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Trends and issues of Italian
migration: from the Post-war era
to the end of the First Republic

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Introduction

It is estimated that in the world there are more than five million Italians residing abroad and between 60 and 80 million *oriundi*¹, the descendants of Italian immigrants. The children, grandchildren and posterity of Italian citizens who moved elsewhere to seek fortune are therefore a clear example of the social and cultural importance of a migratory phenomenon often overlooked by ordinary historical accounts. The mobility processes of the peninsula, in fact, conventionally began at the end of the nineteenth century and then continued until the early twenties of the following century. In that particular period, the Italians experienced the migratory wave of the Great Diaspora, whose primary destination often turned out to be the United States. Nonetheless, migratory processes were impacted by the advent of the two world wars, which forced an initial halt on mobility to then transform it in a completely innovative way.

This paper thus deals with the analysis of the trends and the issues concerning the phenomenon of Italian migration during the course of the twentieth century. Specifically, it aims to chronologically reconstruct the different stages of mobility from 1945, coinciding with the end of the Second World War, to 1994, year in which the end of the "First Republic" is canonically sanctioned. Through the analysis of manuals, journal articles, and statistical data, it will be possible to understand the methodologies enacted, the lifestyle experienced and the integration processes of the millions of Italians that left their hometowns and villages from the immediate post-war period to seek fortune elsewhere within European borders or overseas. Although a vast amount of specific data is lacking with respect to the Italian migration phenomenon of the post-war period, a further goal is to examine the objectives of the movements of Italians over the fifty years under examination, comparing them with each other and, individually and separately, with the period of the Great Emigration of the late 1800s and the 1920s. Accompanying the analysis of Italian migration phenomena throughout the entire dissertation is the painting of the national and international social, economic and political context. From the birth of the Republic to the events of the Cold War, the course of contemporary history is enriched by the examination of the phenomenon of social and cultural history referring to mobility.

The first chapter aims to present the social, political, and economic situation of Italy in the immediate post-war period. From 1945 to 1950, the peninsula was transformed from a monarchy to a republic and witnessed the rapid reopening of the borders of many countries in need of workforce useful for the reconstruction of cities.

The second chapter focuses on the period within the Fifties and Sixties of the twentieth century, in which Italy witnessed a swift economic and social growth and truly became an industrial society. The years of the "economic miracle", from 1958 to 1963, will witness millions of Italians move within the borders of the country, generating a new form of mobility: inter-regional migration. Migrations to European countries also

¹ "Rapporto Italiani Nel Mondo 2011." Fondazione Migrantes, August 1, 2019. <https://www.migrantes.it/rapporto-italiani-nel-mondo-2011-2>

became fundamental and will represent the last most important movement of the general Italian migration phenomenon.

Finally, the third chapter aims to present the picture of the Seventies and Eighties until the year 1994. The latter period was characterised by social and cultural crises and violence that will determine a drastic decline in national, continental, and transnational migrations, the end of the Cold War and the decline of the First Italian Republic.

Finally, the proposed analysis generally aims to clarify and explain how mobility, along with its narrative, changes throughout time within the 1945-1994 period.

Chapter 1. 1945-1950: The immediate post-World War II

1.1. Post-war social and economic conditions

The Italian peninsula, after the struggles of the Second World War – which occurred from 1939 to 1945 – presented itself as a devastated territory, tormented by social, political, and economic issues. The defeat on the battlefield generated a sense of weariness in the Italian population that stemmed from the rise in poverty and unemployment, accompanied by inadequate and precarious living conditions. The latter circumstances were also responsible for the subsequent rapid growth of mobility towards other European and non-European countries, with the hope of finding favourable work and life opportunities elsewhere.

In its recovery from the substantial material and human losses, Italy was assisted by the Marshall Plan – formally known as the European Recovery Program (ERP) – whose creation was advanced in 1947 by US Secretary of State George Marshall as a planned aid destined to financially support damaged countries within the European territory. Also helpful for the “Reconstruction” of the country were the various financial initiatives proposed by the United Nations Relief and Recovery Administration (UNRRA) from 1943, which allowed for the peninsula to gradually recover from the distress caused by the Second World War that would last until the first half of the 1950s. On the other hand, it is interesting to observe how the industrial realm, mainly concentrated in the northern areas of the country and including property, capital, and machinery, was only slightly affected by the destruction brought about by the war. Nonetheless, the Italian industrial pole remained in a stalemate as it lacked the raw materials necessary to make it work.²

An additional issue resulting from the vicissitudes of the war was the level of rampant unemployment. Despite the scarcity of different data on the matter, it is estimated that the number of unemployed in Italy in 1946 was 2.098.257, including many women that lost their jobs due to the return of male veterans to workplaces³. Being the industrial working area the most affected by such numbers, it is not difficult to understand how and why the level of unemployment was higher in the northern regions of Italy, where there was the highest concentration of companies and industries in the country. However, the overall data collected throughout the post-war period clearly specifies a widespread problem touching almost all occupations. Connected to unemployment are the low salaries of workers, and this, along with the general dreadful living standards, revived the necessity for the Italian government to support migration policies – that were halted during the war – to alleviate the burden on the suffering Italian economy⁴.

The events of the Second World War also exacerbated the striking differences between the Northern and Southern areas of the country, deepening the long-standing, painful fracture separating them that would last up to the present days. According to historian Aurelio Lepre, the victory of the *resistenza* in the North

² Francesca Fauri, *Il Piano Marshall e l'Italia*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010 (ed. digit.: 2010, doi: 10.978.8815/145840), 87-88.

³ Adolfo Annesi, “Disoccupazione in ‘Enciclopedia Italiana’,” Treccani.

⁴ Patrizia Audenino and Maddalena Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane: Storia e Storie Dall'Ancien Régime a Oggi*, ESBMO, 2008.

contributed to a strengthening of political hope, whereas the *Mezzogiorno* was aided in this by the presence of anti-fascist parties, while continuing to endure the effects of high inflation that were visible in the soaring cost of food and necessary goods⁵. Notwithstanding the major differences between the North and the South, the entire country generally found itself dealing with very low living standards, food rationing levels that displayed themselves among the lowest in the European territory, and demolished transport and communication networks. The widespread misery and hunger were however generally accompanied by a deeply felt desire for the birth of a new chapter of the history of Italy, one that would be subsequently known as the Reconstruction period, occurring from 1945 to the first half of the 1950s.

1.2. A new Republic and a new Constitution

Along with the material damages brought about by the second world conflict, the Italian society appeared to be devastated by the psychological atrocities of war and the legacy of the fascist regime that had governed the country from 1922 to 1943. After the Liberation, the population was thus in a state of distress, profoundly divided and victim of vandalism and violence perpetrated by the last devotees to fascism. The ruling class of the immediate post-war period found itself facing the difficult task of rebuilding the entire country, where a large part of it suffered from a high rate of distrust of politics⁶. As previously discussed, one of the major problems that gripped Italy at that time was the profound break between the north and south of the country, which was divided into the "two Italies". This situation, together with the growing separatist current concerning above all the Sicilian region, attempted to find a palliative solution in the rise of Ferruccio Parri in June 1945 as Prime Minister of the first of the many governments of "national unity". However, the newly elected President immediately seemed unsuitable to face the delicate situation that Italy was undergoing, and was pressed to resign, which he officially did on the 10th of December of the same year⁷. Parri was followed by Alcide De Gasperi, a leading exponent of the Christian Democracy party (Democrazia Cristiana, DC), who presided over the last government under the Kingdom of Italy. The first convocation of De Gasperi in 1945 would then be followed by seven successive appointments as Prime Minister, that over time magnified the myth of his persona, also giving the Christian Democracy the role of leading party for the entire duration of the so-called First Republic.

As soon as he was elected, De Gasperi immediately understood Italy's imminent need to turn the page after the horrors experienced in the previous twenty years. He thus led the political debate of that moment, which focused on the problem of a new constitution and an assembly to draft it, and on the abandonment of the monarchy in favour of a republic. In this regard, the President advanced the idea of

⁵ Aurelio Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica: L'Italia dal 1943 Al 2003*, Soc. Ed. il Mulino, 2009, 41.

⁶ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 53.

⁷ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 64.

proposing this institutional question through a referendum. This careful and cautious choice grew out of De Gasperi's fear of losing consensus and witnessing a consequent weakening of the Christian Democrats. Within the DC, in fact, around 60% of the members were supportive of the republican choice⁸. On 2 June 1946, with a difference of about two million votes, the Republic supplanted the Monarchy that had represented Italy for centuries. The majority of votes in favour of the republic came mainly from Northern Italy, while the South was responsible for 64% of the votes given to the monarchical option⁹. De Gasperi and the DC, according to the historian Aurelio Lepre, were portrayed as the "bonding element" between the monarchists and the republicans¹⁰. Sixteen days after the elections, the newly elected King Umberto II was forced to abdicate and flee to Switzerland, and on June 28 of the same year Enrico De Nicola was appointed provisional Head of State. The results of the 1946 elections thus expressed the desire of many Italians to leave the past behind, one that was characterised by the atrocities of the war and the long fascist regime.

In conjunction with the proclamation of the republic, there was a need for a new constitution that would replace the Albertine Statute, promulgated by Carlo Alberto of Savoy in 1848. The elections of June 2nd, 1946 also incorporated the suffrage for the formation of the Constituent Assembly. The results assigned the majority of seats to the Christian Democrats, followed by the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI). These parties, which will form the core of all the politics of the First Italian Republic until 1992, were succeeded by members of other middle and small Left and Right parties. Albeit from different factions, all the elected members of the Constituent Assembly were united by a strong anti-fascist sentiment that was later framed within the Transitional and Final Provision number XII¹¹. The latter was one of the eighteen Transitional and Final Provisions which, along with 139 articles also drawn up by the Assembly, gave birth to the Constitution of the Italian Republic, which entered into force on January 1, 1948, with the signature of Enrico De Nicola as the first President of the Republic.

1.2.1. De Gasperi and the era of Reconstruction

The establishment of the republican form of state, the rise to power of Alcide De Gasperi and the external aid especially from the United States are three of the fundamental characteristics that distinguished the period of the Italian Reconstruction. This period, which began immediately after the end of the Second World War and ended at the end of the 1950s, laid the foundations for the flourishing development of the following period, hence the "economic miracle" that occurred from 1958 to 1963. According to numerous studies, the entity of damages caused by the war in Italy has been estimated as amounting to 3.200 billion of

⁸ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 72.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, Disposizioni transitorie e finali XII

lire, besides the appalling loss of almost half a million people¹². The areas that were most damaged by the effects of the battles were infrastructure and communication networks, that became either impracticable or non-existent. Researcher Francesca Fauri indeed asserts that almost 70 percent of road networks in Italy had been damaged during the 1939-1945 period, along with 45 percent of the railroad system present throughout the whole territory¹³. From 1945, Italy was also the stage for many violent civil uprisings, especially during the period from 1946 to 1949 due to the rise in the prices of food, the redistribution of land and the exemption of the Communist Party from the government.¹⁴.

Leading Italy towards the exit from its darkest period was the Christian Democrat Alcide De Gasperi, who held the office of President of the Council of Ministers eight times from 1946 to 1953. He was the leading exponent of the Christian Democrats, configuring himself, according to many scholars, as one of the founding fathers of the nation¹⁵. Besides the vast popular support they had enjoyed since 1945, De Gasperi and the DC were backed by the approval of the Church and the clergy, whose associations were politically engaged throughout the post-war period. However, De Gasperi's political project did not envisage the establishment of a confessional and secular state, despite holding a perception of Christianity as a moral promoter of justice and solidarity¹⁶. In contrast to the left-wing currents present in Italy, which were devoted to Stalinism and the USSR model, De Gasperi saw fidelity to the United States as a lifeline for achieving peace and stability in Italy. Hence the need, implemented after the very popular elections of April 18, 1948, to exclude the Popular Front, formed by the PCI and the PSI, from the formation of the new government, in line with the anti-communist sentiment of the DC¹⁷. This desire not to include the Left within the governmental framework temporarily broke the spirit of national political unity. As a consequence of the elections of April 18, strikes and mobilisations worsened, the epilogue of which took place on July 14, 1948, when a right-wing man attempted the life of the secretary of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti. Extremely intense were also the peasant struggles of the following year, which led to a general popular mobilisation against the De Gasperi government. Notwithstanding the rise of an authentic civil war in those years, the DC was able to regain consent relatively quickly through a series of reforms and policies aimed at transforming and revolutionising the country, in contrast with the nostalgia of the past characterising the communist belief.¹⁸ One of these was the establishment of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* in 1950, which had the purpose of bridging the gap between North and South and promoting economic growth in the meridional regions. In the same year the Agrarian Reform was also accomplished, which revolutionised the distribution of the lands and favoured the ownership of property in the hands of agricultural laborers, thus allowing for a greater amount of product and greater economic gain. The Christian Democracy, also thanks

¹² Fauri, *Il Piano Marshall e l'Italia*, 87.

¹³ Fauri, *Il Piano Marshall e l'Italia*, 85.

¹⁴ Tony Judt, *Postwar: a history of Europe since 1945*, New York: Penguin Press, 16.

¹⁵ Vera Capperucci, "Alcide De Gasperi and the problem of reconstruction." *Modern Italy: Journal of the Association for the Study of Modern Italy* 14, no. 4 (2009): 445-457, 445.

¹⁶ Capperucci, "Alcide De Gasperi and the problem of reconstruction," 447-449.

¹⁷ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 107-114.

¹⁸ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 143.

to the magnetism of Alcide De Gasperi, was therefore perceived to be the "party of peace and stability"¹⁹, and held its leading role in the Italian political sphere until 1992.

While politically it was De Gasperi who held the reins of the country, the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction (Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale, IRI) was of essential economic importance throughout the period of Reconstruction in Italy. The latter has indeed played a crucial role in the unification of the Italian economy, the strengthening of the financial situation of the country and the implementation of economic policies. It was founded in 1933 under the fascist regime, with the primary aim to rehabilitate the banks affected by the great crisis of 1929. It was therefore born as a temporary solution in support of the Banca Commerciale Italiana, the Banco di Roma and the Credito Italiano, but it became an important permanent public holding in 1937. During the second post-war period, it held a predominant role as a financial institution for large-scale industry and infrastructures. In fact, in 1947 IRI found itself controlling about 30% of the mechanical industry, as well as having a substantial stake in numerous different sectors. Contrary to the autarchic system that distinguished the fascist era, the intervention of the IRI also favoured a new economic opening of the country, bolstering the liberalisation of trade and abandoning the hindering duties and customs barriers set by the Mussolini regime. Therefore, the IRI, which will see its activities definitively cease in 2002, was an essential pillar for the rebirth of war-torn Italy and was an inspiration for the rehabilitation of other European countries that suffered huge losses during the Second World War.

1.2.2. A helping hand: the Marshall Plan

As the economic amount of the damages caused by the Second World War would have been impossible for the sole country to fully sustain, great financial support was given to Italy by external sources, countries, and organisations. One of the latter was the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), an international organisation created in 1943 by the representatives of 44 nations whose central scope lied in the provision of economic assistance to European countries after the Second World War. Fundamental was also its goal to assist and repatriate refugees and migrants that were wounded and/or displaced due to the consequences of the conflict. The UNRRA thus provided a substantial number of financial aid to Italy, especially through the generous funding bestowed by the United States.

¹⁹ Capperucci, "Alcide De Gasperi and the problem of reconstruction," 451.

T1. Financial aid to Italy from July 10, 1943 to December 31, 1947		Column1	Column2
Typology of aid		Millions of dollars	%
Army supplies to civilians		511	21,4
Military pay and non-troop pay		422	17,6
Ad interim Aid (FEA)		142	5,9
Credit surplus		202	8,4
Expenses of various kinds for the benefit of the Italian government		20	0,8
Credits to the merchant navy		51	2,1
Credits of the Export Import Bank		132	5,5
UNRRA		461	19,3
Post-UNRRA aid		117	4,9
Ad interim aid pre-ERP		181	7,6
Return of capital blocked or invested in the United States		104	4,3
Return and replacement of the Italian merchant navy (estimate)		22	0,9
Gold return (allies)		27	1,1
Total		2.392	100,0
Of which free of charge (excluding loans)		1.861	
USA		1.921	80,3
GB		393	16,4
Canada		51	2,1
Allies aid		27	1,1
Total		2.392	100,0

Table 1. Financial aid to Italy from July 10, 1943, to December 31, 1947 (Source: Kamarck, *Politica finanziaria degli alleati in Italia (luglio 1943 - febbraio 1947)*, in Fauri, Francesca. *Il Piano Marshall e l'Italia*, 129.)

It is important to underline that the most significant support in the post-war period, however, was granted by the sole United States through the implementation of the European Recovery Program (ERP), more generally known as the Marshall Plan. Its delineation began when the US Secretary of State George C. Marshall, during a speech at Harvard University on June 5, 1947, announced an assistance program directed at European countries that greatly suffered the effects of the war. The ERP was then formally passed by the US Congress in March 1948 through the approval of the Economic Cooperation Act. The Marshall Plan thus represented an ambitious effort to stimulate the rebirth and prosperity of European economies after the events of the Second World War, besides aiming at preventing the spreading of communism in view of the development of a world economy. Its impact on the Italian financial state has long been examined by many economists and has led to the recognition of an all-encompassing, concrete positive effect on the country's destroyed economy. As the third most important recipient of American funds - obtaining just over 10% of total aid²⁰ – Italy experienced growth in the sectors of agricultural production, industry (especially in the North) and services. Particularly, the ERP aid contributed from 1948 to 1952 to the development of machinery for the industrial and agricultural sectors, the growth of active firms, and the construction of public infrastructures²¹.

Apart from the fundamental assistance that the Marshall Plan provided for the Italian economy, the program also served as a catalyst for the reinforcement of an idealisation of the United States by the Italian population. It indeed encouraged the affirmation of the desire for the “American way of life”²², whose salient characteristics began to diffuse among the Italian people thanks to films and television, and it contributed to

²⁰ Nicola Bianchi and Michela Giorcelli, “The Role of the Marshall Plan in the Italian Post-WWII Recovery,” Michela Giorcelli, February 2018.

²¹ Nicola Bianchi and Michela Giorcelli, “Reconstruction Aid, Public Infrastructure, and Economic Development: The Case of the Marshall Plan in Italy,” National Bureau of Economic Research, December 2021.

²² Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 79.

the crumbling of the perception of the United States as the “enemy” to fight against. Unlike the era of the Great Migration of the 1800s, the desire for mobility towards the US did not, however, become reality for many Italians who, due to the temporary closure of the US borders, headed towards new transnational and transcontinental destinations such as Australia, Canada, Venezuela, and Argentina²³. Nevertheless, with such high attention towards the industrial realm that was generally concentrated in the northern provinces of the country, the funds provided for by the Marshall Plan additionally contributed to the rise in internal mobility, from the poorer South to the developed North, that Italy experienced in the very first years of the 1950s.

1.3. Post-war Italian migration: new forms of mobility

Immediately after the liberation of Italy from the occupiers, the misery brought about by the war and the tearing unemployment levels once again forced thousands of Italians to build themselves a new life beyond the borders of the country. The second post-war period in fact configured itself as the last important phase of the Italian exodus after the experience of the Great Emigration of the late 1800s²⁴. Nevertheless, unlike the latter, which was concentrated mainly in the United States, Italian mobility from 1945 acquired different shades, as it was characterized by diverse and more modern methods of travel and new destinations.

Starting from 1946, according to data published by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), out of a population of just over 46 million people, a total of 1,127,720 Italians left their homes to find fortune elsewhere. Among these, the majority preferred to move to destinations located within the continental borders, preferring European countries such as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. Contrary to the migration that took place from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1920s, expatriation to non-European territories drastically decreased, and the transoceanic areas of arrival for many Italians were, among others, Venezuela, Canada, and Australia. It is also interesting to observe how the United States, a target coveted by thousands of Italians in the period of the Great Migration, became a secondary destination for new post-World War II migrants, especially due to the Quota Act implemented by the American government for the limitations to post-war immigration²⁵. Furthermore, the provenance of Italian migrants was mainly concentrated in Southern Italy, where the majority of people left from regions such as Puglia, Calabria and Campania²⁶. In addition, in the five-year period from 1946 to 1950, there was the highest number of women

²³ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 127-128.

²⁴ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 125.

²⁵ Piero Bevilacqua, Andreina De Clementi, and Emilio Franzina, *Storia Dell'Emigrazione Italiana: Partenze*, Roma, Italia: Donzelli, 2001, 374.

²⁶ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 127.

expatriates since 1920, which would however increase in the following decade starting from 1951.

ANNI	TOTALE		EUROPA		PAESI EXTRAEUROPEI	
	Espatriati	Rimpatriati	Espatriati	Rimpatriati	Espatriati	Rimpatriati
37	59.945	35.741	25.718	15.791	34.227	19.950
38	61.548	36.892	30.570	20.232	30.978	16.660
39	29.489	87.279	11.345	29.132	18.144	58.147
40	51.817	61.147	46.968	54.420	4.849	6.727
1941	8.809	46.066	8.734	45.090	75	976
42	8.246	20.535	8.216	19.884	30	651
46	110.286	4.558	103.077	3.958	7.209	600
47	254.144	65.529	192.226	55.420	61.918	10.109
48	308.515	119.261	193.303	101.691	115.212	17.570
49	254.469	118.626	94.959	97.680	159.510	20.946
50	200.306	72.034	54.927	38.377	145.379	33.657

Table 2. Net expats - Decades 1861-1950. (Source: ISTAT)

ANNI	ESPATRIATI PER SESSO			ESPATRIATI IN ETÀ LAVORATIVA									
	MASCHI	FEMMINE	TOTALE	IN CONDIZIONE PROFESSIONALE						IN CONDIZIONE NON PROFESSIONALE		TOTALE	
				AGRICOLI		NON AGRICOLI		TOTALE		N	%		
				N	%	N	%	N	%				
1871-80	103.599	14.047	117.646
1881-90	152.390	35.530	187.920	87.398	53,0	76.625	46,4	164.023	99,4	946	0,6	164.969	
1891-900	222.915	60.558	283.473	110.214	45,4	130.124	53,7	240.338	99,1	2.180	0,9	242.518	
1901-10	494.548	108.121	602.669	198.010	36,6	321.929	59,5	519.939	96,1	21.140	3,9	541.079	
1911-20	291.583	91.224	382.807	94.594	27,8	214.472	63,1	309.066	80,9	30.763	9,1	339.829	
1921-30	178.717	76.347	255.064	55.128	24,9	123.341	55,6	178.469	80,5	43.174	19,5	221.643	
1931-40	41.852	28.413	70.265	6.355	10,9	33.694	58,1	40.049	69,0	17.972	31,0	58.021	
1946-50	142.502	83.042	225.544	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1951-60	206.620	87.120	293.740	64.365	25,2	142.626	55,9	206.991	81,1	48.352	18,9	255.343	
1961-65	247.298	66.996	314.294	59.161	19,9	208.535	70,2	267.696	90,1	29.339	9,9	297.035	

Table 3. Net expats for Gender and Professional condition - Decades 1871-1965. (Source: ISTAT)

The reopening of the borders appeared to be an imminent need for many countries in search of useful workforce to be applied within the reconstruction process, and the various governments began to stipulate numerous bilateral agreements whose aim was to organise and control the movement of migrant workers. In Italy, even President De Gasperi felt the exigency to encourage women and men to leave their homes, deeming migration an important economic lever for the reconstruction of the country. An interesting example of the planning of exodus between Italy and other countries is represented by Belgium, with which the Italian government entered into a bilateral agreement in 1946 for the dispatch of 2000 miners every week. The mine thus became the chief place of employment for Italian migrants, who also suffered from the harsh living conditions associated with it, together with a high rate of discrimination perpetrated by locals. Crucial was an accident that occurred in 1956, when the collapse of a mine caused the death of 136 Italian workers, which was followed by an immediate temporary blocking of departures for Belgium by the Italian government²⁷. Even the transnational experience, like that of Canada, distinguished itself for most of the

²⁷ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 141.

Italian migrants by a sense of social marginalisation and acceptance of occupations that the locals did not want to endure. From the immigration program studied by the country in 1947, a high number of men and women mainly from Southern Italy were indeed employed in a variety of sectors: the former mainly as manual workers or laborers, and the latter as domestic workers. In Venezuela, however, the discovery of oil and the beginning of the relocation of Italian industries such as Fiat attracted a large number of migrants towards the capital. It was, however, the construction sector that attracted the greatest amount, thanks to a concrete policy on public buildings, so much so that the majority of the buildings in Caracas in the 1950s were a result of the hard work of many Italians. Immediately after WWII and until the early 1960s, there existed therefore a greater demand for professional and specialised figures among expats, which will subsequently strengthen over the years despite the clear and steady imminent decline in Italian mobility. Furthermore, the new migratory wave that started in 1945 brought with it a higher level of education among departing Italians, as well as a greater diversification of occupations, which were no longer concentrated solely in the agricultural sphere as it occurred in the past.

While requiring a greater workforce after the extensive damage caused by the Second World War, the welcome towards Italians in the countries of arrival was hardly ever initially positive. In fact, since the time of the Great Migration, the ghettoisation of Italians who had moved away from their land was a common phenomenon regardless of the places of arrival, both continental and transnational. In Australia, for example, olive-skinned Italians were perceived as a threat to the predominantly white country²⁸. The experience of social relegation experienced by Italian migrants usually caused a peculiar strengthening of ties with distant families and with neighbouring countrymen, or *paesani*, so much so that, just as at the end of the nineteenth century, Italians abroad often lived in communities of villagers initially seeking little contact with the inhabitants of the country of arrival. Additionally, despite the creation of several institutions aimed at the protection of Italian migrants in the countries of arrival, such as the establishment of the Directorate General for Italians Abroad (designed within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the creation of emigration centres scattered throughout the Italian territory, expatriates complained of an "almost total absence of the Italian State" with respect to their protection when in a foreign country²⁹.

Unlike the migrations of previous decades, which were often permanent and encompassing entire families on the move, the movements that followed from the end of the Second World War began to foresee a stay for a shorter period of time, one that could be useful for earning money that could then be brought back to Italy. Indeed, much of the continental emigration was of a temporary nature, usually affecting the breadwinner of the family or a single member of a household. Suffice it to think that post-war Germany considered workers from all foreign countries as *Gastarbeiter*, "guest workers", who had to return to their country of origin upon expiry of their employment contract. Transoceanic movements, which became less frequent than in the past, turned out to be largely permanent, giving rise to increasingly consistent

²⁸ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 133.

²⁹ Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina, *Storia Dell'Emigrazione Italiana: Partenze*, 381.

communities of Italians in the chosen destinations who still today make up an important percentage of the population of the same countries.

1.3.1. Continental and temporary migration: the case of Switzerland

A symbolic case of continental and mainly temporary migration is represented by Switzerland, which from the end of the Second World War to 1968 was the preferred destination for more than two million Italians³⁰. According to the authors and historians Patrizia Audenino and Maddalena Tirabassi, the country absorbed almost 50% of the totality of Italian emigrants throughout Europe between the 1960s and 1970s. Originally, the emigrants came mainly from the northern regions of the peninsula, such as Veneto, Friuli and Lombardy, but from the early 1960s mobility began to also affect the Southern areas. Moreover, the provenance of the former allowed many to work as frontier workers, avoiding fully leaving their families and Italian lands of origin.

ANNI	Francia	Germania*	Svizzera	Canada	Stati Uniti	Brasile	Argentina	Australia	Totale
1861-70	288.500	44.030	38.180	....	....	....	....	....	<u>1.210.400</u>
1871-80	347.590	105.940	132.820	26.750		37.220	86.080	460	<u>1.175.960</u>
1881-90	374.070	86.390	71.180	6.270	244.870	215.550	391.510	1.590	<u>1.879.200</u>
1891-900	259.280	230.930	189.060	5.920	514.330	580.220	367.220	3.440	<u>2.834.730</u>
1901-10	572.620	591.040	655.670	65.100	<u>2.329.450</u>	303.360	734.600	7.540	<u>6.026.690</u>
1911-20	664.490	285.070	433.500	83.630	<u>1.566.780</u>	125.880	315.520	7.480	<u>3.828.070</u>
1921-30	<u>1.023.088</u>	11.494	157.056	31.799	419.161	76.558	535.741	33.516	<u>2.550.639</u>
1931-40	213.783	58.103	85.859	3.469	114.636	12.496	80.753	14.248	702.650
1946-50	192.039	74	313.031	15.590	66.068	25.366	274.523	26.556	<u>1.127.720</u>
1951-60	592.492	160.513	745.031	229.332	193.459	85.566	209.545	190.533	<u>2.937.406</u>

Table 4. Expatriates by country of destination - Data by decade 1861-1990 (absolute values)
(Source: *Altreitalie*)

The departure of workforce from Italy to the Swiss territory formally began after the signing of a bilateral agreement in June 1948 between the two neighbouring countries, which had the purpose of regulating and coordinating the movement of labour. The needs that the Swiss labour market faced right

³⁰ Concetto Vecchio, *Cacciатели! Quando I Migranti Eravamo Noi*, Milano, Italy: Feltrinelli, 2019, 29.

after the conflict were concentrated in the need for manual work in the textile industries and in the hotel and domestic sectors³¹, to then expand into the construction and metalworking industry sectors. Over the decades, Italians thus found themselves occupying different jobs in various sectors, often side by side with hostile and prejudiced residents. The fulcrum of the collective experience of Italians in Switzerland was, nonetheless, more closely linked to the perception that the Swiss had of them from the very beginning. The living conditions of Italian workers in Switzerland were in fact materially and psychologically very challenging to endure. Forced to live in shacks and receive meagre wages, the Italians also became victims of intense xenophobia and a high level of discrimination on the part of Swiss residents, who saw the presence of such foreigners in their country as a real threat to the workforce of the place. This level of marginalisation was especially tangible in the German-speaking cantons³², where Italian emigrants were considered to be “waste and trash”³³. Political leaders also fuelled the discontentment of the population, identifying immigrants as real rivals of Swiss workers in the labour market. In 1970, the first referendum against foreigners in European history was held in Switzerland, proposed by James Schwarzenbach, a member of parliament from the far-right Nationale Aktion party. The proposal was to expel the hundreds of thousands of Italians present in the area, which however nearly failed, obtaining 54% of the votes against it.

Although about 48% of emigrants in Europe privileged Switzerland as a destination for their job travel, the mobility of Italians to the Swiss country remains the least examined academically speaking³⁴. However, in the minds of the many Italians who emigrated temporarily or settled permanently in the Swiss country, there remain the vivid memories of a fundamental migratory stage, albeit difficult and hostile to their mobility.

1.3.2. Transnational migration: the road to Argentina

As already previously indicated, the expatriation of thousands of Italians after World War II in search of a job and new hope for their families also concerned more distant destinations. Argentina was indeed one of the countries which were most contemplated by Italian migrants both before and after the Second World War, counting almost 300,000 expatriates in the five-year period from 1946 to 1950 alone, in second place after Switzerland³⁵. The Latin country was the protagonist of one of the first bilateral agreements undersigned with the Italian state regarding controlled mobility after the conflict, and was ratified on February 21, 1947, under the supervision of the Italian Foreign Minister Carlo Sforza. This allowed in the following years, together with the help of institutions such as the Argentine Delegation of Immigration to

³¹ Sonia Castro Mallamaci, “L’emigrazione italiana in Svizzera nel secondo dopoguerra. La nascita del primo accordo sull’emigrazione del 1948”, *Altreitalie*, 27.

³² Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 145.

³³ Vecchio, *Cacciateli!: Quando I Migranti Eravamo Noi*, 64.

³⁴ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 144.

³⁵ Table 4.

Europe (DAIE) and the Comisión de Recepción y Encauzamiento de Inmigrantes (CREI), to select, control and welcome new and necessary workforce within the Argentine territory³⁶. In fact, the demand for labour in Argentina utterly matched the need of the De Gasperi government to persuade Italian citizens to "leave to discover the roads of the world"³⁷. The already-well-established presence of Italians in the country of General Perón proved to be vital for the new arrivals as it permitted a more fluid and faster integration.

The greatest number of migrants who went from Italy to Argentina came from the south of the peninsula, especially from the areas of Calabria, Campania, Abruzzo, and Sicily. In the 1950s, in fact, the first sent about 45,000 workers overseas, followed by Campania which counted 22,000 people. This second important migratory wave that followed the Great Migration was nonetheless different as it was centred around new, different skills and technical and professional preparation of the expatriates. The flow of Italian emigrants after World War II was thus called the "emigration of engineers"³⁸, and the new skills acquired were useful to the workforce in Argentina even within the branches of large Italian industries such as Pirelli, present in the area since 1917³⁹. Nonetheless, Italian workers in Argentina soon began to raise complaints and concerns about the vast margin of freedom that the host country left to employers with respect to the treatment of immigrant labour. More and more requests started being raised for the protection of the rights and guarantees of the Italians, and that exacerbated the already-slowed migratory flow of 1948 due to the harsh selection criteria of manpower. The Italians in Argentina also complained about low wages and precarious and unsuitable living conditions. These grievances were also received as a lack of spirit of sacrifice by the "older" Italian migrants who had arrived in Argentina decades earlier, and this contributed to a sort of internal division within the greater community of Italians who emigrated abroad⁴⁰. A substantial difference from the experience of Italians in Switzerland after World War II could be identified in the change in reception of the resident population with respect to the immigrants of the time. While not totally excluding the presence of discriminatory acts against new workers from the Peninsula, the well-integrated existence of Italian-language periodicals, associations and Italian community institutions in Argentina may indicate the relative widespread tolerance of the country towards Italian migrants, who already formed 5% of the population in 1947.

Shortly after 1950, the migratory current directed towards Argentina began to hold a discontinuous trend, until it finally receded in the 1960s, when the number of annual expatriates counted an average of 2,000 individuals. In addition, although a distant and longed-for destination to be reached, Argentina also experienced a significant wave of repatriations. As the ISTAT data of the time suggest, the average of repatriation during the period from 1946 to 1960 is around 6,000 units, surpassing other transoceanic destinations such as Brazil, Australia and Canada.⁴¹

³⁶ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 128.

³⁷ Alcide De Gasperi, 1949.

³⁸ Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina, *Storia Dell'Emigrazione Italiana: Partenze*, 379.

³⁹ Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina, *Storia Dell'Emigrazione Italiana: Partenze*, 378.

⁴⁰ Audenino and Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 129.

⁴¹ ISTAT, *Annali di Statistica*, 650.

Tav. 19 - Espatriati e rimpatriati per Paese di destinazione e di provenienza (*)

ANNI	ESPATRIATI								RIMPATRIATI							
	FRANCIA	GERMANIA	SVIZZERA	CANADA	STATI UNITI	ARGENTINA	BRASILE	AUSTRALIA	FRANCIA	GERMANIA	SVIZZERA	CANADA	STATI UNITI	ARGENTINA	BRASILE	AUSTRALIA
1861-70 . .	28.850	4.403	3.818	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1871-80 . .	34.759	10.594	13.282	2.675	....	8.608	3.722	46	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1881-90 . .	37.407	8.639	7.118	627	24.487	39.151	21.555	159	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1891-900 . .	25.928	23.093	18.906	592	51.433	36.722	58.022	344	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1901-10 . .	57.262	59.104	65.567	6.510	232.945	73.460	30.336	754	....	....	....	....	118.146	32.830	18.858	....
1911-20 . .	66.449	28.507	43.350	8.363	156.678	31.552	12.588	748	....	....	....	2.052	81.571	29.391	6.776	....
1921-30 . .	101.609	-1.149	15.706	3.180	41.916	53.574	7.656	3.352	56.325	615	10.442	675	36.940	17.282	3.722	967
1931-40 . .	21.378	5.810	8.586	347	11.464	8.075	1.250	1.425	22.280	936	5.603	192	9.738	6.225	908	615
1946-50 . .	38.408	....	62.606	3.118	13.214	54.905	5.073	5.311	5.517	....	44.932	66	3.127	6.145	1.379	152
1951-60 . .	59.249	16.051	74.503	22.933	19.346	20.955	8.557	19.053	30.694	7.684	55.548	1.167	3.387	6.485	2.465	1.951
1961-65 . .	28.039	95.752	124.441	16.142	13.034	1.260	896	12.700	20.168	63.853	98.921	146	320	2.598	1.315	667

With nearly half a million Italians that are Argentinian residents and about 50% of the population boasting Italian descent, Argentina still stands today as one of the most meaningful countries for post-World War II Italian mobility. Although from the 1960s the departure of Italians towards the Argentine territories turned out to be lower over time, the factual and symbolic historical importance of Argentina in the general discourse on Italian migration of the First Republic remains central and undisputed.

1.4. The beginning of the Cold War

The international context after the end of the Second World War displayed itself as disastrous and insecure, and the winners of the conflict soon found themselves at odds with the ideas of stability and security to be implemented and the new borders to be drawn and established. Defeated Germany found itself, during the Potsdam Conference of 1945, having to be divided into four zones of influence among the United States, France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. The world thus began to clearly perceive the first signs of the important political, economic, and military tension that was arising between the two greatest victors of the conflict: the US and the USSR. The escalation of tones between the two powers became clear especially after March 5, 1946, when former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered a speech in Fulton, Missouri, in which he clarified the existence of an "Iron Curtain" that clearly fragmented the world into two parts. This was, in fact, the most famous metaphor for the division of the planet into two precise spheres of influence, one supervised by America and containing the majority of Western countries, the other led by the USSR which included several socialist and communist territories, along with the German Democratic Republic (GDR), occupied by the Soviets until 1949.

Crucial to the deepening of the deep US-USSR rift were also two American initiatives, dated 1947: the Truman Doctrine, whose purpose was to prevent a further communist advance, and the consequent Marshall Plan, the economic aid plan put in place for the defeated or suffering countries to benefit from. The

latter was, in the opinion of the historian Martin McCauley, an impressive economic success, but brought with it the serious consequence of the exclusion of Eastern Europe from American assistance, thus darkening the tones of the long "Cold War".

Alcide De Gasperi's Italy, while primarily privileging the safeguarding of national sovereignty, was pivotal within the international discourse linked to the climate of the Cold War that was emerging. The elections of April 18, 1948, were in fact extremely significant for the situation the world was facing, since they envisaged the exclusion of the left-wing parties from the new DeGasperian government due to pressure from the American state⁴². Italy thus clearly sided with the idea of democracy and capitalist society promoted by the United States. Accompanied by strong anti-communist propaganda, the 1948 elections became, according to McCauley, a victory for US strategy, which succeeded in "fighting [...] without firing a gun or dropping a bomb"⁴³. Significant was the choice by the United States to introduce the Atlantic Pact on April 4, 1949, which Italy will sign in the same year, and which will give birth to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a defensive organization aimed at the security of Member States. The Pact's main purpose was to counter a possible and feared Communist expansion, one that would jeopardise the stability of America and its allies and was based on total defensive military cooperation following the birth of the Cominform in 1947, with the military alliance suggested through Warsaw Pact of 1955 and signed by the states of the Eastern bloc influenced by the USSR.

The end of the 1940s therefore marked the concrete existence of what would become a long era of bipolarism, the fundamental poles of which were represented respectively by the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cold War, which will see the two great powers and their respective allies compete in different fields and finance conflicts over the decades, will formally last until the fall of the Berlin wall on November 9, 1989, and will result in the dissolution of the USSR two years later.

⁴² Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 83.

⁴³ Kaeten Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of Cold War: Waging Political Warfare, 1945–1950*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, 2.

Chapter 2. 1950s-1960s: Italy's contemporary Gilded Age

2.1. The national context

The advent of the 1950s symbolised for Italy the true abandonment of the dark era of the world conflict. In fact, the country began to grow rapidly and regularly, thus effectively becoming an industrial society. The outcomes of the radical Italian Reconstruction culminated in what is known as the "economic miracle" that profoundly influenced Italy from 1958 to 1963 and that may be considered the most prosperous period that the peninsula has ever experienced⁴⁴. The increase in industrial productivity and exports of Italian products, along with the birth and development of small, medium, and large companies, made the Italian market particularly competitive. Added to this was also the greater attractiveness of the labour market, thanks to the vast presence of low-cost labour fuelled by previous migration policies introduced and supported by President Alcide De Gasperi. Also vital for the exponential growth of industrial production was Italy's early entry into the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951, which presented itself as the first concrete step towards the creation of a European community. The industrial development that was mostly concentrated in the northern areas of the country gave nonetheless rise to the most important migratory phenomenon of the 1950s and 1960s: interregional migration. Having the latter been such an all-encompassing experience within the realm of Italian mobility, it also obscured the sporadic departures to other continental and transoceanic destinations. In fact, writers Audenino and Tirabassi estimate that about 900,000 workers from regions such as Puglia, Calabria and Sicily moved to the areas of the Po Valley between 1958 and 1963 to seek their fortune. This relocation was also facilitated by the presence of the so-called "Train of the Sun", connecting the North to the South of the country, which encouraged the movement of the masses of industrial workers.

On the political level, Italy found itself experiencing the last three governments presided by Alcide De Gasperi, who resigned for the last time in August 1953 and died a year later. The 1952 elections clearly displayed the end of the centrism that had dominated the Italian political framework in the previous years, along with the collapse of the support for the Christian Democrats, which fell from 48.5% in 1948 to 35.1%⁴⁵. Notwithstanding the weakening of the government, 1949 marked the beginning of a thriving season of crucial reforms for the country such as the *Fanfani Plan*, or *INA-casa* reform, which involved the construction of social housing for the most suffering strata of the population. As previously mentioned, in 1950 the agrarian reform, known as the "excerpt law", and the establishment of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* stood out as two turning points for the development of the country. The first, considered by historiography as the most significant Italian policy, sanctioned the distribution of lands that previously

⁴⁴ Andrea Villa, "Il Miracolo Economico Italiano in 'Il Contributo Italiano Alla Storia Del Pensiero: Tecnica.'" Enciclopedia Treccani

⁴⁵ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 151.

belonged to prominent landowners in the hands of agricultural labourers. The second, on the other hand, was advocated by De Gasperi with the objective of finally bridging the gap between North and South, increasing investments for public intervention aimed at improving the conditions of the *Mezzogiorno*. Also, of great significance was the *Vanoni Law* of 1951, which established the annual obligation of the income tax return, and the institution of the *ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi)* in 1953 following the first gas discoveries in the areas of the Po Valley. Influential on Italian politics in June 1950 was likewise the outbreak of the Korean War, which caused the rearmament of the West and further intensified the frictions that were already present between the Italian Christian Democrats and the Communists.⁴⁶ In the 1950s, the “Trieste question” that was disputed between Italy and Yugoslavia since the end of the Second World War was also resolved. After the conflict, the city of Trieste and the territory of Istria were in fact divided into a zone A and a zone B which were administered respectively by the Allies and the Yugoslavs. With the London Memorandum of 1954, however, zone A, concerning the free territory of Trieste, passed under the administration of the Italian government. The Julian-Dalmatian question, and particularly the territories ceded to the government of General Josip Broz Tito, also became the scene of the forced exodus of about 350,000 people, an estimated number due to the absence of a real census of exiles at that time⁴⁷.

From the early 1950s, the Italian society, still exhausted by the remnants of the war, thus quickly began to reinvigorate itself. Crucial to improving the lifestyle of the population was the birth and spread of the use of motor vehicles, especially the Fiat *Seicento* car and the famous Vespa scooter, and numerous household appliances. The protagonist of the boom will however be the television, whose advent will contribute to the strengthening of a sense of unity of the country and the creation of a mass culture that would last in the following decades. Overall, the increase in public investment, the flourishing state of the industry and the change in the lifestyle of the majority of Italians led to the establishment of the “economic miracle” (or “economic boom”) that would maintain its beneficial effects for many of the twenty years under consideration.

2.2. The “Economic Miracle” (1958-1963), the growth of the *industria* and urbanisation

Generally, Italy recorded unprecedented growth rates in the twenty years between the Fifties and Sixties. In the immediate post-war period, a large number of Italians left the southern countryside to head towards the territories of northern Italy, which saw a rapid and impetuous development of small, medium and large industries. In Piedmont, Lombardy and other northern regions, the industrial sector managed to sprout both for the discovery of deposits of raw materials such as methane, and for important public and private intervention. In 1962, a little over 40% of Italian workers were in fact employed in the industrial sector, while agriculture retained only the 27%⁴⁸. The Italian industries that drove the growth of the

⁴⁶ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 138.

⁴⁷ Bevilacqua, De Clementi, and Franzina, *Storia Dell'Emigrazione Italiana: Partenze*, 386.

⁴⁸ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 160.

peninsula in the twenty years under consideration were those manufacturing cars, household appliances, furniture, and office machines, all of which became the internationally known symbolic image of Italy as a developing country⁴⁹. Among the effects of the reconstruction period that the peninsula was experiencing was also a substantial increase in exports to other countries. This was due to a high rate of capital investment that the state decided to incentivise with the aim of increasing the productivity of the pivotal industries. In the public sector, the figure of Enrico Mattei was of fundamental importance as he founded the ENI in 1953, offering Italy a new profitable source of energy. Other dynamic sectors were those that received substantial aid in the years of Reconstruction, such as the metallurgical, mechanical, and chemical divisions. The products of these industries were of good quality and had competitive prices, especially thanks to the massive availability of low-cost labour, and thus further favoured the vast export abroad. Other distinguished Italian industries that developed in those years are Fiat, Olivetti and Pirelli, which are still among the most renowned companies in the world. The first, specifically, manufactured the first small cars to expand in such a rapid and extensive manner: the *Fiat Seicento* in 1955, and subsequently the *Cinquecento*, thus became part of the lifestyle of most Italian people. The automobile, together with the new scooters such as the *Vespa* and the *Lambretta*, therefore began to establish itself as a primary asset for the population, and the automotive industry experienced a steady development that led Italy to count more than one million cars on the road 1956 and, a year later, the ownership of a car for every thirty-nine inhabitants⁵⁰. As this happened in the northernmost areas of the country, the same cannot be said for the territories of the South. The institution of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* in 1950, although being born with the aim of balancing the development between North and South, disappointed the expectations of its promoters. In fact, several scholars found the cause of the discrepancy between the two areas of the country in the absence of a real entrepreneurial tradition in the South. Nevertheless, several large steel and petrochemical plants were born in the areas of Taranto and Brindisi, but they did not succeed in boosting extensive industrialization in the *Mezzogiorno* as it did in the North. In truth, the "economic miracle" that swept Italy from 1958 to 1963 inevitably led to the aggravation of the differences that had long existed between North and South, such as the "southern question".

The phenomenon of urbanisation was also connected to the rapid and strong development of the industrial sector. During the Kingdom of Italy, the most populous city was Naples, counting 450.000 inhabitants⁵¹, whereas in the twenty years of the economic boom new development centres such as Rome, Milan and Turin began to flourish. In the words of Audenino and Tirabassi, the major industrial centres experienced a demographic explosion mainly due to the abandonment of the southern countryside, which saw the displacement of about 900,000 workers during the Fifties and Sixties⁵². In *Table 5* it is indeed

⁴⁹ Andrea Villa, "Il Miracolo Economico Italiano in 'Il Contributo Italiano Alla Storia Del Pensiero: Tecnica.'"

⁵⁰ Villa, "Il Miracolo Economico".

⁵¹ "L'Evoluzione Demografica Dell'Italia - Istat." ISTAT, 2018. <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2019/01/evoluzione-demografica-1861-2018-testo.pdf>.

⁵² Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 147.

Dataset: Estimated resident population - Years 1952-1962

Demographic	population on 1st January										
Select time	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
Territory											
Piemonte	3,519,786	3,545,099	3,576,399	3,615,094	3,656,611	3,690,602	3,730,297	3,768,793	3,808,493	3,875,760	3,924,196
Liguria	1,568,211	1,572,390	1,583,509	1,605,389	1,618,196	1,632,094	1,650,076	1,673,722	1,698,202	1,719,302	1,737,406
Lombardia	6,573,397	6,626,395	6,688,895	6,752,398	6,826,304	6,902,794	6,984,895	7,089,891	7,205,703	7,320,888	7,421,804
Veneto	3,915,599	3,907,896	3,903,751	3,896,292	3,880,694	3,867,177	3,858,715	3,854,200	3,853,919	3,847,298	3,846,999
Friuli- Venezia Giulia	1,226,083	1,223,609	1,224,310	1,223,605	1,220,510	1,218,397	1,215,214	1,211,823	1,211,418	1,207,010	1,205,604
Toscana	3,159,699	3,169,118	3,185,296	3,203,099	3,216,895	3,225,292	3,237,492	3,251,079	3,265,898	3,279,611	3,289,207
Lazio	3,344,481	3,390,405	3,451,413	3,511,583	3,571,992	3,631,036	3,689,615	3,745,708	3,821,920	3,900,996	3,974,894
Campania	4,349,500	4,381,901	4,424,413	4,473,499	4,517,007	4,555,941	4,596,099	4,641,507	4,689,704	4,727,775	4,768,901
Puglia	3,224,032	3,254,196	3,286,225	3,317,573	3,346,602	3,362,391	3,370,618	3,385,705	3,405,497	3,414,401	3,425,090
Calabria	2,044,578	2,051,397	2,059,623	2,065,594	2,071,299	2,073,183	2,064,792	2,061,384	2,059,594	2,052,093	2,047,004
Sicilia	4,488,798	4,509,269	4,538,601	4,575,574	4,606,889	4,626,406	4,644,203	4,667,098	4,692,466	4,708,966	4,727,687

Data extracted on 17 May 2022 15:32 UTC (GMT) from I.Stat

Table 5. Estimated resident population - Years 1952-1962 (Source: ISTAT)

possible to understand how the region with the most residents between 1952 and 1962 was Lombardy, owing to the presence of the major Italian firms in its territories. It is also interesting to observe the demographic evolution of post-war Italy during the period of the economic boom. Until the Seventies, the Italian population grew exponentially thanks to the lowering of mortality and in parallel to the increase in the birth rate. The peak of marriages and births indeed occurred in 1964, which is remembered as the year of the *baby boom* that was favoured precisely by the new positive living conditions that the Italian population was undergoing⁵³. The urbanisation of Italy was also driven by an important surge in the construction of new homes as a result of the ever-increasing demand for housing in the city. In fact, the highest construction rate was also recorded in the year 1964, with almost three million new rooms⁵⁴. This “pillaging of cities⁵⁵”, as called by the urban planners of the time, was the outcome of the extension among the lower classes of the need for a private home, something that for a long time was only reserved for the wealthiest groups.

The swift industrialisation and the effects of the speedy economic growth that hit Italy brought about a radical change in behaviour and in the more general lifestyle of the population. The Italian community thus transformed into a real consumer society, one that was driven by new needs and new individual and collective desires. The birth and diffusion of television, above all, contributed to creating a new form of socialisation and the formation of a collective sense of belonging. Significant in this regard was the TV show “*Lascia o raddoppia?*” led by the Italian American Mike Bongiorno, who was successful in attracting the consent of Italian families and even of the reigning Pope Pius XII⁵⁶. Furthermore, as already analysed, the spread of the first small cars and motorcycles resulted in a new conception of space, besides giving Italians a newfound sense of independence. The advent of scooters and cars, mainly produced by Fiat, was

⁵³ Villa, “Il Miracolo Economico”.

⁵⁴ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 187.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 167-169.

accompanied by the initiative of the Italian government aimed at expanding and modernising the roads and highways that crossed the country. In this regard, it was a law of 1955, the Romita law, that implemented the state-funded construction of the new motorway networks also thanks to the supervision of the IRI⁵⁷.

In general, the sum of all these factors together with the promising developments of the foreign policy conducted by the Italian government helped to create a new, contemporary golden age for Italy. The country wrecked by the events of the Second World War up to a decade before quickly found itself between 1951 and 1963 observing a steady annual increase in the gross domestic product of about 6%⁵⁸. Additional data on that period of splendour also recount of an increase in Italian spending, a further sign of the rise in wages towards the beginning of the 1960s. Notwithstanding this, the first signs of the inversion of the growth trend began to appear after 1963 due to the tightening of relations between the great powers on a national and international level, and which will lead Italy to experience years of protests, clashes, and national terrorism.

2.3. The political framework in the 1960s and the events of the *Sessantotto*

With the death of Alcide De Gasperi in 1954 Italy witnessed the end of a political era dominated by the charisma of a single man capable of attracting the consensus of a large part of the electorate and leading the country towards progress. He was succeeded by Amintore Fanfani, whose policy – especially the economic one – was based on the proposals offered by the "*Schema Vanoni*" of 1955. The latter presented as its main objectives the reduction of the unemployment rate, the narrowing of the gap between North and South and the achievement of a balanced budget. Another priority of the new Prime Minister was to be able to transform the Christian Democracy into a mass party in order to be able to further recover the consensus of the electorate. In line with this idea was the new President of the Republic, Giovanni Gronchi, elected in April 1955, who supported a policy of detente between the conflicting forces both nationally and internationally⁵⁹. In 1958, the elections for the renewal of the two Houses of Parliament again showed a consensus growth for the DC and an increase in the electorate of the Socialist Party. This was significant because it gave rise to the need for the DC to include the latter in the formation of a new government, for the first time with a centre-left majority. The formal proposal for this was put forward by the new secretary of the DC, Aldo Moro, and saw its realization in December 1963 with the latter as chief⁶⁰. The need for this "leftist turn" was mainly a consequence of the crisis that Italian politics had experienced in 1960, when the then Prime Minister Fernando Tambroni had authorised a congress of the Italian Social Movement (MSI), of a pro-fascist nature, in anti-fascist Genoa. The President's decision resulted in the outbreak of clashes

⁵⁷ Villa, "Il Miracolo Economico".

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 178.

⁶⁰ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 205.

between the opposing population and the police, and led to the cancellation of the congress, the resignation of Tambroni and the closing of the government doors to the far right.

In general, the Italian society of the Sixties continued to undergo a constant growth and to enjoy the legacy of the years of the economic miracle. In addition to the notable rise in population consumption, the level of awareness of citizen rights began to grow even more. The reforms launched by the centre-left government arose in fact from the need to keep up with the changing mentality of the population. An example of this was the 1966 law concerning the "just cause for dismissals", which obliged companies to be able to dismiss their employees only if there was a valid justification and only after sixty days' notice to the worker⁶¹. However, it was the reforms that interested education, such as the one concerning the extension of compulsory schooling up to the age of fourteen and the one that expanded the possibility of access to universities, which marked a turning point in the history of Italy. These two policies indeed ignited the first sparks of the season of violent and very participatory student protests that will constitute the era of the *Sessantotto*, since they mainly took place during 1968. The first significant mobilisation that represented the formal start of the *Sessantotto* took place in the Catholic University of Milan from November 1967 until the end of January 1968. Here, protests erupted following an increase of more than 50% in university fees, accompanied by the denial by the executives of a signature collection against the war in Vietnam and the alleged limitation to the freedom of dissent of university students⁶². Soon, students from all over Italy began to occupy schools and universities, united by the same desire to overturn the pre-existing conditions of power and to implement Marxist-style changes. Students from Rome, Turin and Trento thus found themselves protesting the imbalance between school and university studies offered and the real demands of the labour market, as well as the difficulties of students to graduate (in which only 44% of the total could succeed)⁶³. At the heart of the general discontent was also anger towards the system of examination and grading of students, considered unjust and discriminatory, and towards the power of teachers, of a hierarchical and relatively limited type. According to Aurelio Lepre, Italian politics, especially the PCI and the PSI, failed to establish relations with the 1968 movement and were unable to guide its protests or resolve its problems. Despite this, the *Sessantotto* had the power to emphasise even more the difference between the Italian Right and the Left, underlining the inconsistencies between them⁶⁴. Crucial in the analysis of the student movement of 1968 is also its counterpart, concerning workers and the labour realm. This began, however, in 1969, when during the "hot autumn" the first strikes began in factories in favour of improved working conditions and a fair wage increase for workers. The protests, which lasted longer than the student protests, led to important achievements for the Italian working community, such as the 1970 Workers' Statute, safeguarding the constitutional rights of the employed.

In both the currents of 1968, the student and the working ones, it is therefore possible to see at the

⁶¹ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 214.

⁶² Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 225.

⁶³ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 223-224.

⁶⁴ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 238.

base an intrinsic desire for a radical change in the conditions of power and a more attentive look at the needs and rights of a society that was experiencing a profound process of mental change. It is also interesting to note the symbolic nature of the events through the active participation of all social classes, not just the lower and most suffering strata of the population. Further victories of the *Sessantotto* movement were visible in the greater commitment of the state in investments aimed at improving the living conditions of Italians, and in the new sexual revolution that arose from the crumbling of the taboo on the rights and freedoms of individuals. Despite this, the gap between the Right and the Left widened even more, provoking in the following decade a current of violence that was vehemently expressed in the period of massacre and political terrorism of the 1970s and 1980s.

2.4. A new community: the international framework

Meanwhile, during the 1950s and 1960s, the world political situation continued to worsen, dominated immediately after the world conflict by the advent of the Cold War between the United States, the Soviet Union, and their respective allies. With the death of Stalin in 1953 an abrupt change in international relations occurred, especially with the rise to power of Nikita Khrushchev and his goal of starting a widespread process of de-Stalinization of the USSR⁶⁵. Furthermore, in response to the 1949 Atlantic Pact between the United States and many Western countries (including Italy), Khrushchev signed the Soviet Union into the May 1955 Warsaw Pact. The latter was implemented as a military agreement between the USSR and several territories under its influence, including East Germany, and remained in force until a year before the fall of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. At the centre of the Cold War discourse was the general fear for the threat of nuclear weapons, initially possessed only by the two main powers and subsequently followed by Great Britain, France, China, India and Pakistan. The imminent danger was in fact felt both in the East and in the West, triggering in the American government the need to implement a strategy of deterrence, later translated into Eisenhower's "New Look" policy, against the possible threat represented by the communist powers⁶⁶. Nevertheless, the main aim of those years remained the realisation of a policy of detente between the two world forces, although there were several crises that fuelled the fear of the outbreak of a nuclear war. Highly symbolic was the Berlin Crisis of 1961, which saw the Communists build a concrete wall dividing East Germany from the West. Quickly, the Berlin Wall became the most recognised symbol of the Cold War era. Also important in the chronology of that period was the Cuban Missile Crisis, which occurred in 1962. Preceded by the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba in 1961 by local anti-Communists trained by the American CIA to overthrow the Communist dictatorship of Fidel Castro, the 1962 crisis saw the deployment of ballistic missiles in the country by the USSR following a request from the Cuban government in order to

⁶⁵ Jeremy Black, *The Cold War: A Military History*, 1st ed. London, United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015, 81-82.

⁶⁶ Black, *The Cold War: A Military History*, 85.

avoid a possible US invasion. Despite its resolution through an agreement between the new US President John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, according to which the Soviets would withdraw the missiles if the United States promised not to invade Cuba, the 1962 missile crisis led the world's population to come near the idea of the (escaped) danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war. Meanwhile, relations between the Soviet Union and Communist China also began to worsen, following the statements made by President Mao Zedong on the inadequacy of Khrushchev unlike the late Stalin⁶⁷. An intense rivalry therefore arose between the two communist forces which quickly detached, further altering the balance of international relations.

Central in the twenty years between 1950 and 1970 was also the rivalry over technological and social progress. In 1957 the Soviet Union inaugurated the first experiments in space by sending the Sputnik spacecraft into orbit, and a month later the Sputnik II, the latter containing the first living being inside, the dog Laika. Another record attributable to the USSR was also the expedition of cosmonaut Jurij Gagarin into orbit on the Vostok 1 shuttle, officially making him the first man in space. America quickly regained its prestige in 1964 when the Apollo 11 spaceflight landed the first men on the Moon, astronauts Neil Armstrong, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin, and Michael Collins. The race to space therefore symbolised one of the salient moments of the power dichotomy between the US and the USSR, further increasing the differences between the two world powers and serving as an effective propaganda tool for both.

The twenty years between the Fifties and the end of the Sixties thus represented a period full of important events on an international level that drastically altered the course of world history. Additionally, during the 1960s, both the United States and the USSR lost two of their most influential leaders, respectively John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who was assassinated in 1963 with a gunshot to the head, and Nikita Khrushchev, who was removed by the nominal leader of the USSR. Notwithstanding the possible threats of the imminent outbreak of a nuclear war that could have destroyed the entire planet, both contributed to affirming a policy of relative detente between the USA and the USSR that would lead, in the following twenty years, to the end of the Cold War and to the definitive dissolution of the Soviet Union.

2.4.1. The roots of the European Union

The legacy of the Second World War had brought the desire of many countries for peaceful coexistence among States, along with the maintenance of peace among the peoples to avoid new nationalist drifts. French politician Jean Monnet, who is considered one of the founding fathers of Europe, saw cooperation between European states as a guarantee of widespread prosperity for all peoples⁶⁸. The latter, together with the then French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, advanced the Schuman Declaration, a proposal for the creation of a community in which member states could share their respective steel and coal

⁶⁷ Black, *The Cold War: A Military History*, 134.

⁶⁸ Robert Godby, and Stephanie B. Anderson, “European Integration: The Road to the EU and the Euro.” In *Greek Tragedy, European Odyssey: The Politics and Economics of the Eurozone Crisis*, 1st ed., 25–44. Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016, 25.

production. Following the Treaty of Paris of 1951, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was thus born, which immediately presented itself as an economic pact between France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg and Belgium. The main purpose on which the ECSC was founded was the implementation of a common policy for the production of the materials of interest, together with the common distribution prices of the same. However, it was already in 1949, with the Treaty of London establishing the Council of Europe, that the various countries began to take the first steps towards the creation of a real European community⁶⁹. Italy, one of the very first signatories of all treaties aimed at a European integration, was also encouraging the possible establishment of the European Defence Community (ECD), whose treaty was signed in 1952 but which France ultimately opposed.

It was also Italy that presented itself as one of the most important entities supporting the birth of the European Union from the earliest years. Indeed, President Alcide De Gasperi is still considered one of the pillars and founding fathers of the European community as he immediately understood the inestimable value of a capillary integration between states. In his speech before the Assembly of the Council of Europe, held in December 1951, De Gasperi underlined the need and will of the peninsula to promote and consolidate a sense of solidarity not only from a military-defensive point of view but also "on a human level", in such a way as to achieve "the development of an active fraternity" among neighbouring countries⁷⁰. The entry of Italy into the European project also stimulated the growth of the country by the opening of the borders to international trade, thus increasing imports and commercial exchanges within the continent.

The prospect of creating a European community was not, however, immediately shared by all states. Charles de Gaulle's France, for instance, was reluctant to accept the sharing of the leader status with the other founding countries, after the entry into force of the Treaties of Rome in 1957 establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC, now EURATOM). De Gaulle's strategy of political interruption resulted in the "empty chair" policy of 1965. After a failed first proposal for the financing of the Community budget, a second proposal was advanced, but France effectively boycotted the Council by "not taking its chair", therefore renouncing to its representation within the organ. The Community thus organised two extraordinary Council sessions in 1966 in Luxembourg (remembered as the "Luxembourg Compromise") which implemented the right for Member States to veto matters of national interest⁷¹. These decisions, according to Robert Godby and Stephanie B. Anderson's analysis, ultimately prevented the formation of a true European federation as envisioned by the late De Gasperi⁷².

Over the years, the European project continued with its development, also including the new countries that each year presented the formal request for entry into the community. The first organs of the European framework would later be followed by the founding treaties that will effectively transform it into today's Union. With the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht, the areas of competence of the project widened, and the

⁶⁹ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 141.

⁷⁰ Lorenzini, 480-481.

⁷¹ Godby and Anderson, "European Integration: The Road to the EU and the Euro," 27.

⁷² Ibid.

concepts of justice, judicial cooperation, common security, and community citizenship were included in the European discourse. In 1999 the Treaty of Amsterdam entered into force and strengthened the powers of the European Parliament and the overall authority of the Union, once again allowing for the expansion of cooperation. The 2007 Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force two years later, enhanced the structure of the Union by creating new primary roles (such as the permanent President of the European Council who was no longer selected on a rotating basis) and improving the balance of powers between the Union and the Member States.

2.5. Internal migration: from South to North

The rapid and strong Italian industrial development concentrated mainly in the northern areas of the country brought about a critical social consequence from the migratory point of view: the beginning of massive interregional mobility. The greater concentration of small, medium, and large companies in the North attracted, especially since the 1950s, a substantial number of workers from the South who were willing to leave their lands and settle in the industrial areas of Italy. In 1931 and 1939 the first laws were passed to prevent the change of residence for possible workers interested in moving from South to North, which were resolutely circumvented. In fact, it is estimated that in 1937 about 1.5 million southerners left for the burgeoning northern cities. Furthermore, many companies such as Fiat took advantage of the great availability of low-cost labour from the South by immediately hiring thousands of workers, thus establishing a business strategy that would last for the following twenty years.⁷³ Within their studies, Audenino and Tirabassi underline the difference between the departures of Italian migrants to continental destinations – such as those regulated through bilateral agreements between the Italian government and Germany, Switzerland and Belgium – which were usually of a temporary nature, and the movements from South to North which became mainly definitive in time⁷⁴. This had a remarkable consequence on the demographics of the northern cities, especially of Turin and Milan, which recorded an increase of about half a million inhabitants each over the course of almost sixteen years⁷⁵. The provinces surrounding these large industrial poles were also affected by the ongoing mobility, witnessing an 80% increase in their population.

The first interregional migrations initially excluded the departure of landless peasants or individuals totally in poverty as there was a need to cover travel expenses. The rural bourgeoisie thus became the protagonist of the initial movements from South to North⁷⁶. In planning their departure, the first migrants were usually aided by cooperatives to which they paid a registration fee and which helped them find employment in the thriving companies of the North. The cooperatives, comparable according to Audenino

⁷³ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 146-149.

⁷⁴ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 147.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 146.

and Tirabassi to a form of illegal hiring practice (the *caporalato*), were finally banned in 1960 because they did not guarantee security and employment contracts to those who applied for jobs.⁷⁷ The southern areas of exodus, mainly the areas of Puglia and Calabria, originally witnessed young celibate males leaving, who were coming from the "bone" areas⁷⁸ of the regions (hence the most mountainous or hilly territories) and possessing a low, if not non-existent, level of education. The absence of requests for specific qualifications not only contributed to the influx towards the North of an increasingly large number of migrants but also allowed companies to fully occupy work sectors that the citizens of Northern Italy did not want to be employed in. Unlike these, those who formed the second wave of internal migration, starting from about 1965 to 1975, brought with them a higher level of education and professional training, often clashing in the arrival areas with migrants of the previous waves.

The reasons for the mobility of such a large number of workers – and then families – of the South were essentially linked to the living and working conditions in their hometowns and villages, which were almost always characterised by instability and precariousness. As formerly stated, despite the initiatives proposed by the Italian government in favour of the redevelopment of the territories of the South, with particular attention to the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* and the financial policy of 1957, the territory failed to record consistent growth and employment rates. The lands of the South, not as profitable as those of the North, thus ended up being abandoned by thousands of men, and this contributed, according to the sociologist Nazareno Panichella, to the "feminisation, southernization and ageing" of agriculture⁷⁹. In spite of this, several scholars have in fact noticed how the majority of Southern Italians initially tried to find work in the neighbouring areas, but after the experience of exhausting working conditions and meagre salaries they decided to move to the most industrialised areas of the country. Furthermore, it is vital to accentuate that the work path of Italian migrants usually began with some experience in the construction sector, to then move to factory work. Many southerners also found employment in other different sectors, such as restaurants, hotels, and small businesses. Others, instead, approached crime or prostitution⁸⁰.

⁷⁷ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 150.

⁷⁸ Nazareno Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord. Migrazioni interne e società italiana dal dopoguerra ad oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2014, 23.

⁷⁹ Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord*, 24.

⁸⁰ Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord*, 32.

Prosp. 11.3 – IMMIGRATI DA ALTRE REGIONI
Per 100 residenti nella regione

REGIONI DI RESIDENZA	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951
Piemonte-Valle d'Aosta	3,8	5,4	5,4	10,2	13,5
Liguria	15,6	17,7	21,7	25,8	26,6
Lombardia	4,0	5,8	5,1	9,5	11,7
Trentino-Alto Adige . . . . .	....	....	4,3	7,3	10,6
Veneto-Friuli	1,9	2,6	2,4	3,9	3,7
Emilia-Romagna	3,4	4,3	4,6	5,7	6,0
Marche	3,4	4,1	3,5	4,9	4,9
Toscana	3,8	3,9	4,4	5,7	7,0
Umbria	5,6	5,7	5,6	7,9	8,5
Lazio	19,9	19,3	20,2	20,1	22,7
Campania	3,3	4,1	3,4	4,9	3,9
Abruzzi e Molise	2,1	2,6	2,1	3,5	3,9
Puglia	2,7	2,8	2,2	3,3	3,5
Basilicata	3,5	4,9	2,4	4,8	5,0
Calabria	1,4	2,0	1,4	2,7	2,3
Sicilia	1,2	1,2	1,1	1,7	1,7
Sardegna	2,9	2,3	1,9	3,2	3,4
ITALIA	4,0	4,8	4,7	7,3	8,2

Table 6. Immigrants from other Italian regions (on 100 residents within region) Years 1901-1951
(Source: Istituto Centrale di Statistica, 1965)

How were southern immigrants received in the North? The existing literature concerning interregional migratory phenomena recounts a real "clash" between the citizens of Southern and Northern Italy⁸¹. The integration of migrants in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in the earlier days, was difficult, especially for those who arrived from lands and villages outside the large southern cities. These, in fact, were openly despised for their limited ability to speak Italian correctly and for the constant use of regional dialects⁸². Episodes of racism, such as the prohibitions of entry to the southerners in public and private places, and the perception of immigrants as delinquents or criminals contributed to the sense of discrimination and ghettoization of the southern communities in the North, which often closed in on themselves and they kept alive the traditions and lifestyles of the areas from which they started. The difficulties also expanded towards the housing conditions of migrants: in Milan, for example, the areas most populated by southerners were the northern suburbs of the city, while in Turin and Genoa, the other two cities constituting together with the first the "industrial triangle" of the country, southern workers and their families were forced to stay in basements, shacks, and abandoned ruins⁸³. The offspring of immigrants also suffered from this type of segregation as the children of immigrants were often placed in separate classes from the children of the North.

In essence, internal migrations were part of a phenomenon of mobility that arose at the beginning of the Italian economic reconstruction, and which suffered a setback in the mid-1960s, only to be reduced in the

⁸¹ Panichella *Meridionali al Nord*, 26.

⁸² Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord*, 24-25.

⁸³ Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord*, 28.

following decade.⁸⁴ Their presence and existence were and still are fundamental in order to understand the passage of the Italian peninsula from a country destroyed by war to a flourishing industrial power, as well as providing useful data on the reshuffling of the population that Italy witnessed during those years.

Furthermore, from the 1960s, the construction of migratory networks became fundamental, allowing more people to emigrate from South to North and often settling permanently in the areas of arrival.

2.5.1. The role of women in migration

Fundamental to consider in the analysis of Italian migration since the Second World War is the role of women. The female migratory experience, both during the years of the great migration and immediately after the Second World War, was for a long time overlooked by the main historical accounts concerning mobility although it represented an indispensable focal point for the development of Italy, albeit numerically smaller than male migration. During the late nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century, it is in fact estimated that women accounted for about 20% of total expatriates, and then came to be about 30% in the following years until 1962⁸⁵. However, the data presented in the existing literature are still uncertain today and are more the result of estimates due to the inadequacy of migration statistics and analyses of the periods taken into consideration.

A vast number of women initially used to leave their homelands mainly to join their husbands in the places where they had settled. Some of the migrating women who landed in the United States during the Great Migration, as examined by American historian Donna R. Gabaccia, succeeded in finding an occupation in their new setting, by working in garment factories or as aids to commercial activities of their husbands. Nonetheless, the "abandoned women"⁸⁶, hence those who at the time decided not to follow their spouses and to remain in the Italian *Mezzogiorno*, had a pivotal role as they contributed to an economic, social, and cultural evolution in their rural lands while maintaining their traditional duties as wives, mothers, and carers. Women were not responsible anymore solely for the upbringing of children, but they were also handling the financial aspects of their husbands' relocation, a fundamental feature that permitted the actual emigration of men. In opposition to the prediction that these "white widows" would generate chaos or dishonor their families by engaging in adulterous sexual encounters, consequently undermining the manliness of their distant partners, these women managed to overthrow the perception of weakness and dependence they were long victims of⁸⁷.

⁸⁴ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 148.

⁸⁵ Giovanni Marrocchi, Cesare Lemmi, and Pilade Di Rienzo. "Parte Quarta: Andamento Temporale e Caratteristiche Del Movimento Migratorio." In *Sviluppo Della Popolazione Italiana Dal 1861 Al 1961* 17, 1965th ed., 17:635–86. 8. Roma, Italy: Istituto Centrale di Statistica, 1965, 644.

⁸⁶ Linda Reeder, "Migrating Men and Abandoned Women", in *Widows in White: Migration and the Transformation of Rural Italian Women, Sicily, 1880-1920*. Studies in Gender and History. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 57.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

It is interesting to note that even during the second post-war period, and especially in the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of women moved mainly with the aim of family reunification, hence after the initial departure of the family breadwinners (usually men) looking for work away from their homelands. Despite this, the research of the sociologist Nazareno Panichella indicates that the transfer of women from the South, especially in the more industrialised cities of Northern Italy, often involved their almost immediate entry into the job market. In the 1950s, women who emigrated from the South thus found themselves carrying out work duties mainly in the domestic services, or in tailoring or crafts sectors, unlike northern women who used to stay at home thanks to the increase in their husbands' wages⁸⁸. Starting from the 1960s, however, there was a radical change in the professional role of emigrant women. Their entry into industries and factories was gradually enlarged, and they acquired a new, important sense of independence, thus emancipating themselves from the customary idea of a woman economically subordinate to her partner.

Albeit the predominance of male migrants has permeated the general discourse on migration, it is thus nonetheless important to include an analysis of the significant mobility of women into the general framework of Italian migration. This is proven to be true especially within the period of time going from the end of the Second World War until the Sixties, when the female population began moving its first steps towards establishing its voice as a crucial part of the Italian society, finally earning the recognition of new rights, such as voting rights achieved in 1946 and the right not to automatically leave the workplace when married legalised in 1963. Overall, it is therefore vital and functional to incorporate a deeper outlook on the conditions of female migrants within the broader discussion regarding the all-encompassing revolution that Italy was experiencing during those years.

2.5.2. Migration paths within Europe

The construction of a European community that would bring together and align the majority of the continent's countries swiftly became a lifeline for the many Italians who decided to seek their fortune elsewhere while remaining on the continent. From 1946 until 1970, almost 4 million Italians headed towards European destinations, preferring the areas of France, Switzerland, and Germany⁸⁹. The analysis carried out by Audenino and Tirabassi shows how in fact the percentage of migrants to European countries was significantly higher than the choice of transoceanic destinations. After 1960, the share of Italian emigrants aiming for European countries amounted to about 80% of all Italian mobility⁹⁰. The main regions of origin of migrants in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as in previous decades, were those of the Centre-South, with the largest groups coming from Sicily, Puglia, Campania e Calabria.

⁸⁸ Panichella, *Meridionali al Nord*, 32-33.

⁸⁹ ISTAT, "Altreitalie" in Audenino, 138.

⁹⁰ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 136.

Prosp. 10.1 - ESPATRI PER AREA GEOGRAFICA DI DESTINAZIONE

Dati percentuali

PERIODI	ESPATRI VERSO PAESI EXTRAEUROPEI				ESPATRI VERSO PAESI EUROPEI			
	Ripartizioni statistiche							
	I	II	III	Totale	I	II	III	Totale
1876-1900	21,9	26,7	51,4	100,0	29,5	63,8	6,7	100,0
1901-1920	11,3	13,5	75,2	100,0	33,8	55,2	11,0	100,0
1921-1940	13,4	25,4	61,2	100,0	37,1	50,5	12,4	100,0
1958-1962	4,0	15,2	80,8	100,0	7,7	26,0	66,3	100,0

(1) *I Ripartizione*: Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta, Liguria, Lombardia.

II Ripartizione: Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Alto Lazio (Rieti e Viterbo), Roma e provincia.

III Ripartizione: Lazio merid. (Frosinone e Latina), Abruzzi e Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna.

Table 7. Expatriates by destination area - European and non-European countries (in percentage) Years 1876-1962 (Source: Istituto Centrale di Statistica, 1965)

As already specified in the previous pages, the Italian government of Alcide De Gasperi primarily aimed at entering into bilateral agreements with other countries since the first years after the end of the Second World War. Many governments were in fact in search of manpower that would be useful for the reconstruction of the cities destroyed by the conflict. In addition to the case of Switzerland, which welcomed the majority of departing Italians from the 1940s, the case of France was also of considerable interest, with which Italy had signed a bilateral agreement as early as 1947. The country, territorially united with Italy through the chain of the Alps, soon began to attract different groups of workers originally arriving from Veneto, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, and Friuli. In the 1960s, it became a popular destination also for a consistent number of southerners. In 1959, in fact, 59% of Italian immigrants on French soil came from the southern regions of the peninsula⁹¹. In the immediate post-war period, the key working sectors for Italians abroad were factories and mines, whereas after the mid-1950s the concentration of employment shifted mainly towards public and private construction. In this sphere, Italians also had the opportunity to aspire to more important job positions, thus becoming protagonists of prospects for social mobility. A further cause of this was the higher level of education characterising the new immigrants, who unlike their compatriots who emigrated from 1947 were more technically prepared and more inclined to perform demanding tasks. The reception of the locals with respect to Italian immigrants was also different than in the past, positively supported by the presence and foundation of numerous immigration institutions. Overall, the existence of Italians in France since the immediate post-war period and the territorial proximity of the two countries ensured the new waves of Italian migrants a greater ease regarding integration into the French community. According to Audenino and Tirabassi, a narrative of "double belonging" of Italian emigrants quickly developed with respect to their country of origin, Italy, and their country of adoption, France. A new

⁹¹Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 139.

identity, the "*francitalité*"⁹², thus arose.

The migration analysis of the Fifties and Sixties was also enriched with the increasingly consistent experience of the repatriation of Italians abroad, of which a careful examination is useful to better understand the mobility of those years. Being mainly of a temporary nature, unlike the intercontinental one, European mobility was constantly characterized by high rates of return. Several studies on the matter show that especially in areas of Northern Europe, such as Great Britain, the return rate amounted to around 80% after 1960 and almost 100% after 1970⁹³. In 1951, a considerable number of Italian workers selected and sent by local immigration centres regularly travelled to England. Together with the difficulties encountered in the various English working sectors with respect to the salary and the quality of work, the Italian emigrants were immediately perceived as a threat by the British trade unions and were ultimately forced to repatriate. Thus, many of them moved to the Belgian mines, while others saw the solution to expulsion from Great Britain in the enlisting in the French foreign legion. In fact, the latter would have allowed after five years the acquisition of a job in France and citizenship by naturalization⁹⁴. Returns to Europe principally affected Switzerland, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, with an average of 67.000, 20.000 and 11.000 annual repatriations respectively⁹⁵. The returns to Italy concerning emigrants in transnational territories were also of high relevance. In Argentina, for example, contrarily to what the country experienced in previous years, a decrease in arrivals was observed at the end of the 1950s (with about 100.000 new emigrants in the 1950s-1960s) and a consistent average of 6.000 repatriations per year.⁹⁶

By thoroughly analysing the existing data on the mobility of Italians to different countries of the continent, it is therefore possible to see how the process of European integration facilitated the movement of Italian migrants both for the greater ease of finding a relatively stable job, and for the overall positive integration within arrival areas. More generally, the total number of expatriates to European and non-European countries amounted to about 5 and a half million Italians from the beginning of the 1950s to 1970, thus baptising the latter period, according to Audenino and Tirabassi, as the final expression of the history of Italian migration. The latter moved in fact towards depletion in the early Seventies especially with respect to overseas destinations, even becoming statistically irrelevant according to various scholarly accounts⁹⁷.

⁹² Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 141.

⁹³ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 136.

⁹⁴ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 137-139.

⁹⁵ Giovanni Marrocchi, Cesare Lemmi, and Pilade Di Rienzo. "Parte Quarta: Andamento Temporale e Caratteristiche Del Movimento Migratorio." In *Sviluppo Della Popolazione Italiana Dal 1861 Al 1961*, Istituto centrale di statistica, 1965, 650.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 133.

Chapter 3. 1970-1994: The end of the First Republic

3.1. The Years of Lead

The advent of the Seventies marked a turning point in Italy with respect to its societal, political, and economical frameworks. The previous experience of the *Sessantotto* paved the way for the beginning of a tormented season of violence and mobilisation that baptised the entire decade as that of the “years of lead” (“*anni di piombo*”). The infamous event that inaugurated the “strategy of tension”⁹⁸ was the attack that occurred on December 12th, 1969, in the city of Milan. The main offices of the National Agricultural Bank (*Banca Nazionale dell’Agricoltura*) were indeed the location for the *Piazza Fontana* bombing, as a detonated explosive killed seventeen people and wounded 88 more. The terrorist attack provoked a sense of dismay and bewilderment in the minds and spirits of the public opinion, also throwing a shadow on the political élite of the time. The act was the work of several far-right groups, which would continue to stain their hands with the blood of numerous successive massacres. In fact, in the summer of 1970, violent riots began in the southern city of Reggio Calabria due to the initial recognition of Catanzaro as the capital of the newly formed region of Calabria, and due to the request for work and protection by the State⁹⁹. Additionally, 1974 witnessed the massacre on the Italicus Express train, where 12 people died and 48 remained wounded, and of the infamous *Piazza della Loggia* bombing, where an anti-fascist protest was halted by a terrorist attack that killed eight people and injured more than 100. The wave of “black” terrorism ascribable to groups pertaining to the far-right movement is what would then define the violent campaign of “*stragismo*”¹⁰⁰.

Although the massacres of the Seventies were almost entirely the work of neo-fascist organizations, even the Italian far left was the protagonist, initially through the *Lotta Armata* movement and street mobilisations, of the dark period that Italy found itself undergoing. In this regard, the historian Aurelio Lepre distinguishes black terrorism from red terrorism by underlining how the former was selective in decisions regarding places and targets, unlike the latter which used to act indiscriminately and served as a useful tool for new forms of class struggle¹⁰¹. However, the violent scenario of the far left soon focused on the group of the Red Brigades, which arose in 1970. Its members, most of whom had experiences of leading student clashes in universities, were the protagonists of a series of kidnappings and murders of leading figures of the Italian political, industrial, and economic life. Among the many, the most famous event took place on March 16th, 1978, when the Red Brigades abducted the former Premier and leading exponent of the DC Aldo Moro in Rome. He remained hostage to the Red Brigades for 55 days before being killed and found on the 9th of May of the same year in the trunk of a Renault car, symbolically equidistant from the headquarters of the

⁹⁸ Diana Pinto, “Sociology, Politics, and Society in Postwar Italy 1950-1980.” *Theory and Society* 10, no. 5 (1981), 691.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 279.

¹⁰¹ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 277-280.

PCI and that of the DC. According to various historiographical analyses, the murder of DC President Aldo Moro may be understood both as consequence and as final stage of one of the most significant political strategies of the Seventies: the "historic compromise". Proposed in 1973 by the Communist Party secretary Enrico Berlinguer, the plan revolved around a policy of formal alliances between the Catholic-conservative forces and the communist-socialist ones with the main aim of collaborating towards the overall prosperity of the country. While failing to join the country's governing forces throughout the decade, the PCI nonetheless acted as a solid aid for the executive governments of those years through parliamentary votes and overall support, such as the decision to abstain in the vote for the Andreotti government of 1976¹⁰². Given the effective cooperation between the governing élite and the Italian Communist Party, the years between 1976 and 1979 would also be later recognised as those where a "national solidarity" was enacted¹⁰³. The substantial rapprochement of the communists to the conservatives led nonetheless many to further engage in extremist groups for fear of a progressive and dangerous homogenisation of political beliefs. From a political point of view, despite this, the Seventies can be identified as the years of the greatest electoral success of the PCI. This was mainly due to Berlinguer's alluring personality, in addition to the revolutionary civil achievements such as the divorce law in 1974 and the abortion law in 1978. These important changes were also due to the transformation of the Italian society and the germination of a new collective mentality no longer entirely based on class memberships, inheriting from the period of the *Sessantotto* a different vision on issues considered as proscribed a few years earlier. The 1970s would also represent the halt to the steady economic growth that the country began to experience in the early Fifties. This occurred due to the worldwide oil crisis of 1973 that struck almost all countries depending on petrol importation. Countries such as Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela, that were part of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), controlled over a large part of the worldwide oil production and thus decided on a rise in prices that eventually resulted in lower production levels. These decisions thus provoked a global economic crisis that steered the general economy towards a heavy recession a few years later¹⁰⁴. As an importing country, Italy, too, suffered from the consequences aroused by these oil production and distribution choices. After 1973, the country experienced some brief consequences, such as a rise in inflation rates, the reduction of public illumination, limitations on private transport – which consequently led to a crisis of the motor vehicle industry – and a growth of the general attention towards projects for nuclear power plants¹⁰⁵. The GDP, investments, and the national industrial production also suffered the outbreak of the oil crisis, the former witnessing a fall in percentage of -3.7%, whereas the others experiencing a fall in percentage of more than -9 %¹⁰⁶. Additionally, the economic crisis aroused by the OPEC countries' decision also facilitated the very first scandals for corruption that will become pivotal in the Italian political framework of the 1980s and

¹⁰² Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 263.

¹⁰³ Edmondo Berselli, "The Crisis and Transformation of Italian Politics," *Daedalus* 130, no. 3 (2001): 1–24, 5.

¹⁰⁴ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 281.

¹⁰⁵ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 260.

¹⁰⁶ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 270.

1990s.

3.1.1. The long 1980s

The wave of violence and unrest that the country experienced since 1969 was protracted towards the beginning of the “long Eighties”, a revolutionary season in the chronological history of Italy. It is indeed in the morning hours of August 2nd, 1980, that a bomb detonated in the Bologna Centrale railway station killing 85 people and injuring over 200. As of today, the Bologna massacre (*strage di Bologna*), allegedly executed by the neo-fascist organisation Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari (NAR), is considered the deadliest terrorist attack ever occurred on Italian soil. A different event whose consequences would be also felt throughout the following years is the discovery of the Masonic lodge Propaganda Due, better known as the P2. Along with its leader, Licio Gelli, the secret anti-communism organisation counted more than 900 of the most prominent personalities within the higher ranks of the Italian society. Among the accusations for money laundering and speculative building, the P2 was also found to be responsible for the illegal financing of the Christian Democracy and for having close and frequent contacts with the chief exponents of the spheres of politics and finance, such as seven-time Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti¹⁰⁷. The elaboration of networks spreading patronage across political system will in fact find its pinnacle in the following decade into the notorious Tangentopoli, or Bribesville, case.

The political realm throughout the Eighties was nonetheless centred on the ascent to power of Benedetto “Bettino” Craxi, who became the secretary of the PSI in July of 1976, and who then served as the first socialist President of the Council of Ministers twice from August 1983 to March 1987. During his role as head of the PSI, Craxi primarily aimed at reinforcing the identity and methods of the Socialist Party by vehemently positioning it in contrast with the PCI. Eventually, the latter would suffer from the socialist political victories, and despite a brief wave of consensus that overwhelmed the party when Enrico Berlinguer expired in 1984 it slowly but steadily began to decline. Additionally, a meeting between Craxi and Berlinguer in 1979, in which the former underlined the need for a “unitary reform” that could encompass all political forces for the benefit of the country, is one salient piece of the technique of decisionism that Craxi enacted throughout his entire political career¹⁰⁸. In terms of economy, Bettino Craxi was responsible for the successful issuance of counter-inflationary measures that led the country towards a higher GDP percentage and a lower level of inflation¹⁰⁹.

Notwithstanding the persistent economic problems, the expansion of the shadow economy and the difficult situation concerning salaries and retribution, the 1980s represented a flourishing period

¹⁰⁷ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 296-297.

¹⁰⁸ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 295.

¹⁰⁹ Berselli, “The Crisis and Transformation of Italian Politics,” 3.

characterised by the growth of overall well-being and the boost on qualitative reconstruction of the country. The emergence of new technologies and the scientific advancements of that period were indeed accompanied by the new industrial development of centre-north regions such as Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, and Veneto, all of which will be included in the wider territory baptised as that of the “Third Italy”. However, a central economic issue during the Eighties was to be found in the soaring phenomenon of indebtedness. According to Lepre, the level of public debt in 1987 indeed represented more than 90% of the Italian GDP¹¹⁰. The reasons for such an expansive rise lie in the active decision of the government, as more investment aided the ruling class of the 1980s in the acquisition of a wider consensus. Along with it, the contraction of inflation and the economic well-being of the population influenced purchase decisions and stimulated consumption. The Italian population, fragmented by class differences and social struggles before, finally began to witness the fading of the borders that had long designated different social groups, allowing for a kind of homogenisation into an all-encompassing middle class.

3.2. The “new Cold War” and the fall of the USSR

After a brief state of relaxation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the early Sixties, the escalation of the Vietnam War throughout the 1970s ultimately altered the relative equilibrium that the world benefitted from for a while. The fight occurred between North and South Vietnam, respectively aided militarily by the USSR and the United States. Since its beginning, the conflict generated a strong, widespread response from the social movements arisen in 1967 and 1968 and contributed to the formation of the general notion of “society of dissent” that characterised both the Sixties and the Seventies¹¹¹. The outburst of mobilisation against the war, which lasted for twenty years, eventually led to the formal withdrawal of American troops from the city of Saigon in 1973 and the entrance of Vietnamese communists¹¹². Nonetheless, the atrocities of the war left a profound mark on the global population of the time and determined a new deterioration of the relationship between the two powers. The phase of the USA-USSR confrontation that occurred in the Seventies and early Eighties was thus baptised as the “new” or “second Cold War”. A symbolic escalation of the latter season of events is represented by the 1978 Afghan War, whose motives lied in the forceful rise to power of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the consistent popular dissent which ultimately led to the burst of a civil war. While the USSR intervened in support of the seizing party, the United States arrived in 1979 to shield the country against the Communist menace. In the end, the development of the Afghan conflict began to highlight the first signs of the

¹¹⁰ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 315.

¹¹¹ Ralph B. Levering, *The Cold War: A Post-Cold War History*, 3rd ed. (Wiley Blackwell, 2016), <https://www.perlego.com/book/9319/the-cold-war-the-45year-struggle-against-communism-pdf>, 6.

¹¹² Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 252.

weakening of the Soviet Union¹¹³.

Following the well-received end of US involvement in the Vietnamese conflict, the American society was once again shaken by the resignation of President Richard Nixon in 1974 subsequent to the Watergate scandal. While the election of President Jimmy Carter saw the pursuance of a more pacifist approach towards questions of foreign policy, it was the presidential victory of Ronald Reagan in 1981 that truly caused the reawakening of the tensions between the two main powers. The neo-elected President's political strategy was indeed centred on a tougher approach towards the enemy, and highly focused on the increase in military spending and on the defeat of Communism everywhere¹¹⁴. Unlike the previous president, Reagan also amassed important support from the British Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Pope John Paul II, once again proving the strong anti-communist perception of the West¹¹⁵.

Meanwhile, the USSR found itself progressively more isolated on the international stage and started suffering numerous losses and issues in its economic situation. The Soviet economy soon found itself on the brink of collapse, and that was accentuated by an arms race that further deteriorated the position of the USSR. Given the absence of enough agricultural resources to reach self-sufficiency, the Union was also forced to resort to substantial importation, particularly arriving from the USA¹¹⁶. An overall crisis of the Soviet bloc therefore began to materialise. A key episode that profoundly scarred the historical course of events was the election of Michail Sergeevič Gorbačëv as Secretary of the CPSU in 1985, who profoundly revolutionised the *modus operandi* of the USSR as he aimed at implementing a democratic system within the Union without abandoning the project of maintaining an egalitarian economy¹¹⁷. His entire political project was based on the *glasnost*, the transparency of the true social, political, and economic situation of the USSR, that would be helpful in order to implement the *perestrojka*, hence the rebuilding of the entire Union. Since the beginning, he likewise aimed at pursuing a closer and more open relationship with the United States. A series of encounters with Reagan followed with friendlier tones and with the decision of both leaders to finally endorse a policy of disarmament¹¹⁸. Moreover, Gorbačëv decided to avoid further expansion of the USSR, to modify the composition of the CPSU, and to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1988. Such decisions of the new Soviet Secretary eventually accentuated the isolation of the USSR within the international context, and the very first departures of communist regimes under its sphere of influence arose, with Poland being the first "satellite State" to become a democratic state¹¹⁹. On November 9th, 1989, the Berlin Wall separating East Germany from the West ultimately fell, sanctioning the reunification of the country, the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 and, finally, the end of the Cold War that had menaced the equilibrium of the world for almost 45 years.

¹¹³ Ralph B. Levering, *The Cold War: A Post-Cold War History*, 6.

¹¹⁴ Black, 173.

¹¹⁵ Black, 174.

¹¹⁶ Black, 187.

¹¹⁷ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 321.

¹¹⁸ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 319.

¹¹⁹ Levering, *The Cold War: A Post-Cold War History*, 6.

3.3. 1992-1994: the end of the First Republic

As the entire world had to cope with the new geopolitical situation, Italy's reception of the collapse of the USSR was of a very negative nature giving the international importance of its Communist party. The PCI thus entered in a state of progressive decline due to the close contact it maintained with the fallen Soviet Union, along with the pre-existing difficulties that it faced throughout the Eighties given Bettino Craxi's desire to surpass the Communist party and impose the PSI as the main leftist party. Craxi's antagonism towards the PCI led to the formation of a new alliance among the PSI, the DC and other three secular parties: the Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI), the Italian Liberal Party (PLI) and the Italian Republican Party (PRI). Such coalition resulted in the birth of the "*Pentapartito*" system. The latter, based on the subscription of an informal pact between Bettino Craxi, Giulio Andreotti, and Arnaldo Forlani (the three main exponents of the PSI and the DC, respectively), ensured the alternance of governmental powers among the DC and the other secular signatory parties. Nonetheless, the decision to secure the governmental majority avoiding the entrance of the PCI soon elicited a sense of immobility of the Italian political system¹²⁰, averting the crucial participation of the electorate and fuelling the feeling of distrust towards the government. The scepticism with respect to the political system was visible in the low participation in the national elections of 1987 and in the European elections in 1989, where 24.9% of total voters and one out of four voters, respectively, abstained or invalidated their choice¹²¹. In 1991, the Italian Communist Party finally dissolved to split into two different factions. The Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) was born from the separation, as well as the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) which incorporated the most extremist members of the original party¹²². In the meantime, the political environment in Italy began to assist to the birth of new political parties primarily endorsing the independence of the Padania region and Northern Italy. The most prominent was the Lega Nord, a federation of regional parties founded in 1991 by Umberto Bossi. As it rapidly grew and amassed a relatively wide support, it placed itself as a menace to the long-standing hegemony of the Christian Democracy, which soon started to show difficulties in enduring the transformation that Italian politics was undergoing¹²³.

Besides the crisis that was tormenting the political sphere of the peninsula, the early 1990s were also characterised by a series of crucial events that dramatically overturned the deep-rooted certainties of the Italian socio-political reality. 1992 is indeed the year in which the biggest corruption scandal in Europe came to light. The "*Mani Pulite*" ("clean hands") trial on bribing included all of the principal Italian political and industrial personalities, among which appeared Giulio Andreotti and Bettino Craxi. The investigation uncovered a matured and organised network of corruption based on political favours in exchange for

¹²⁰ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 327.

¹²¹ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 333.

¹²² Berselli, "The Crisis and Transformation of Italian Politics," 7-10.

¹²³ Berselli, "The Crisis and Transformation of Italian Politics," 9.

political party funding from entrepreneurs and industrialists¹²⁴. The “Bribesville” scandal (“*Tangentopoli*”) therefore generated an unstoppable and unretrievable loss in the credibility of all political forces and led to the accusation of leading politicians like Andreotti and the retreat of others away from the Italian territory, such as Craxi’s escape to Hammameth, Tunisia. Ultimately, the dissolution of the Christian Democracy and the Italian Socialist Party followed, spelling the end of a long era within the history of Italy.

The political upheaval that the country experienced was accompanied by general institutional crisis due to the intensification of the role of Mafia. Present within the territory of Sicily for many decades, the criminal organisation began spreading homogeneously throughout the entire peninsula during the Seventies, also beginning to forge stronger relationships with exponents of the State and the government. The State-Mafia Pact (“*Trattativa Stato-Mafia*”) was therefore one of the vital events that also contributed to the fall of the longstanding political élite. The ill-fated pinnacle of the contacts between the State and the *Cosa Nostra* criminals was reached in 1992, when the Capaci bombing of May 23rd and the Via D’Amelio bombing of July 19th killed respectively Judge Giovanni Falcone and Judge Paolo Borsellino, two of the members of the investigative Antimafia Pool and the main national symbols of the fight against the Sicilian criminal organisation.

Overall, the crisis of the political parties, accompanied by the fade-out of their institutional credibility, and the 1993 electoral reform named “*Mattarellum*” that instituted a mixed majoritarian system of voting led President of the Republic Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to prematurely dissolve the Chambers of Parliament and call new elections. The polls of March 27th and 28th indeed saw the affirmation of the newly born Forza Italia party founded by television magnate Silvio Berlusconi¹²⁵. The latter and his allies indeed managed to obtain 366 seats, the largest majority despite its brief existence within the political realm. The existence of a new political bipolarism and the critical events that were scattered throughout the late Eighties and the beginning of the Nineties confirmed, in 1994, the official ending of the First Italian Republic.

3.4. Attracting migration: Italy and its “open doors”

While in the immediate post-war period Italy was deeply involved in the experience of mass mobility after the Great Emigration of the late 1800s until the 1920s, between the Seventies and the Nineties of the twentieth century the phenomenon acquired completely different connotations, carrying new trends that revolutionised the history of migration in Italy.

¹²⁴ Lepre, *Storia Della Prima Repubblica*, 342.

¹²⁵ Berselli, “The Crisis and Transformation of Italian Politics,” 14.

ANNI	TOTALE		EUROPA		PAESI EXTRAUROPEI	
	Espatriati	Rimpatriati	Espatriati	Rimpatriati	Espatriati	Rimpatriati
1861-70	<u>1.210.400</u>	....	992.720	....	217.680	....
1871-80	<u>1.175.960</u>	818.320	905.490	....	270.470	....
1881-90	<u>1.879.200</u>	....	929.200	....	950.000	....
1891-900	<u>2.834.730</u>	....	<u>1.288.000</u>	....	<u>1.546.730</u>	....
1901-10	<u>6.026.690</u>	....	<u>2.512.010</u>	....	<u>3.514.680</u>	<u>1.716.270</u>
1911-20	<u>3.828.070</u>	....	<u>1.696.450</u>	....	<u>2.131.620</u>	<u>1.209.170</u>
1921-30	<u>2.550.639</u>	<u>1.378.143</u>	<u>1.362.419</u>	752.382	<u>1.188.220</u>	625.761
1931-40	702.650	589.857	414.222	301.842	288.428	288.015
1946-50	<u>1.127.720</u>	380.008	638.492	297.126	489.228	82.882
1951-60	<u>2.937.406</u>	<u>1.323.589</u>	<u>1.767.116</u>	<u>1.004.404</u>	<u>1.170.290</u>	319.185
1961-70	<u>2.646.994</u>	<u>1.868.620</u>	<u>2.128.211</u>	<u>1.711.184</u>	518.783	157.436
1971-80	<u>1.082.340</u>	<u>1.121.503</u>	835.339	899.078	246.941	222.425
1981-90	687.302	695.711	528.945	488.081	158.357	207.629

Table 8. Expatriates and returnees by destination and origin - Data by decade 1861-1990 (absolute values) (Source: *Altretalia*)

From being a territory of emigration, the Italian peninsula soon became a receiving country, located in a strategic geographic position that would prioritise it as a coveted destination for fluxes arriving both from Northern Europe and from the African continent. According to researcher Eva Garau, the turning point within the analysis of mobility is represented by the 1973 oil crisis that shifted migration fluxes towards Mediterranean countries due to the strong economic stagnation that Northern Europe found itself undergoing¹²⁶. Not only did Italy transform into a welcoming country for individuals arriving from different areas, but it also attracted a salient number of its natives who left their homes to move elsewhere in the previous decades. As displayed in Table 8, from 1971 the number of expatriates is indeed significantly lower than that of the returnees, with a substantial difference between the returnees from European countries, which represent the majority, and those arriving from non-European territories. The arrival of such an extensive quantity of individuals in Italy was also favoured by a policy of open doors that the Italian government implemented during the Seventies, which did not entail a detailed regulation of the phenomenon but limited itself to accepting new entries and welcoming an increasing number of foreigners. Great contribution was in fact also given by the large-scale existence of a “shadow economy” allowing for workers a greater possibility of finding an occupation albeit without any safety or protection¹²⁷. It is however since the 1980s that greater needs will begin to arise with respect to the regulation of migratory flows, and the Italian legislation will be therefore significantly modified. The first Italian law on migration was indeed the Foschi Law (*Legge Foschi*, L 30/12/1986, n. 943), which entailed equal treatment and rights for Italian and

¹²⁶ Eva Garau, “Gli Studi Sull’Immigrazione: Il Caso Italiano,” *Rivista dell’Istituto di Storia dell’Europa Mediterranea*, II, 5 (December 2019): 123–48, 125.

¹²⁷ “Immigrazione Nell’Enciclopedia Treccani.” Enciclopedia Treccani.

<https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/immigrazione#:~:text=Bench%C3%A9%20il%20numero%20di%20stranieri,cifra%20di%205.013.215%20cittadini.>

non-Italian workers, besides authorising family reunifications¹²⁸. Initially, migrant men and women who arrived in Italy in the late 1960s used to occupy specific niches in the labour market. This was the case with migrants from Tunisia around 1968, who began working in the fishing sector due to the locals' abandonment of the countryside. Women, especially those arriving from countries such as Ethiopia, Cape Verde, and the Philippines, worked instead in the domestic sector.¹²⁹ In the mid-Seventies, however, more and more foreign workers began to converge in the agriculture and livestock sectors¹³⁰.

The events of the early Nineties, such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the war in former Yugoslavia brought about the movement of vast masses of migrants, especially travelling from Albania. In 1990, the Martelli Law (*Legge Martelli*, L 28/02/1990, n. 39) aimed at further regulating immigration processes by detailing the entry and rejection requirements and methods, also redefining the concept and status of a "refugee"¹³¹. As the phenomenon of migration widened, the discourse on diversity began to sprout, despite also carrying the negative perceptions that started to spread with respect to the foreigners' entry into the Italian territory. Significant in this respect was the murder in the southern city of Villa Literno, of the South African Jerry Essan Masslo in 1989¹³², a symbol of a new racist perspective on migration that began to proliferate. A pivotal piece of legislation that resulted from such events was the implementation of the Mancino Law (*Legge Mancino*, L 25/06/1993, n. 205) which for the first time condemned violent and intolerant gestures, actions, symbols, and slogans based on discrimination for racial, ethnic, religious or national reasons¹³³. A further, fundamental landmark within the analysis of Italian migration concerns the topic of citizenship. The first law on citizenship, dated 1912, was the first steppingstone towards the definition, almost ninety years later, of the double-citizenship right that would favour the arrival of descendants of Italian migrants in their territory of origin. The 1992 law on citizenship (L. 05/02/1992, n. 91) indeed permitted the acquisition of the double citizenship to any individual who had at least one grandparent who maintained their citizenship. It also reinforced the *jus sanguinis* citizenship, hence the nationality based on the citizenship or ethnicity of one or both parents, apart from the citizenship acquired through legal union and marriage¹³⁴. The decision to apply the *jus sanguinis*, "right of blood", instead of the *jus soli*, "right of land", stemmed from the linguistic and ethnic variety that Italy could boast, and the difficulties connected to it with respect to territorial and regional differences that would have allegedly complicated the acquisition of citizenship through territorial belonging.

In sum, throughout the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties the migratory history of Italy underwent an all-encompassing revolution. Having always represented a country of departure, in a few years it found itself representing an important pole for the return of the heirs of past migrants and for the arrival of new

¹²⁸ LEGGE 30 dicembre 1986, n. 943. Gazzetta Ufficiale. <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1987/01/12/086U0943/sg>

¹²⁹ Garau, "Gli Studi Sull'Immigrazione: Il Caso Italiano," 128.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ LEGGE 28 febbraio 1990, n. 39. Gazzetta Ufficiale. <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1990/02/28/090G0075/sg>

¹³² Garau, "Gli Studi Sull'Immigrazione: Il Caso Italiano," 132.

¹³³ LEGGE 25 giugno 1993, n. 205. Gazzetta Ufficiale. <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1993/06/26/093G0275/sg>

¹³⁴ Audenino e Tirabassi, *Migrazioni Italiane*, 159.

individuals enriching the diversity of the nation. The legislation elaborated during the last decades of the twentieth century thus laid the foundations for a true Italian immigration policy, which completed the Italian migratory picture of the era and stimulated it for the transformations of the mobility trends that Italy will face in the following century.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by observing the statistical data of the migratory waves from 1945 to 1994 in the different social, economic, and cultural contexts that Italy experienced, it is possible to notice a clear and effective break within the historical-evolutionary process of Italian emigration. First of all, the initial high number of emigrants due to the destruction caused by the war and the imminent need for employment was followed by an increasingly less consistent number of departures, which were replaced in the Seventies by the arrival of new individuals in the Italian territory and by the repatriation of previously emigrated citizens. Furthermore, as examined by the historians Audenino and Tirabassi, the quantitative dimensions of the migration of the period from 1945 to 1994 are decidedly more contained even compared to the Great Diaspora of the late 1800s. The results of the research on Italian mobility and on the last important periods of migration from the peninsula highlight, in addition, how much the figure of the migrant has changed over the decades. A significant change is evident, first, from the difference in the level of education and preparation between the first and second waves of departures. In fact, a greater demand for education and work specialization accompanied the technological revolutions, the growth of cities and the new needs of the labour market, and this allowed migrants to extend over time to more work environments, gradually abandoning mines and fields. The migratory composition also changed considerably, as a greater percentage of women began to move both to join their husbands who had already emigrated, and for individual work reasons which helped them to gain more and more independence. The lengths of the stays also changed, as from mainly permanent they became more and more temporary and limited in time. Finally, the perception of Italian emigrants in the countries of arrival, albeit generally characterised by initial prejudice and intolerance, softened slightly towards the end of the century in the territories that had already welcomed the previous Italian migratory waves.

Through analysing the phenomenon globally, with its trends and issues, the phenomenon of the Italian migration can be truly understood as representing one of the richest and most significant experiences of mobility in Europe.

Abstract

Dopo la Seconda guerra mondiale avvenuta dal 1939 al 1945 l'Italia si presentava come un territorio devastato. La sconfitta sul campo di battaglia generò nella popolazione un senso di stanchezza derivante anche dall'aumento della povertà e della disoccupazione, accompagnata da condizioni di vita precarie e inadeguate. Ciò ravvivò la necessità per il governo italiano di sostenere le politiche migratorie bloccate durante la guerra, in modo tale da alleviare il peso sulla sofferente economia italiana. Gli eventi bellici esacerbarono inoltre le notevoli differenze tra le aree del Nord e del Sud del Paese, aggravando la dolorosa frattura che le separava. La miseria era però generalmente accompagnata da un desiderio di scrivere un nuovo capitolo della storia d'Italia, quello che fu poi conosciuto come il periodo della Ricostruzione, avvenuto dal 1945 alla prima metà degli anni Cinquanta.

Dopo la Liberazione d'Italia, la classe dirigente si trovò ad affrontare il compito di ricostruire l'intero Paese. Dopo un breve esecutivo dal giugno al dicembre 1945 guidato da Ferruccio Parri, l'incarico di formare un nuovo governo venne affidato ad Alcide De Gasperi, esponente di punta della Democrazia Cristiana (DC) che ricoprì il ruolo di Presidente del Consiglio per sette ulteriori volte. Appena eletto, De Gasperi si occupò della necessità di una nuova costituzione e di un'assemblea per redigerla, oltre alla problematica dell'abbandono della monarchia a favore della repubblica. Al riguardo, il Presidente avanzò l'idea di proporre la questione istituzionale attraverso un referendum. Così, il 2 giugno 1946, con una differenza di circa due milioni di voti, la Repubblica soppiantò la Monarchia. Dopo le elezioni, il re Umberto II fu costretto ad abdicare e a fuggire in Svizzera, mentre il 28 giugno dello stesso anno Enrico De Nicola fu nominato Capo provvisorio dello Stato. Le elezioni del 2 giugno 1946 incorporarono anche il suffragio per la formazione dell'Assemblea Costituente, la quale fu chiamata a redigere una nuova costituzione che sostituisse lo Statuto Albertino in vigore dal 1848. Seppur di partiti diversi, tutti gli eletti dell'Assemblea erano accomunati da un forte sentimento antifascista poi inquadrato nella Disposizione Transitoria e Finale numero XII, che insieme ad altre diciassette Disposizioni e altri 139 articoli diedero vita alla Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, in vigore dal 1° gennaio 1948.

L'instaurazione della repubblica, l'ascesa al potere di Alcide De Gasperi e gli aiuti economici esterni furono tre delle caratteristiche fondamentali che contraddistinsero la Ricostruzione italiana. Questo periodo, terminato alla fine degli anni '50, gettò le basi per il fiorente sviluppo del "miracolo economico" avvenuto dal 1958 al 1963. Secondo numerosi studi, l'entità dei danni causati dalla guerra in Italia fu di circa 3.200 miliardi di lire, oltre alla perdita di quasi mezzo milione di persone. Dal 1945 l'Italia fu teatro anche di numerosi moti civili per l'aumento dei prezzi dei generi alimentari, la redistribuzione delle terre e l'esenzione del Partito Comunista dall'esecutivo. Nonostante l'insorgere di una rivolta civile contro il governo, la DC seppe riguadagnare rapidamente consensi attraverso una serie di riforme, tra cui la Cassa per il Mezzogiorno del 1950, mirata a colmare il divario tra Nord e Sud e favorire la crescita economica delle regioni meridionali. Dello stesso anno fu anche la Riforma Agraria che rivoluzionò la distribuzione delle terre e

favorì la proprietà dei beni nelle mani dei braccianti agricoli. L'Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale (IRI) fu di fondamentale importanza economica per tutto il periodo della Ricostruzione. Ricoprì infatti un ruolo preponderante come istituto finanziario per la grande industria e le infrastrutture, controllando circa il 30% dell'industria meccanica, oltre ad avere una partecipazione sostanziale in settori diversi. L'intervento dell'IRI favorì inoltre l'apertura economica del Paese, rafforzando la liberalizzazione degli scambi e abbandonando gli ostacoli doganali posti dal regime di Mussolini.

Poiché l'ammontare economico dei danni causati dalla Seconda guerra mondiale sarebbe stato impossibile da sostenere pienamente per il solo Paese, grande sostegno finanziario fu dato all'Italia dalla United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), un'organizzazione internazionale creata nel 1943 con l'obiettivo di fornire assistenza economica ai paesi europei dopo il conflitto mondiale. Ulteriore scopo fu quello di assistere e rimpatriare rifugiati e migranti feriti e/o sfollati a causa delle conseguenze della guerra. Il sostegno più significativo nel dopoguerra, però, provenne dagli Stati Uniti attraverso l'attuazione dell'European Recovery Program (ERP), generalmente noto come Piano Marshall, il quale aiutò l'Italia a registrare una crescita nella produzione agricola, nell'industria e nei servizi. Il programma fu utile anche come catalizzatore per il rafforzamento di un'idealizzazione degli Stati Uniti nelle menti degli italiani.

A partire dal 1946, su una popolazione di poco più di 46 milioni di persone, 1.127.720 di italiani lasciarono la propria casa preferendo destinazioni situate all'interno dell'area continentale. Contrariamente alle migrazioni avvenute dalla fine dell'Ottocento agli anni '20, gli espatri in territori extraeuropei diminuirono drasticamente e le mete transoceaniche furono, tra le altre, Venezuela, Canada e Australia. Gli Stati Uniti, meta ambita da migliaia di italiani nel periodo della Grande Migrazione, diventarono una meta secondaria per i nuovi migranti, soprattutto per il Quota Act attuato dal governo americano per limitare le entrate nel Paese. Inoltre, la provenienza dei migranti italiani si concentrò principalmente nel Sud Italia, specialmente da Puglia, Calabria e Campania. La riapertura delle frontiere parve essere una necessità imminente per molti paesi in cerca di manodopera da applicare nel processo di ricostruzione. Un interessante esempio di pianificazione dell'esodo tra l'Italia e altri paesi è rappresentato dal Belgio, con il quale il governo italiano stipulò nel 1946 un accordo bilaterale per l'invio di 2000 minatori ogni settimana. La miniera divenne così il principale luogo di lavoro per i migranti italiani, che soffrivano anche delle dure condizioni di vita ad essa legate, insieme ad un alto tasso di discriminazione. Anche l'esperienza transnazionale, come quella canadese, si distinse per un forte senso di emarginazione sociale provato dalla maggior parte dei migranti italiani. Dal programma di immigrazione attuato dal Canada nel 1947, uomini e donne principalmente del Sud Italia furono impiegati in diversi settori: i primi principalmente come operai o manovali, i secondi come lavoratori domestici. In Venezuela, invece, la scoperta del petrolio e la delocalizzazione di industrie italiane attirarono un gran numero di migranti verso la capitale. Fu però il settore delle costruzioni a richiamare più lavoratori. Inoltre, la nuova ondata migratoria iniziata nel 1945 portò con sé un più elevato livello di istruzione tra gli italiani in partenza e un più alto livello di specializzazione, nonché una maggiore diversificazione delle occupazioni. L'esperienza di relegazione

sociale vissuta dai migranti italiani provocò solitamente un rafforzamento dei legami con le famiglie lontane e con i connazionali vicini tanto che, proprio come alla fine dell'Ottocento, gli italiani all'estero vivevano spesso in comunità. A differenza delle migrazioni precedenti, spesso permanenti e che interessavano intere famiglie, i movimenti successivi dalla fine della Seconda guerra mondiale furono caratterizzate da soggiorni più brevi. I movimenti transoceanici, meno frequenti rispetto al passato, si rivelarono invece in gran parte permanenti, dando origine a comunità sempre più consistenti di italiani che ancora oggi costituiscono una percentuale importante della popolazione dei paesi di arrivo.

Un caso simbolico di migrazione continentale e temporanea fu la Svizzera, che dalla fine della guerra al 1968 fu la meta preferita da oltre due milioni di italiani, assorbendo quasi il 50% della totalità degli emigrati italiani in tutta Europa. In origine gli emigranti provenivano principalmente dalle regioni settentrionali della penisola, ma dai primi anni '60 la mobilità iniziò a interessare anche il Meridione. Gli italiani si trovarono così ad occupare posizioni diverse in vari settori, spesso fianco a fianco con residenti ostili e prevenuti. Le condizioni di vita dei lavoratori italiani in Svizzera erano infatti materialmente e psicologicamente molto difficili da sopportare. Costretti a vivere in baracche e a percepire un salario misero, essi divennero vittime anche di un alto livello di discriminazione. I politici ne alimentarono ulteriormente la xenofobia, identificando gli immigrati come rivali dei lavoratori svizzeri e indicendo nel 1970 il primo referendum contro gli stranieri della storia europea.

L'Argentina fu uno dei paesi più contemplati dai migranti italiani sia prima che dopo la Seconda guerra mondiale, contando quasi 300.000 espatriati nel quinquennio dal 1946 al 1950. Il Paese latino-americano fu protagonista di uno dei primi accordi bilaterali sottoscritti con lo Stato italiano in materia di mobilità controllata dopo il conflitto, che consentì di selezionare e accogliere nuova e necessaria forza lavoro nel territorio argentino. La consolidata presenza degli italiani nel Paese si rivelò vitale per i nuovi arrivati in quanto ne consentì un'integrazione più fluida e rapida. La maggioranza dei migranti italiani proveniva da regioni quali Calabria, Campania, Abruzzo e Sicilia. Ciononostante, i lavoratori italiani in Argentina iniziarono presto a sollevare lamentele e preoccupazioni per l'ampio margine di libertà che il Paese ospitante lasciava ai datori di lavoro rispetto al trattamento del lavoro immigrato, lamentando anche bassi salari e condizioni di vita precarie e non idonee. Poco dopo il 1950, la corrente migratoria diretta verso l'Argentina iniziò ad avere un andamento discontinuo, fino a cessare definitivamente negli anni '60, quando il numero di espatriati annuali contava una media di appena 2.000 individui.

Intanto, la fine degli anni Quaranta segnò l'esistenza concreta di quella che sarebbe diventata una lunga era di bipolarismo, i cui poli fondamentali furono gli Stati Uniti e l'Unione Sovietica. L'escalation di toni tra le due potenze divenne chiara soprattutto dopo il 5 marzo 1946, quando l'ex primo ministro britannico Winston Churchill pronunciò un discorso in cui chiariva l'esistenza di una "cortina di ferro" che frammentava manifestamente il mondo in due parti. Significativa fu la scelta degli Stati Uniti di introdurre il 4 aprile 1949 il Patto Atlantico, che l'Italia firmò nello stesso anno, e che diede vita all'Organizzazione del Trattato del Nord Atlantico (NATO), organizzazione difensiva finalizzata alla sicurezza degli Stati membri e

il cui scopo principale era contrastare una possibile e temuta espansione comunista.

Con l'avvento degli anni Cinquanta l'Italia iniziò a crescere rapidamente e regolarmente e gli esiti del periodo della Ricostruzione culminarono in quello che è noto come il "miracolo economico" che influenzò profondamente l'Italia dal 1958 al 1963. Lo sviluppo industriale, concentrato prevalentemente nelle aree settentrionali del Paese, diede origine al più importante fenomeno migratorio italiano degli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta: le migrazioni interregionali. Le storiche Patrizia Audenino e Maddalena Tirabassi stimano infatti che circa 900.000 lavoratori provenienti da regioni come Puglia, Calabria e Sicilia si siano trasferiti nelle zone della Pianura Padana tra il 1958 e il 1963 in cerca di fortuna. Sul piano politico, il Paese osservò un indebolimento della Democrazia Cristiana ma anche l'inizio di una florida stagione di riforme cruciali per il Paese come le già citate Riforma agraria e Cassa per il Mezzogiorno e il Piano Fanfani, o la riforma INA-casa, che prevedeva la costruzione di alloggi sociali per i più strati sofferenti della popolazione. Negli anni Cinquanta si assistette inoltre ad un miglioramento delle condizioni di vita della popolazione anche grazie alle nuove evoluzioni tecnologiche, all'aumento dei consumi, all'avvento della televisione e all'inizio di un importante fenomeno di urbanizzazione.

Oltre al notevole aumento dei consumi della popolazione, il livello di consapevolezza dei diritti dei cittadini iniziò a crescere notevolmente. Le riforme varate dal governo di centrosinistra nacquero, infatti, dall'esigenza di stare al passo con la mutevole mentalità della popolazione. Furono le riforme che interessarono l'istruzione, come quella relativa all'estensione dell'obbligo scolastico fino ai quattordici anni e quella che ampliava le possibilità di accesso alle università, che segnarono una svolta nella storia d'Italia. Queste ultime accesero infatti le prime scintille della stagione di violente proteste studentesche che costituirà l'era del Sessantotto. Ben presto studenti provenienti da tutta Italia iniziarono ad occupare scuole e università, protestando per problemi accademici condivisi e uniti dalla stessa volontà di ribaltare le preesistenti condizioni di potere. Nel 1969 ebbe luogo, invece, "l'autunno caldo" delle proteste dei lavoratori nelle fabbriche. Conseguenze del movimento del Sessantotto si ebbero nel maggiore impegno dello Stato rispetto agli investimenti volti a migliorare le condizioni di vita degli italiani, e nella nuova rivoluzione sessuale nata dallo sgretolamento del tabù sui diritti e le libertà. Nonostante ciò, il divario tra Destra e Sinistra si allargò ulteriormente, provocando nel decennio successivo ulteriori scontri e violenze.

Con la morte di Stalin nel 1953 si verificò un brusco cambiamento nelle relazioni internazionali, soprattutto con l'ascesa al potere di Nikita Krusciov e il suo obiettivo di avviare un diffuso processo di destalinizzazione dell'URSS. Krusciov portò l'Unione Sovietica a firmare il Patto di Varsavia nel maggio 1955, un accordo militare tra l'URSS e diversi territori sotto la sua influenza che contrastava con il Patto atlantico occidentale del 1949. Tuttavia, l'obiettivo principale di quegli anni rimase l'affermazione di una politica di distensione tra le due forze mondiali, sebbene vi fossero diverse crisi che alimentarono il timore dello scoppio di una guerra nucleare. Due esempi di ciò furono la crisi di Berlino del 1961 e la crisi dei missili di Cuba del 1962. Centrale nel ventennio tra il 1950 e il 1970 fu inoltre la rivalità sul progresso tecnologico e sociale, che si esplicitò nella corsa allo spazio inaugurata dai sovietici nel 1957 e consacrata

dal primo atterraggio americano sulla Luna nel 1964. Negli stessi anni, diversi Paesi europei iniziarono a muovere i primi passi verso la costruzione di una comunità europea. Al Trattato di Parigi del 1951 e alla nascita della Comunità Europea del Carbone e dell'Acciaio (CECA) seguirono ulteriori accordi che perfezionarono i meccanismi della nuova organizzazione, la quale accolse negli anni sempre più Stati membri e divenne ciò che oggi è conosciuta come Unione Europea.

Il rapido e forte sviluppo industriale italiano concentrato principalmente nelle aree settentrionali del Paese determinò l'inizio di una massiccia mobilità interregionale. Molte aziende approfittarono della grande disponibilità di manodopera a basso costo proveniente dal Sud assumendo subito migliaia di lavoratori. Le ragioni della mobilità di un così gran numero di individui e famiglie del Mezzogiorno erano legate alle condizioni di vita nei paesi e nelle città di origine, quasi sempre instabili e precarie. I movimenti da Sud a Nord divennero prevalentemente definitivi nel tempo, subendo però una battuta d'arresto a metà degli anni Sessanta per poi ridursi nel decennio successivo. L'esperienza migratoria italiana generalmente incluse anche un numero notevole di donne, le quali costituirono circa il 30% degli italiani in movimento fino al 1962. Un gran numero di donne inizialmente era solita lasciare la propria patria principalmente per raggiungere i mariti nei luoghi in cui si erano stabiliti, mentre dagli anni Cinquanta iniziarono ad entrare in maniera più consistente nelle industrie e nel settore del lavoro domestico. In generale, la migrazione femminile fu un evento che arricchì le donne in partenza di un nuovo senso di indipendenza che si confermò con la conquista di importanti diritti, come il diritto al voto e il diritto all'aborto, che modificarono radicalmente l'intera società italiana.

L'inizio della costruzione di una comunità europea sancì lo sviluppo dell'ultimo importante periodo migratorio italiano, quello concernente i trasferimenti sul territorio continentale. Dal 1946 al 1970 quasi 4 milioni di italiani si diressero verso destinazioni europee, prediligendo le aree di Francia, Svizzera e Germania. Le principali regioni di provenienza dei migranti negli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta furono quelle del Centro-Sud. Dopo il 1960, la quota di emigrati che puntarono ai paesi europei ammontò a circa l'80% di tutta la mobilità italiana. Nell'immediato dopoguerra i settori di lavoro chiave per gli italiani all'estero furono le fabbriche e le miniere, mentre dopo la metà degli anni Cinquanta la concentrazione dell'occupazione si spostò principalmente verso l'edilizia pubblica e privata. L'analisi migratoria del ventennio si arricchì inoltre della sempre più consistente esperienza del rimpatrio degli italiani all'estero. Come ultima espressione della storia della migrazione italiana, gli spostamenti in Europa si esaurirono nei primi anni Settanta insieme alle destinazioni d'oltremare, diventando anche statisticamente irrilevanti secondo varie analisi accademiche.

L'avvento degli anni Settanta segnò una svolta in Italia dal punto di vista sociale, politico ed economico. L'esperienza del Sessantotto aprì la strada all'inizio di una tormentata stagione di violenze e mobilitazioni che battezzò l'intero decennio come il periodo degli "anni di piombo". Tra il 1970 ed il 1992 si registrò così un susseguirsi di stragi, attentati terroristici, sequestri di persona ed omicidi. Sebbene le stragi degli anni Settanta siano state quasi interamente opera di organizzazioni neofasciste, anche l'estrema sinistra italiana fu protagonista, inizialmente attraverso il movimento Lotta Armata e le mobilitazioni di piazza, del

periodo buio che l'Italia si trovò a vivere. Lo scenario violento dell'estrema sinistra si venne a identificare maggiormente nel gruppo delle Brigate Rosse. Oltre i tanti sequestri e omicidi di personalità di spicco della vita politica e imprenditoriale, il gruppo fu responsabile del rapimento il 16 marzo e dell'uccisione il 9 maggio 1978 dell'ex Premier ed esponente della Dc Aldo Moro. L'assassinio di Moro rappresentò sia una conseguenza sia la tappa finale della strategia politica del "compromesso storico", proposta nel 1973 dal segretario del Partito Comunista Enrico Berlinguer e concernente una politica di alleanze formali tra le forze cattolico-conservatrici e quelle comuniste-socialiste volte alla prosperità del Paese. Gli anni '70 rappresentarono inoltre l'arresto della costante crescita economica di cui il Paese godeva dall'inizio degli anni Cinquanta. Ciò avvenne a causa della crisi energetica del 1973 che colpì quasi tutti i paesi dipendenti dall'importazione di greggio.

Gli anni Ottanta si aprirono con lo scoppio di una bomba nella stazione ferroviaria di Bologna Centrale che uccise 85 persone e ne ferì oltre 200. Ad oggi la strage di Bologna, presumibilmente responsabilità dell'organizzazione neofascista Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari (NAR), è considerata l'attacco terroristico più mortale mai avvenuto sul suolo italiano. Altro evento le cui conseguenze si sarebbero fatte sentire anche negli anni successivi fu la scoperta della loggia massonica Propaganda Due (P2). Guidata da Licio Gelli, l'organizzazione segreta anticomunista contava oltre 900 tra le personalità dei ranghi più alti della società italiana. Tra le accuse di riciclaggio e edilizia speculativa, la P2 risultò anche responsabile del finanziamento illecito della Democrazia Cristiana e di stretti e frequenti contatti con i massimi esponenti della sfera politica e finanziaria. L'ambito politico per tutti gli anni Ottanta fu tuttavia incentrato sull'ascesa al potere di Benedetto "Bettino" Craxi, primo presidente socialista del Consiglio dei ministri dall'agosto 1983 al marzo 1987. Egli fu artefice di una efficace adozione di misure antinflazionistiche e di una generale crescita del benessere del Paese.

Sul piano internazionale, dopo un breve periodo di *détente* tra gli Stati Uniti e l'Unione Sovietica all'inizio degli anni Sessanta, l'escalation della guerra del Vietnam nel corso degli anni Settanta alterò il relativo equilibrio di cui il mondo aveva brevemente beneficiato. La fase del confronto tra USA e URSS avvenuto negli anni Settanta e nei primi anni Ottanta fu così battezzata come la "nuova" o "seconda Guerra Fredda". Simbolica a questo proposito fu la guerra in Afghanistan del 1978, le cui motivazioni risiedevano nella ascesa al potere del Partito Democratico Popolare dell'Afghanistan e nel dissenso popolare che portò allo scoppio di una guerra civile. Mentre l'URSS intervenne a sostegno del partito, gli Stati Uniti mirarono a proteggere la popolazione dalla minaccia comunista. Tuttavia, fu la vittoria presidenziale di Ronald Reagan nel 1981 a provocare realmente il risveglio delle tensioni tra le due principali potenze. La strategia politica del neo-eletto Presidente era infatti incentrata su un approccio più duro nei confronti del nemico, e fortemente focalizzata sull'aumento delle spese militari e sulla sconfitta del comunismo. Nel frattempo, l'URSS si trovò progressivamente più isolata sulla scena internazionale e l'economia sovietica si trovò presto sull'orlo del collasso. Un episodio chiave che segnò profondamente il corso storico degli eventi fu l'elezione di Michail Sergeevič Gorbačëv a Segretario del PCUS nel 1985, il quale sconvolse il *modus operandi* dell'URSS

puntando all'attuazione di un sistema democratico all'interno dell'Unione. Attraverso le politiche di *perestrojka* (ricostruzione dell'Unione) e *glasnost* (trasparenza), egli mirava parimenti a perseguire un rapporto più stretto e aperto con gli Stati Uniti, con i quali approvò infine una rivoluzionaria politica di disarmo. Il 9 novembre 1989 cadde, così, il Muro di Berlino che separava la Germania dell'Est dall'Ovest, sancendo la riunificazione del Paese, lo scioglimento dell'URSS nel 1991 e, infine, la fine della Guerra Fredda.

L'accoglienza da parte dell'Italia del crollo dell'URSS fu di natura molto negativa, data l'importanza internazionale del suo partito comunista. Il PCI entrò così in uno stato di progressivo declino, accompagnato dal preesistente antagonismo di Craxi nei confronti del partito. La nascita del “pentapartito”, una coalizione tra Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Socialista, Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano (PSDI), Partito Liberale Italiano (PLI) e Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI), e la conseguente esclusione del Partito Comunista dall'esecutivo, portarono ad un senso di immobilità della politica italiana e alimentarono il sentimento di sfiducia nei confronti del governo. Nel 1991 il Partito Comunista Italiano si sciolse per dividersi in due diverse fazioni: il Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS) e il Partito di Rifondazione Comunista (RPC). Nel frattempo, l'ambiente politico in Italia iniziò a favorire la nascita di nuovi partiti politici, come la Lega Nord. Oltre alla crisi che attanagliava la sfera politica, una serie di eventi cruciali ribaltarono drammaticamente le radicate certezze della realtà sociopolitica italiana. Nel 1992 venne alla luce lo scandalo “Mani Pulite”, che coinvolse tutte le principali personalità politiche e industriali italiane e fece luce su una rete organizzata di corruzione basata su favori politici in cambio di finanziamenti ai partiti da imprenditori e industriali. Gli eventi di *Tangentopoli* risultarono nello scioglimento della Democrazia Cristiana e del Partito Socialista Italiano, segnando la fine di una lunga epoca nella storia d'Italia. Cruciale fu, inoltre, la diffusione ancor più capillare del fenomeno della mafia, che iniziò a stringere rapporti sempre più solidi con i più alti esponenti dello Stato. L'apice sfortunato dei contatti tra lo Stato e i criminali di Cosa Nostra fu raggiunto nel 1992, quando l'attentato di Capaci del 23 maggio e quello di Via D'Amelio del 19 luglio uccisero rispettivamente i giudici Giovanni Falcone e Paolo Borsellino, due dei i membri del Pool Antimafia. Nel complesso, la crisi dei partiti politici, accompagnata dalla diminuzione della loro credibilità istituzionale e dalla ascesa in campo politico dell'imprenditore Silvio Berlusconi determinarono, nel 1994, la fine ufficiale della Prima Repubblica Italiana.

Tra gli anni Settanta e Novanta del ventesimo secolo il fenomeno migratorio acquisì connotazioni completamente diverse rispetto al passato. Da territorio di emigrazione, la penisola italiana divenne presto un paese di accoglienza specialmente per i flussi in arrivo sia dal Nord Europa che dal continente africano. Inoltre, attirò un numero sempre più importante di cittadini italiani che lasciarono le loro case per trasferirsi altrove nei decenni precedenti. L'arrivo in Italia di un così vasto numero di individui fu favorito anche da una politica di porte aperte che il governo italiano attuò e che si limitava ad accettare i nuovi ingressi. In questo periodo cominciarono inoltre a sorgere maggiori esigenze rispetto alla regolazione dei flussi migratori e la legislazione italiana, attraverso la Legge Foschi, la Legge Martelli, la Legge Mancino e la nuova legge sulla

cittadinanza, gettò le basi per una vera politica dell'immigrazione, che potesse completare il quadro migratorio italiano dell'epoca e lo stimolasse per la metabolizzazione delle trasformazioni delle tendenze migratorie che l'Italia affronterà, poi, nel ventunesimo secolo.

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