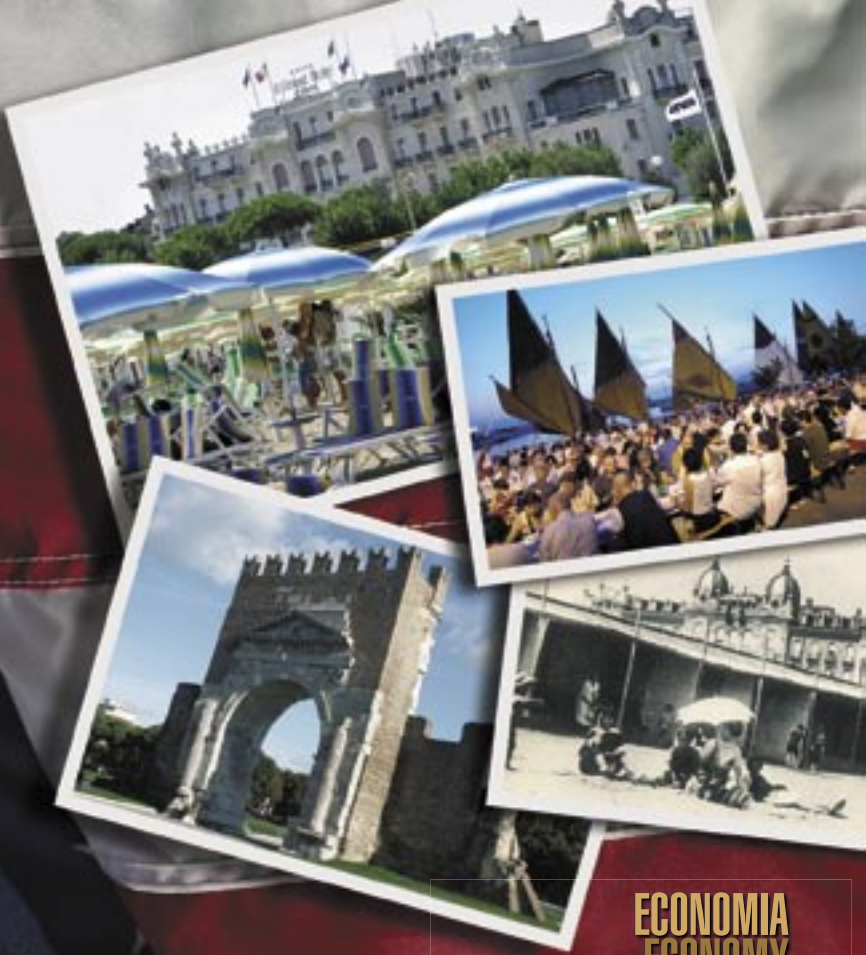


EMILIA ROMAGNA

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ECONOMIA ECONOMY

Nasi elettronici
e giardini di farfalle
Electronic nose and
butterfly gardens

CULTURA CULTURE

L'uomo che perse
le Olimpiadi
The man who lost
the Olympics



Gli americani inseriscono la città di Fellini
tra le mete del turismo mondiale
The Americans have listed Fellini's city
as a must-see world tourist destination



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Direttore responsabile
Chief Editor
Roberto Franchini

In redazione
In Editorial office
Roberto Alessandrini

Segreteria di redazione
Editing Coordinator
Rita Soffritti

Direzione - Redazione
Editorial Office

Viale Aldo Moro, 52
40127 Bologna
Telefono (+39) 51/6395440
Fax (+39) 51/6395389

Internet:
www.regione.emilia-romagnait
E-mail:
stampaseg@regione.emilia-romagna.it

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LETTERE

FELLINI'S CITY WINS OVER THE USA

by Anna Tonelli

If you mention the word Rimini in the company of Americans, what you actually don't get is the inevitable "what?". What you will get is probably: "Rimini? Yes, Fellini". The fact that the director from Rimini is the symbol of the capital of Italian tourism is not surprising. What is surprising, though, is that Rimini has become a desirable tourist destination for Americans. When hospitality managers saw Rimini placed 58th on *The New York Times* list of international tourist destinations not to be missed, they exclaimed *osta*, a typical Fellinian expression. Americans have been bitten by Rimini. It has managed to become a part of the American dream thanks to Fellini, but also due to its ancient Roman ruins, the nightlife and the luxury hotels. Especially the Grand Hotel, the holiday temple, which celebrates its 100th anniversary in July. The new owner, multi-award winning hotelier from Romagna, Antonio Batani, is preparing to celebrate the hotel's birthday with a summer characterised by pomp and circumstance. This is the location of the film *Amarcord*, whose magical images enchanted tourists and spectators upon the arrival of the legendary cruise ship Rex, and ravished the expectations of aspiring Gradiscas, buckling under the prince's charm and flattery. The same hotel, which is the symbol of the Adriatic Riviera in need of a new breath of life, will be revived. And on the Riviera, Rimini is the trail blazer of this model of tourism which still manages to lure people in: the main attractions of this type of tourism are no longer based on piadina and clubbing, but a varied choice of reasons to choose from, including culture and history, gastronomy and entertainment, day and night activities, affordable prices and ridiculously high ones.

And everything starts and ends with Fellini. Batani, who paid out € 65 million to have the five star hotel in Rimini, has plans to renew the ancient cupolas (which were destroyed in a fire in 1920) which inspired the director of *La Dolce Vita's* imagination. On the top of the roof there are two pinchbecks which seem to have absorbed the past which

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has seen impoverished aristocrats and the new rich, sheiks and princesses, directors and actors, heads of state and scientists, politicians and artists. A long list of guests which ranges from King Faruk to princess Diana, from Sharon Stone to Rania of Jordan, from Henry Kissinger to Gorbachev, to name just a very select few. In the cupolas, which should leave a strong mark on the tourist landscape of Rimini – both real and imaginary - there will be space for ultra-modern suites which are not, however, totally devoid of the atmosphere of the past. "The cupolas were stunning, they had a unique view", explains Batani. "For this reason, we plan to renew them, while respecting Restoration Office constraints". As an excellently versed man in the hospitality trade – he manages other nine hotels, including the very famous Palace in Milano Marittima – Batani is convinced that the name of the Grand Hotel will be enough to launch Rimini and the Riviera beyond national borders. "Rimini and the Grand Hotel have a symbiotic relationship and are inseparable from a very precise century", says triumphantly the mayor of Rimini Alberto Ravaioli who received Batani's arrival with a sigh of relief, after the fleeting but disconcerting management style of real estate agent Danilo Coppola, who is currently under criminal investigation.

The desire to bring the Grand Hotel

back to its "ancient splendour" is part of the new Romagna tourist philosophy which is based on upgrading, holding onto mass tourism, but focusing on quality. Small one-star pensioni seem to be disappearing, which, even though they struck it rich in the boom of the 1960s, no longer reflect the new standards of the holiday industry in which low prices are important, but so is a wide range of choices. In the wake of this inevitable "disappearance", we have seen a move from hotels towards the so-called "hundred types of tourism", which include culture, gastronomy, sport, trade fairs, well-being and nightlife. Special attention is directed to architectural considerations, like the DuoMo hotel, in the heart of the historical part of Rimini, designed by Ron Arad and awarded the best small hotel in the world prize by the *Travel & Leisure* magazine, which was also mentioned in the *New York Times* list.

The public and private sectors are working together to send out a unified message of renewed innovation as a catalyst for other events in and around Rimini. It is of no coincidence that the newly renovated "surgeon's domus" archaeological site has also become a tourist destination. This is an archaeological pearl hailed as the "little Pompei" of the Adriatic by all the newspapers, and is situated in piazza Ferrari right in the centre of the town, where two centuries ago the sea

flowed but which has since receded by more than a kilometre. The modern setting, designed by Studio Cerri, allows visitors to see the remains by walking over or alongside them, and the effect is that of a walk in history in a layered city which opens into polychrome frescoes, walls with floral motifs, geometric mosaics and parts of caisson decorated ceilings. In terms of historical importance, the *surgeon's domus* is considered one of the most precious and representative at a national level, having preserved a wide array of surgical and pharmacological instruments. In the house which is equipped with a taberna medica domestica where the surgeon looked after and operated on his patients, a collection of more than 150 surgical instruments were unearthed which are now exhibited in the city Museum. In a history-hungry tourism, the domus too offers another reason that illustrates how Rimini celebrates the present while reflecting the past.

A SHOWCASE FOR ITALY

by Thomas Foschini

The trade fair sector in Emilia-Romagna is travelling at full speed, with an ever increasing international involvement. In only the last year, foreign visitors have increased by a further 10.6%. This constant growth has brought about the growth of exhibition areas, whose surface area has grown by 20% from 2000. And which has consolidated Emilia-Romagna as one of the leading national trade fair regions, second only to Lombardy.

Latest confirmation comes from a sample of 40 representative trade fairs (33% of the total activities) examined by the Milan research institute Cermes Bocconi, comparing the performance of the first semester in 2006 with the same period in 2007. "The research proves the growth of the international trade fair sector in Italy and in our Region – explains town councillor Duccio Campagnoli. Now we need to focus on this system, which is essential in promoting the Made in Italy platform".

The Cermes Bocconi research leaves no doubt about the success of the adopted course: in just over 20 years – from 1985 to now – our country has hosted from 150 to over 190 trade fairs

at an international level with a real potential to reach the most important markets. While Italy is one of the European leaders with a 25% market share, just behind Germany (37%), Emilia-Romagna (26%) is second to Lombardy in inter-regional ranking.

Figures relating to international involvement are positive, both for exhibitors (+ 1.4% of direct foreign exhibitors) and visitors (+ 10.6% foreign visitors), consisting in equal measure of EU and non-EU numbers. If we break up the overall trend in terms of the level of the trade fairs, these results are confirmed above anything else – with the exception of figures on numbers of foreign visitors at national and regional events: this goes to show that the trade fair system grows above all when international trade fairs are hosted and increased.

A look at other indicators further confirms this growth. Overall, there has been a slight increase in the average size of trade fairs in terms of rented areas (from 12,195 m² in 2006 to 12,590 m² in 2007), while the average number of people attending per event has increased. As a result, there has been a slight increase in visitor to exhibitor ratio, from 72 in 2006 to 73 last year. To keep up with these figures, an increase of areas will be carried out, which have grown by 20% from 2000 to 2007. Starting with BolognaFiere (exhibition space to be increased soon to 200,000 m² thanks to a new pavilion), Rimini Fiera and Fiere di Parma.

If we look at the individual bodies of Emilia-Romagna **BolognaFiere**, which boasts a € 126.7 million consolidated revenue (+ 6.8 % on 2006), what we have in front of us is an internationalisation plan which ranges from an increase in the trade fair premises to the strengthening of the domestic market, along with business production specialisation with an eye on services, which today accounts for 20%. Including seven new trade fairs of which four are overseas, "where we are the leaders with the organisation of a third of Italian trade fairs in Asia, the USA, Russia and Turkey", explains the CEO Michele Porcelli. But that's not all: as the main national operator in China (eight annual events), BolognaFiere has opened a new office in Shanghai, where Fiere Rimini and Fiere Parma will be present along with Emilia-Romagna tour operators.

In view of its integration into BolognaFiere, 2007 was a record year on the incoming front for **RiminiFiera** spa, which organised 1,231 business meetings involving 415 Italian businesses and 173 foreign buyers from 29 countries. On the strength of a € 50.7 million revenue (+ 5% on 2005), the body has embarked on the opening of the new Rimini Congress Centre (Palacongressi) –

construction began last September – which with 38,000 m² and seating for 9,300, will include a services areas, restaurants and dining areas and a large car park. It has also obtained the eco-patente (environmental management standards recognition) and has a new version of its corporate website.

By playing on international fairs to export Italian brands in the food market in all the world – Russia, India and China in particular - **Fiere di Parma** has recorded a turnover of € 25 million which is destined to increase due to infrastructure investment.

A glance at the 2008 calendar of international trade fairs in Italy – 197 are scheduled - shows Bologna ranked second after Milan, with 10% of events. Third placing goes to Rimini (9%), ahead of Verona (7%) and Bolzano (6%). The leading sectors are clothing and fashion in the top position, followed by building (23%), food farming-agroindustrial sector (12.9%), health-environment (8.8%). Mechanical instruments (18%) along with industry machinery and technology. Tradition.

ELECTRONIC NOSES AND BUTTERFLY GARDENS

by Gea Scancarello

Edible ink, printers that print on waffles, "boxed" ecosystems. And also electronic olfactory systems and bio-chips to analyse organic materials. Ranging from the diametrically opposite fields of the simple improvement of quality of life to the very serious progress of science, innovation Emilia-Romagna style has launched 309 products and 300 new high technology services on the market in the 10 years from 1997 to 2007.

These figures were produced by the census conducted by the Osservatorio sugli spin off della ricerca in Emilia-Romagna (Research Spin-offs Observatory of Emilia-Romagna) (Osiride), whose first annual report was issued by the Department of Business Sciences of the University of Bologna and Aster, who thought up and conducted the project. The initiative began in 2006 with the aim of monitoring high-tech start-ups as a result of public research, that it, those businesses in which the University or public research centres are amongst the founding bodies and/or business partners. The aim was to construct an updated and updateable database which would be useful for institutions to effectively influence their business support mechanisms. Which, given the extent of the assistance, is far from trivial: the Observatory report also observes the public

funding figures for spin-offs, which was about € 10.7 million.

The sum was distributed over 83 companies – which is the amount of firms recorded by the Observatory in the studied period – which employ a total of 410 staff – 145 permanent employees and 265 contract employees – and, at the end of 2006, produced a turnover of about € 17 million.

The products were mainly sold on the regional and national market, but in 14% of cases also went abroad, to other European countries and the rest of the world. Proof of this lies in the fact that of the 18 patents registered until now, 17 were registered in Italy, 11 in Europe and 2 in the United States.

An example is SmartSlide and Silicon Biosystem, which are patented more or less in all the world, from Italy to Japan, and the prototype has been in use in the Californian Justice Department for a few months, for scientific analyses in sexual assault cases. "What we're dealing with is a bio-chip that can separate suspended cells at a micrometric level which is normally carried out in a test tube", explains the company's chief technology officer Niccolò Manaresi. "The chip creates electric fields which produce dielectrophoresis which can work on neutral particles like cells. In simple terms, normal laboratory analyses can be carried out very quickly on the surface of a small chip, using much lower quantities of organic materials than normally required.

Electronic noses produced by Soatec (code name Ise Nose 2000), is a spin-off from the University of Parma which deals with artificial olfactory systems. "The electronic nose which we have invented and sold allows us to carry out quality controls on food much faster than traditional analyses", explains the company's researcher Roberta Pinalli. "In simple terms, the system must be 'trained', by inserting a series of good and bad 'smells' in the internal database. Then, thanks to its in-built sensors, the nose can establish if a certain product or food product is good or not". Time reduction and simplification of work procedures are two features of this product which had the giant Barilla drooling: they use Ise Nose 2000 to test the quality of its packaging. Cheese producers Parmigiano Reggiano use the Soatec nose to hunt out imitation copies of food.

Finally, "private ecology" products have had a raging success in Italy and Spain. The start-up was born from an idea from researchers from the agricultural science department of the University of Bologna, who came up with the idea to reconstruct the perfect habitat in the city to bring up various species which risk becoming extinct. "For example, the European butterfly, whose numbers in our

country have dropped by 50% and in Great Britain by up to 70%", says entomologist and researcher for Eugea, Gianumberto Accinelli. "Our garden is a small box which contains the seeds needed to grow some marvellous plants which are the nourishment for the butterflies which are at risk of extinction: it's a simple solution for everyone and anyone to contribute to a more sustainable environment". A thought revolution, rather than a scientific one, which can be spread symbolically for the low price of € 9 a box.

BEHIND GIOVANNINO'S MOUSTACHE

by Renato Bertacchini

Don Camillo and Peppone are two of his most famous characters. But there's more than just that. The aim of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Giovanni Guareschi (born in Roccabianca 1 May 1908, died in Cervia 22 July 1968) is to rediscover and appreciate the multifaceted persona who was a writer, humorist, drawer, journalist, polemist, radio journalist, writer of screenplays, television ads and radio programs.

The national organising Committee for the celebrations have organised exhibitions, conferences, meetings, presentations and activities in schools. President of the Committee and President of the Parma Province, Vincenzo Bernazzoli, explained that "This is an important initiative which aims to place Guareschi in the position he deserves in the Italian historical and cultural landscape of the 1900s. This is definitely the best time to do it, because after one hundred years we are in a position to see Guareschi without any ideological constructs". Events began in Parma in April with the exhibition *Giovannino Guareschi. Nascita di un umorista (Giovanni Guareschi. The birth of a humorist), and will be followed by the festival Giovannino Guareschi e il cinema (Giovannino Guareschi and cinema)*, organised by the Cineteca in Bologna from June to September, up until the international conference *Cent'anni di Guareschi: letteratura, cinema, giornalismo, grafica (One hundred years of Guareschi: literature, cinema, journalism, graphic art)* on 21 and 22 November in Parma. The conference will include about 30 scholars from all over Italy with a special delegation of European experts who have translated and are still translating Guareschi's works today in new editions of his stories. To coincide with the anniversary, two museums will be opened in Fontanelle di Roccabianca (Parma) and Brescello (Reggio Emilia) and his archive in Roncole Verdi (Parma).

THE MAN WHO LOST THE OLYMPICS

by Renato Bertacchini

Ever mindful of the pomp of ancient Rome, the Baron Pierre De Coubertin offered the fourth edition of the modern Olympic Games to Italy. The head of government, Giolitti, refused due to a lack of funds and the fear of losing face with our “modest” athletes (yet Alberto Braglia competed in those Olympics, and he had a gold medal in athletics). Anyway, how could the “little” Dorando Pietri have won the classic marathon? Born in Mandrìo, Reggio Emilia, and raised on polenta and codfish, how could he beat the English and Americans raised on steaks and vitamin pills? Unlikely.

And yet on 24 July 1908, the 42 kilometres and 195 metres from Windsor Castle to the London stadium White City were run intelligently by the man from Reggio Emilia-Carpi against the favourites Tom Longboat, a Canadian redskin and the American John Hayes. After hours of intense running, the finish line draws near. Dorando is ahead of his competitors by 20 minutes. Only a few metres left, but the Italian marathon runner, completely worn out and out of breath, trips and falls. Due race stewards, moved to pity, egg him on and hold him up. Dorando thus arrives first, but is disqualified, to a reaction of general outrage.

He was on drugs, they say, he smells of strychnine. In fact the smell is simply that of balsamic vinegar in the sponge he is clutching in his hand, mixed with perspiration. The ravishing applause of the spectators means nothing to him. Nor does the cup donated by Alexandra, Queen Consort of England, who was moved by the Italian’s bad luck and urged on by the journalist/writer Conan Doyle, father of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes. The athlete’s final words to the *Corriere della Sera* on 30 July 1908 were dignified in their bitterness: “I am not the winner of the marathon. I am, though, as the English say, the person who won and lost the victory”. A century has passed since that fateful Olympic event. But the Dorando Pietri affair still retains a surprising ability to provoke reactions in people in the Third Millennium. Proof is the recent biographical novel *Il sogno del maratoneta (The dream of the marathon runner)* written by Giuseppe Pederiali (Garzanti, 2008, 273 pages, € 16.60). A frank and ef-

fortless description of the character’s life, the book is not traditionalist in tone despite its centenarian subject matter. The prose is fluid, free and constantly soaring: it runs with the protagonist and his fate. The observer Pederiali focuses on reality, and renders the story’s vicissitudes and sentiments current. The marathon in those times was very similar to contemporary sport, with international stars and enormous earnings, doping attempts, wheeling and dealing and prestigious overseas sporting events.

Underlying the whole story is the boy and the man Dorando’s unique intuition which was ahead of the times: the beauty of running, foot-racing as a supreme, freeing mode of existence. A powerful and stirring biographical account, faithfully determined by that vital force of running. Dorando possessed a significant mental calling and physical aptitude: Pederiali’s Dorando Pietri had a card in his sleeve which, in the light of later events, proved to be a winning hand. At the beginning there was a race between man and horse: Dorando on foot, challenges and beats Arturo Marchi in a horse-drawn coach. Then an unusual amateur marathon in Paris: the snobbish French are shattered to see their idol outclassed by an unknown Italian. Then to the New World, the land of “Merica”, a sensational victory over John Hayes at Madison Square in New York, hitting the tape with half a lap ahead of the unjust Londoner victor of the 1908 Olympics. Back at home, tired and weak, in his final years Pietri takes American tourists around the Riviera dei Fiori in his Balilla. His generous heart stops beating in February 1942, during the war. He is totally forgotten by everyone. Nobody is interested. The old-fashioned, naive, and obstinate champion and his death are unreported. No Italian or English newspaper talk about it. ❧

A PRIEST ON THE THAMES

by Claudio Bacilieri

The period prints of the suburb of Saffron Hill look like they’re straight out of a Charles Dickens novel: crumbling houses, wayward streets, people pressed-up in cold rooms. This is where the Italians immigrants lived in London in the 1800s. In the middle of the century there were about two thousand, quite a few of them from the poor areas of the Apennines around Parma. They

were employed in the most unusual jobs: musicians and travelling milliners, piano organ players, sellers of small plaster statues. Most of them were wanderers and beggars, living one day at a time, like the Slavic wind-screen cleaners and Pakistani rose sellers in Italy today. *The Times* reports, as early as March 1820, of the presence of children from the towns near Parma who were taken to London to beg in the streets. The *Penny Magazine* in 1833 reports that from the tiny dukedom of Parma and Piacenza, small piano organ players and vagrants arrived in the city to make ends meet with dancing monkeys and bears and white mice.

The residents of Little Italy still didn’t have a catholic church in which to pray: they used the Royal Sardinian Chapel in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. This was to be until 1845 when a Roman priest, Vincenzo Pallotti, who had devoted his life to helping the poor and marginalised – and for this reason pope John XXIII sanctified him in 1963 – decided that the time had come to build a church for the immigrants in London. Initially though up as a church for all Catholics in the English capital, the “Saint Peter’s Church for all nations” was inaugurated in 1863. It was situated in Clerkenwell Road, in the heart of the what was the Italian quarter. Over its almost 150 years of existence, St Peter’s Church has always been the centre of the life of Italians on the Thames: concerts have been held there, thanks to its marvellous organ which has also accompanied the tenor Beniamino Gigli, and has also celebrated the most important events of the community, from baptisms to funerals. A monument marks the Arandora Star tragedy, the ship sunk in 1940 by a Nazi submarine, while it was transporting Italians by the English government to an intern camp in Canada.

St Peter’s Church is known for its social activities. The headquarters of the Parmigiani Valtaro Association still stands in Clerkenwell Road, which brings together the descendants of the immigrants from the Val di Taro (in total there are 6 Emilia-Romagna associations in London). It operated as a sort of employment office, where the parish assisted fellow-countrymen in their search for work, paper work, and help for the most needy. Still today elderly Italians come here to play cards, while wayward youth with drug problems can eat a hot meal and hear words of comfort.

A strange priest arrived here in 1971 to carry out his pastoral activi-

ties: he was young, wore a red sweater, jeans, had long hair and a southern Italian accent. It was Carmelo Di Giovanni, from the Pallottine Fathers congregation, the order founded by St Peter’s Church. The Beatles had just split up, and swinging London attracted many young Italians looking for excitement. Rock, fashion and youth legends, an air of transgression and ideals of freedom which were under strong attack in Italy in an environment of ideological clashes, acted as a magnet for curious, enterprising youth, who, though, were also unprotected, who hung out on the footpaths of Soho and Piccadilly Circus confused, tempted and excited by drugs, and often had no place to go. Dozens would gather at all times of the day and night at the entrance of the Italian Church, knowing that there would be somebody to listen to them.

To greet them was this unimpeachable and non-judgemental priest, because he was one of them. A “left wing” priest, fresh from Sociological studies in Rome who – as he wrote in a book published in 1989, *Eravamo terroristi. Lettere dal carcere (We were terrorists. Prison letters)* – if he hadn’t become a priest, he would have “become a terrorist”, as the need for justice was so strong. Here was a priest who, having been sent to London as punishment because he was considered hot-headed, the first thing he did was knock at the door of the Italian Communist Party offices: this led him only to understand that problems were not resolved by breaking down the “structures”, but by “changing men’s hearts”. This is where Carmelo’s journey begins, from the need to measure himself with the evils of the world. “A priest – he claims – is not somebody who has exhausted his duties once mass has ended. He must stay with the people, and adopt the role of servant, the lowest place, like the god in which he believes, who humbled himself by becoming man”.

This led to his work helping Italian prisoners. Prisons in the United Kingdom still today hold 600-700 young Italians sentenced for various crimes, particularly drug-related ones. At the end of the 1970s and after the bomb attack on the train station in Bologna in 1980, various left and right-wing terrorists have been held in English penitentiaries.

Men on the run who, in jail, embarked on a journey of disassociation from armed struggle and in some cases of spiritual purification, conversion, accompanied by father Carmelo who understood their torment. The small

priest gains their confidence. Some of them are the perpetrators of horrendous crimes, like Marco Barbone, who in 1980 as the head of a group affiliated with the Red Brigades, was sentenced for the assassination of the journalist Walter Tobagi. Or Arrigo Cavallina, another protagonist of the “anni di piombo” (years of lead), ideology of the “Proletari armati per il comunismo” (Armed proletarians for communism). The London priest gathers the letters of about 15 terrorists into the above-mentioned book, young people who had fallen into an escalation of hate due to an absurd adhesion to the ideological furore which characterised the 1970s. “One ends up drawing a white line of difference on the asphalt, friends and enemies”, writes Cavallina. “And once you reduce the other person to a ‘enemy category’, the only thing left is violence. The terrorists attacked symbols, but they killed people”.

In 1994 Carmelo Di Giovanni published letters in another book, *Dal Carcere di Londra (From jails in London)*, sent to him from young Italian inmates in United Kingdom jails, mainly drug addicts and HIV carriers. The small priest form the south tirelessly visited about 30 jails, most of them situated in London and its surroundings, to bring comfort to his young men. Some touching episodes are described in the letters, like those of some young men finally ending the battle with drugs to end up with AIDS. Like Moreno, who before he died wrote a poem to his wife: “Be moved in front of a sunset / of which you are the protagonist”. Or like Franco, who from a drug rehab centre out of London, tells father Carmelo that he has found faith: “I have received an internal strength, something which I cannot describe”. And Isabella, in despair after finding her boyfriend dead in a toilet in the King’s Cross station, a meeting place for Italian drug addicts: “I feel all the horrors which I have lived through and I feel a scream rise up inside of me, a scream of rage and impotence”. A scream like Munch’s, in the cold desolation of a bridge on the Thames, which only the Italian chaplain of London jails embraces. A good pastor, who for his lost sheep – a monkey on one’s back, a wayward life – does not hesitate to dirty his hands in the lowest of human existence. “From 1985 onwards, I have seen hundreds of young Italians in London die in absolute solitude, even rejected by their families. I celebrated up to three or four funerals a week”. Father Carmelo would bring mothers the ashes of their children who had died of AIDS. He

consoles and convinces. He fights in the parish to convince the immigrants to accept these young marginalised people, who live on the streets and come to eat at the day centre. And it is the parish church which covers the cost of these English rehab centres.

“Immigration is different now”, he says. “The people who attend the parish are no longer the children of immigrants, who are by now completely English. The people who come are young Italians who work in banks, in universities, and are doctors, professionals or waiters. And there are still many of them who come from Italy with lots of problems thinking that London can resolve them, who end up knocking at the church’s door. And finally there are tourists who don’t want to miss out on visiting St Peter’s Church, and leave moved by the atmosphere”.

The Emilian community gave father Carmelo a hearty welcome on 5 September 2007, when the council of Borgo Val di Taro gave him honorary citizenship for his work as a point of reference for people from Parma in London, which is one of the biggest Italian communities in the United Kingdom. ❧

ABRAHAM’S CHILDREN

by Giorgio Savona

Ferrara will be the site of the National Italian Jewish Museum, which will be inaugurated in 2011 in the former prison for the 150th anniversary of the Unity of Italy with funds totalling € 16 million allocated by a special law.

The decision to open a museum of Jewish culture and the Holocaust falls on the 70th anniversary of racial laws in Italy, passed by the fascist government in 1938. The event is also a moral reparation for the Jewish community and recognition of what it did for the Unity of Italy. Ferrara is, after all, a city with an ancient Jewish community and is also the city of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* by the writer Giorgio Bassani.

The museum will be the first of its kind – explains Renzo Gattegna, president of the Italian Jewish Communities Union (Ucei) – which will bring together the millennium-long history and culture of Italian Judaism. The Jewish communities see this initiative with great interest because it will be a live museum, a research centre and a centre for the spread of culture”. □ 15 million has been allocated for the pro-

ject and an additional □ 1 million per year for management costs.

The board of directors of the Museum Foundation is chaired by the writer Riccardo Calimani and is composed of the president of the Italian Jewish Communities Union, Renzo Gattegna, Cesare De Seta, Gad Lerner, Bruno De Santis, Saul Meghnagi, Paolo Ravenna, Antonio Paolucci and Michele Sacerdoti.

The museum will be not only a Holocaust museum, but also a way of showing the over two-thousand-year-old history of Italian Judaism. “Italian Judaism – adds Gattegna – is a particular type of Judaism in that it is closely tied to the Nation, and sees this initiative with great interest, as an occasion to create a live museum, non a simple exhibition of past events, and a research and culture diffusion centre”. It also reflects “the desire that Jews have at this moment – stresses the president of the Ucei – of broadening its communications channels, of working and living openly so that its traditional values, which they have never rejected, can be shown”.

Riccardo Calimani adds: “With the National Italian Jewish and Holocaust Museum, we hope that the Italian Jew will become better known, for what he has contributed to the national identity from its origins to the Risorgimento period, to not mention of contemporary society”. ❧

LOS EMILIANOS IN SPAIN

by Claudio Bacilieri

The man wearing a beret and a handkerchief around his neck in the famous photo taken by Robert Capa, which became an icon of the Spanish Civil War, has finally been identified: he is Dante Galli, from Piacenza, who was immortalised by the most famous photographic journalist without knowing it on 28 October 1938 in Barcelona on that fateful day of the *despedida*, the seeing off of international volunteers to Spain. With an intense look and his head held high, he is listening to a talk by the *Pasionaria* Dolores Ibarruri to the militiamen who had come from all parts of the world to help the republican government, and from where they were sent to France to end up in the demobilisation camps. The people who identified him as Dante Galli were Franco Sprega and Ivano Tagliaferri, the authors of the book *Los Italianos: antifascisti nella guerra civile spagnola (Los Italianos: antifascists in the Span-*

ish civil war) (Infinito edizioni). The two historians went on a search for proof to confirm what had emerged from dusty archive files, in which lay unforgotten reports drawn up by the fascist police and black and white mug shots. They thus happened upon the widow of Dante Galli, 17 years younger than her husband, who proudly showed them the reproduction of an old photograph taken in Spain which they immediately recognised as Robert Capa’s.

Capa’s photos of the demobilisation of the International Brigades, along with that incredibly famous one of the militiaman shot to death, are perhaps the most eloquent images of the civil war in Spain, which saw the nationalists led by General Franco and supported by the European fascist governments, set against the republicans, who in turn were supported by foreign volunteers. These volunteers formed an international brigade of 40-50 thousand men, of which nearly 4,000 were Italian.

The authors of *Los Italianos* have shed light on the contribution of fighters from Piacenza against Franco, drawn together by a series of personal issues whose common denominator was staunch anti-fascism. They were men with faces hardened by fatigue, which the police mug shots or political records show them with firm looks and rough beards, and who in the French prison camps look depressed under their felt berets for having failed in their ideal of freedom. Idealistic men, who were ready to die for an idea, and who had to swallow Franco’s victory, the prelude to the second world war and the spread of Nazi power. Spain had been their *Iliad*.

We have to go back to Piacenza in the years immediately preceding the march on Rome to understand the presence of so many draftees from this city into the International Brigades. Many of them had been victims of Fascist action squads, they had been threatened or had seen people they knew killed by the fascists. There were some quarters in Piacenza, like San Lazzaro and Sant’Antonio, considered strongholds of the workers’ and farmers’ movement, and where a lot of men, as a response to the Fascist action squads, had organised into the Arditi del Popolo, who were ready to use arms to defend themselves. Tensions between the classes in Emilia were high. The fighters’ biographies in Sprega and Tagliaferri’s book shows how migrating to France or, less commonly to Argentina, was the only road to salvation for these young men. ❧