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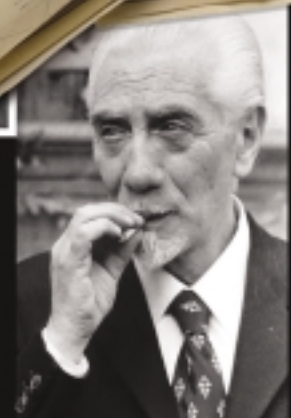
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ITALIAIAN IMMIGRANTS ON SUNNYSIDE PLANTATION

In 1895 B95 Austin Corbin, a New York banker and land dnd developer, working with immigration officials brot brought 100 families from north central Italy to gro grow cotton at Sunnyside, a plantation located betl between the Mississippi River and Lake Chicot. Th These Italians struggled against exploitation, prejudice and language barriers, and many died of sof malaria and other lowland diseases. Many of thof their descendents are now among the leading citlj citizens of Arkansas and the nation.

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LETTERE



TRANSLATIONS AT PAGE 47

In copertina:
Il monumento alla Resistenza, realizzato da Luciano Minguzzi nel 1947, nei pressi di Porta Lame a Bologna, dove il 7 novembre del 1944 ebbe luogo l'unica battaglia contro i nazi-fascisti combattuta in Italia all'interno di mura cittadine.

SOLDIERS IN THE MOUNTAINS

by Marco Trasatti

You might see them holding their in pose in front of the photographer, displaying firearms, musical instruments, food. Or you might see them simulating scenes of combat and disarmament. They are the youths from whom war exacted their best years, and who in Partisan life found their first apprenticeship in democracy. They want to come across as authoritative, solid, and strong. But there also filter through allusions to myth, as well as to adventure literature, comic strips, and cinema, from which sources they got their poses and noms de guerre. On the other side of the lens was Aldo Corti, a traveling professional photographer who until June 1944 portrayed the militiamen and carabinieri at the Fascist presidium based in Montefiorino, on the mountains of Modena, and then, until April of 1945, did the same job at the urging of the Partisans. Unbeknownst to him, he was creating what would become one of Italy's most important collections of documentary photography on the Resistenza, a collection now brought back to life on the occasion of the 60 years that have passed since the establishment of the Republic of Montefiorino, the first democratic experiment made in Italy after two decades of Fascism. It all happened on July 18, 1944. There was a light drizzle on the town, but you could clearly sense that summer was approaching. The young rebels climbed up from Vitrifolia; when they reached Montefiorino they walked the piazza and then seized hold of the fortress. Italy was still under German occupation, and they resolved to give life to organs of democratic government. It was the first time in years that anyone had been talking about freedom. On June 26 was held the first meeting of the administrative council, a body made up of freely elected people and of the household heads representing the town's territory.

Emilia-Romagna was liberated from April 10 to 28, 1945, as a result of the Allied advance. In the western-central part of the region, where the Germans put up the strongest resistance, the Partisan offensive proved to be decisive: they freed the cities and dealt heavy blows to the enemies in retreat, thereby paving the way for the Allies in the Po River Valley, the final act of

the war in Italy. The Resistenza lasted long in the region and won wide favor among the population, especially in the countryside. A strong opposition to Fascism had already transpired in the 1920s; it grew even bolder with the ensuing economic crisis of the 1930s, and subversive activity was fervent, with 1,694 people pushed beyond the border and 2,293 brought before the Special Tribunal for the State's Security—no other region had a higher incidence. Still, the government was harsh in its repressive action, and effectively weakened clandestine opposition organizations, forcing them to exercise greater caution; so, armed resistance proper went through this initial stage before its actual takeoff, which happened in the spring of 1944. Alberto Preti, professor of contemporary history at the University of Bologna, and author of the recent *History of Emilia-Romagna*, published by Laterza, observes that none of this prevented a number of activities from taking hold, some of them bound to strike a deep chord in the popular consciousness, to become a symbol of romantic re-

belliousness (a case in point being the Corbari band, which operated in the Apennine range stretching from Ravenna to Forlì) or a symbol rooted in the farming communities, which played an unprecedented guiding role in the wake of the historic fracture of September 8; an example here is the killing of the Cervi brothers near Reggio in November of 1943—not incidentally, they would become one of the first symbols of anti-Partisan repression in this region."

The years 1943 and 1944 laid the groundwork for the developments that would come to fruition in the ensuing months, such as the Partisan detachment born in the Bardi area (near Parma); the Modena-based band of Giuseppe Barbolini, operating in the Montefiorino area; the Stella Rossa Brigade of Mario Musolesi in Vado, in the lower Bologna Apennines; and the Resistenza organization of Arrigo Boldrini, operating in the prohibitive environment of the Ravenna plains. And then there emerged in the cities the first Partisan Action groups, inspired especially by the Communist Party: they would lay ambushes on

the German troops and on the adherents of neofascism. And yet the Resistenza in Emilia-Romagna was far from uniform, despite the region having to its name more recognized Partisans than any other region in Italy: 82,000 of them, 9,000 of whom were women. And accounting for this variegation was not only the web of relations that had developed with groups outside the region (thus, the Piacenza and Parma sections of the movement connected with the Piedmontese and the Lombard formations, and there was also a natural connection of the Parma brigades with those of Lunigiana and Pontremolese, on the other side of the mountain range). Also a factor was the diversity inherent in the region, not only political diversity—with plural anti-Fascist political orientations (Communists, Socialists, Christian democrats, and those adhering to the Partito d'Azione), but geographical and socioeconomic as well. "This region," Preti concludes, "certainly ran the risk of spiraling into violence or even into a new civil war, even after the deep fracture of 1948. What intervened to balance the situation was the political mediation of the left-wing parties," and in particular "the lucidity and sense of responsibility shown by many local political and labor-union leaders." But even more important was the spirit of solidarity that prevailed among the people, who forestalled what would otherwise have been an irreparable breaking up of the social fabric and the bonds of community.

HITLER'S SLAVES

by Luigi Rossi

In July of 1999 I embarked on an effort to come to grips with a territory and an epoch where memory had been blotted out. I knew of the tragedy of Fascism and National Socialism which came to a head with the dramatic events of 1939 to 1945. I remembered the silence of those who had lived the maelstrom of 1943 to 1945. I had only a faint notion of the 13 million forced laborers, most of them from Eastern Europe, who'd been enslaved by the German Nazi regime. Nothing testified to it in the cities of the Ruhr. That summer I learned of another Resistenza, one that had taken place in Cephalonia. This is the story of some 700,000 Italian military detainees and forced la-



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borers who from 8 September 1943 to May of 1945 became slaves to Hitler, in a condition that denied them their status as prisoners of war. Violence, privation, abandonment, hunger, disease, and bombardment would beset them for about 20 months. Sixty thousand Italian military detainees would eventually be buried on German soil. Their choice to lay down their arms, opting for peace, became a defining moment of the country's future, by helping to bring out democratic values. According to some statistics, nine soldiers out of ten said no to a new deployment in the army of the Italian Social Republic—a refusal that translated to a further worsening of their condition under imprisonment. Among those who refused to adhere to the Republican Army was Giovanni Guareschi, prisoner number 6865: He was interned at Sandbostel and returned to Italy in September of 1945, weighing about 40 kilograms.

The first piece of evidence I found at testing to the tragedy of the military internees and forced laborers was a register on which were recorded the vital statistics relating to 461 of them in Hagen, a city of about 200,000 inhabitants a short distance from Dortmund. The register was a full list of the people interned at the camp set up a Schmiedag Steeworks (Arbeitskommando 341), a facility that is still running today, and on whose walls you will search in vain for a plaque dedicated to the thousands of internees from all sorts of countries who labored there from 1940 to 1945.

For every internee at Schmiedag we have a record detailing his name, last name, address, livelihood, and cause of death (where applicable) or date of transfer. The list was requested by Guglielmo Dothel, a physician of Forlì, and its compilation was entrusted to Vinicio Mesturini, prisoner number 3788, of Senigallia. Dothel had reached Dortmund in October of 1943 upon receiving orders to ensure good health conditions for a batch of wounded and sick soldiers. The convoy left from Tirana, heading for Italy, and wound up instead in the hell of Stalag VI D.

Some 30 natives of Emilia-Romagna turn up in the list. Others still are recalled in the memoirs, yet unpublished, of the doctor from Forlì. He witnessed the violence and privations the internees were subjected to: exhausting labor shifts, water and carrots, a lack of medicines, the absence of any Red Cross or government; and

then, there was the constant, devastating bombardment on the cities of the Ruhr. On the night of December 2, 1944, the doctor set down these words in his memoirs: "The bombers are hovering over our heads, and the bombs are coming down by the dozen [...]. Our camp is in a shambles, and what is left is ablaze." Fifty-three Italian internees died that day, along with dozens of people of other nationalities and hundreds of Germans. The city of Hagen was razed flat. The 53 Italians were subsequently cremated and now rest, along with a number of Polish victims, in a common tomb at the Hagen-Delstern cemetery. Doctor Dothel's memoirs survive as a denunciation and chronicle of those years "spent far away, in suffering, in pain, in regret, and in hope." The research done on the internees grows richer with further accounts, photographs, and letters—and with the diary of the military chaplain (prisoner number 56345). This diary stands as an arraignment for the enslavement and death of hundreds of Italian soldiers from the armistice to Liberation. The young chaplain reworked his diary and sent it to his twin, in Turin, so early as December of 1945. This may well be the first published work denouncing the internees' tragedy. He dedicates his work "to the 750 Italians who at the Dortmund cemetery are awaiting the comfort of a prayer, of a tear and a flower." Among the victims we see 39 natives of Emilia-Romagna. We have a full, detailed record for each of them, thanks to the meticulous work the chaplain did. Among the causes of death: concussion, nephritis, tuberculosis, exhaustion, suicide, edema consequent on famishing. The chaplain was Father Giuseppe Barbero; he'd been taken unawares on 8 September 1943 in Parga, Greece. It is on this day that he started writing his account of faith and piety. His faith in man broke down several times, or at least it seems to have. September 8 marked the beginning of a long journey across Greece and Albania, and then up along the borders of Bulgaria and Hungary. He stood witness to the forays made against the Partisans, a witness powerless to stop the events unfolding before his eyes. On 16 October 1943, on the Austrian border, there was waiting for him a PANE for 42 people, the route being Regensburg, Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Köln, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Hamm, Rheine, and Meppen. On October 19 he realized he had "wound up in the

round of the damned." Father Barbero would find himself working next to Doctor Dothel until the end of the war—at Stalag VI D of Dortmund as well as in Hagen and in other cities of the Ruhr. He ends his account with these words: "We came to understand [...] that if Italy still wanted to aspire to any greatness, if it wants to be regarded respectfully, and as beautiful country, it must be governed not by a totalitarian or sectarian regime, but by a truly democratic one." A lot of work has been done since the summer of 1999 in the effort to keep alive the memory of the wartime internees and forced laborers of Hagen. The city itself took action in just this direction, seeking out its own past, with help coming from the Gesamtschule Steinhoff. In March of 2001 four survivors were sent to Hagen with their experience, to blot out indifference and oblivion. The city honored them and remembered the victims. Ivo Mantovani, prisoner number 2098, of Calderara di Reno (Bologna), on meeting a group of German students troubled by these revelations from the past, said, "We have come to testify that on pain and suffering has been a future of peace and democracy."

The memoirs of Father Barbero have been translated into German and are now read in class at schools across the Ruhr. They have become the subject of several dissertation theses, in Germany as well as in Italy. Jochen Mueer and Benjamin Wassen, two students majoring in journalism at the University of Dortmund, have produced a video documentary on the historical reality of the internees of the Ruhr; the documentary is entitled "Symbols without Memory."

ON GRANDPA'S TRAIL

by Stefano Vezzari

Some do it out of nostalgia, some out of curiosity, and some out of need. But for many, going back and reconstructing their family trees is really a question of retracing their origins. And it's no longer necessary, to this end, to plod through dusty archives or to undertake impossible searches for lost documents, for the technology has been put to use with which to satisfy even the most difficult requests for information. "There are many people from abroad who get in touch with us to recover the

birth certificate of one of their grandparents," says Gina Pietrantonio, who coordinates the public relations office of Emilia-Romagna Region and that of the region's agency entrusted with providing services for denizens abroad. So, then, what is the method by which forebears are found? Requests for vital records come in especially by e-mail, and by e-mail they are sent to the cities the people looked for are from. "Matters become complicated," Pietrantonio goes on to explain, "when we are given no specific information about the person's birthplace. In these cases we proceed by trial and error: we start out by e-mailing all the cities within the province where the person is presumed to have been born, and then we make phone calls inquiring whether the information is available; when it is available, we send it back to the person who made the initial request." And it doesn't take too long to go through the entire procedure, either: "It takes on average a month to have a birth certificate sent to your home. Of course, the sketchier the information about the place of birth, the longer the process." The success rate is 40 percent, and much lower when the records requested date to before the unification of Italy: Records of vital statistics were instituted as of 1860, and the exact date varies from city to city, with some cities having set up their offices only in 1871. "In these cases (for records earlier than 1860) we turn to the bishop's sees, each of which collects the vital records sent to it from the parish churches under its jurisdiction. So you can make the search easier and more likely to succeed by specifying, along with the person's date of birth, the name of his or her parish church (if you have that information)."

The requests coming in to the public relations office do not relate only to the family tree. There are in fact a bunch of different reasons why people make contact. Thus, you might have people asking to have certain English forms of greeting translated into the dialect of Romagna, so as to be able to teach them to their American students in class; or again, people taken by nostalgia and asking if they can have reproductions of the region's traditional costumes (male and female) sent to Argentina.

There have been in all 468 requests that Emilia-Romagna natives abroad have sent in to the region's public relations office since 2003, 84% of them by e-mail. Most of these requests are for the birth certificates of

descendants and for information relating to the paperwork required to apply for Italian citizenship, to the financial aid the region makes available for people wishing to return to their homeland, to the kind of employment you can find (and the way to go about finding it), to retirement benefits and how to get them, and to accommodations, for people seeking to establish a permanent household in Emilia-Romagna. Some also inquire about professional training, the universities, and health coverage for temporary stays in Italy. There is, too, a great deal of interest in the region's culture and history. Further, on the website dedicated to Emilia-Romagna natives living abroad (at www.emilianoromagnolinelmondo.it), the public relations office has a special page giving access to the most popular services; the page has recently been updated with the latest legislation, such as the law on absentee voting for Italians living abroad, and the region's labor law. The texts have been written bearing specifically in mind those readers who are not native to Italy or have been away for some time, so the language is simple and has flow. If you need to contact the region's public relations office you can send an e-mail at urp@regione.emilia-romagna.it, or you can call the foreign-resident service (at 0039 051 639 5361) on weekdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

A BRIDGE BETWEEN CONTINENTS

by Giorgio Savona

Local development, social policy, and economic-stimulus packages. These are the three linchpins of an agreement struck between Emilia-Romagna and Brazil in an effort to promote cooperation among enterprises and help them look to markets abroad, doing business internationally. The region's president, Vasco Errani, signed the agreement last November in Brazil.

The agreement commits Marche and Tuscany as well as Umbria, here playing its first role in the relations between the two countries. It is aimed at fostering an exchange of experiences between these four Italian regions and five Brazilian territories: Manaus (Amazonas state); Serra de Capivara (Piauí), where Emilia-Romagna Region already has underway a project to

create water-collection cisterns; Juz de For (Minas Gerais), where the region is making possible the Mata Atlantica reforestation project of photographer Sebastião Salgado as well as a number of socioeconomic initiatives in favor of women living in high-risk conditions in the city of Belo Horizonte; Pelotas-Bage (Rio Grande do Sul), with initiatives supporting cooperatives in the agribusiness sector; and finally Rio Claro-Piracicaba (São Paulo), where, too, the region is involved in cooperative activities, supporting a project launched by the Solidarity Consortium for San Bernardo, a consortium belonging to which there is also the city of Imola.

For some time now Emilia-Romagna has been carrying on cooperative activities for development in Brazil, a country with a population of no less than 30 million people of Italian descent. The initiatives in question are aimed at favoring sustainable development locally, at preventing child abandonment by reinforcing social networks, at fostering entrepreneurship among women and youths, and at building a community-oriented economy by securing basic services, such as education, food, training courses teaching management of public funds, and support for cooperatives. There is also a project aimed at supporting the dairy producers in the Alto Acre and the Rio Grande do Sul.

Further, there are numerous initiatives the region is promoting through its Production Activities Office, and specifically its Center for Internationalization of Businesses, initiatives by which the enterprises of Emilia-Romagna, especially in agribusiness and wood processing, may find it easier to start activities abroad. Thus, in 2002 was set up in São Paulo, in association with Fiere di Parma, the trade show Cibus Brazil, and in 2003, in association with Confindustria Emilia-Romagna and ICE, the region took part in the trade show Fispal Tech, which too was held in São Paulo. Last year, a project developed in association with Confindustria Emilia-Romagna was launched to encourage the region's businesses start up relationships with businesses in São Paulo and in the southern part of the country, and in particular in São Palo and Curitiba. And this year São Paulo is hosting the Permanent Forum on Brazilian Universities, the aim being to get universities to work in synergy with one another and with the business sector. These initiatives fall within the scope

of the agreement the region signed with the city of São Paulo, an agreement that, among other things, provides for different forms of collaboration through which to transfer new technologies and enable universities to exchange experiences. The region also has in the works, with Paraná state, an agreement informed by the same objectives; specifically, the purpose is to foster economic collaboration among manufacturers (especially in the food industry) and among universities, as well as to encourage research and development.

CITIES REGAINING THEIR SHAPE

by Ermes Oldrini

Redesigning a district in a Chinese city, developing a South African suburb where the houses are no more than shacks, restoring the historic center in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. Emilia-Romagna is taking abroad its experience in replanning urban centers and recovering architectural sites. And it's doing so in far-away places, places not close to one another, either. In China, the region has undertook a project aimed at redefining the face of a certain district in the city of Tianjin, located at about 100 kilometers southeast of the capital, Peking. The project is being carried out in association with the Tianjin Bureau of Planning and Land Resources (BPLR), the Tianjin Urban Planning and Design Institute (UPDI), and the Institut Català de Energia (ICAEN) in Barcelona and is funded by the Asia-URBS European program for decentralized cooperation between Asian and European local and regional agencies.

This year an international competition has been put out to tender in a bid to find investors willing to present proposals for developing the area's urban planning, in line with the guidelines laid out under the program in agreement with the authorities in Tianjin. The overall layout is 751,000 euros, 486,000 of which (about 65 percent) will be contributed by the European Commission; the remainder will be picked up by Emilia-Romagna Region and its European and Asian partners, ICAEN and BPLR respectively; for the region, this means putting up about 135,000 euros. Further, Emilia-Romagna has committed itself to help out the urban-replanning effort un-

derway in Cato Manor, in the outskirts of Durban, South Africa. This project is financed by UNESCO and will affect 50,000 families in a community stretching over an area of thousands of hectares. Says the region's chief of urban and territorial planning, Pier Antonio Rivola: "This is not so much a renovation project that we are supporting, since most of the buildings are simply shacks, as an urban-planning project, for as soon as the city authorities in Durban give us the go-ahead, we will have to start by mapping out from scratch a network of services. We envision this to be a technical collaboration, since we have observed that there is good political leadership in South Africa; what is lacking, instead, is an entrepreneurial class, so much so that the South African government looks to our system of small-to-medium enterprises as something of a mirage." And even the Uruguayan capital, Montevideo, is speaking the language of Emilia-Romagna, at least in what concerns its architecture. Having already contributed 100,000 dollars for the restoration of the Solis Theater (a building designed in the 19th century by the architect Carlo Zucchi, a native of Reggio Emilia who emigrated to South America), the region adhered as well to a project which the Uruguayan ministries of tourism and urban planning have launched in an effort to reclaim the historic center of Montevideo (its "ciudad vieja"), a project to be carried out with the technical collaboration of the Ferrara University School of Architecture.

THE SON OF THE GREAT SERPENT

by Claudio Bacileri

"The canoe leaves an interminable serpentine track in its wake, with the river flowing sluggishly and lapping the forest as it washes the banks." So begins a travel book written by Danilo Manera and entitled Yurupari, the Flutes of the Blue Anaconda: On the Trail of Ermanno Stradelli, the most important Italian explorer of Amazonia.

Stradelli was born in 1852 in Borgoratto, in the province of Parma, seven years before the death of another great explorer and adventurer from Emilia-Romagna, the author of the first atlases of Venezuela and Colombia: his name was Agostino Codazzi, a native of Lugo

di Ravenna. His maps are now among the holdings of the Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi in Bogotá, and, as Manera observes, they still serve as the best guide to the countless watercourses and sudden rapids of Colombian Amazonia along the border with Brazil. Codazzi's homeland was Romagna, and what took him to the American Tropics were the Romantic ideals forged during the Italian Risorgimento, the same ideals that led him into adventure as soldier under Napoleon, a gambler in Constantinople, a corsair in the Caribbean, and finally a cartographer in Colombia. Stradelli, instead, was a native of Emilia, and could little tolerate the petit-bourgeois that had obtained trasformismo under King Humbert I of Italy (trasformismo was the practice of maintaining power by seeking broad majority coalitions secured through government patronage). While his well-to-do family spent long periods in Piacenza, he studied in Pisa, attending a boarding school at first and then moving on to law school. But he did not feel like a man of law; at only 25 he had already published a collection of verses by the significant title *Wasted Temple*; so, too, he had learned Portuguese and Spanish and pursued an interest in the natural sciences, in pharmacy, in geography, in topography, and in photography—all skills that he could put to use in exploring Brazil. His dream came true in June of 1879, when he reached Belém, the gateway to Amazonia. From there he went on to Manaus, which would serve as his base for all expeditions into the forest. The place that won his heart was Vaupés, in Colombia, a stretch of Amazonia a little bigger than Piedmont and Lombardy combined, and there he fell in love with the wild. Even to this day, Vaupés—a region inhabited by no more than 22,000 indigenes—is amazingly pristine, largely untouched by the devastating practice of caoutchouc extraction, and by cocaine trafficking and guerilla warfare: there is great biodiversity in Vaupés, more so than in most other parts of the world.

The region is named for an affluent of the Rio Negro, which in turn flows into the Amazon River. Stradelli first visited the region in 1881 and then went back the following year. In 1884, he returned to Italy to get his law degree, and he even practiced for some time in Genoa. But constantly occupying his mind was the forest. In 1885, he published in Piacenza a short poem based on a legend of the indigenes, and he translated from the Portuguese a ro-

mantic novel by Gonçalves Magalhães set in Amazonia. In the misty fogs of the Po River Valley he conceived the project of rediscovering the source of the Orinoco River, a project that would take him back to his beloved wilderness at a time when others his age were being sent off to fight in Africa. Italian-Abyssinian War and many were boarding ships heading for the Americas.

It was a big disappointment to Stradelli to learn in 1887, on being received in Caracas by the then-president of Venezuela, Guzmán Blanco, that the site had already been reached the year before by the French explorer Chafanor. Still, he held firm his conviction that the Frenchman had only reached the point already reached by other explorers, and on this reasoning resolved to attempt the crossing to Manaus anyway, a place he reached in 1888 overcoming a thousand difficulties. Amazonia was not the Orient the early navigators had sought, or a paradise where a young romantic could quench his thirst for exoticism; it was rather an impervious, wounded land, a place where the indigenous cultures had been annihilated, but also a place where one could come to know a "different" thought. In the reports that Stradelli would send to the bulletin maintained by the Società Geografica Italiana, he was always taking the side of the indigenes. In 1890, he was back in Vaupés for the third time, and the year after that he cut his way up to the Yurupari waterfalls, tracing out an accurate cartography of the territory, as well as writing vivid accounts of his explorations, but even more fascinating is his account of the foundation myth of the Tukanoan people, the legend of Yurupari.

Amazonia is water, air, wildness, fire, rite, and nakedness. It is collective life within the maloca, the traditional dwelling where the extended family found their home, a family now split up into separate households, after a century of missionary propaganda against promiscuity. As Stradelli observes, "the small merchant is loath to discover the indigenes enough, and will consequently look upon them as indolent creatures and upon me as a dogged Indianophile. So be it. The Indians are guilty of a great crime, in his estimation: They reject the leftover items the trader has in stock—items of which he has long recognized the inutilty, and which they, too, have no need for, having no special need to satisfy—and they will only offer in return, and unwillingly at that, a basket of flour [...], in exchange for a piece of canvas with which they

do not know what to do."

Stradelli was respectful of the indigenous culture, a culture based on symbolic exchange and impenetrable to political economy. He collected arrows and amulets, classified plants and insects, charted maps, looked at nature under the microscope, and took photographs (though never falling into cliché). The Indians gave him a benevolent welcome, affectionately calling him *mayra raira*—the son of the great snake, the Amazon River—and they attributed magical powers to him, on account of the technological equipment he would carry along. Maximiliano José Roberto, an Indian sage, as well as a friend, informer, and guide, had gone out to different tribes and reconstructed from them the Yurupari in its several variants. Maximiliano's original manuscript is now lost, so Stradelli's Italian translation of it remains the only extant primary source relating the founding myth of the Tukanoan people, a myth regarded by some scholars as bearing curious analogies to the Popol Vuh, the Maya Bible, as it were.

Yurupari was something that Stradelli had come to know of the moment he set foot in the Vaupés. The forest, by the missionaries' accounts, conceals demoniacal secrets. The area was evangelized beginning around 1880 through the work of three Franciscan friars. One of them, the Tuscan-born Giuseppe Coppi (Stradelli had met him in Manaus in 1884), sparked among the indigenes a revolt in consequence of which the missionaries were banished for many years to come. In October of the year before the revolt broke out, the friar had displayed in the courtyard of his mission the Yurupari mask used in the sacred ceremonies, a mask that women and children were prohibited from looking at, on pain of death. What he wanted to achieve by so doing was to "remove from these peoples the chief error of their extravagant beliefs." He thought the Yurupari was the personification of the devil, whereas to Stradelli the friar was simply biased against "anything that might veer off the path of the Christian world." The friar's gesture provoked panic: The women fled in terror, the men assailed the church, and in the melee the shamans blew on the people there to ward off the nefarious presence of the whites. The missionaries barely managed to get out alive. This explains the immediate interest Stradelli took in the mysterious ceremony of the masks and the palm flutes, a dance whose ancestral music and "foods for

the soul" (cocaine, tobacco, and the hallucinogenic liana of yagé) is central to the mythical account of the creation of the Tukano peoples. The rite evokes the journey of the ancestral anaconda, a sort of Amazonian Odyssey proceeding westward along the planet's fluvial axis, from the source of the Amazon River—the root of the world—to the cataracts of Yurupari.

Following in the wake of Stradelli, Danilo Manera retraces the venturesome course to the root of the myth: he sails in coffee-colored waters under tropical rains and the fire of the sunsets, brushing close to FARC guerrillas backed by drug lords. He lives among the indigenes, listens to their accounts, and witnesses a Yurupari ceremony. "The hallucinogen-induced trance," he explains, "is an apprenticeship by which you learn to exert self-control with a woman: the woman affords sensations of vertigo, excitement, debilitation." In the rite of hallucination the indigenes can dance, play sacred flutes, enter into contact with their forebears, and recognize the characters of the myth. In the end, Yurupari is a male ceremony that serves to hand down usages and knowledge; the supernatural being from which it gets its name is none other than "the legislator-hero, the protagonist of an Amazonian saga, the master of ritualized customs."

In 1893, Stradelli naturalized as a Brazilian citizen: having to somehow make a living, he started practicing law in Manaus, and two years later he became a judge. In 1897, he returned to Italy to make a proposal to the industrialist Pirelli, namely, setting up an Italian-Brazilian company that would make tires. But the proposal was not taken up and so he made his way back to Amazonia. He was appointed judge at the Tribunal of Tefé and got a house up in the mountains, where he could live by himself and work without distraction "on a sort of encyclopedia of the Amazonian world," says Manera; that is, a weighty Portuguese-Nheengatú dictionary in which there are described as well the uses, customs, and beliefs of the tribes he had met in his travels. The work would be published posthumously in 1929 in Rio de Janeiro in the *Revista do Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro*. Having failed to find a publisher, the explorer Stradelli began wondering whether he had dedicated years to a useless endeavor, a thought that beset him in the late period of his life, a period marked by sadness and solitude. Tired and in failing health, he let his Jesuit brother per-

suaide him to return to Italy. But on a doctor's visit in Manaus he was diagnosed with leprosy. He died on March 24, 1926, in a leprosy hospital in Manaus, in utter solitude and poverty, surrounded only by books, maps, and manuscripts, and by the recollections of his splendid journey in a world other than ours, a world where shamans fly with the jaguars and the Milky Way is the starry river that flows with each of us.

THE LEGEND GETS HIS HOME BACK

by Marino Barasani

A roofing structure 45 meters long that conjures up the hood of a racecar, an overall surface of 6,000 square meters—4,500 of which are display space—at a cost of about 10 million euros. These, in brief summary, are the figures behind the project with which the London-based firm Future Systems won the competition to remodel the Enzo Ferrari house and Maserati Gallery in Modena. The building sports a big covering structure made of aluminum panels whose openings—the windows—recall the air intakes of racecars. The exhibition space starts out from the ground floor and then, by way of two sloped floors, goes five meters underground, where you'll find a spacious area in which to amble comfortably amid the many works of automotive art on display. This central salon is flanked on either side by an space where you'll find a cafeteria, a bookshop, a study center with an archive and a library, and a multifunctional space that can be set up to accommodate conferences and exhibitions. The facility is designed to make it possible to document and recount the phases in the life of Enzo Ferrari: his childhood, his early career as a driver, the birth of the stable that would bear his name, his first triumphs on race-tracks across the world. Continuous with the building is the Ferrari Gallery in Maranello, a permanent exhibition that presents to almost 200,000 visitors a year the automaker's past and present. And not only that. The gallery will also be the stage on which to unpack the history of Maserati, which in 1939 transferred from Bologna to Modena, a short distance from the house where Enzo Ferrari grew up; it was by this joint presence of two powerhouses that made Modena the capi-

tal of automotive excellence. The competition through which the contract was awarded drew in some big players (and the projects they presented were just as impressive). Among them were Aldo Cibic, one of the founders of the Memphis Group and now working on the Grattaciolo Milano, an office building going up in Piazza della Repubblica in Milan; Mario Cucinella, who has done work with Renzo Piano and received the 1999 award for young architects at Berlin's Akademie der Kunst; Cino Zucchi, who has recently won the competition from which came the urban-design project for the former Junghaus on the Isola della Giudecca in Venice; Massimo Iosa Ghini, who has designed the interiors for the Ferrari Store and the Ferrari Gallery; François Confino, of Switzerland, who has overseen the layout designed for the national museum of cinema in Turin and has designed the Audi Autostad pavilion in Wolfsburg; Sauerbruch & Hutton, a Berlin studio responsible for designing the museum that houses the Brandhorst collection in Munich and the headquarters of the Federal Agency for the Environment in Dessau; and Mathias Klotz, of Chile, whose work includes set designs and installations as well as theaters and restaurants. Future Systems is recognized internationally as a top firm, having created a number of unique designs, among which the Docklands Bridge, the stands for London's cricket stadium, the Selfridges department store in Birmingham, and the subway in Naples.

THE WILL-O'-THE-WISP PROMISE OF COTTON

by Walter Bellisi

The mountaineers of Emilia-Romagna who emigrated to America one century ago didn't end up working as carbon miners: they drudged and toiled as well picking cotton on the plantations of the South. The experience that in certain areas of the Mississippi delta hundreds of farmers from Emilia-Romagna, the Marche, and Veneto went through was nothing short of appalling. Sunnyside, Arkansas, was anything but the sunny and happy place its name suggests: the Italian emigrants who came here found desperate times, a painful historical moment largely unreported. On November 8, 1895, the

Chateau Yquem set sail from Genoa with 98 families on board: 340 people in all, including 110 adolescents and 127 children. Among them were the families of Giuseppe Zucconi and Geminio Domenichini, both of them from Montalto, a district of the town of Montese, and the family of Antonio Maestri, of Missano di Zocca—both places in the mountains of Modena—and then there was the family of Claudio Zanni, of Villa d'Aiano, in the province of Bologna. A second group of families crossed the ocean the following year: 72 families on this other ship, and they were headed for the same destination.

Nothing of what these farmers ended up doing was anything like what had been promised to them. They were taken to Sunnyside, where the New York banker Austin Corbin had plantations on which he was looking to turn a profit: he had used the inmates of the state penitentiary to work these lands, and now he was going to use for the same purpose the farm hands recruited in Italy. Corbin found as his partner in this venture the then-mayor of Rome Emanuele Ruspoli: a member of the House of Poggio Suasa (a town located on the hills of Senigallia), he pledged the necessary number of laborers. Under the plan that Corbin had worked out, 1,300 hectares of land were going to be parceled into lots of about five hectares, each having its own colonial house each, so that 250 Italian families could use the land to grow cotton. The families would each have assumed a debt of about 2,000 dollars, money they would have paid back at 5% interest over a 20-year period with the profits made by working the land. The Sunnyside Company agreed to buy the farmers' cotton at the price it was currently trading at the New Orleans Stock Exchange, but at the same time the farmers had to shop at the stores owned by the Sunnyside Company for all the consumer goods that they needed to buy.

The Sunnyside properties were marshy and unhealthy, and the company did not deliver on its promise to reclaim the land. It was so that tragedy would soon strike, breaking the already low spirits of its inhabitants: it was late 1897, and in a single year, malaria fevers claimed more than 100 lives, the bodies buried in common graves. The malignant fevers spread panic, but the final blow was dealt when the price of cotton plunged at the New Orleans Stock Exchange: so severe was the situation that in 1898

the colony broke apart. In the diaspora that followed, the settlers took different roads, moving to different places in the effort to make new lives for themselves. In the state of Missouri, for example, they founded Tontitown and Rosati, two towns still prevalently inhabited by their descendants.

In 1904 and 1905, other groups of Italian farmers were led to the Mississippi delta to work as cotton growers. Fifteen families from Emilia settled in a borderland between Mississippi and Louisiana, where you will now find the city of Natchez. The man who took them there was Luigi Tirelli, an emigrant of Emilia who had left with the first group (the Sunnyside group) and had then moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi. In 1905, a ship left from the port of Genoa carrying on board a group of about 100 people, most of them residents of the Bologna environs, places such as Budrio, Medicina, Savigno, Monte Pastore, Vergato, Monte San Pietro, and Camugnano, but there were also people from Montombaro di Zocca (Modena) and Vernio (Prato), as well as from Ferrara and Mantua. They boarded the merchant ship Montevideo and arrived in New York on February 11 of the following year. Almost all of them declared to the port authorities they were illiterate and penniless. They reached the state of Mississippi by train, and in Vicksburg, their final destination, they were divided into small groups recruited to the nearby plantations of Rosedale and Cleveland, in Mississippi, and of Tallulah and Mounds, in Louisiana.

As had happened at Sunnyside, here too the farmers found they had been bamboozled. There were put up in shabby shacks, and the plantations were in dismal conditions, too. Payments were made on the basis of the cotton actually picked. These farmers' plight, it seems, derived not from the kind of work they did, but from Tirelli and the other Italians who would act as their intermediaries. The group sent to Tallulah soon left for Saint Catherine Creek, a town located near Natchez along Washington Road, where the farmers rented small plots of land that some in their group eventually managed to buy and expand. The settlers taken to Sunnyside and Vicksburg were taken there breaking migration laws both in Italy and the United States. One conspicuous example is the Alien Contract Labor Act of 1885, which made it unlawful for anyone to recruit laborers from abroad to have them work under contract.