.* 111347. Also, ACS/CPC, Saviane, Tommaso, *b.* 4630, *f.* 114313.
  - 31) ACS/CPC, Pastega, Giacomo, *b.* 3772, *f.* 28052. Also, ACS/CPC, Perani, Giovan Battista, *b.* 3848, *f.* 21650.
  - 32) ACS/CPC, Argenti, Giacomo, *b.* 184, *f.* 14013. Refractory migrants who were allowed to return to Italy, if registered in the *Rubrica di Frontiera* "to search and to watch", were subjected to a thorough search of their luggage and to close surveillance. This was the case for Nicola Battista, a Socialist who in December 1931 arrived in Naples on board the MV *Esquilino*, was searched and allowed to proceed for Foggia, "duly signalled to be located and watched". When, in March 1933, he departed for Australia on board the MV *Remo*, he was again "personally frisked" and his baggage searched "with negative result" (ACS/CPC, Battista, Nicola, *b.* 410, *f.* 2483).
  - 33) Bettini, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
  - 34) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-209.
  - 35) ACS/CPC, Bertazzon, Isidoro, *b.* 551, *f.* 602.
  - 36) ACS/CPC, Cunial, Angelo, *b.* 1558, *f.* 31943.
  - 37) ACS/CPC, Colladetti, Angelo, *b.* 1406, *f.* 13702. Also, ACS/CPC, Da Cortà, Mirko, *b.* 1569, *f.* 41958. Also, ACS/CPC, Simeoni, Carlo, *b.* 4815, *f.* 114559.
  - 38) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 247, also pp. 569-570.
  - 39) ACS/CPC, Amendola, Francesco, *b.* 98, *f.* 136556. During the Second World War Amedeo Mammalella would serve as Consul in Dubrovnik (Rodogno, *op. cit.*, pp. 63, 177, 245, 327, 332, 449, 452, 483).
  - 40) ACS/J5/10, Antico, Giovanni Terribile. Also, ACS/CPC, Antico, Giuseppe, *b.* 150, *f.* 3818. Also, ACS/CPC, Antico, Luigi, *b.* 150, *f.* 73703..
  - 41) ACS/CPC, Arico, Carmelo, *b.* 186, *f.* 66904. See also ACS/CPC, Berlato, Primo, *b.* 524, *f.* 119333, who in August 1939 enquired at the Sydney Consulate-General why the Police had asked his family in Vicenza for his photograph and his address in Australia, and expressed his concern if an investigation on his activities were opened. Sometime this process was reversed. Mario Auricchio, an anti-Fascist from Cairns (Qld), was identified by the Police in Naples when his photograph, forwarded by the Sydney Consulate-General, was shown to his sister Elvira (ACS/CPC, Auricchio, Mario, *b.* 216, *f.* 119206). Another migrant who complained on 23 April 1930 to the Melbourne Consul that his home in Italy had been searched and his wife harassed by the *Carabinieri* was the Socialist Vito Riggio from Vizzini (Catania). In fact, the *Carabinieri* removed, upon instructions from the Parish priest who had visited the home

- in order to bless it, a painting portraying a priest attempting to rape a naked woman (ACS/CPC, Riggio, Vito, *b.* 4322, *f.* 47209).
- 42) ACS/CPC, Baratto, Ernesto, *b.* 313, *f.* 33340. Also, ACS/CPC, Poli, Giovanni, *b.* 4058, *f.* 66797.
  - 43) See ACS/CPC, Sceusa, Francesco, *b.* 4682, *f.* 61659. On Sceusa, see Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Kookaburra e Kultur: Francesco Sceusa tra miti e realtà australiani', in: Romano Ugolini (Ed.), *Italia-Australia 1788-1988*, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Roma 1991, pp. 261-275. Also, see Salvatore Costanza, *Socialismo, emigrazione e nazionalità. Tra Italia e Australia*, Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano, Trapani 1992. Also, see: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Archivio Storico Diplomatico (hereafter MAE), Interpol, Conferenza anti-anarchica 1899-1901, *b.* 32, *f.* 8, Inghilterra. See also, MAE, Interpol, Anarchici in Italia, Inghilterra, ecc., 1877-1899, *b.* 34, *f.* 8, Inghilterra. See also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'L'integrazione dell'emigrazione italiana in Australia e la politica delle Trade Unions dagli inizi del secolo al fascismo', in: Bruno Bezza (Ed.), *op.cit.*, pp. 330-331.
  - 44) ACS/CPC, Bentivoglio, Ferdinando, *b.* 505. Another emigrant who settled in Sydney in 1902 and found employment in a laundry shop was the Anarchist Enrico Bertoni. Still in February 1930 the Prefect of Bologna, upon request from the *Casellario Politico Centrale*, was endeavouring to find his address, but the consular authorities in Australia had lost trace of him since 1923 (ACS/CPC, Bertoni, Enrico, *b.* 582, *f.* 78752).
  - 45) ACS/CPC, Berlato, Primo, *b.* 524, *f.* 119333.
  - 46) ACS/CPC, Carpigo, Giuseppe, *b.* 1109, *f.* 51009. On Maggiani, see ACS/CPC, Maggiani, Umberto, *b.* 2917, *f.* 87471. On Pasquale Binazzi, see Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti, *Il movimento operaio italiano*, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-309.
  - 47) ACS/CPC, Camba, Avendrace, *b.* 967, *f.* 136701.
  - 48) ACS/CPC, Cazzulino, Mario, *b.* 1211, *f.* 120432.
  - 49) ACS/CPC, Boito, Antonio, *b.* 695, *f.* 122307.
  - 50) Franzinelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-240. Also, ACS/CPC, Chiarella, Giuseppe, *b.* 1292, *f.* 135267. Also, ACS/CPC, Governato, Luigi, *b.* 2492, *f.* 73053. Also, ACS/CPC, Tibaldi, Giovanni, *b.* 5091, *f.* 68303.
  - 51) ACS/CPC, Badesso, Giuseppe, *b.* 242, *f.* 127643. The Prefect of Treviso advised that "his letter from Australia, directed to Baratto Antonio, has been intercepted here...".
  - 52) ACS/CPC, Bosco, Oreste, *b.* 781, *f.* 131240. Also, ACS/CPC, Scagliotti, Vincenzo, *b.* 4647, *f.* 130858. Scagliotti also mailed a copy of *L'Unità* to his friend Boccalatte in Italy, who quickly consigned it to the *Carabinieri*.
  - 53) ACS/CPC, Campanaro, Francesco, *b.* 980, *f.* 125272.
  - 54) ACS/CPC, Castelli, Achille, *b.* 1167, *f.* 136764.
  - 55) ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Francesco, *b.* 711, *f.* 20924.
  - 56) ACS/CPC, Brida, Ottavio, *b.* 838, *f.* 135649.
  - 57) Davide Lajolo, *I "Voltagabbana"*, Il Saggiatore, Milano 1963; Ruggero Zangrandi, *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1964.
  - 58) ACS/CPC, Avanzini, Clemente, *b.* 218, *f.* 38951. See also the file of Luigi Cazzulino, who was reported in May 1934 by the Townsville Vice-Consul L. Chieffi, as being still decidedly against the Regime, but seemingly calming down (*sembra che egli si vada calmando*). ACS/CPC, Cazzulino, Luigi, *b.* 1211, *f.* 64030. On the Meacci case, see ACS/CPC, Meacci, Paolo, *b.* 3194, *f.* 376. Already during the 'Twenties the Consuls hoped that the possibility of quick fortune would dampen the migrants' anti-Fascist zeal. In writing to the Ministry of the Interior on 16 October 1925 about Rina Zaetta, a Communist that in Italy had assisted the Party's underground activities as a silent mail

- box and who purchased a farm in Victoria, Consul-General Grossardi intimated that "now that she too has become a 'landowner' (*proprietaria*), her advanced ideas will noticeably calm down as often has been the case in similar circumstances" (ACS/CPC, Zaetta, Rina, *b.* 5490, *f.* 130321).
- 59) ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Francesco, *b.* 711, *f.* 20924. Also, ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Girolamo, *b.* 711, *f.* 20362. Also, ACS/CPC, Bonaguro, Giovanni, *b.* 711, *f.* 6323. Also, ACS/CPC, Manera, Giuseppe, *b.* 2979, *f.* 6363. Incidentally, Giovanni Bonaguro's life as a migrant took an unhappy turn. In January 1929 the Prefect of Vicenza reported to the *Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* that "he gave in trust his savings, made over many years of work abroad, to his father, also living in Coltrano, who, having squandered for many reasons his son's savings, and in order to recompense him, at least in part, decided to transfer to him the ownership of part of his land, transfer that, being of old age and father of eight other sons, he wants to execute as soon as possible and in secret, in order to avoid possible negative reactions by his other next-of-kin".
- 60) ACS/CPC, Canu, Antonio, *b.* 1019, *f.* 95232.
- 61) ACS/CPC, Dalla Valle, Albino, *b.* 1586, *f.* 67034. See also the case of Romeo Guglielmi, a Socialist worker from the Elba Island, classed in the *Casellario Politico Centrale* as dangerous. On 23 March 1930, the Prefect of Livorno was pleased to report to the Ministry of the Interior that in Mourilyan (Qld), Guglielmi "was "obsequious and respectful towards the Consular authorities, and some time ago, at a private function, he even sang with the others the hymn *Giovinezza*" (ACS/CPC, Guglielmi, Romeo, *b.* 2582, *f.* 31001). See also the case of Antonio Giordano, who in 1932 was writing under the pseudonym S. Jordan for the Communist Party paper *Workers' Weekly*. In January 1938, when Giordano abjured his former ideals and crossed to the Fascist side, his name was taken out of the list of subversives (ACS/CPC, Giordano, Antonio, *b.* 2421, *f.* 110894).
- 62) ACS/CPC, Bianchi, Filippo Maria, *b.* 616, *f.* 38833.
- 63) ACS/CPC, Pompilio, Pasquale, *b.* 4075, *f.* 126442.
- 64) ACS/CPC, Frizza, Domenico, *b.* 2186, *f.* 65384.
- 65) On this, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op. cit., pp. 60-63.
- 66) ACS/CPC, Borghetti, Benedetto, *b.* 754, *f.* 27955.
- 67) ACS/CPC, Cappellari, Lorenzito, *b.* 1041, *f.* 2954. On Lanero, see ACS/CPC, Lanero, Pietro, *b.* 2712, *f.* 12387.
- 68) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Lino, *b.* 1096, *f.* 601.
- 69) On Francesco Giuseppe Carmagnola, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *The Italians in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne 2003, pp. 86-95. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op.cit., pp. 97-130. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Fascism and Italian Anarchists in Australia', in: *The Australian Quarterly*, op. cit., pp. 4-19.
- 70) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Giovanni, *b.* 1096, *f.* 390.
- 71) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Antonia, *b.* 1096, *f.* 389.
- 72) ACS/CPC, Carmignola, Silvio, *b.* 1096, *f.* 600.
- 73) ACS/CPC, De Angelis, Carlo, *b.* 1635, *f.* 73288. Even when they were not "impulsive", they were still perceived as a threat. On 2 June 1934, Consul-General Ferrante advised the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that, out of two anti-Fascist brothers, "it is my opinion that Luigi Danesi is more dangerous than Costante Danesi, because more cunning, more shrewd; he is hiding his feelings and sometimes pretends to be the defender of Italianness in order to better instil, at the right moment, his anti-Fascist poison" (ACS/CPC, Danesi, Luigi, *b.* 1608, *f.* 118834).

- 74) On Omero Schiassi, see Gianfranco Cresciani, *Fascism, Anti-Fascism, etc.*, op. cit., pp. 223-248. Also, A. R Chisholm, *Men were my Milestones*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1958, pp. 117-125. Also, Gianfranco Cresciani, 'Omero Schiassi in Australia: l'avvocato dei poveri', in: *Studi Emigrazione*, XXXIII, no. 122, June 1996, pp. 304-324.
- 75) ACS/CPC, Caldera, Ciro, b. 945, f. 118046.
- 76) ACS/CPC, Colbertaldo, Luigi, b. 1401, f. 125606.
- 77) ACS/CPC, Ciotti, Giuseppe, b. 1358, f. 11860.
- 78) ACS/CPC, Chemello, Pietro, b. 1263, f. 125568. Also, ACS/CPC, Gavioli, Giuseppe, b. 2319, f. 31045.
- 79) ACS/CPC, Manera, Giuseppe, b. 2979, f. 6363. On the Redentorist Father Giacomo Salza, see Gianfausto Rosoli, *Insieme oltre le frontiere*, Salvatore Sciascia Editore, Rome 1996, pp. 600-623.
- 80) Luigi Einaudi, 'Via il Prefetto!', in: *L'Italia e il secondo Risorgimento*, Supplement to the *Gazzetta Ticinese*, 17 July 1944.
- 81) On the New Fascist Man, see Michael Arthur Ledeen, *Universal Fascism. The Theory and Practice of the Fascist International. 1928-1936*, Howard Fertig, New York 1972, pp. 61-62; 94-95; 151-153; 161-163. Also, Luigi Preti, *Impero fascista, africani ed ebrei*, Mursia, Milano 1968.
- 82) Franzinelli, op. cit., pp. 440-441
- 83) ACS/CPC, Mostacchetti, Giuseppe, b. 3442, f. 117650.
- 84) Aldo Garosci, *Storia dei fuorusciti*, Laterza, Bari 1954, p. 238.
- 85) ACS/CPC, Gemmi, Federico, b. 2328, f. 27598.
- 86) Antonino Repaci, 'Note e discussioni. Una spia del regime', in: *Il Movimento di Liberazione in Italia*, No. 40, January 1956, p. 55.
- 87) *The Spectator*, London, 6 and 13 September 2003. Also, *Corriere della Sera*, Milan, 12 and 15 September 2003.
- 88) Richard Bosworth, *Mussolini*, Arnold, London 2002, p.35.
- 89) Between 1921 and 1926, the number of Italians in France increased from 450,000 to 760,116, and peaked to 808,000 at the beginning of the 'Thirties, only to drop to approximately half at the end of the Second World War. Obviously, the majority of migrants were motivated by economic reasons, however, it has been estimated that not more than 10% were forced to leave Italy by political persecution (Santi Fedele, *Storia della Concentrazione Antifascista 1927-1934*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1976, pp. 6-9.

**TABLE 1**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government 1922-1940

| <b>POLITICAL AFFILIATION</b> | <b>NUMBER</b>     |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Communist                    | 77                |
| Antifascist                  | 56                |
| Socialist                    | 57                |
| Anarchist                    | 31                |
| Republican                   | 11                |
| Subversive                   | 1                 |
| <b><u>TOTAL</u></b>          | <b><u>233</u></b> |



**TABLE 2**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
 Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
 Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government 1922-1940

| <b>REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE</b>        | <b>NUMBER</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>NORTHERN ITALY</b>             |               |
| Piedmont                          | 31            |
| Lombardy                          | 35            |
| Liguria                           | 3             |
| Veneto                            | 83            |
| Trentino-Alto Adige               | 2             |
| Friuli-Venezia Giulia             | 15            |
| Emilia-Romagna                    | 9             |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>178</b>    |
| <b>CENTRAL ITALY</b>              |               |
| Tuscany                           | 10            |
| Umbria                            | 1             |
| Marche                            | 6             |
| Lazio                             | 1             |
| Abruzzi-Molise                    | 3             |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>21</b>     |
| <b>SOUTHERN ITALY</b>             |               |
| Campania                          | 5             |
| Apulia                            | 13            |
| Basilicata-Lucania                | nil           |
| Calabria                          | 2             |
| Sicily                            | 7             |
| Sardinia                          | 4             |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>31</b>     |
| TOTAL ITALY                       | 230           |
| REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE NOT AVAILABLE | 3             |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                | <b>233</b>    |

**TABLE 3**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
 Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
 Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government - 1922-1940

| <b>PROFESSION</b>  | <b>(MESTIERE)</b> | <b>NUMBER</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Peasant            | Contadino         | 57            |
| Farm labourer      | Bracciante        | 22            |
| Bricklayer         | Muratore          | 18            |
| Factory Worker     | Operaio           | 11            |
| Farmer             | Agricoltore       | 11            |
| Carpenter          | Falegname         | 10            |
| Miner              | Minatore          | 7             |
| Cobbler            | Calzolaio         | 6             |
| Labourer           | Manovale          | 7             |
| Sailor             | Marittimo         | 6             |
| Textile worker     | Tessitore         | 4             |
| Trader             | Commerciante      | 4             |
| Timberjack         | Boscaiolo         | 3             |
| Carter             | Carrettiere       | 4             |
| Clerk              | Impiegato         | 3             |
| Blacksmith         | Fabbro            | 3             |
| Medical doctor     | Medico            | 3             |
| Fruit grower       | Agrumaio          | 3             |
| Shop keeper        | Negoziante        | 3             |
| Motor mechanic     | Meccanico         | 3             |
| Accountant         | Ragioniere        | 3             |
| Concrete worker    | Cementista        | 2             |
| Hotel keeper       | Albergatore       | 2             |
| Fisherman          | Pescatore         | 2             |
| Tailor             | Sarto             | 3             |
| Waiter             | Cameriere         | 2             |
| Property owner     | Possidente        | 1             |
| Interpreter        | Interprete        | 1             |
| Scribe             | Scrivano          | 1             |
| Casual employee    | Commissionario    | 1             |
| Publisher          | Editore           | 1             |
| Army Lieutenant    | Tenente Esercito  | 1             |
| Sail maker         | Velaio            | 1             |
| Driver             | Autista           | 1             |
| Housewife          | Casalinga         | 1             |
| Barber             | Barbiere          | 1             |
| Railway man        | Ferroviero        | 1             |
| Military Policeman | Carabiniere       | 1             |
| Electrician        | Elettrotecnico    | 1             |
| Wood cutter        | Segantino         | 1             |
| Baker              | Panettiere        | 1             |

|                  |                   |   |
|------------------|-------------------|---|
| Gardener         | Giardiniere       | 1 |
| Icecream maker   | Gelatiere         | 1 |
| Lathe operator   | Tornitore         | 1 |
| Book seller      | Libraio           | 1 |
| Boilermaker      | Calderaio         | 1 |
| Goldsmith        | Orefice           | 1 |
| Lawyer           | Avvocato          | 2 |
| Journalist       | Giornalista       | 2 |
| Teacher          | Insegnante        | 1 |
| Student          | Studiante         | 2 |
| Physics graduate | Dottore in Fisica | 1 |
| Pensioner        | Pensionato        | 1 |
| Agronomist       | Agronomo          | 1 |

**TOTAL 233**

**TABLE 4**

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome - Ministero dell'Interno  
Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza - Casellario Politico Centrale  
Italians in Australia screened by the Fascist Government - 1922-1940

**NAMES BY REGION**

**NOMINATIVI PER REGIONE**

**PIEDMONT - PIEMONTE (31)**

1. Avalle, Michele
2. Betta, Luigi
3. Bonfanti, Carlo
4. Bosazza, Celestino
5. Bosco, Oreste
6. Caldera, Ciro
7. Cazzulino, Luigi
8. Cazzulino, Mario
9. Cazzulino, Paolo
10. Costanzo, Carlo
11. De Andrea, Luigi
12. De Vecchi, Giovanni
13. Ferraris, Bernardo
14. Gatti, Carlo
15. Gatti, Silvio
16. Ghibaud, Giovanni
17. Giacosa, Pietro
18. Governato, Luigi
19. Lanero, Pietro
20. Mametro, Marcello
21. Marco, Felice
22. Marco, Rizieri
23. Migliavacca, Antonio
24. Montagnana, Massimo
25. Mortara, Antonio
26. Paglietta, Giovanni
27. Quartero, Luigi
28. Scagliotti, Vincenzo
29. Spinoglio, Ernesto
30. Strambio, Vito
31. Tibaldi, Giovanni

## **LOMBARDY - LOMBARDIA (35)**

1. Andreoletti, Giovanni
2. Avanzini, Clemente
3. Bonassi, Giuseppe
4. Borghetti, Benedetto
5. Della Maddalena, Fortunato
6. Della Maddalena, Francesco
7. Fanelli, Stefano
8. Farina, Emilio
9. Frizza, Domenico
10. Gavioli, Giuseppe
11. Gilardi, Luigi
12. Giovanelli, Aladino
13. Glisenti, Andrea
14. Guerrini, Antonio
15. Guidi, Abele
16. Maestri, Angelo
17. Maggi, Costantino
18. Magoni, Carlo
19. Mostacchetti, Giuseppe
20. Movigliatti, Giovanni
21. Perani, Giov. Battista
22. Pianeda, Vito
23. Plozza, Stefano
24. Poli, Giovanni
25. Positti, Michele
26. Rebuffoni, Andrea
27. Rebuffoni, Domenico
28. Rebuffoni, Fortunato
29. Rebuffoni, Giovanni
30. Sacristani, Giovanni
31. Tardiani Mario
32. Viganò, Aldo
33. Viganò, Cesare
34. Zilioli, Enrico
35. Zilioli, Giovanni

## **LIGURIA (3)**

1. Maggiani, Umberto
2. Pasquali, Angiolino
3. Rebora, Giov. Battista

## **VENETIA - VENETO (83)**

1. Acquasaliente, Pietro
2. Antico, Giovanni Terribile
3. Antico, Giuseppe
4. Antico, Luigi
5. Badesso, Giuseppe
6. Baratto, Ernesto
7. Basso, Gottardo
8. Bentivoglio, Ferdinando
9. Berlato, Primo
10. Bertazzon, Isidoro
11. Boito, Antonio
12. Bonaguro, Francesco
13. Bonaguro, Giovanni
14. Bonaguro, Girolamo
15. Cadonà, Leandro
16. Campanaro, Francesco
17. Canil, Pietro
18. Canteri, Guido
19. Carmagnola, Francesco Giuseppe
20. Carmignola, Antonia
21. Carmignola, Giovanni
22. Carmignola, Lino
23. Carmignola, Silvio
24. Cavasin, Carlo
25. Chemello, Pietro
26. Cielo, Eliseo
27. Ciotti, Giuseppe
28. Ciotti, Valentino
29. Colbertaldo, Luigi
30. Colladetti, Angelo
31. Corso, Giovanni
32. Cunial, Angelo fu Giovanni
33. Cunial, Angelo fu Quirino
34. Cunial, Antonio
35. Cunial, Giovanni
36. Cunial, Pietro
37. Da Cortà, Mirko
38. Dalla Costa, Guerrino
39. Dalla Valle, Albino
40. Dalle Nogare, Modesto
41. Dal Santo, Silvio
42. Da Vanzo, Pietro
43. De Bernardo, Andrea
44. De Biasio, Giuseppe
45. De Candido, Giovanni
46. De Meio, Gelmiro
47. De Meio, Orazio

48. Epifanio, Giovanni
49. Fantin, Francesco
50. Feltrin, Antonio
51. Festini, Furlan
52. Forner, Antonio
53. Fratin, Pietro
54. Furlan, Sebastiano
55. Girardini, Antonio
56. Grotto, Pietro
57. Lesana, Giuseppe
58. Manera, Emanuele
59. Manera, Giuseppe fu Giovanni
60. Martin, Andrea
61. Mendo, Giovanni
62. Panizzon, Gaetano
63. Pastega, Angelo
64. Pastega, Giacomo
65. Perin, Claudio
66. Pilloni, Fulvio
67. Pinazza, Francesco
68. Precoma, Antonio
69. Precoma Gioacchino
70. Precoma, Mario
71. Predebon, Ernesto
72. Saccardo, Giovanni
73. Salvestro, Giuseppe
74. Sarri, Carlo
75. Saviane, Tommaso
76. Savio, Pietro
77. Scodro, Giovanni
78. Socal, Giuseppe
79. Socal, Graziadio
80. Stedile, Severino
81. Torresan, Calogero
82. Visonà, Giovanni
83. Zaetta, Rina

## **TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE (2)**

1. Brida, Ottavio
2. Pellizzari, Cornelio

### **FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA (15)**

1. Cappellari, Lorenzito
2. De Luca, Cesare
3. Hojak, Cirillo
4. Lonzar, Giovanni
5. Martin, Antonio
6. Mecchia, Giobatta
7. Noselli, Angelo
8. Palman, Cento
9. Palman, Savoino
10. Percich, Antonio
11. Revelant, Alfredo
12. Revelant, Giorgio
13. Simeoni, Carlo
14. Solari, Giuseppe
15. Volpe, Passatea

### **EMILIA-ROMAGNA (9)**

1. Bertoni, Enrico
2. Fantini, Carlo
3. Giovanardi, Giuseppe
4. Giovanardi, Secondo
5. Magi, Giuseppe
6. Prampolini, Giuseppe
7. Rossi, Pietro
8. Santi, Giulio
9. Schiassi, Omero

### **TUSCANY - TOSCANA (10)**

1. Argenti, Giacomo
2. Cardenti, Giuseppe
3. Carucci, Giulio
4. Castelli, Achille
5. Danesi, Costante
6. Danesi, Luigi
7. De Angelis, Carlo
8. Gemmi, Federico
9. Guglielmi, Romeo
10. Meacci, Paolo



### **UMBRIA (1)**

1. Sebastiani, Pietro

### **MARCHE (6)**

1. Bianchi, Filippo Maria
2. Capriotti, Vincenzo
3. Carlini, Enrico
4. De Marco, Divo
5. Ficcadenti, Vincenzo
6. Nibbi, Gino

### **LATIUM - LAZIO (1)**

1. Carpigo, Giuseppe

### **ABRUZZI-MOLISE (3)**

1. Gigante, Cesare
2. Petrilli, Amico
3. Pieragostino, Luigi

### **CAMPANIA (5)**

1. Auricchio, Mario
2. De Luca, Pietro
3. Di Tocco, Rosario
4. Gargiulo, Francesco
5. Giordano, Antonio

### **APULIA - PUGLIA (13)**

1. Altomare, Leonardo
2. Battista, Nicola
3. Cammerino, Pietro
4. Del Campo, Matteo
5. Giuliani, Antonio
6. Leggieri, Nazzario
7. Limosani, Michele
8. Locurcio, Giovanni
9. Matera, Antonio
10. Rana, Pantaleo
11. Soccio, Angelo
12. Stilla, Pasquale
13. Villani, Gioacchino

## **CALABRIA (2)**

1. Chiarella, Giuseppe
2. Pompilio, Pasquale

## **SICILY - SICILIA (7)**

1. Amendola, Francesco
2. Arico, Carmelo
3. Calì, Rosario
4. Certoso, Gaetano
5. Ioppolo, Michele
6. Riggio, Vito
7. Sceusa, Francesco

## **SARDINIA - SARDEGNA (4)**

1. Camba, Avendrace
2. Canu, Antonio
3. Cusinu, Antonio
4. Salis, Giovanni

## **REGIONAL BIRTHPLACE NOT AVAILABLE (3)**

1. Del Favero, Giuseppe
2. Giannitrapani, Alberto
3. Muratori, Guido

**GRAND TOTAL            233**

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# Mambo Italiano: Ugo Ceresoli and His Orchestra Mokambo

*by John Whiteoak*

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*Ugo Ceresoli's Orchestra Mokambo is probably the best remembered Italian-Australian dance and show band of Melbourne's Post-war era. It came to attention again in the 1980s when the band was revived for what became its famous annual Mokambo reunion nights at the San Remo Ballroom. Ceresoli and his band have been fictionalised in several novels and they are cited in many other publications as being historically significant. This article sets out to critique the mostly word-of-mouth 'Mokambo legend' by examining it in a more detailed way. The outcome is no less evocative than the legend itself.*

To the Italian community of Melbourne, Ugo Ceresoli and his Orchestra Mokambo have become poignant landmarks in the story of early post-war immigration and the cultural life of Carlton and adjacent suburbs where 1950s and '60s Italian migration was intensely focused. Ugo and his orchestra are further immortalized in vivid fictionalized sketches presented in Arnold Zable's *Scraps of Heaven* and Anna Maria Dell'oso's *Songs of the Suitcase*. Both pen fascinating glimpses of the legendary Mokambo cabaret-balls at Cumparsita Hall in Carlton. Dell'oso depicts Ugo (whom she interviewed) as Livio Simioni, 'The King of the Accordion', and Orchestra Mokambo as the 'Combo Milano'.<sup>1</sup>

Other enduring figures in the Mokambo story include Ugo's guitarist brother, Bruno, and Mokambo *cantanti*, such as Pietro Alessi, Guido Maiorano, Vittorio Sacca, Jo Muhrer (Muhrer Laurance) and—through the 1980s revival of Orchestra Mokambo—Ugo and Jo's daughter, Melinda Ceresoli. A significant uncertainty in the legend-story surrounds the compelling sound of the *Latino Americano e Italiano* music that drew a generation of post-war migrants to Carlton's Cumparsita ballroom. This sound now lives and resonates only in the minds of the rapidly dwindling number of people who actually heard and danced to it, since Orchestra Mokambo never released a record. The twirling mists surrounding the legend-like story also embrace a tantalising and plausible rumor of the filming of a Mokambo cabaret-ball. Yet, these very uncertainties are surely all the more reason to revisit the Mokambo legend or story from a deeper historical perspective.

## **Ugo Ceresoli: Italian Beginnings**

Ugo was born on 27 September 1927 in the inland rural *comune* or municipality of Ramiseto, situated in the province of Reggio-Emilia, part of the North-Eastern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna that has Bologna as its capital. Emilia-Romagna is a fertile region noted for its hard working rural population and the abundance of its produce, including fine wines. Ugo's father Adelio Ceresoli was a metal worker (or plumber) and his mother, Paola Ceresoli (formerly Paola Zammarchi), possibly undertook other employment besides her home duties. Ugo remained especially close to his one-year older brother, Bruno, until the former's untimely death. Details of Ugo's early musical education and development in Italy are tantalisingly minimal, vague, and sometimes contradictory. They form a very probable though unconfirmed narrative that he related with slight variations to various interviewers, family and friends over the years.<sup>2</sup>

The story begins with Ugo as a nine year old boy totally besotted with the sound and sight of the accordion and who eventually persuades his parents to buy him his first accordion at the cost of 150 lire. With strong parental support, he learns rapidly (he claimed to be 'self taught') and later he, Bruno and other teenage musicians form a small dance band and perform at outdoor rural *fiesta* dances throughout the Emilia region.

I remember, always with a nip of nostalgia, the times in which, together with my brother, we ran about from one part to the other of Emilia playing mazurkas, waltzes, sambas and tangos to diminish the hardness of people's lives.<sup>3</sup>

His talent as an accordionist is soon recognised and, according to one account, he takes up formal music studies, including composition, but where, with whom, or for how long is not known. By 1952, when he boards the *Oceania* for the sea voyage to Melbourne, he is already a fully-fledged and highly accomplished professional dance musician and concert accordionist with experience in major cities like Milan and Genoa and, it is said, an appearance on RAI-Radiotelevisione Italiana (or the earlier Radio Audizioni Italiane) with the famous quiz show champion, Mike Bongiorno.<sup>4</sup>

He disembarks at Port Melbourne in late 1952 with an entire music library in suitcases, a P.A. system and a number of accordions.<sup>5</sup> In Maria Dell'oso's version of what Ugo told her, the customs officials who had never seen a continental button accordion before, attempt to confiscate the accordions on the assumption they are being brought ashore duty-free to be sold, not played. To save the situation, Ugo straps on his custom-made Crosio accordion and, to the insolent 'continental-style' wolf-whistles and cat calls of some nearby Italians, he whips off a break-neck rendition of *Il Volo Del Calabrone* (*Flight of the Bumble Bee*) to the astonishment of the now smiling officers—who respectfully wave him through. In Melbourne, he is reunited with his brother and the Australian part of the story begins.

## **The Early Years in Melbourne**

Events following Ugo's arrival in Melbourne are much more verifiable and confirm that he reached Australia as a very accomplished and experienced musician. One can easily imagine that he arrived with the full expectation that his talents, knowledge and experience would be greatly appreciated and grasped in this geographically and culturally isolated country, and that his musical career would be quickly and successfully re-established within the mainstream of Australian entertainment culture.

The formal gateway to musical employment, membership of the Professional Musician's Union, was however restricted to British subjects or naturalized individuals of non-British heritage. Furthermore, there were already many well established musicians of Italian heritage in Melbourne, such as the accordion virtuosos Egidio Bortoli and Lou Toppano, the multi-instrumentalist Giovanni Cera, and the guitarist Nino Alda, all of whom were reputed performers of Latin, Spanish, Italian, 'Gypsy', 'Continental', light classical and American popular repertoire—repertoire similar to that offered by the Ceresoli brothers. Furthermore, they also led dance bands that were, until the late 1950s, the Italian community's first choice for major community functions.

## **Getting Started**

The Ceresoli brothers' response to their situation was one that various other migrant Italians had adopted before them. This was to form an Italian band from available members of the Italian community (such as the all-Italian 'Argentino Tango Bands' formed in early 1930s Depression-era Melbourne), gain as much media exposure as possible, compete for whatever work was available within the local Italian community, and do whatever non-musical work was necessary to become financially and materially established.<sup>6</sup> Bruno, for example, became an expert driving instructor and by the end of the 1950s had established his *Presto Scuola Guida* (driving school) in Carlton while, around the same time, Ugo became the proprietor of a small 'Mokambo' bistro (also called Nando's) in Carlton, where he sometimes played for his customers.

In November 1952, the Ceresoli brothers were living in boarding accommodation at 230 Palmerston Street, Carlton. The concierge, Mrs Parkin, was enthralled by their musicianship and encouraged the brothers to enter radio station 3UZ's talent contest, 'Are You an Artist'.<sup>7</sup> Scrapbook cuttings show that they also appeared in many other contests, including 3UZ's Christies' Auditions, 3KZ's Monbulk Jamboree, 3XY's Talent Tote, and the 3DB's Australia's Amateur Hour. 'Duo from Milan smooth, tuneful in semi-final', proclaimed a 1954 *Listener In* headline and the article noted that they 'provided the best radio entertainment' of the Lever £1000 Contest.<sup>8</sup> The photogenic brothers gained excellent mainstream media publicity from their many contesting successes but, for whatever reason, these are almost unreported in the Melbourne news section of *La Fiamma* of the period.



*Ugo and Bruno Ceresoli ca. 1955*

They also formed a dance band with other young Italian musicians and began providing music for functions organised by the main Italian social club of that time, *Circolo Italiano Cavour* and, eventually, other Italian organisations. A 1953 photograph shows a very youthful band comprising Ugo, Bruno, *cantante* and bongo player, Pietro Alessi, Franco Pascazio on trumpet, Franco (surname unknown) on saxophone and clarinet, and Renzo Conte on drums. Most of these players appear to have stayed with the band throughout the 1950s despite the entry of new players such as Giuseppe Alessandrello on bass and tenor saxophonist Alberto Caselli. The name Mokambo was not adopted immediately, as Ugo explains:

The name was chosen instinctively without much thinking. We had seen the film *Mokambo* [probably the 1953 Hollywood jungle film, *Mogambo*] ... when, one evening, someone asked us what we called ourselves, we looked at each other without knowing how to respond. All at once as one we remembered 'Mokambo' and the name was created.<sup>9</sup>

Ugo says that after the band was named, 'I specialized myself in Latin American rhythms so that Mokambo could be defined as the ethnic community orchestra.'<sup>10</sup> The choice and ongoing use of the name Mokambo was particularly fortuitous since it related to exotic imaginations of Africa and was therefore even more ethnically neutral than the Hispanic names adopted by many other local Italian bands. 'Mokambo' also tapped directly into a late 1950s vogue for musical exotica exemplified by the, then, globally popular 'exotic' music of Arthur Lyman. For example, a 1959 report about music at the Mokambo Club in Newtown, Sydney, mentions that the resident four-piece band featured taped jungle sounds with bird-calls behind exotic numbers like *Taboo* and *Caravan*.<sup>11</sup>

### **Enterprise Rewarded**

The fame of the Orchestra Mokambo grew slowly but steadily, bolstered in part by the growth of the post-War inner Melbourne Italian community. From late 1953 Mokambo began to gain higher profile community functions, such as the October 1953 *ballo pro-Ospedali* at the Royal Ballroom alternating with Giovanni Cera's Orchestra Continentale. Ugo also took other musical work, including solo playing from table to table at the Hotel Britannia in Swanston Street. Yet engagements for Mokambo remained insufficient and the obvious solution was for the band to create their own.

Italian cabaret-style balls held in multi-functional halls—so-called *balli Italiani*—had an extremely important function for early post war migrants. They offered a place where *all* Italians could come together to eat, drink, talk in Italian, listen and dance to Italian, Latin-American and other popular 'Continental' music, enjoy (where offered) variety acts and MC banter in Italian, and possibly even find romance. Early *balli Italiani* were mostly organized by the Catholic Church or other welfare agencies but, by the late 1950s, several Italian bands were running their own regular *ballo Italiano* as entrepreneurial ventures. While Orchestra Mokambo's earliest such venture appears to have been a regular Saturday night *balli Italiani* at Fitzroy Town Hall, the Mokambo legend is mostly woven around Cumparsita Hall, situated on the corner of Kay and Canning Streets, Carlton (now the San Marco in Lamis Social Club rooms).

In late January 1958, an advertisement appeared in *La Fiamma* for Sunday evening 'Ballo Italiano' at Cumparsita Hall with Orchestra Nino Alda and *cantante* Gigi Rayola and his 'vasto repertorio di canzoni Italiane'. The advertisement for the following week, however, named 'La Famosa Orchestra "Mokambo", e il noto cantante Pietro Alessi e il suo vasto repertorio di musica moderna'. The revised advertisement appeared for several more weeks, by which time Mokambo was also presenting Saturday afternoon Calypso Dancing sessions at Victoria Hall in Russell Street. Although these weekly Cumparsita *balli Italiani* were then discontinued, they probably represent the genesis of Mokambo's association with Cumparsita Hall and of the regular Sunday 'Ballo Mokambo' at Cumparsita Hall that continued until the late 1960s. During February, another rival band, Eugenio Milazzi's

Mexican-costumed nine-piece band, Estrellita, began a regular '*Ballo Italiano*' at Fitzroy Town Hall, which ran successfully for some months. Other rival bands at this time included Cubana, Cumbachero, Latina, Granada, and Flora (later as Mambo), El Bajon, Abruzzesina, and Swing Continental.

Ugo had bigger plans for the Mokambo Orchestra and in May 1958 he registered 'Mokambo' in his own name as a business organisation operating from his living quarters at 230 Palmerston Street. 'Mokambo' was conceived to, among other things, present a variety of *ballo Italiano*-type social events for Italian migrants *and* the wider ethnic community of Carlton, which included a large Jewish component. Cosmopolitan functions like this were also called *Ballo Continentale*.

Ugo promoted his own brand of *ballo Italiano* as '*Ballo Mokambo*' and was determined to make them the most successful of all. The *Ballo Mokambo* scene he created was sometimes referred to as '*Club Mokambo*' since it was, in fact, a loose-knit Italian social club, albeit without a constitution, committee, or strict rules beyond appropriate dress, behavior and adherence to its liquor license laws. One strategy for success that he had developed before 1958, and which he continued for many years, was the presentation of beauty quests in conjunction with balls. Of particular importance was the annual Miss Mokambo quest since the successful Miss Mokambo provided much wider publicity for Mokambo by entering and sometimes succeeding in much larger beauty contests. With his good looks, personable nature, abundant talent, and growing reputation for organising beauty quests, Ugo was eventually invited to organise and even judge other quests—and, of course, provide the Mokambo Orchestra for the quest balls. From 1959 he also ran an annual *Mister Brutto* (Mister Ugly) quest. Imminent 'club' activities advertised in mid-1959 included: (July 21) Election of Miss Bellezza Continentale; (August 16) Partying and dancing to a fifteen piece orchestra and a *cantante famoso* and (August 20) *Massaia Italiana* lottery draw in between partying and dancing. Club activities were held in a variety of all-purpose venues but, by 1960, regular Sunday *Ballo Mokambo* nights at Cumparsita Hall, operated with 8.30-12 P.M. liquor licenses, had become Club Mokambo's core activity.

*Ballo Mokambo* at Cumparsita Hall centered on Orchestra Mokambo's own Latin-American and Italian popular music and its popular *cantanti* but subsequently drew upon a variety of local Italian talent, such as the tiny prodigies, Vincenzo Verga on accordion and Virgilio Donati on drums (now a world famous jazz-rock drummer) or the young *cantante* Tony Pantano, thereby assisting these and many other local artist to become established. Ugo even published a *Canzoniere 1960* (small songster) for Club Mokambo members containing lyrics to his own song compositions, *Italia*, *Buonanotte Tristezza*, and *Mamma Stanca*, and others by popular Italian song- writers, including superstar, Domenico Modugno, who made a triumphant appearance at Festival Hall in December 1959. Ugo was proud of having kept his homesick *Ballo Mokambo* patrons in touch with the Italian hit songs of the day by importing them immediately they were available.<sup>12</sup>



By 1960, Ugo was advertising from 230 Palmerston Street offering music, catering, photography, limousines, printing and MCing for weddings, baptisms, society *feste*, fund-raisers and other functions. He also ran an import agency for the '*Italiano* and *Continental* band arrangements' published by various Italian and Spanish music houses. His brother, a businessman in his own right, played a very active and supportive role in the multi-faceted Mokambo enterprise but, for whatever reason, he always maintained a low public and musical profile and, in later years, played less often with the orchestra.

### **The Orchestra, the Musician, the Music**

As the fame of Ugo Ceresoli, Ballo Mokambo and Mokambo Orchestra continued to grow, the core orchestra itself grew larger and more select. To have the best orchestra possible, Ugo needed players who could read music arrangements at first sight with great accuracy and he therefore often had to look beyond the relatively small pool of fully professional Italian dance musicians available to him. By the 1960s, the core orchestra included Anglo-Australian professionals such as pianist Ken Whidburn who remained a Mokambo stalwart for many years.



*Orchestra Mokambo at Torino Studios reception rooms. Brunswick, 1960. L-R Ugo Ceresoli (accordion), Pietro Alessi (cantante), Franco [unknown] (alto sax), Nino Cabrera (trumpet), Renzo Conte (drums), Alberto Casselli (tenor sax), Ken Whitburn (piano), Bruno Ceresoli (bass).*

Latin-American music was a critically important part of Mokambo's repertoire and more than half of the 578 numbered orchestrations in the original Mokambo library are mambos and cha-cha-chas, plus boleros, beguines, congas, guarachas, rumbas, sambas, calypsos and other Hispanic fare. Many are Italian-published arrangements of the Latin hits of Xavier Cugat and other leaders in Latin dance music.

Ugo's musical role within the orchestra was more like that of a conductor-director. His accordion playing was foregrounded in tangos, sambas and certain other Latin, Italian or Continental repertoire where the deeply expressive sound (e.g. *Arrivederci Roma*) or the dazzling melodic gymnastics of his Continental button accordion playing was especially appropriate. Otherwise he confined his contribution to tastefully applied embellishments since his piano player provided the required rhythmic Latin and other vamping. Nevertheless, these embellishments and 'fills' on the relatively rare Continental accordion (the author's own instrument) must have given the orchestral sound an evocatively unique sonority and texture. Ugo also delighted his patrons by leaving the stage to do a *passerella* around the tables. His personal repertoire on accordion was very comprehensive. It covered light classics, compositions for accordion, including many of his own, Latin and Spanish, Jewish, French, 'Gypsy' and other Continental repertoire, a wide variety of Italian popular music, plus a sprinkling of American hits, and all the more traditional Italian favorites like *Ciribiribin*, *Calabrisella*, *Santa Lucia* or *Nanni*.<sup>13</sup>

### **Moomba International**

Besides the regular Cumparsita cabarets-balls, the Miss Mokambo and Mister Brutto quests and other special Cumparsita Hall events of 1960, there were several very prestigious balls at the Royal Ballroom (Miss Teenager of Victoria Ball and the Italian National Ball); a Miss Cavour Cabaret Ball at St Kilda Town Hall and a Mokambo *Ballo Di Fine Anno* at Fitzroy Town Hall. Orchestra Mokambo appeared in a *Grandi Spettacoli di Varietà* at the Plaza Theatre, Thornbury, where Pietro Alessi sang Ugo's beguine *Italia* to acclaim. It also played for private and sporting club functions at Italian reception rooms and other hired venues. The orchestra gained particular kudos and media attention for its role as a support act for the separate Melbourne concerts of the famous visiting Italian *cantanti* Aurelio Fierro and Nilla Pizzi. *Ballo Mokambo* at Cumparsita Hall remained in full swing during 1961 with even more quests, novelty nights and new cabaret artists, including the immensely popular, Duo Moreno, and Mokambo advertisements began promoting its new *cantante*, Guido Maiorano. Then Ugo was handed an opportunity that suddenly brought him and his orchestra to the attention of the mainstream media and offered a new spectrum of possibilities for him as a musician and for 'Mokambo' as an orchestra and broader entrepreneurial project.

Since Ugo's arrival in 1952, post-war migration had swelled Melbourne ethnic communities' to proportions that could no longer be ignored as

inconsequential to Melbourne's overall cultural makeup. An early indicator of this paradigm shift was the decision by the Moomba Festival Committee to include a Miss Moomba International Quest and a variety show, International Medley, to be held in the Alexandra Gardens. It was to feature music, drama, dancing and other entertainments by artists drawn from the various ethnic communities and auditioned by representatives of the Moomba International Cultural Group. Only overseas born entrants could audition for the International Medley show or enter the Miss Moomba International pageant.

The selection of pageant winners was scheduled to take place at an International Evening ball at Melbourne Town Hall. Ugo was appointed Musical Director for the entire event with Orchestra Mokambo providing music ranging from accompaniments for the auditions to the ball itself. The event was an entrepreneurial coup and an official gesture of much historical significance for post-war migrants in Melbourne. Ugo had undoubtedly achieved his dream of seeing Mokambo—as he put it— 'defined as the ethnic community orchestra'. His profile reached new heights within the Italian community and Moomba patrons and media reports spread knowledge of Ugo Ceresoli and Orchestra Mokambo into the wider Melbourne community. It also raised his and his orchestra's esteem within the music profession, making it much easier for him to hire leading players as required.

### **Mokambo's Multilingual *Cantante***

Ugo probably entered 1962 with every reason to be optimistic, and the year lived up to all expectations. Regular and 'special' 1962 *Ballo Mokambo* functions included a song contest with heats and a final, and a special Cumparsita Twist-Everybody-Twist night, presented only a week after the new twist craze in Rome was reported in *Il Globo*.<sup>14</sup> High profile balls included the Miss Cavour Ball at St Kilda Town Hall, the Alitalia Miss Juventus 1962 Ball and the Festa Nazionale Italiana Ball at the Royale Ballroom. From May, Orchestra Mokambo ran a regular Sunday afternoon dance at La Scala Theatre in Footscray in addition to many other individual engagements. It was also a support act for the early September Melbourne concerts of the famous Italian *cantante* Claudio Villa.

Much more significant than all these things, however, was Ugo's commencement of a musical and personal relationship with a beautiful and musically gifted young Anglo-Australian woman, Jo Muhrer (maiden name Laurance). There was always a sprinkling of Anglo-Australian women at *Ballo Mokambo* who came by invitation or were drawn by a sense of adventure to the cosmopolitan—or seemingly exotic—social atmosphere and Italian-Latin music. Jo had developed a love of singing at an early age and later trained in voice production and linguistics. Her intense interest in vocal sounds and time spent overseas gave her a particular fascination for non-Anglophone languages. She was initially attracted to opera and operetta, but by the time of her introduction to *Ballo Mokambo* her interests as a singer lay more in the colour and deeply personalised expressiveness of crooning. At *Ballo Mokambo*, where Ugo invited her to sing a number with the band, two new

musical passions were born, Italian *canzoni popolari* and Afro-Cuban rhythms.<sup>15</sup>



## Ballate, ballate con l'ORCHESTRA

# MOKAMBO

### BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL

OGNI SABATO SERA 8-11,30 p.m.

Sabato 18 febbraio '67 - Grande serata per il ritorno della bravissima cantante

## JO MUHRER

La nota cantante JO MUHRER, reduce dai successi in Italia, America, Messico e Canada, ritorna con

### l'Orchestra Mokambo

alla BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL con un vasto repertorio di recentissimi successi italiani ed americani.

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La brillantissima personalita' di JO MUHRER che interpreta canzoni in ben otto lingue

Volete riascoltare JO MUHRER? Non mancate SABATO 18 FEBBRAIO P.V. alla BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL.

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### UGO CERESOLI

recentemente ritornato dall'Italia e da un giro del mondo, ha portato con se le ultime novita' musicali e presentera' nel 1967 artisti locali ed internazionali.

I quattordici anni di affiatamento dei 19 elementi della orchestra MOKAMBO sono garanzia di successo e di serate indimenticabili che solo

### l'Orchestra Mokambo

puo' offrirvi!

**SIGNORE e SIGNORINE**

questo interessa VOI!

Ogni sabato sera, durante i trattenimenti danzanti alla Brunswick Town Hall, saranno estratti due premi di \$10 ciascuno, in contanti, tra le dame presenti.

Poster for Ballo Mokambo featuring Jo Muhrer at Brunswick Town Hall, 1967.

She had studied German and various other languages but neither read nor spoke Italian to any degree. However, with her exceptional ear, coupled with tips on pronunciation from Ugo, Maiorano and other Italian *cantanti*, she rapidly became and remained a *Ballo Mokambo* highlight. Her ability to 'interpret songs in eight languages', and native ability to croon and sing ballads in English, greatly increased the versatility of the orchestra. From early 1962 she shared equal billing with Guy as Mokambo's permanent *cantanti* and was also *cantante* for *Trio Mokambo* and *Quartetto Mokambo*, formed the same year by Ugo for work in cabaret venues such as the Blue Danube Cabaret in St Kilda. She eventually became the mainstay *cantante* for Mokambo.

### Ballo Mokambo at Brunswick Town Hall

Promotion and reports in *Il Globo* suggest that the momentum gained from 1961 did not translate into a cornucopia of orchestra work during 1963. In April of that year, Ugo applied to Brunswick Council to lease Brunswick Town Hall for weekly Mokambo cabaret balls and these commenced in March 1964. Rival *balli Italiani* continued to be run from St. George's Hall in Carlton, San Remo Hall in West Melbourne and elsewhere. But Ugo was now running both his Sunday night Ballo Mokambo at Cumparsita Hall and the more up-market Saturday night cabaret balls at Brunswick Town Hall. He had also created a

distinctive 'sombrero' trade-mark that, from thereon, appeared on all his promotional material.

Bands, artists and television celebrities featured at Cumparsita Hall and Brunswick Town Hall that year included *chitarrista e cantante* Carlo Dei, *fisarmonicista e cantante* Gino Ginetti, 'Maria of Sunnyside Up', Quartetto Paolo Trevi, Barry Sherridan and the Wanderers rock band, 'Negro' [in fact, a Torres Strait Islander] club and T.V. crooner, 'Georgia Lee', American crooner, Johnny Dane, and conga player, Albert La Guerre. Orchestra Mokambo also remained the premier band for major community functions, albeit sometimes sharing the stage with *ballo Italiano* rival, Estrellita. The year ended with a *Grande Spettacolo* at each venue featuring seven cabaret artists. Although 1964 had been a particularly successful and exciting year for Mokambo Orchestra it also marked the end of Mokambo's climb to ever-greater successes.

*Ballo Mokambo* continued at Cumparsita Hall and Brunswick Town Hall until 1968 with guest artists including the '*stelle della televisione*' Buddy England, Judy Jacques, Sergio G. and the Flippers, 'Lou and Simon', 'Lyn and Jan' and others. But going by reports and advertisements in *Il Globo*, *Ballo Mokambo* were presented with less and less frequency. The orchestra continued to play for prestigious civic balls and pageants and came to heightened media attention in 1967 when two local song compositions interpreted by Jo, won both first and second prize in the first annual *Festival Della Canzone Italiana* held in Melbourne. From early 1967 Ugo and his future wife, Jo, were deeply involved with another daring venture: the establishment of Mondo Music at 304 Lygon Street, Carlton, which offered sheet music, recordings, acoustic and electronic instruments, imported and local recordings, radiograms and instrumental tuition.

After 1967, Mokambo Orchestra appearances became much less frequent and sometimes as far-flung as Werribee. In 1970, Mokambo was booked to appear on October 10 at, ironically, the very venue where it had begun its exciting odyssey seventeen years earlier, the Circolo Italiano Cavour in South Melbourne. However, tragedy was afoot and Bruno died a few weeks later on November 2 following a short illness. Without the brother he had been so close to all his life, Ugo no longer had the heart to continue running the Mokambo Orchestra.

But what hampered the progress for the orchestra after 1964? For one thing, the Melbourne Italian community had become more consolidated and much less in need of the particular type of supportive Club Mokambo social scene Ugo had established in the late 1950s. *Balli Italiani* were still popular but, by 1964, they were competing with a growing number of Italian-owned night spots where patrons could sit, listen and dance to Italian-Latin bands and Italian *cantanti*. Regional social clubs were booming and their own cabaret balls represented increasing competition for Ballo Mokambo. Some, like the Veneto club, were already planning lavish clubrooms with entertainment rooms. And, from 1967 the *ballo Italiano* scene, itself, became fiercely

competitive, with weekly 'Copacabana Cabarets' at Copacabana Hall Brunswick followed by many others, such as those run from the new San Remo Ballroom, the Catania Ballroom and Italia Hall. Whereas there had only been a handful of Italian bands in competition with Mokambo Orchestra in the late 1950s, there were well over a hundred by 1970.

Furthermore, while many local Italian bands besides Mokambo identified themselves with Latin music when the mambo and cha-cha-cha was a craze, by 1964 Italian-Australian community taste was already changing, especially that of Italian youth. One event that illustrated this was the successful 1964 tour of the Italian pop group Peppino di Capri and his Rockers with *cantante* Mina (best known for her catchy soft rock hit *Tintarella Di Luna*)—the same year that the Beatles' spectacularly successful Australian tour and small all-electric rock band model changed mainstream Australian popular music for ever. By the late 1960s Italian social organisations and entrepreneurs were promoting 'young generation dances' where the Latin music that Mokambo excelled in was already a distinct marker of the parental generation's dance music. Another outcome of this shift in style and taste was that many accordionists (including this author) abandoned their acoustic accordions for the modern sound of transistor-enhanced accordions or organs and, in so doing, abandoned the very sound that was most audibly 'Italian' and 'Continental' and which had been the main metaphor for Italian 'Latinness' in music since the Italianisation of the tango. This same sound had also helped to distinguish Orchestra Mokambo from just any large competent dance orchestra playing Latin or European dance music from commercial arrangements. Ugo lamented this shift and refused to abandon his traditional accordion for a transistorised model, explaining, sardonically, that you can't do a *passerella* amongst the tables with the latter.<sup>16</sup>

### **Riunione Nostalgia**

The decade following the loss of his brother and the disbanding of the orchestra was a difficult time for Ugo. *Mondo Music* was sold up and he more or less gave up on his first musical love, playing the accordion. But he was sustained musically by an ongoing passion for lyrics and melodies that evoked deep feelings of nostalgia and yearning. His dream as a songwriter—one held by many other leading Italian musicians—was to win first prize in the coveted Italian Song Festival of Australia, and perhaps even touch the Holy Grail of Italian popular songwriters and *cantanti*, the annual San Remo Song Festival. He had, in fact, reached the finals of the third Australian (Melbourne) festival in August 1969 with his *Non Aspetto Nessuno*, interpreted by Jo.

The 1980s, however, brought a remarkable resurgence of his former status and musical career. By 1980, with the encouragement of family and confidants such as John D'Andrea and Ivano Ercole, he began to revive his accordion technique and plan the revival of *Ballo Mokambo* on an even larger scale than before. Ivano, being a journalist, was the ideal publicist and manager for the proposed revival of *Ballo Mokambo* and was to write many evocative reports and illustrated articles about Ugo and New Mokambo

Orchestra over the coming decade. The first of these, published in *Il Globo* of 8 June 1981, announced a Mokambo 'Riunione Nostalgica Grande Dinner Dance' at San Remo Ballroom on July 17, with a new Orchestra Mokambo of eleven players and two *cantanti* (Jo Muhrer and Vittorio Sacca). Melinda Ceresoli, then age 10, and her friend Simone Sommers sang with the orchestra and, from thereon, Melinda often appeared with the orchestra as a featured artist. Although it must have been an emotional night for Ugo, being surrounded by many of his old Cumparsita Hall patrons, it was a great success with over 500 guests turning up. It was followed in October by an even more successful 'Grande Dinner Dance—Spettacolo'. His 'Nostalgia Della Mokambo' project was already a reality. Here was a new tradition constructed out of nostalgia, not for the country of birth, but for a time and social scene that Italian-Australians fondly recalled from the dynamic early days of their migration—the time of their hard but fulfilling struggle to establish themselves, find love, make a home, and create a family as so-called 'new Australians'

The following July brought 'Mokambo Nostalgia Gala Night '82' with three *cantanti* (Jo, Vittorio and Tony Serrano), plus a floor show and dancing to Mokambo's Latin, Italian, Continental, 1940s swing and other 'pre-Beatles music'. The annual Nostalgia Gala Nights with their atmosphere and joy of the 'tempi eroici dell'immigrazione italiana a Melbourne' became an increasingly popular and well-publicized event, sometimes including exotic floor show acts such as the Brazilian Ritmo Orchestra with dancers (Gala '85). Mokambo continued to run other *Ballo Mokambo* at San Remo Ballroom, beginning with a 'Champagne and Chicken Night' in early 1982, and also played for many other large Italian functions held at San Remo Ballroom.



*New Orchestra Mokambo at San Remo Ballroom, 1982.*

As the fame of New Mokambo spread, the orchestra was offered more bookings on the vast Italian social club circuit that had sprung into existence since the 1960s. In 1983, Ugo found time to present a cabaret style show on 3EA Ethnic Radio with his band called *Piccolo Varietà Italiano*.

Possibly of even greater satisfaction to Ugo was formal recognition of his ability as a song writer. Jo's interpretation of his *Ho Bisogno Di Piangere* was awarded a 'special prize' at the 1982 Italian Song Festival. The following year he entered *A Prestito Del Tempo*, interpreted by the popular Italian combo leader Sergio Giovannini (a.k.a. Sergio G.) and this time he won first prize. It was presented by Premier John Cain at a lavish civic reception and comprised a cash prize, a trophy, a return trip to Italy and a commitment by the Italian Consul General to enter *A Prestito Del Tempo* into the San Remo Song Festival. He was probably even prouder in 1985 when Melinda entered the Australian festival for the first time, or a few years later when The Generation, an octet she belonged to with other young professionals, began touring with much success.

Ugo toured the club circuit with Sergio G. as a duo in 1984 (and, later, with other *cantanti*) and became much in demand as a solo *fisarmonicista* on the club circuit and for other venues and events. Quartetto Mokambo was also reformed for engagement not requiring the full orchestra and Orchestra Mokambo was sometimes seen at the annual Lygon Street Festival. He had also entered another phase of his personal life with his new wife, Rita. Many interesting musical possibilities lay ahead, but a lifetime of intense work, or over-work, was quickly catching up. Serious health problems and an operation curtailed Ugo's activities during 1991 and much of 1992 but Orchestra Mokambo was back in full swing at the end of 1992 with a highly publicised *Ballo Anti-Recession* at San Remo Ballroom. It continued to work throughout 1993 and into 1994 with lots of club work (the Veneto Club especially) but Ugo, now in his late sixties, was once again struggling with serious illness. The second Mokambo era was drawing to a close and it did so on 23 February 1996.

Those who had come within the sphere of his extraordinary life and evocative music were now left to reflect upon what Ugo and his music had been to them. He, himself, had been well aware of the social power of his music. A ten year old child once related to him (in Ivano Ercole's words), 'one of those simple genuine children's phrases which are somehow able to reach the meaning of a human experience. Ugo—he said—my papa and my momma married themselves with your orchestra.'<sup>17</sup>

The Orchestra Mokambo story is but one of many that need to be told about Italian instrumentalists, *cantanti* and Italian-led bands that enriched Italian-Australian or wider Australian social and musical life. Yet the early Mokambo history is unique in itself and the 1980s revival of the original *Ballo Mokambo* evenings as glittering annual *riunione nostalgica* balls represents a fascinating example of the actual creation of an Italian-Australian tradition.



The story is also that of a man who, despite his many creative, daring and vigorous strivings for business success, lived a life that, at its deepest level, was passionately committed to making music. Ugo said in 1987 that 'There are so many beautiful things in the world, but music is one of the most beautiful things that God has created; if you do not love music, you cannot be complete.'<sup>18</sup> While Ugo's social legacy has been focussed upon here, his musical legacy, such as his unpublished *canzoni* and accordion pieces, awaits serious evaluation and, hopefully, publication and live performance as music that has enriched Australia's musical heritage.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anna Maria Dell'oso, *Songs of the Suitcase*, Sydney, HarperCollins Publishers, 1998; Arnold Zable, *Scraps of Heaven*. Melbourne, The Text Publishing Company, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The pre-Melbourne story is a composite of available accounts, including articles based on interviews with Ceresoli: Judy Brett and Graeme Smith, 'Ugo Ceresoli' in 'Multicultural Music Making in Melbourne', *M.A.T.I.A. Music 11*, North Sydney, Australia Council, 1987, p. 30-1; Sandra Baldi, 'Musica a Melbourne con Ugo Ceresoli', 1988 Italian Song Festival brochure, Melbourne, p. 17.; and Ivano Ercole, 'Ugo Ceresoli e l'Orchestra "Mokambo" di nuovo in pedana dopo 12 anni', *Il Globo* 8 June 1981, p.16. The remainder of the article, with referenced exceptions, is based on primary source research, including *La Fiamma* 1952-8, *Il Globo* 1959-94, the scrap books, band library, and other documentation held by the Ceresoli family, Mokambo files at the Italian Historical Society (Co.As.It.), Public Records Office Victoria, plus interviews and discussions with Jo Muhrer, Graeme Smith, Melinda Ceresoli, Ivano Ercole, Paul Pergolese, Mimmo Bottari, and others.

<sup>3</sup> Ivano Ercole, 'Ugo Ceresoli: la Mokambo e il "Ballo Anti Recessione"', *Il Mondo*, 8 November 1992, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Radio Audizioni Italiane became RAI-Radiotelevisione Italiana in 1954.

<sup>5</sup> Dell'oso, op. cit., pp. 242-3; Brett & Smith, op. cit., p.30.

<sup>6</sup> See John Whiteoak, 'Italo-Hispanic Popular Music in Melbourne before Multiculturalism', *Victorian Historical Journal*, 78(2) 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Sands & McDougall Melbourne and suburban directory for 1952 lists Mrs May Johnson as the occupant.

<sup>8</sup> *The Listener In*, 9 April 1954, p.20.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Ercole, op. cit., 1981.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Baldi, op. cit., p.17.

<sup>11</sup> *Music Maker* (Sydney), October 1957, p.27.

<sup>12</sup> Discussion with Ivano Ercole, 25 February 2007.

<sup>13</sup> I catalogued and studied the extant early library in detail. See also John Whiteoak, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> *Il Globo*, 30 January 1962, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> Discussions with Jo Muhrer Laurance and Ivano Ercole, 'Jo Muhrer 16 anni dopo', *Il Globo*, 26 July 1982, p.18.

<sup>16</sup> Brett & Smith, op. cit., p.31

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Ercole, op. cit., 1981

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Brett & Smith, op. cit.

# A Day Out Of The Ordinary

*by John Maneschi*

*John Maneschi was born in Milan, Italy, in 1932, the son of an Italian father and an Australian mother. He was brought up in Italy until the age of sixteen when the family moved to Australia, the first of many moves. He attended high school and university in Melbourne, where he graduated as an electrical engineer in 1955. He worked in England for some years, there meeting up with an Australian girlfriend from university days. They were married in Milan in 1958, then moved to the United States for fifteen years, where their three children were born. They*

*then lived in Belgium for three years, before returning to Australia, first to Canberra, then to Sydney. He retired in 1988 and he and his wife built a house at Batemans Bay, on the NSW South Coast. He maintains close links with both his Italian and Australian relatives. He is a member of the Italian Institute of Culture and of Co.As.It. in Sydney, and of the Amici d'Italia association in Batemans Bay. His childhood wartime memories, under the title of "Giovinezza", have just been published by the Ginninderra Press (ACT).*

It was not going to be an ordinary day.

First of all, we had been sent home early from school, at noon, as if it had been a Saturday. But it wasn't a Saturday, it was a Monday.

"Boys, this is an important day in the history of the Fatherland. There will be a speech by *il Duce* from Rome on the radio this afternoon, you are all to go home", came the voice of *il Rettore*, the school principal, over loudspeakers mounted on the wall in each classroom. I was delighted. It was getting close

to the end of the school year, summer days were already upon us and many of us were pining for the long summer break to start. Was *il Duce* going to cancel the rest of the school year, some wondered. Could he? Could HE? He who could do so many wonderful things, who so loved us, his *Balillas*, who worked indefatigably for us, we were told, even when we were asleep. Yes, perhaps He could pull this one off, too.

I was eight years old, and was attending third grade of *la scuola elementare* (primary school) at the Istituto Leone XIII in Milan. It was one of the well-thought- of private schools in Milan for boys, run by the Jesuits. It combined strong religious values with a commitment to high scholastic achievement. My father attached great importance to the latter and to the grades I got at school. Endowed with keen intelligence, he himself had excelled at school and gained his *maturità* (higher school certificate) with flying colours at the age of sixteen. He was held in awe by his parents, humble country folk from the village of Terrarossa in northwestern Tuscany. He was their first born, and they had christened him Egidio Goffredo Ulisse, (Aegidius Godfrey Ulysses). A saint, a crusader, and a hero of the *Odyssey*.



He was only ever known as Egidio, though he brought out his other two names occasionally when he was in a jocular mood, especially at parties. He claimed that we were descended from Etruscan stock – maybe through the Ulysses connection – ‘Italian’ being in his view far too generic a label. Like the Etruscans he had a certain mysterious side. At seventeen years of age he served as a junior official in the Italian army during the First World War.

After the war he graduated as an electrical engineer from the University of Pisa and obtained a scholarship to get early work experience in the United States. He lived in Chicago for a few years, there learning English and, as he put it, ‘the American way of doing things’. In 1928 he was working for an American company in Paris and there met Lorna Pitt, a Melbourne girl, at that time studying at the Sorbonne. She had come to Europe with her mother, sister and brother in the ‘Grand Tour’ tradition which Australians had inherited from the English; all of them were keen and well-informed travellers and had spent over a year seeing the sights.

My parents’ marriage was a courageous, at times difficult, bridging of two different cultures. Mass Italian migration to Australia had not yet started, so Australia was still terra incognita to most Italians. My mother’s Italian in-laws found some of her ways strange, beginning with the fact that she spoke no

Italian and did not eat pasta. And some of my mother's relatives were under the influence of the Italian stereotype in Australia at the time, an equivocal mixture of artist, singer, Latin lover, organ-grinder and local 'fruit and veg' man. Such prejudiced views were to put a strain, at times, on their adventurous marriage. At first my parents lived in Paris and London and then moved to Milan a couple of years before I was born.

My father had by then become the factory manager of the Italian subsidiary of an American company which made telephone equipment. He had a strong work ethic and would at times take me to the factory on a Saturday – the two-day weekend was yet to be invented – so I might get a feel for what engineers did for a living. My school work was of paramount importance to him. He would spur me on, test and coach me in various subjects. His forte was mathematics and science, though he was also helpful to me in Italian composition, history, geography – everything except Latin: he had never studied it and was reluctant to meddle with the unfamiliar. He had an inventive mind which he could turn to storytelling.



Early on Sunday mornings my brother Andrea, four years junior than me, and I would sneak into the parental bed and my father would invent, in serial form, adventure stories about fantastic characters, stories which used to hold us spellbound. The following Sunday we would be back:

"Dedi, tell us what happened to the three brothers."

"Which three brothers?", he would reply, feigning ignorance.

"You know, Bione, Cione and Baccione!"

"Ah that's right, boys, now where had we got to?"

After a brief reminder, he would put down the newspaper and continue the never-ending saga of the three brothers with such unlikely names.

His hobby was watercolour painting and he taught me the basic skills along with a love of painting. He remains in my mind an authoritarian figure and, as I learnt in later life, highly secretive. He was reserved and undemonstrative, a closed book on many subjects.

He used to quiz me when he arrived home from the office.

"What did you get for arithmetic today, Noni?"

"Oh... 6 out of 10."

"Noni, you have to work harder. We'll go through some exercises after dinner tonight."



My Australian mother was a wonderfully loving parent. She spent more time with me and my young brother than our father did – those being the days when we had a live-in maid – and nurtured the development of other aspects of our education: the English language, our Australian family background, nursery rhymes, friends, music. She loved classical music and would play a Beethoven symphony from her record collection. It was the era of 78 rpm records and I became adept at changing the needles on the gramophone. In her youth she had learnt to play the piano and had a good singing voice. played the organ and her father sang.

My father had given her a Pleyel baby grand piano as a birthday present. It fitted in a corner of our living room. Both Andrea and I had inherited her love for music and soon I was taking piano lessons. She and my father spoke English to each other at home, so I grew up understanding the language, though I was reluctant to try and speak it. If they wanted to speak privately to each other within my hearing, they switched to French, the language of their courtship.

My father was a short barrel-chested man, with dark brown hair and brown eyes. He had bushy eyebrows that stood up when he first woke in the morning, until he settled them down again.

"Your father has beautiful hands", my mother told me, "and feet. He is a good dancer."

She also was short, they were well matched when they danced, she said. From the family photo album I could see there had been partying and dancing in their Paris days. My third-grade teacher, *signora* Marelli, had recently set us a school competition on the subject of "*La mia mamma* [my mother]". She had made it clear that she expected us to include feelings of filial devotion and respect, so I had started the essay with: "My mother labours hard from morn until night looking after me and my little brother. Every time I see her she seems to be working". More than a trifle misleading, as it ignored the hard labour of our maid Elisa, but *signora* Marelli let it pass

as these were appropriate feelings. I continued by describing her brown hair and her eyes "blue like pieces of sky". No problem here either. But then I went on: "*Mia mamma è bassa e un po' grassa* [my mother is short and a bit fat]", which didn't sit at all well with *signora* Marelli's expectations of filial respect. She crossed out the sentence in my exercise book with her red pencil – I still have the evidence – and substituted "*di media statura e rotondetta*" [of average stature and somewhat rotund]".

My mother laughed at the correction, much preferring my straightforward description. In later years she told me of the delight of her in-laws when they first met her: "*Bella grassa!*" they had cried out. She had started learning Italian and took their greeting to mean "Nice and graceful". But when they started pinching her arms, my father had to disenchant her and admit to her that they were joyously admiring her fleshiness, which for them augured well for healthy *bambini*.

She spun a cocoon of affection and caring that we found comforting, though she also was keen on her son doing well at school.

"Who came first this month?"

"Bellini again, mother."

"Who came second?"

"Petrella again."

It rankled that her son would at best come fifth or sixth... from the bottom of the class of 20-odd boys. She came away despondent from parent-teacher interviews.



"Johnny, I talked to your teacher, *signora* Marelli. She says you are distracted, you do not pay attention... 'with his head in the clouds' ...that's what she said".

*Signora* Marelli was a small middle-aged woman with a pale face and grey curly hair cut short. She wore a shiny grey smock. I didn't like her, and sensed the dislike was mutual. She had it in for me, I was sure.

"Wake up, Maneschi, what did I just say? You didn't hear me, hey, that's because you were fooling around with Bernasconi instead of paying attention."

Bernasconi was my *compagno di banco* [school desk companion].

He was a big, untidy boy, whose fingers were perpetually ink-stained. It was still the era of inkwells, pen and nibs. Ink stains on fingers could only be removed by persistent scraping with la *pietra pomice* [pumice stone], which tended to rub off the skin and leave our hands raw and red. What a business! Bernasconi distinguished himself by being *l'ultimo della classe*, i.e. the

generally uncontested holder of the last place in the monthly ranking of the class.

Mother managed to persuade signora Marelli to move me away from Bernasconi, and closer to the two prodigies, Bellini and Petrella. That meant closer to the front, as the two shared the top desk, in the middle of the front row.

"My boy might also be able to see the blackboard better if he sits closer to the front," said mother to the *signora*. Much to mother's chagrin, I had been diagnosed with defective vision the previous year and had to wear glasses.

"Hey, here comes *el quattrec* [four eyes, in Lombard dialect], hey *quattrec*, how many fingers?" my school mates teased me.

My mother fondly hoped that by being moved closer to Bellini and Petrella my school performance might improve. "Try to work like they do", she encouraged me.

Giuseppe Bellini was a handsome boy, with a noble high brow, an aristocratic mien and pronounced his 'R's in the French way, which the other boys thought affected. His hair was always beautifully combed, his forelock neatly held in a hair clip. His black smock was impeccable, his collar as white as snow, his fingers never ink-stained. The black smock, intended to keep stains off our clothes, formed part of the Istituto Leone XIII's uniform for boys up to the fourth grade. Also pompoms, a couple of balls of cotton tied around our starched collars, blue for second grade, red for third, and yellow for fourth.

Bellini and Petrella always sat up straight in their desk. They had beautiful *calligrafia* [handwriting], which was often shown to the class as examples to emulate. At the end of the month the names would be read out:

"Bellini first, Petrella, second! Again!" The two would bestow admiring looks on each other and demurely bow their heads over their workbooks, busily engaged in accumulating further points for the next month. There was no rivalry between them, Petrella being satisfied to play second fiddle to his idol, Giuseppe.

School ended at four o'clock on weekdays and at noon on Saturdays. The boys would be picked up by their mothers or by the maids. This provided an opportunity for my mother to get to know other mothers and she befriended *signora* Bellini. Besides having boys at the same school, *signora* Bellini's husband was an engineer working for my father. Mother reported at home that, according to *signora* Bellini, their son was a kind of demigod, able to achieve effortlessly whatever he attempted. Though christened Giuseppe, his mother called him 'Bepi'. My mother misheard: "She talks adoringly of her baby. My baby this, my baby that. Johnny, you didn't tell me that Bellini is called 'Baby' at home."

"And how is Baby Bellini doing this week?" she would ask, with a malicious wink at my father.

We were invited to Baby Bellini's house one day, after school. The mothers sat in the living room, sipping afternoon tea, which the Bellini maid had

prepared in deference to my mother's 'English ways'. Baby took me to his room, showed me his telescope, his books, his various educational toys, his completed school assignments.

"What shall we play," he said, "do you play draughts?"

I say I did, We played and I lost.

"What card games do you know, do you know *briscola*?"

"Sure," I said. We played, and again I lost.

"O.K., now, let's do something else, let's wrestle. We shall call our mothers to watch us. Come on, help me move the table. Oh, and take off those glasses, they might get damaged."

Soon I found myself on the floor, my face ground into the thick pile carpet, Baby Bellini on the top of me yelling "Give up, give up!" Out of one eye I could see my mother's shoes and the elegant ones of *signora* Bellini.

"He is quite wonderful my Bepi," I could hear *signora* Bellini saying to my mother, "he is so strong and can be so aggressive. And gets such good grades at school."

But Baby also had excellent manners and did not gloat over his scholastic or sporting prowess. He helped me straighten myself up and saluted us courteously: "I'll see you at school tomorrow. Don't forget we have a geometry test."

Years later Baby went on to become an electrical engineer and was employed for a short time by my father's firm. On one of my visits there he escorted me around the factory floor with his customary courtesy and spoke knowledgeably on many technical subjects. He gave me a learned dissertation on the pros and cons of *viti destrorse versus viti sinistrorse* [clockwise vs. anticlockwise screw threads]. These obscure technical terms gave him plenty of scope to flourish his French 'R's. it was like listening to a textbook. "how boring!" said my father.

On that out-of-the-ordinary day we had just started the dictation period as il *Rettore's* announcement had come. I had carefully written the heading, as we had been taught to do, in my exercise book: *Milano, 10 June 1940 - XVIII E.F.*

The Roman numerals meant that we were in the eighteenth year of the Fascist Era, Fascism having been born in 1922 with the March on Rome, when Benito Mussolini had abolished democratic institutions and proclaimed himself *il Duce* [the leader]. Christian era and Fascist era now went hand in hand. He had ruled Italy for eighteen years and we, the schoolboys born under the Regime, were his loyal *Balillas*.

The *Balilla* program was mandatory in all Italian schools. 'Balilla' had been the nickname of an eighteenth century street urchin from Portoria, a suburb of Genoa, who had ignited a revolt against the occupying Austrian militia. His inspiring story was told in our school reader. The Austrians were transporting a cannon through the streets of Genoa when it became bogged in mud. People round about were ordered to come and help. From a nearby vantage point some boys, Balilla amongst them, were watching. In reply to the Austrians' request, Balilla picked up a stone and flung it at them. His



example was soon followed by others, forcing the Austrians to flee. All of us knew the words of the patriotic song commemorating the event:

*Fischia il sasso, il nome squilla  
Del ragazzo di Portoria,  
E l'intrepido Balilla  
Sta gigante nella storia...*

The stone hisses, the name resounds  
Of the boy from Portoria  
And the undaunted Balilla  
Remains a giant in history...



He was made into a suitable model figure for patriotic youth. Associations like the Boy Scouts were dissolved at the start of Fascism and replaced by *Balilla* paramilitary squadrons. Uniforms were worn and military drill was compulsory every Saturday afternoon in Italian schools. There was some choice of 'corps', however, and Istituto Leone XIII's *Balillas* were of the Navy persuasion.

We all dressed up as *marinaretti* [little sailors] and attended our weekly *adunate* [parades] in the school courtyard. Why we should be sailors in landlocked Milan, with no sea or ship in sight, remains a mystery. Mother, always with an eye on the household budget, decided to send me to the first parade dressed in my First Communion sailor suit. Guffaws greeted me when I boarded the school bus:

"Hey, look at what *il quattrec* is wearing. He thinks he is going for his First Communion! That's the wrong uniform, *quattrec*, look at the neckerchief, it's the wrong colour, has three narrow stripes instead of two wide ones, you are missing the two stars, etc. etc.", called out all those charitable souls from the back of the bus.

So, of course the right uniform had to be bought in time for the next parade.



To show we were *Balillas* we wore the regulation Fascist steel medallion, with the helmeted head of *il Duce*, chin jutting forward as was his wont. The head was surrounded by one of the Regime's favourite slogans: *Credere - Obbedire - Combattere* [To believe, to obey, to fight] and the letters G.I.L., which stood for *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio* [Italian Lictorial Youth]. The name fascism was derived from the Latin *fascis* [*fasci* in Italian], which were bundles of rods strapped together, with an axe head protruding from them.

They were carried in ceremonial procession by the *lictors*, who assisted the magistrates of ancient Rome and symbolised imperial authority. The *fasci* became the emblem of Fascism. I drew many a *fascio* in my exercise books, colouring the rods brown, the axe head blue, strapped by a tricolour sash.

*Balillas* formed one of the groups within Mussolini's Lictorial youth movement. During first and second grade boys were *Figli della Lupa* [sons of the she-wolf], but this program was not mandatory and the Istituto opted not to have it. The *Figli della Lupa* owed their name to the legend of Romulus and Remus, the mythical founders of ancient Rome, who had been suckled by a she-wolf. After the age of fourteen *Balillas* became *Avanguardisti* [Vanguard troops] and wore the Fascist uniform, black shirt and black fez. The fez was the Fascist adaptation of the Arab headgear that Italian troops had encountered in Libya and Abyssinia. It sported a black pompom attached by a string to the back, that could be jauntily tossed around. Alas, as *marinaretti* we were not entitled to a fez, just a sailor's hat. There were similar groups for girls, the *Giovani e Piccole Italiane*.

During the *adunata* we would be addressed by *il Rettore*, incongruous in the flowing robes of his religious habit amongst Fascists in uniform. He stood on a podium overlooking the courtyard, surrounded by Fascist officials in knee-high boots, black shirts, black fez and plenty of shiny insignia. They would inform us of the heroic deeds of our troops in Abyssinia. From them I learned that England, dubbed *la perfida Albione* [perfidious Albion], had tried to starve Italy by imposing sanctions after the Abyssinian war.

"Never forget, boys, that we owe it to *il Duce* that Italy is today strong and free, that she has her Empire, her place in the sun. It was *il Duce* who brought order out of anarchy, who fought the Bolsheviks, who drained the marshes, built roads, schools, hospitals. France and England tried to prevent us from bringing the light of civilization to the black races, but they were wrong! *Mussolini ha sempre ragione* [Mussolini is always right]!" The last was

one of the slogans from the Fascist repertory, many of which peppered our school reader and were painted on walls of houses throughout the country. The older boys, *Avanguardisti*, would display their marching prowess. They carried the *moschetto* [rifle]. I couldn't wait to grow up so I also would be allowed to carry a *moschetto*. The Fascist militia drummed into us their vision of academic future awaiting us:

*Libro e moschetto,  
Balilla perfetto*

Book and rifle,  
[make] the perfect *balilla*

At one fateful *adunata*, however, I changed my mind. During one of the manoeuvres a boy dropped his *moschetto*. It fell to the ground with a loud clang. The parade came to a halt. The head Fascist descended from the podium in a seething fury, his pompom swinging wildly from side to side. He faced the unfortunate one and proceeded to bawl him out within everyone's hearing:

"What is the meaning of this? Do you call yourself an *Avanguardista*? Shame on you, you have shamed your uniform, your school! *Il Duce* doesn't want people like you in his *Avanguardisti*! Fall out, away with you! Away, away from the Istituto Leone XIII!" I saw the poor boy shuffle out of the courtyard, his *Balilla perfetto* self-image in tatters. I doubt whether the threatened expulsion was actually carried out as it was only the *Rettore* who could order expulsions. There would have been some behind-the-scenes accommodation, but I felt acutely the unfairness of such public humiliation.

The *adunate* ended with our singing the Italian national anthem *Fratelli d'Italia* [Brothers of Italy] and *Giovinezza*, Mussolini's hymn to youth. *Giovinezza* had a stirring tune and words that inspired us. We all loved singing it. It was all about us, his youth. We were all marching enthusiastically into Italy's Fascist future. We were told that some unpatriotic Italians derided the hymn. For punishment they were made to drink castor oil. The hymn ended with a rousing acclamation to *il Duce*:

*E per Benito Mussolini,  
Eja eja alalà!*

These words had always been mysterious for me. Bernasconi, my desk companion, told me they were some sort of primordial African war cry that had crept into the Fascist repertory after the Abyssinian war. I have since found out that they are instead attributed to Gabriele d'Annunzio, the

soldier-poet of Fascism, who supposedly coined them as a grandiose, would-be imperial Roman, equivalent of "hip, hip, hurrah!"

In later years I learnt that there had been well-known and respected Italians who had objected to Fascism and to *Giovinezza*. Being forced to drink castor oil was only the lowest step of the punishment scale. There was exile, detention on a remote island, and there had been mysterious murders. One of the more prominent opponents of the Regime had been Arturo Toscanini, the chief conductor and musical director of La Scala theatre in Milan, a world-class musician and an obstinate character. When requested by the Regime to have his orchestra play *Giovinezza* before opera performances, he refused steadfastly, reportedly saying: "La Scala artists are not vaudeville singers and they will not sing that piece of buffoonery!" He was hounded by Fascist militia, and in 1931 roughed up in Bologna prior to a performance. He went into voluntary exile to the United States, vowing not to set foot in Italy until Fascism had been overthrown. His musical career flourished in the United States, where he became chief conductor of the New York Philharmonic and the NBC Symphony orchestras. He did not return to Italy until after the end of the Second World War.

How our military school parade fitted in with the spiritual values of a dedicated religious order like the Jesuits might be hard to fathom. Ever since the annexation of Rome to united Italy under Victor Emmanuel II in 1870, the Popes had cut themselves off from the new nation and remained in isolation in the Vatican. In 1929, we learnt in our school readers, *il Duce* had brought about *il Concordato*, the agreement recognizing the rights both of the Vatican and of Fascist Italy. A settlement of sorts had been reached: each party, State and Church, tolerated the other's presence in the schools. The Istituto Leone XIII did the minimum that was required. The two regimes came together at morning prayer.

On each classroom's wall above the teacher's podium hung the Crucifix, flanked on one side by the portrait of our King, Victor Emmanuel III, and on the other by that of a helmeted Benito Mussolini, *il Duce*. Morning prayer opened with the Lord's Prayer, followed by a prayer to the Virgin Mary and, for good measure, one to the Blessed Trinity. At the end of these, *signora Marelli* would intone:

"*Saluto al Re!*" [Salute the King!]

"*Viva il Re!*" [Long live the king!], we would respond.

"*Saluto al Duce!*" [Salute the leader!]

"*A noi!*" was our reply, literally meaning 'To us!', another contribution to the Fascist repertory which had been given fame by Gabriele d'Annunzio. We learned from our school reader that in a fit of patriotic fervour the soldier-poet had, with the aid of a small band of men, daringly invaded the city of Fiume (now Rijeka) on the Istrian peninsula of Yugoslavia, and declared it to be Italian territory. He was welcomed jubilantly by the Italian-speaking population. The city fell without a struggle, it was reported. From the balcony overlooking the main *piazza*, d'Annunzio had called out:

"To whom Fiume?"

"*A noi!*" was the crowd's enthusiastic reply.

"To whom the victory?"  
"A noi!" the people roared.

The Roman salute had to be given whenever external dignitaries, militia or civilians, visited the classroom. As the classroom door opened and the visitor was shown in, accompanied by *il Rettore*, Baby Bellini stood up, yelling in military tones: "At-tenti!" [Attention!].

We had to drop whatever we were doing and spring to our feet, raising our right arm, palm open facing the front, the elbow slightly bent. This was the true *Saluto Romano*, how the ancient Romans greeted each other, we were told, not to be confused with Nazi Germany's poor imitation. It was illustrated in our history book by the picture of the statue of Caesar Augustus, his right arm outstretched. Later on, probably in deference to the school furniture, our response was modified and only Baby Bellini stood up. The rest of us were required to stretch both our hands in front of us, as if to grab an oar. On such occasions one of us might be asked to recite the *Balilla's* prayer from our school reader, this honour generally falling to Baby Bellini or to Petrella:

*Lord, bless and protect always my Italy in her Roman Church, her leaders, mothers, warriors, workers and her golden harvests.*

*Bless her Sovereign, her Princes, our Duce in the great labours which he undertakes, and since you have bestowed Him to Italy, grant Him long life and grant that all should be worthy of Him, who knows no true rest until He is amongst us children and bestows His luminous smile upon us.*

*Bless my family, my school, my teachers, my uniform, which is my honour and my promise. Grant me this grace, to give to the Fatherland my strength, my soul and, should it be required, my life.*

Life was tranquil for us as our parents shielded us from the more unpleasant aspects of life in Fascist Italy. Even though not an advocate of Fascism, my father wore the party's badge with the letters P.N.F. [*Partito Nazionale Fascista*] in his lapel. The acronym, I found out years later, was also whispered sarcastically amongst many bread-winners to stand for *Per Necessità Familiare* [because of family necessity], i.e. belonging to the P.N.F. was a requirement to hold down a professional job. At home, with us children, our parents studiously ignored Fascist indoctrination and chose to reinforce in us higher, more permanent values. This left us politically at the mercy of the school propaganda. To this day I look and marvel at the bombastic way the Fascist message was inculcated through my fifth grade reader, which I still own. Reading it one gets the distinct impression that Fascism was the natural culmination of twenty centuries of Italian history, starting from ancient Rome, and had been divinely ordained.

Upon arriving home at lunch time on that out-of-the-ordinary day, we found everyone in the building in a high state of excitement. Giovanni the *portinaio* [caretaker] had been around to all apartments and said he had been instructed by the *carabinieri* [police] that the national flags should be displayed that afternoon. By law all dwellings had to have a flag, to be hung

outside the window, or on the balcony. This was indeed going to be a special day, as normally the flags were only displayed on Armistice Day and national holidays. However there had been a spate of special flag days in the last few years of Fascism: there had been the Victory over Abyssinia Day, the Gold to the Fatherland Day, the Proclamation of the Empire Day, the Annexation of Albania Day. So what was this one going to be about?

"And be sure to turn on your radio for *il Duce's* speech at three o'clock," added the *portinaio*.

Putting out our flag was a source of embarrassment to me. The regulation Italian flag was the green, white and red tricolour arranged in vertical stripes, the green being closest to the flag pole. In the middle of the white stripe was the coat of arms of our royal family, the House of Savoy, surmounted by a coronet. Our own flag, unfortunately, was not a regulation flag. My father had bought a huge tricolour banner to turn the length of the terrace and be seen from the street. The stripes ran horizontally, alas, and there was no Savoy coat of arms. Putting it out was a major undertaking, requiring the combined efforts of my father, my mother, Elisa our maid and myself. There were a number of bows to be knotted around the cages containing the flower boxes and we had to be careful not to let the flag out of our hands, as the wind would grab it and billow it out like a huge sail. It was finally put up.

"But, Dedi, our flag is wrong. The stripes should be vertical; where is the Savoy emblem?"

"Don't worry, Noni. They are our national colours. They have been our colours since Napoleon."

"What happens if the *carabinieri* see we have the wrong flag?"

"They won't, son, they have other things to attend to."

They never did and I had to admit our flag did look grand from the street, dominating from the top of the building all the other minute regulation flags hanging from the lower windows.

We were going to listen to *il Duce's* speech on our brand new radio which occupied pride of place in the living room. For the occasion my father had invited some of his colleagues from the firm, including the managing director, signor Biffi, whose wife was American and a good friend of my mother. It was a hot sultry day and we had all the windows open. Mother asked Elisa to go down to the corner bar and buy bottles of cold beer for the men. This was another thing out of the ordinary, as I could not remember my parents ever drinking beer. As three o'clock approached, an eerie silence descended upon the city. The trams had stopped, there were few people in the street, many had gone into bars or cafes where they could listen to a radio.

"It's about time," said my father. The radio crackled as he tried to tune it for best reception. We could hear what sounded like the sea.

"It's the people in Piazza Venezia."

We could hear a band playing the *Marcia Reale* and *Giovinezza*. *Il Duce* was going to come out from his palace in Rome and speak from the famous balcony overlooking the square. I had never been to Rome, but had a picture

of him at that balcony in my school reader. Now the sound of the sea got louder and we could hear the people calling out, below the balcony.

Finally, the raucous voice sputtered forth the angry staccato sentences that were the hallmark of his speeches:



"Combatants of land, sea and air!"  
"Black shirts of the revolution and of the legions!"  
"Men and women of Italy, of the Empire and of the Kingdom of Albania!"  
"Listen!"  
I could hear the crowd clamouring at a higher pitch.  
"The hour marked by destiny has struck in the skies of the country!"  
"It is the hour of irrevocable decisions!"  
Shouts of acclamation.  
"The declaration of war has already been delivered to the ambassadors of Great Britain and France!"

Now they were chanting: "*GUER-RA, GUER-RA...*[war, war]"

"We are entering the field against the plutocratic and reactionary democracies of the West that at all times have obstructed the march, and threatened the very existence, of the Italian people..."

The voice was overrun by the crackling static, but we could hear the frenzied crowd:

"*DU-CE, DU-CE, DU-CE, DU-CE...*"

"...the ignoble siege by fifty-two nations... our conscience is clear... static... static... static..."

"...we need to break the chains that suffocate us in our own sea... we need free access to the Ocean... this gigantic struggle... the die is cast... our German allies, their magnificent armies... we will march with our friends to the end... static... static... static..."

"To whom the victory?"

"*A noi!*" we heard the crowd roar.

The speech lasted a good forty minutes. The static was getting worse but the message was clear: we were at war, against England, therefore against Australia, my mother's country. The afternoon continued sultry and hot, now we could hear the first trams moving again down in the street. The men in the living room were grave. No one spoke.

Suddenly my mother stood up and rushed out of the room, sobbing. My father followed her:

"Lor, it's all right, it's all right..."



But Mother's sobs got louder and I followed my parents out of the room. For the first time I had witnessed a crisis in my family and was terribly upset.

The only room in our apartment that could be locked was the bathroom. Mother went in and locked the door. My father, on the outside, knocked: "Lor, please, it's all right... open up..."

The door opened to let him in, but then it was firmly locked again. I felt bereft, standing outside the bathroom door. I could hear the voices inside, the sobs of my mother, and my father's reassuring baritone, "It's going to be all right, it's going to be all right..."

It had been a day out of the ordinary.

The colour picture of Balillas marching with Italian standard and the photograph of Mussolini on the balcony of Palazzo Venezia are sourced from the fifth grade reader: Luigi Rinaldi (author) and Bepi Fabiano (illustrator) *Il libro della Quinta Classe*, Mondadori, 1941.



# Immigration Bridge Australia

*The Italian Historical Society supports the Immigration Bridge Australia project and wishes to make available the following information supplied by Immigration Bridge Australia.*

*Immigration Bridge Australia is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation created to build Immigration Bridge as a gift to the nation.*

*For more information, visit [www.immigrationbridge.com.au](http://www.immigrationbridge.com.au)*

## ***The Bridge***

In 2001 a steering committee was formed with the objective of building a monument to honour the contributions migrants have made to Australia, and the opportunities this land has given them. After discussions with the National Capital Authority (NCA), they decided the monument should take the form of a spectacular pedestrian bridge spanning Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra, linking the National Museum of Australia with the Parliamentary Triangle.

## ***The Griffin Legacy***

This new pedestrian bridge fulfils a key design element of Walter Burley Griffin's original plan for Canberra, as described in the NCA publication *The Griffin Legacy*.

## ***The Design***

Immigration Bridge Australia will be a spectacular, dramatic, swooping, beautiful bridge, reminiscent of the great, wide spaces of this land.

The design is a unique collaboration between architect Bligh Voller Nield, engineer Arup Australia, composer Ross Edwards, poet Peter Skrzynecki, Campaign Director Andrew Baulch and the Board. The team is working closely together to ensure the bridge is a national monument and an international icon.

## ***The History Handrail***

The bridge will stretch for 400m some 12m above the surface of Lake Burley Griffin. The sculpted stainless steel handrail will allow 200,000 names to be engraved permanently – the names of people that have settled in Australia since 1788.

Every Australian family is invited to contribute their name to the bridge – to be immortalised on the handrail in perpetuity. The names will be recorded together with the country of origin and year of arrival.

The cost of each name is \$110 (inc GST). Money raised from this program will go towards the construction of the bridge – giving all who contribute a permanent physical memorial.

## ***To reserve a name on the History Handrail***

Visit [www.immigrationbridge.com.au](http://www.immigrationbridge.com.au)

***Write your story***

You can register your stories or those of your ancestors on the Immigration Bridge web page, where they will be recorded and then published in the "Migration Book". Many of these stories of migration will also feature on the surfaces of the Bridge itself. We hope that the building of the Immigration Bridge will be the catalyst for an unprecedented rise in interest in the history of Australian families.

The "Migration Book" will be a collection of all the stories that we can gather. It will be a huge book, magnificently bound and displayed under glass on the bridge – a page will turn each day of the year and we will notify families whose stories feature in advance to encourage family reunions on the Bridge.

***To register your story***

Visit [www.immigrationbridge.com.au](http://www.immigrationbridge.com.au)

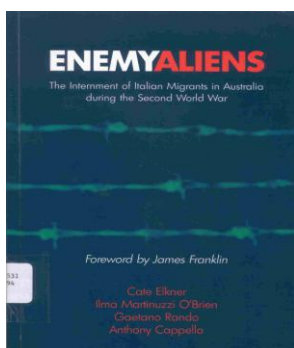
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## Publications received

*The following publications have been recently purchased by or donated to the Italian Historical Society. The Society makes every attempt to acquire all current publications in the field of Italian-Australian history.*

*These publications may be consulted at the library of the Italian Historical Society.*

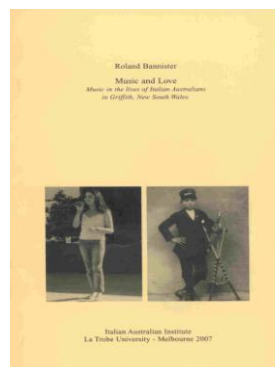
**AA.VV., A.L.I.A.S. Antologia 2007. Antologia del quindicesimo premio letterario internazionale. Poesia – Narrativa – Pittura. Melbourne, A.L.I.A.S. Editrice, 2007. Pp., [22], 1-308**



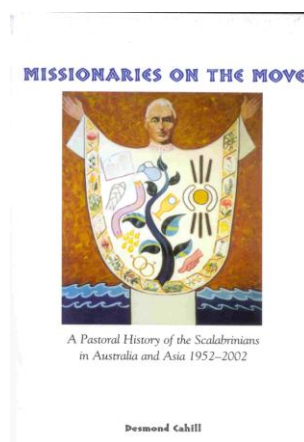
**AA.VV., *Enemy Aliens: The Internment of Italian Migrants in Australia during the Second World War*. Foreword by James Franklin. Connor Court, 2005. Pp.vi, 80.**

*Enemy Aliens* tells of the plight of Italian migrants in Australia during the Second World War. Following Italy's declaration of war on Britain and France on June 10<sup>th</sup> 1940, the Australian authorities carried out the biggest round-up of civilians of an Italian descent. These people, because of their background, now became enemy aliens. These four essays tell of their plight, from Melbourne to North Queensland and Newcastle, and of those who worked in their defence against the injustices of the internment policy. Contents: James FRANKLIN, Preface; Cate ELKNER, 'The internment of Italian-Australians: A Perspective from Melbourne, Victoria'; Ilma MARTINUZZI O'BRIEN, 'Internments in Australia During World

War Two: Life Histories of Citizenship and Exclusion'; Gaetano RANDO, 'Tales of Internment: The Story of Andrea La Macchia'; Anthony CAPPELLO, 'Archbishop Mannix and Italian Relief'.



**Roland BANNISTER, *Music and Love. Music in the Lives of Italian Australians in Griffith, New South Wales*. Melbourne, Italian Australian Institute, La Trobe University, 2007. Pp. 304, ill.**

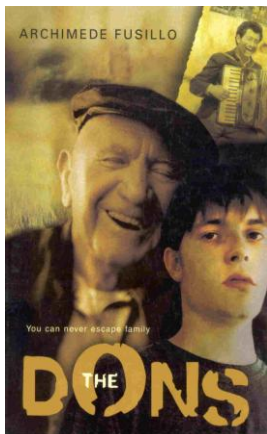


**Desmond CAHILL, *Missionaries on the Move: A Pastoral History of the Scalabrinians in Australia and Asia 1952-2002*. New York, Center for**

**Migration Studies, 2004. Pp. xvi, 504, ill.**

**Kay DREYFUS and Joel CROTTY (eds), Music, Migration and Multiculturalism, Special issue of the *Victorian Historical Journal*, Volume 78, No. 2 – November 2007. Pp. 147-288 (irregular pagination).**

Contents: Joel CROTTY and Kay DREYFUS, 'Introduction: Music, Migration and Multiculturalism'; Graeme SMITH, 'Playing with Policy: Music, Multiculturalism and the Boite'; Wang Zheng TING and Anne DOGGETT, 'Chinese Music on the Victorian Goldfields'; Marcello SORCE KELLER, 'Transplanting Multiculturalism: Swiss Musical Traditions Reconfigured in Multicultural Victoria'; Bronia KORNHAUSER, '"The Yiddish are Coming! The Yiddish are Coming!" The Reshaping of Melbourne's Jewish Community from 1890 to 1939'; John WHITEOAK, 'Italo-Hispanic Popular Music in Melbourne before Multiculturalism'; Aline SCOTT-MAXWELL, 'Melbourne's Banda Bellini: Localisation of a Transplanted Italian Tradition'; Kerrin HANCOCK with Kay DREYFUS, 'Jewish Liturgical Music of South Africa: Transmission in the Orthodox Community of Melbourne'.



**Archimede FUSILLO, *The Dons*. Puffin Books, 2001. Pp. 186.**

Paul is trying to escape. He's trying to escape from an Italian heritage that just doesn't seem to have relevance for him any more, and he's trying to escape from his nonno. They come from two different worlds, he and his grandfather, and Paul is more interested in his own world – his friends, the girls, the fast cars, the go-carts – than Nonno's strange and embarrassing behaviour. Nonno is more than just a silly old man getting in the way of Paul's lifestyle, though. Nonno has more stories to tell than Paul can even begin to imagine. But there is one problem – Nonno is losing his mind.



**Flavio LUCCHESI (a cura di), *Gli italiani nel quinto continente. L'emigrazione valtellinese in Australia*. Atti del seminario di studio (Milano, Università degli Studi, 25 gennaio 2006). Madonna di Tirano, Museo Etnografico Tiranese – Centro provinciale di documentazione sull'emigrazione, 2007. Pp. 104, ill.**

This book is part of the collection published by the *Centro provinciale di documentazione sull'emigrazione valtellinese e valchiavennasca*, run by the Museo Etnografico Tiranese (in Madonna di Tirano, in the province of Sondrio, Italy). This book consists in the proceedings of the Conference on Emigration from Valtellina to Australia, held at the University of Milan in

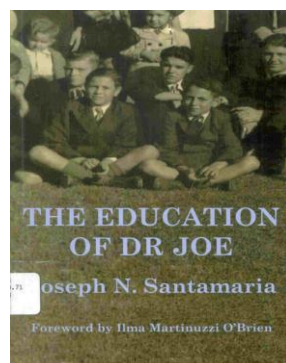
January 2006. This publication marks an important step in the so far scanty historical research into the centuries old migration from the valleys of the Adda and Mera. By studying this emigration in all its aspects and by publishing their results, researchers fulfil a scholarly duty. But their activity is also a means to reach out to the many migrants from our area who still maintain an emotional tie to the land of their origin, and to the descendents of Valtellinesi, who increasingly seek information about the villages from which their ancestors came. It is both a duty and a pleasure to keep this valuable connection alive.

Contents: Guglielmo SCARAMELLINI, Presentazione; Flavio LUCCHESI, 'L'emigrazione italiana e valtellinese in Australia: introduzione'; Piero GENOVESI, 'Note sull'emigrazione italiana in Australia'; Bruno CIAPPONI LANDI, 'L'emigrazione valtellinese all'estero nel procedere degli studi e delle ricerche'; Flavio LUCCHESI, 'La Valtellina in Australia attraverso le "storie dal basso". Vite di singoli e saghe familiari nella ricostruzione di forme, modalità e sviluppi di un lungo processo migratorio'.

**Lorenzo PRENCIPE (ed) *I musei delle migrazioni*, numero monografico di *Studi emigrazione / Migration Studies. International journal of migration studies*. Volume XLIV, N. 167 – July-September 2007. Rome, Centro Studi Emigrazione, 2007. Pp. 513-784 (irregular pagination).**

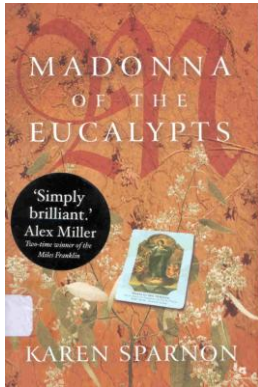
Contents: Lorenzo PRENCIPE (ed.), *Migration Museums: Migration Museums in the World: Argentina – Brazil – Australia – Canada – United States – Israel; Migration Museums in Europe: Portugal – Spain – France – Switzerland – Germany – Denmark – Norway – Sweden – Republic of San Marino; Migration Museums in Italy: Salina (ME) – Camigliatello Silano (CS) – Francavilla Angitola (VV) – San*

*Marco in Lamis (FG) – Campobasso – Cansano (AQ) – Gualdo Tadino (PG) – Napoli – Lucca – Mulazzo di Lunigiana (LU) – Coreglia Antelminelli (LU) – Bedonia (PR) – Genova – Frossasco (TO) – Torino; Michele COLUCCI, 'Storia o memoria? L'emigrazione italiana tra ricerca storica, uso pubblico e valorizzazione culturale'; Emilio FRANZINA, 'Dai musei al museo: emigrazione e storia d'Italia'; Paola CORTI, 'Musei dell'emigrazione e fotografia'; Maddalena TIRABASSI, 'Musei virtuali e reali sulle migrazioni'; Pietro CLEMENTE, 'Anime di emigranti. L'emigrazione nei musei italiani demoetnoantropologici'*



**Joseph N. SANTAMARIA, *The Education of Dr Joe*. Foreword by Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien. Ballan (Victoria), Connor Court Publishing, 2006. Pp. 80, ill.**

Remembering past experiences that left him with a lasting impression, and with more time available for musing, Joseph Santamaria – in an amusing way – describes episodes in his life that shaped his lifestyle and social development. Keen to pass onto his children their origin and culture, Santamaria's memories are vivid with considerable but truthful embellishments. In the 100<sup>th</sup> year since the arrival of the Santamaria family in Australia, this collection of stories tells us of the uniqueness and value of the Santamaria family, as well as the importance of the institution of the family and the traditions of Dr. Joe's Italian heritage.



**Karen SPARNON, *Madonna of the Eucalypts*. Melbourne (Australia), Text Publishing, 2006. Pp. 253.**

In 1900 the Aeolian Island of Salina is a small paradise of fruit trees, vines and fishing boats. When the life of their new-born baby Delfina is saved,

Angelina and Fortunato give thanks for the miracle to the island's patron saint, the Madonna del Terzito. Delfina is destined to marry Nino, her childhood sweetheart, against the wishes of his ferocious mother Ludevina. And when Nino sails to Australia to start a new life for them, Delfina is bereft. By the time she follows him to their new home in the scorching sun of outback Mildura, with their two daughters, she carries a terrible secret in her heart. *Madonna of the Eucalypts* is a stunning debut, a powerful story of migration, desire, and the conflicting ties of family and faith.

### *Acknowledgements*

Our sincere thanks go to Agostino Inguscio, Nicolas Panayotis and Paolo Baracchi who have assisted with the publication of this edition of the Journal and for the valued work at the Society.

It also goes without saying that we greatly appreciate and thank the Authors who contributed their articles.

## **Italian Historical Society Journal - Guidelines for Contributors**

### **Scope**

The journal of the Italian Historical Society is produced for a general readership. Preference will be given to articles which increase an understanding of the history of Italian immigrants and their descendants. The editors of the Journal accept unsolicited articles. However, we reserve the right to decline publication. We welcome articles from professional and amateur historians and writers. All items submitted are subject to editing. There is no payment for contributions. The IHS Journal is published on line and available for downloading via the website.

### **Manuscript Presentation**

Send one electronic copy of the article, either as an Mword attachment to the [ihs@coasit.com.au](mailto:ihs@coasit.com.au) email address or on disc/CD to: Italian Historical Society, 189 Faraday Street, Carlton 3053.

Articles should be of no more than 6,000 words, wordprocessed in Mword, 12 point – Verdana font, and should include endnotes.

Articles should be preceded by an abstract of no more than 100 words.

Illustrative material is to be supplied in the form of black and white, medium resolution jpgs (300 dpi). All images are to be clearly captioned. The author is to supply evidence of copyright clearance.

Authors are to indicate sources and references where appropriate by the use of numbers at the end of the relevant sentence. These numbered endnotes should be grouped at the end of the article.

For general style conventions please refer to AGPS Style manual for authors, editors and printers, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. All bibliographic citations should follow the Author-Date style as outlined in the above publication. For example:

Citing books (author, followed by year of publication, title of book in italics, edition, publisher, place of publication). For example: Castles, S et al. (eds) 1992, *Australia's Italians: culture and community in a changing society*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, New South Wales.

Citing periodicals (author, followed by title of article in single quotation marks, title of journal in italics, volume number, date/year of publication, page number/s). For example: Battaglini, AG, 'The Italians', *Italian Historical Society Journal*, vol.9, no. 2, July-December 2001, pp. 5-9.

Contributors should retain copies of all materials submitted.

Please provide a 150 word biographical note with your contribution and ensure that this includes your full name, address and contact details.

We look forward to receiving your articles.