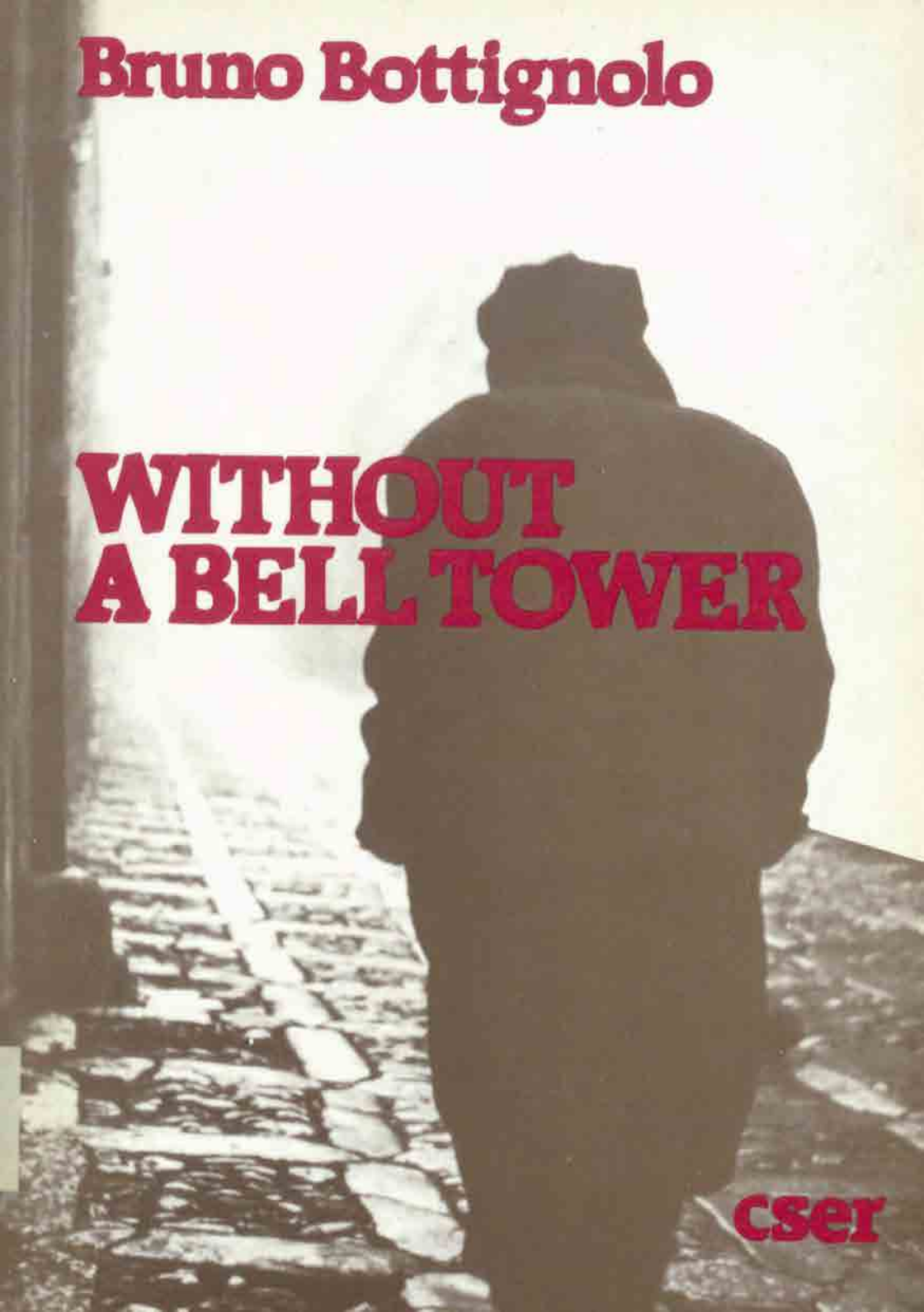
Bruno Bottignolo

WITHOUT A BELL TOWER



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BRUNO BOTTIGNOLO

WITHOUT A BELL TOWER

A study of the Italian immigrants in South West England

1985
CENTRO STUDI EMIGRAZIONE - ROMA

Centro Studi Emigrazione - Roma
Via Dandolo, 58
00153 Roma (Italy)

ISBN 88-85438-19-9

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to express my gratitude to John and Dorothy Evans, who from the beginning of this project have been an unfailing source of moral support and practical help. I would like to mention also Marilena Di Gennaro, who has corrected my English.

My thanks to Prof. Kenneth Kirkwood, who read the draft work many times. His invaluable criticism and the numerous suggestions which he made helped me considerably in clarifying my thoughts and words.

A special word of thanks must go to Dr. Godfrey Leinhardt who supervised the entire work of research and writing, and whose casually made, yet deep comments have been of considerable assistance to me.

A scholarship from the British Council made it possible to conclude this work.

INTRODUCTION

This book is the result of research done from 1975 to 1980 amongst the Italian immigrants in the South-West of England, mainly in Bristol and Swindon.

The two groups of Italians living in these towns are independent of each other, reveal different features in their respective origins, patterns of immigration, attitudes and in the way they organise their groups.

But one can also detect a certain consistency between the two groups. They are in fact connected through the special ties between the various Italian institutions of the two towns, ties which do not exist with other towns. Above all, they are connected as a result of particular accidents of history, which threw various members of the two groups together.

The Bristol Region

Geographically, the two towns and the two Italian groups, are in the "Bristol region" broadly speaking, covering the counties of Gloucestershire, Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire. This region extends from the upper Thames basin and the Cotswold hills to the North, down to the Somerset plains; East to West from the Salisbury plain to the Bristol Channel. Even in its variety, the region has a unity in its physical and human geography, a unity also confirmed by successive events throughout its long history.

Leaving the two towns aside for the moment, the region represents an image of a countryside rich in prosperous farms, small market towns, chalk hills and plains. The most persistent features throughout the whole area, are those of a mixed farming region. From the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, the principal industry in the region was wool textile manufacturing, and it left a lasting impression on later patterns of settlement and industrial development. By the seventeenth century the local wool trade had declined and the dairy industry was gaining prominence as one of the most renowned in England, and has so remained to the present day [1].

[1] See F. WALKER, *The Bristol Region*. London, Nelson, 1972.

The city of Bristol and its conurbation is, and has been for centuries, a most important administrative, commercial and industrial centre and forms the nodal point of the region.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, transport had been very difficult; the heaviest cargoes were usually transported by river and sea. From the beginning of the Middle Ages, Bristol exploited its position on the Avon as an access to the hinterland, and its position on the sea for the coastal markets. Mercantile activity rapidly became and remained the basic activity of the town, and the port emerged as a major economic asset contributing much to the life, development and history of the town. Bristol was a trading centre, exchanging the products of its own region with those to which it had access on the coast of Southern England, Wales and Ireland. Along with its trade, Bristol grew as a manufacturing centre for wool, leather and soap; products which in time developed and diversified.

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, Bristol was already the dominant town in the region. Bryan Little writes that at the time, Bristol "was no Venice or Bruges" ... but its modest size "can remind us that England was then on the fringe of civilisation, and that only London was large by comparison with the Italian cities, or the Hansa Towns and the great cloth centres of the Low Countries". But "among English provincial towns, Bristol was well placed for a great future, being already both port and manufacturing town" [2].

The port was already the main outlet for cloth from the Cotswolds, Bath and the whole of South Gloucestershire. From this angle Bristol was the centre of the West Country woollen industry. The European market then was nothing but an extension of the local market.

In its overseas trade, Bristol had no significant direct relations with towns of the Hanseatic League, or Mediterranean commercial towns. In this sphere its activities were mediated and products from the Baltic and Flanders arrived in Bristol via London, while luxury goods and commodities arrived from the Mediterranean mainly through Southampton. However, Bristol was not completely dependent on these latter sources; its coastal market at this time extended to the European Atlantic coast as well. Bristol ships collected fish in Iceland and exchanged it with luxury good, wool, and above all wine from Gascony and the Iberian Peninsula. By the end of the Middle Ages, a mercantile class of ship owner, with an ever-growing organisation, was emerging in the town.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the town which had built up its fortunes on a happy combination of manufacturing and trading, continued its expansion and its enrichment even if at a rather reduced rate.

[2] B. LITTLE, *The City and County of Bristol*. Republished by S.R. Publishers Ltd., 1967, p. 34.

Commerce suffered a mild recession, mainly because of the wars between England and the Continent in particular with Spain, and later as a consequence of the English civil wars. Attention turned slowly to the other side of the Atlantic, towards America where between 1654 and 1685 about 10,000 Bristolians emigrated, creating an increasingly stable and permanent colonial market. These were the first attempts at the colonisation and organisation of the plantations with white labourers, who were often convicts, bankrupts, political and religious refugees, adventurers in search of fortune, or even simply people who had been kidnapped, shipped out and sent to work against their will. Before long it was recognised that these white labourers were unsuitable and Bristol entered the black slave trade.

In the eighteenth century, Georgian-Bristol lived its golden age. Besides the solid manufacturing and mercantile basis developed in the previous period, there matured in Bristol a society capable of supplying various specialised services, with an already experienced and efficient mercantile class.

From the second half of the seventeenth century, Bristol ships sailed regularly as far as the Atlantic coast of Africa, the West Indies and the American Continent. These voyages followed two wellknown patterns, the direct and the triangular one.

In the triangular pattern, ships left Bristol for West Africa taking European manufactured products (brass, cotton and linen, alcohol, weapons and so on) in exchange for slaves and ivory. Thence to the colonies across the Atlantic with their African cargo. And finally home from the West Indies and America, loaded with cargoes of ivory, sugar, tobacco, cotton and spices. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Bristol was the main slave port in the world.

The relationship with the colonies was not limited to an economic one, but extended into the social sphere. There was a continuous flow of people to and from the colonies. Bristol news and fashion made news and fashion in the colonies, and events in the colonies had an impact on Bristol life.

Parallel to this mercantile activity and perhaps spurred on by it, Bristol's industrial sector went through one of its most rapid phases of expansion and diversification. The sugar refining, tobacco and chocolate industries were started and developed. In the non-ferrous metal industry a process of concentration occurred culminating in the establishment of some of the biggest plants in Europe. The secret of the rapid expansion of these industries, several of which required vast amounts of power, was the availability of large quantities of easily accessible and relatively inexpensive coal. To the South of Bristol (Bedminster, Brislington and Kingwood) was the coal belt which was exploited to the maximum throughout this period.

In relation to this economic expansion the religious and cultural developments which also defined the character of the local population are

significant. In the sphere of non-conformism, besides the Unionist, Baptist and Congregationalist, two groups in particular became relevant: the Quakers and the Methodists.

The Quakers, although never numerous (about 600) commanded an exceptional economic power. The brass and copper trades in Bristol were almost entirely in Quaker hands, as was the glassmaking industry, chocolate (the Fry's) banking (the Harfords) and in the transport industry (the Champions).

The arrival of John Wesley (1739) gave impetus to the development of organised Methodism, especially amongst working people in the coal belt to the South of Bristol, leading to its dissemination throughout the region.

To complete the religious picture we should remember the rebirth of the Jewish community which was later to share control of the glassmaking industry with the Quakers; and the group of Huguenot refugees (about 200) many of whom became small entrepreneurs. The Jesuit community of Trinchard Street, serving foreign Catholic sailors and labourers in town, was also started in this period in connection with the penal laws. It was with the Jesuits that the Italian community was, much later, to become associated.

Traditional mercantile activity in Bristol suffered a severe recession with the coming of the nineteenth century and the revolution in transportation. The port (today called "City port" to distinguish it from a new one on the sea front) had functioned for ships and traffic in the past, but because of its physical limitations (The Avon Gorge) was no longer suitable for nineteenth century ships. The asset which had been taken for granted, and had contributed so much to the development of the town till then was to become a trap, a problem that was only painfully solved over the period of a century.

The Georgian era had left vast wealth and capital for investment, a group of experienced entrepreneurial merchants, and a local tradition of accountancy, together these factors created the modern features of the town.

With industrial development, social differentiation and a stronger definition of the various classes arose. A working class movement emerged, especially amongst the miners of the coal belt, and the town experienced social tensions with the riots of 1831-32 and "Black Friday" in 1892. Alongside the developing working class, a bourgeois society formed, settling mainly in the Clifton area and engaging in a sophisticated and culturally active life-style.

In the twentieth century, the port once again had a much stronger role and further industrial development resulted especially in the engineering sector.

Bristol nowadays is a large conurbation with about 750,000 inhabitants. According to the Financial Times, Bristol has "a wide manu-

facturing base—including aircraft engineering, tobacco, confectionary, brewing and paper—as well as a balanced service sector. It is a regional centre of government, has famous distribution and retail names, and has attracted a number of insurance companies and banks. Unemployment ... tends to be ... below the national average". Bristol "has never been an industrial problem" [3].

The economic strength and diversification is the result of a long process of development, organic to the city itself. As Bryan Little says: Bristol "is a city ... but never a unit in a conurbation". "Unspoiled countryside comes close to the borders and within sight of many Bristol houses. So the Bristolian outlook is more naturally rural than the attitude of Mancunians or Birmingham people can readily be. In such a setting ... a more natural feeling for history and tradition exists than one finds in cities whose rise has been meteoric and whose signs of the past have been completely overlaid". Physically isolated and remote, Bristol is "a city owing much less than most southern English towns to the life and influence of the capital" [4]. Bristol has through gradual "organic" expansion developed a character of its own.

Fifty kilometres away from Bristol, in North Wiltshire, is Swindon. It is an industrial town of recent origin. It came into existence 140 years ago, went through a rapid expansion which more than tripled its population, and that only in the last thirty years. Nowadays the town has about 200,000 inhabitants.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Swindon was only a small market town with not much more than a thousand people, resembling the other small towns in the neighbourhood in every aspect.

In 1841 the Great Western Railway Company (G.W.R.) whose railway line reached Swindon, chose it as the main centre for its workshops because, in Brunel's opinion, it was an ideal spot, standing at the beginning of the plain which sloped towards the West, near the Chippenham connection, and with easy access to the Somerset coal. The G.W.R.'s decision gave the impetus to the initial expansion of Swindon, and conditioned its development, dominating both economic and social life. Workers, who with their families immigrated into the town in successive waves, supplanted and transformed the image and character of the old, agricultural Swindon. To the South of the railway, about a kilometre away from "old Swindon", 300 cottages were built for the employees of G.W.R. The arrival of still more workers in "new Swindon" stimulated its further expansion.

In 1900 the two towns had already merged and their physical union was recognised with the constitution of one administrative centre (Swindon

[3] *Financial Times*, 11.4.1980.
[4] B. LITTLE, *op. cit.*, p. XV.

Borough); significantly, the first Mayor was G.R. Churchward, the superintendent of the G.W.R. locomotive workshops. The resultant image of Swindon was, according to John Benjamin, that of "depressing rows of storeyed, semi-detached houses packed closely together with hardly any trees. Bay window, front door, bay window for miles. Almost every street has houses with only two storeys"[5].

Around 1920 G.W.R. went into decline; the "development" of the town came to a standstill and remained so until the outbreak of the second world war. A town almost exclusively dependent on one industry which was by now in recession, with no alternative and where the tendency to population exodus was becoming increasingly evident.

Swindon remained in a state of decline until, in 1951, Parliament passed the Town Development Act, which set out and provided the means for decentralisation. In 1952, under this Act, an agreement was reached between Swindon Borough Council and London County Council (in particular Tottenham Borough) on which Swindon planned its second expansion.

A housing development programme, with an annual output of 1,000 houses a year until 1957 was initiated, to be maintained for five years, by which time the overspill of Londoners would be housed, thus bringing the town population up to around 92,000 (from around 60,000). 1966 is usually considered to be the close of this phase of expansion; but by now Swindon Council had more ambitious dreams, which had been proposed at the height of the expansion and by the late seventies were still developing. The programme which was being planned and developed piecemeal still under the auspices of the Town Development Act, is outlined in the document: "Swindon: A study for Further Expansion" (1968) and provides for an increase of population to 241,000 by the year 1986.

The problem of attracting industries was more difficult to solve but as time passed, some big engineering concerns (Plessey, Pressed Steel) established themselves in the area, together with some wholesale and retail distributors (W.H. Smith). Several other smaller concerns followed[6].

Nowadays the notion of Swindon as the railway town and community belongs only to a minority, and for this minority too the "Railway Town" is a dead myth, rather than a unifying element in local culture. By now the minority had been supplanted by the bulk of immigrants who today constitute the majority of the local community and give the impression of a "rootless" society.

In the population then, there is not yet a noticeable social differentiation. Swindon emerged from the era of the G.W.R. as a town of skilled engineering workers, and subsequent development took place mainly in the

[5] *Evening Advertiser*, 10.5.1937.

[6] See M. Harloe, *Swindon: A Town in Transition*. London, Heinemann Education Books, 1975.

engineering sphere. At the time of this research, the town presented a very concentrated social structure, nearly unidimensional, which could be defined as "upper working class".

Finally housing, even though modern, like the railway town, is extremely monotonous. Swindon's progress had been mainly a process of repetition of which the housing development was its ultimate expression. The town people describe Swindon as "a town with no identity" where "there is nothing".

The Italian in the Bristol Region

The Italian presence in the Bristol region is relatively recent, mainly growing after the second world war. Only in Bristol city itself, can one find evidence of an Italian settlement stretching back to previous times. From the various Italian names in the register of St. Mary on the Quay (belonging to the Jesuit community of Trinchard Street) one can easily see the presence of a conspicuous Italian contingent in Bristol, even during the first half of the twentieth century.

This presence is consistent with the continuous, mainly economic relations, which Bristol city has had throughout the centuries with various Italian towns. For example, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Florentine merchants considered Cotswold wool to be amongst the best and they bought it. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sugar refined in Bristol was sold in Venice and Genoa. In return cargoes of statuary marble, anchovies, dried fruits, olives, etc. occasionally arrived from Italy, and in the nineteenth century one could find the glass works of a Venetian named Dagnia in Bristol.

There has indeed been a relatively continuous Italian presence in the city and the visit of Christopher Columbus on his way to Iceland, the residence of John Cabot with his children Luigi, Sebastiano and Sancio, at the end of the fifteenth century, indicate something of that presence.

In more recent times, the overspill of the immigrants from the two large Italian settlements of the eighteenth century, London and Glasgow, have joined this local community.

Between the two world wars the presence of this small community in Bristol is readily detectable and could be numbered at about four or five hundred people [7]. They were nearly all employed in family businesses,

[7] The kinship groups of the "old immigrants" in Bristol whose names we are able to collect are: Ambrosino, Agostini, Berni, Bogo, Bertorelli, Bertoldi, Cola, Capaldi, Capocci, Cornacchio, Cavacciuti, Cocozza, D'Agostini, De Santis, Di Mambro, Donatelli, D'Orazio, Fionda, Forte, Fiffinella, Guattieri, Gloria, Gazzi, Latte, Maddalena, Marcucci, Martelletti, Michelangelo, Paccini, Puledri, Panetta, Policella, Ridonda, Ricci, Sidoli, Sandrone, Stefano, Siddi, Steffieri, Tisi, Tedesco, Toffolo, Velardo, Verrecchia, Zanetti.

such as restaurants, cafes, fish and chip shops, ice cream producing and selling, shop-keeping, these being the most wide-spread occupations. However, there were also other services such as building, knife-grinding, shoe-making and especially mosaic and "terrazzo" work.

The nucleus of the community was to be found in the centre of the city, in the neighbourhood between St. James church and the B.R.I. (Bristol Royal Infirmary), this neighbourhood was destroyed by bombing in the last war, and today is the site of the County buildings and the bus station. It was there that a settlement which people used to call "Little Italy" had developed.

A prominent group of Italians from Friuli (Friulani) was employed in the work of terrazzo, and soon became the heart of the community. They identified themselves by the region from which they came, the character and reputation of hard workers and by the kind of work they were doing, but above all by the solidarity they cultivated amongst themselves.

Initially they lived together in a building (two attached houses converted into a hostel) in Cave Street. Collectively they helped each family to buy and restore a house until each one had its own dwelling. In the end, when the majority of families were settled, the hostel was transformed into a sort of Italian centre. The ground floor was converted into a large hall for communal use; the old people I interviewed still remember that hall decorated with portraits of Mussolini and the Royal family hanging from the walls with the Italian flag.

The centre also operated as a school for the children of the immigrants, with courses organised and supervised by Italian teachers who came from Cardiff every week. There had never been an Italian mission or missionary in the area before the war and for the religious services the Italian community associated itself with the church of St. Mary on the Quay on which they left an indelible mark.

In the neighbourhood, even before the existence of the centre, the Italians used to have an intense social life. Someone told me about the New Year celebrations "when the Italians used to have a ball" and a group with accordion, tambourine and flute sang and played under the windows of the houses of Little Italy. Several people remembered the visits to the community by the general consul from London, or the visit to Bristol of some well known fellow countryman, for example Beniamino Gigli.

The outbreak of the second world war came as a shock and the community remained scarred for-ever by the experience. One night all the Italians were rounded up and taken to the police station where the Chief Constable, "like on the day of final judgement" divided them. On one side were those destined for the internment camps and sent to the Isle of Man; on the other side those who were permitted to stay, but under surveillance. During this time, according to the old immigrants, the local

Italian community was victimised far more seriously than the prisoners of war who, towards the end of the war, began arriving at the camps in the region [8].

From 1944 P.o.W. camps for the Italians were located in Bristol and its outskirts (Patchway Lane, Yate, Southmead Road, Rodge Way, etc.). With the armistice Italy was considered to be on the side of the Allies and Italian prisoners were given a sort of provisional freedom. For example they were able to leave the camps, enter the city and use some of its services, but were banned from places like theatres and public houses; they had limited contact with the local population.

The Italian P.o.W.'s from the local camps were few, especially in relation to a large city like Bristol. It seems in fact that the local population did not bother much about their presence. The press ignored them almost completely.

Perhaps they passed unnoticed because in a short time P.o.W.'s were in touch with local Italians who took an interest in them and cared for them. The houses of the local Italians became their refuge and meeting place [9].

The local Italians became the means of communication with families in Italy; they would collect or send letters, money and parcels on their behalf; they became their interpreters and guides in the city and their suppliers for the things they were not able to have in the camp.

At the end of the war, these camps were dismantled and apart from three or four P.o.W.'s who remained, deep ties of friendship between a few ex-P.o.W.'s and a few local Italians, they hardly left any trace of their presence in the city.

The end of the war saw the return of Italians who had been interned on the Isle of Man, and who found themselves having to count the damage left by the war. The experience permanently marked them both economically and socially; the air raids had destroyed the historic centre and Little Italy, and the war had shattered the local community. The immigrants who arrived after the war had the habit of referring to them as the "old immigrants".

1947-48 marked the arrival of the first group of the post-war contingent. Among these was a group of Friulani mainly because of the Friulan presence in the area which had imposed itself and was part of the Italian tradition there, a tradition which had, over the years, permitted a continuous flow of people between Friuli and Bristol.

An example, and in large part a cause of this migratory movement of Friulani was Mr. Pietro Maddalena. He was born in Friuli and had

[8] Cf. P. Gillman, *Collar the Lot!*. London, Quartet Books, 1980; see also C. Cavalli, *Ricordi di un emigrato*. London, La Voce degli Italiani, 1972.

[9] For example, 32 Italian P.o.W.'s, having secretly baked cakes in the camp, celebrated Easter day 1945 in the house of Ambrosino.

married a woman from that area, but like his father and his grandfather before him, he had spent a large part of his life making terrazzo in Bristol. In the years immediately after the first world war, he had set up his own firm in Bristol, the "Marmo Mosaic", thus establishing the tradition of the terrazzo in the city, and making the work and presence of Friulani in the area more permanent. After the second world war he helped several Friulani who almost without exception came from two small towns: Fanna and Sequals to come to Bristol and work for him.

The two largest gangs of Friulani to be employed by "Marmo Mosaic", each numbering thirty people, came in 1947 and 1955. During the fifties and the sixties though, there were on average around eighty Friulani working for the firm at any one time. The majority of these immigrants were married and soon after their arrival brought their families over to live with them. They settled in the St. Paul's area in lodgings initially rented from other Friulani and later, in their own houses which were nearly always bought in the same area.

They knew each other and socialised together, but not as much as one would expect. They mixed even less with the other Italians who arrived at the same time or after them. The work of the "Marmo Mosaic" took the men away from Bristol to different English towns and compelled them to remain away from home for several days at a stretch.

These Friulani were "people who minded their own business and who only thought of work". In fact they wanted to put some money aside, at any cost, and then return to Italy. So "men used to work even on Sundays" while women saved money wherever they could. They even cut back on their journeys to Italy, and "they used not to go out very much with the other Italians".

At the time of this research there were two Friulan firms in Bristol working on terrazzo (Maddalena and Zanetti) and both of them sought to employ Friulani. But the Friulani families in the area numbered no more than ten. Half of these were made up of immigrants who had come before the second world war. All of them had either a son or a daughter married to an English person.

The Friulani's will to return to Italy, together with a positive policy towards emigrants in the Friulan region, reduced emigration and made the "great return" possible. This re-entry, as the Friulani themselves told me, had already started in the sixties "when things in Italy started to go for the better" and reached its climax after the earthquake in Friuli (May 1976) when they went down and "rolled up their own sleeves to rebuild their own towns".

A second group of workers which arrived between 1947 and 1948 was composed of metal-founders from the industrial regions of Northern Italy and went to work in the firms of Thomas Richards and Newmans. They were part of the contingent of 2,000 metal-founders who had been recruited in Italy through the local labour exchanges, and examined by

a special English commission which went to Italy with the purpose of checking that these applicants were qualified.

They were all skilled workers from towns with a long and solid industrial tradition and they often had very good prospects and sometimes very good jobs in their own country. But they too had been caught in the trap of the temporary post-war recession. For example, some of them had had to leave their jobs because and emergency law did not permit more than one person from the same family to work in the same factory. Like the old Italians of Bristol nearly all of whom had come from the North and who once abroad, were relatively well-off small-time business people, so too the metal-founders were from the North and ignorant of the culture of poverty.

Though they formed part of the migratory wave caused by the post-war Italian economic crisis, they always cultivated the tendency to identify with the "old-immigrants". In this idiom, and with their behaviour, they stated their northern origin (from Northern Italy) and professionalism, they identified with the Friulani (like the skilled workers from the North) and the old immigrants, and directly distinguished themselves from the unskilled labour force which mainly came from Southern Italy, which arrived several years later.

In 1951 a decisive wave of immigration occurred with the arrival of miners who came to work in the five or six mines of the Mendip Hills, in a belt several kilometres South of Bristol and Bath. They were part of various (at least three) contingents of workers who left Italy at two monthly intervals (April, June, August).

At the landing in Folkestone they were met by an interpreter (an ex-Italian officer, ex-P.o.W., married to an English woman) and coaches, which took them to Yorkshire, to the towns of Mexborough and Maltby. Here introductory courses had been organised for them and they found themselves having to go to school "like children", "to learn, run and wrestle" as well as learn English under the guidance of a teacher who made them listen to a record and repeat "good morning, thank-you and so on". They were all people with no formal educational qualifications, who saw themselves as unskilled workers of mature age, with no intention of staying long in Great Britain, preferring to spend their time playing cards. At the end of the course "all passed" and after a short training period of about three weeks in various mines, they were invited to choose the mine in which they would have to do their four years of indentured labour.

Of this contingent, a certain number of people from Southern Italy, in particular Sicily, specifically from the towns of Ribera, Aragona, Grotte and Agrigento, arrived to work in the Bristol region. For the local Italian community their arrival was an important event and in his own way an old-immigrant remembered by saying: "In 1951 the Sicilians arrived; before, there had never been one Sicilian in Bristol, never, not even one".

The local Coal Board Headquarters was at Midsomer Norton, the site of the largest of the local mines, and about 500 Italians were employed there. The other mines of the coal belt stretching from Radstoke to Pensford employed the rest of the Italian contingent which totalled around 2,000 people. Nowadays all these mines have been closed, but from the second half of the fifties the majority of these Italians had already started the exodus towards the two nearby towns of Bath and Bristol. In Bristol they entered into the widest variety of jobs the town could offer, in particular they went into business, developing a local Italian trade in an impressive way.

During the period the miners were moving into Bristol city and its life, another influx of immigrants arrived there directly from Italy. Already by 1950-51 some women from Central Italy had come to work in the hospitals, later recruiting other people for the same job.

But a larger group arrived in 1956 to work in Brooks Laundries. There were some men but mainly women, recruited directly through newspaper advertisements by the firm which sent an agent to Italy for that purpose, from the Campania region, Sorrento in particular.

From the beginning of the fifties consequently there was a continuous influx of "immigrants" into Bristol, either from the coal belt or directly from Italy. This influx increased greatly from the second half of the fifties onwards. In fact the true development of the community, as it appeared at the time of this research, took place between 1958 and 1965, when the immigrants, who were, until then, mainly bachelors, started "to set up house and families".

This was a period of turmoil in the immigrant contingent. Several people, who considered their period as immigrants to be completed, returned to Italy permanently. Several others on the other hand, went back to Italy, but in order to get married or pick up their families and return to Bristol. Many people simply married on the spot, or arranged for their family to come to Bristol.

During this period the community had its highest rate of expansion, partly because several immigrants, besides assembling their family group around them, arranged for other relatives, friends and fellow villagers to come. Increasingly the contingent assumed the features of a relatively stable group of immigrant families. In the period from about 1965 till the time of the research, the immigrant group hardly changed; it continued to expand but only minimally.

The presence of a local Italian community, together with the glamour typical of Bristol, made the city an attraction and a place of passage for many young people. They were sometimes students who went there to learn the language or simply to spend some time abroad and as far as possible be financially self-supporting.

The community in this way diversified further and assumed the structure of the three categories into which the "modern" Italian migra-

tory contingent in Great Britain is traditionally subdivided. Firstly the category usually called "the old-immigrants" composed of people who come mainly from Northern or Central Italy. Secondly the post-war immigrants who left Italy for economic reasons, in the period of depression following the war. Thirdly the recent movement, or mainly young people who come as students or visitors, representing the most recent phase.

This classification not only defines three distinct types of migratory movement and of migrants who mingled in Bristol, but, as we have seen, gives some people the chance of refusing the classification "immigrant", a term which is reserved for the un-skilled manpower from Southern Italy. This last category, "the miners" to use the local expression, gave the Italian community in Bristol its character.

In Swindon there never was an Italian group presence of any note till the second world war.

Rinaldo Stefani, born in London of Italian parents in 1896, settled in Swindon towards the end of the 1920's. During the first world war, while he enlisted in the Italian army and was at the front, his parents moved to this town where they opened a fish and chip shop. Stefani, who later on took over the family shop, claims that in the period between the two world wars, there were only five or six Italians in Swindon: one a café owner, and the others like him, with fish and chip shops. They were all people who "spoke English very well" and who, as far as he knew, were born and came from somewhere in England.

The first time that a truly Italian presence was felt in Swindon was towards the end of the second world war, when a number of internment camps for prisoners of war were established around the town (Whitworth, Lambourn, Devizes, Easton Grey, etc. About 10,000 Italian P.o.W.'s in all).

For those willing to do so, there was the possibility of working, either individually or in organised teams in local industry or on farms. The majority chose to work on the local farms being paid only a penny a day, but in compensation felt freer and had better opportunities of helping themselves (especially to the food). Relations with the indigenous population were mixed, with a variety of attitudes ranging from hatred to compassion, as one would expect in a situation where one was face to face with prisoners who were former enemies and largely still were.

In the local press at the time, one can clearly detect echoes of these ambivalent reactions. A question put to the Secretary of State for War by Sir Wavell Wakefield, who was worrying that "at the time when, owing to an acute shortage of accommodation in Swindon, young married couples are having to live with their parents-in-law, Italian P.o.W.'s were billetted in houses ..." [10], was reported. When the reply was that there

[10] *Swindon Advertiser*, 19.3.1945.

were only "four houses and rooms over four shops ... used to accommodate Italian P.o.W.'s who worked at a nearby depot ...". Sir Wakefield replied wondering: "Why the Italians cannot be put into tents" [11].

Other reports related to the reaction of some English soldiers returning from the front, like the one who said: "The best German is a dead one ... but as far as the Italian is concerned there is no name bad enough for him. Every time I see one my blood boils within me. It makes me sick ... etc." [12]

But it seems that in reality, the Italian prisoners generally had been accepted with sympathetic understanding. The local press took notice of a meeting with the local population held on 6th March 1945 reporting a concert given at the Regent Street Methodist Hall by a group of Italian prisoners, taking trouble to explain to the readers how "Italians are very fond of music" [13].

On the 11th November 1945 on the Straton Road, a lorry carrying an Italian work-team from Whitworth camp to one of the local farms was involved in an accident. The young (eighteen year old) English soldier who was driving, survived, but among the Italians there were six dead and seventeen injured. At the funeral several English people were present. There was also a wreath from English mothers on behalf of Italian mothers, and the event was reported in the press for some time after [14].

When, at the end of the war, the P.o.W.'s started to leave, sympathy became more explicit, and some pictures of the departing Italians were published in the local press [15].

Once the prisoners had been repatriated, the internment camps were dismantled and, in Swindon, these events were only a memory.

The P.o.W. camps were the historic "incident" which allowed some Italians and English people to become acquainted, and formed the basis for a pattern of immigration to the region, which was the decisive one for Swindon.

Outside the town, in the local countryside, the P.o.W. camps left some traces. The Italian prisoners had been offered the possibility of staying as immigrants and some of them had decided to do so. Among these some had debts with Italian justice, some had reason to be afraid of their political past, but the majority thought they were not going to find, at least not for some time, any better means of subsistence in the chaos of post-war Italy.

Not many people remained from the various camps, three or four people from each, at the most, except for Easton Grey near Malmesbury

[11] *Ibid.*, 22.3.1945.
[12] *Ibid.*, 19.5.1945.
[13] *Ibid.*, 6.3.1945.
[14] *Ibid.*, 12.11.1945, 13.11.1945, 15.11.1945, 22.1.1946.
[15] *Ibid.*, 25.1.1946.

where about a hundred remained. As someone said, "Everything started from there".

Generally these immigrants were organised to work on the various local farms, given a labour contract where each pledged himself, amongst other things, to work for "nobody but his employer" whom he had to obey fulfilling "his orders diligently" and whom he was required to reimburse for the cost of his meals (about one third of the pay) and the sum of £ 0.3s.9d. towards the cost to the employer of buying the employee's clothing from the military authorities. The weekly pay was £ 0.3s.10d.

Of these P.o.W. immigrants, several returned to their country, some even terminating their work before the twelve months fixed by the contract. Of this latter group, several were destined to come back to the same area at a later date.

Generally, both those who stayed and those who returned again from Italy, did not stay on the farms. After a few years they moved to the neighbouring towns of Cirencester, Devizes, Chippenham, where they founded the various local Italian immigrant communities, still present at the time of the research.

Directly from the countryside, or else from the above mentioned towns, several people moved into Bristol and Swindon which were becoming the two major centres of attraction for the immigrants from Italy in the region.

Franco Mazzotta is one of the ex P.o.W.'s from Lambourn camp who, at the end of the war, remained to work on a farm in the area for some time. In 1949 he called his wife over and later took work in Swindon, eventually settling there. He had, in 1948, already arranged for his cousin to immigrate, finding work for him on a farm in Lechlade. In 1951 he then found work for another four of his relatives, the first of about thirty people (all males, whose families followed later) and who over a span of seven to eight years were settled in the region as the result of his own efforts.

As Franco himself told me, in the evening after work accompanied by an English friend (Mr. D. Barrett) he used to visit different farms asking if, by chance, there was need for workers. When he did find jobs, he went to the local labour exchange to obtain an application form for a work permit, taking it to the potential employer who undertook to fill it in and obtain an endoresement from the Home Office later returning it to Franco. Franco would then send it to the person concerned in Italy.

They all started working on farms, with the exception of half a dozen immigrants who were employed in a brick factory. In fact, during his captivity, Franco happened to meet the owner of this factory (Mr. Mervyn Hill) where he used to go in the evening to do a few hours of extra work, for tobacco money.

Franco also arranged for five young women to immigrate, some of

whom worked as au-pairs in his house at the beginning, later working as housemaids with other families.

These people, in their turn, brought their families to Great Britain, as well as calling other relatives and friends over. Thus the group expanded.

Using a rather epic image, the local "Echo and Times" of 25.2.66 described Franco as "the 20th century Moses who brought his starving people to Swindon, the promised land", and amongst other things stated that in view of his deeds, Franco was "revered by the Swindon Italians".

Actually Franco was from Calabria, and in 1966, as at the time of the research, the largest section of the Italians in Swindon was made up of people from the same region. Franco's role in relation to this section of the Italian contingent was evident. As the moving force behind the arrival and settlement of the initial group of people and the person who later on arranged for the rest of the Calabrese population of Swindon to come over, he was in practice at the start of the entire process which established the Calabrese presence in this town.

But he had only helped a few Calabresi, not all, to come to Swindon. The majority of the Swindon Calabresi then, did not feel any obligation toward Franco and had no need to revere him, let alone the other remaining Italians.

Through a series of fortuitous circumstances, Franco (who was a slightly less important figure than Moses) found himself carrying out the first recruitments. His case though had not been an exception but only represented the typical model of recruitment through which the majority of Italians had arrived in the area.

As far as the other Italians in Swindon are concerned, people who came mainly from Central and Southern Italy, the story is very different, but even here the phenomenon is connected to the events of the last war and the migratory pattern is the same.

During the second world war, Maria Stranieri from Giulianova (Teramo, Abruzzi) met a Pole (Babicz) to whom she became engaged thinking that later, once the war was over, she would go to him in Poland and marry. As a consequence of the Yalta agreement, however, Poland remained in Eastern Europe and the Polish soldiers, who had been fighting with the British army, found themselves away from their homeland in England. Maria's fiance, who ended up in the Swindon area, was amongst them. He tried to go to his fiancee's town, but in the initial post-war period, Italy (for political reasons) was closed to the Polish people, so Maria had to move and in 1947 she arrived in Swindon where she married and settled. Through her, between 1950 and 1956, another six girls, either sisters or friends, moved to Great Britain from her town and remained; of these, five married Poles.

Something similar happened in the case of Pasqualina Fiore from Castelpagano (Benevento, Campania) who, in 1943 met a Polish soldier

(Bedri) in her home town. This Pole too eventually ended up in Swindon. She kept contact my mail until 1952, when she came to Great Britain, married and settled. During the first years she had "a very hard life" living with her Polish husband in accommodation rented from an English family; nobody spoke to her in Italian. After six months "just to have someone to talk to" she invited Maria, one of her girl-friends from Italy, to stay with her.

Between 1952 and 1956 Pasqualina, along with Maria who remained and married a Pole (Noga), arranged for five people to immigrate to Swindon, of whom two girls later each married Polish men. Maria for her part persuaded ten people to come between 1955-60, of which five were girls and three of whom also married Poles. In Swindon, at the time of the research, one could have found about fifty Italian women married to Polish men.

People called over by the three above-mentioned ladies were not only from Giulianova or Castelpagano, but relatives and friends from neighbouring towns as well, who afterwards would call other people in their turn. In this way, beside the Calabresi contingent, a group of Italians from Giulianova, Castelpagano, Colle Sannita, San Marco dei Cavoti, and later on Battipaglia (Abruzzi and Campania) became established.

Noteworthy in the history of this contingent is the role of Rinaldo Stefani, mentioned above, especially in the phase of expansion, settlement and initial introduction of the immigrants into Swindon. In 1952-53 he "discovered" and got in touch with the Italian group of Lechlade, and as he too wanted his nephew to come from Italy, made enquiries and found out how they had managed to get there.

Apart from his nephew, Rinaldo had nobody in Italy who wanted to emigrate. Initially his work consisted mainly of finding jobs and providing work permits for the local immigrants who wanted to bring some relative or friend from Italy. From his notebook, in the span of time to 1965 (when he retired from any sort of work) it appears that he found employment for about 350 people. In the end the employers themselves started going to him to enquire if there were, or if they knew of any people looking for work within the local Italian community.

Even Rinaldo made use of the opportunity for employment on the farms, but only in a minor way (about 20 people). For the majority of the males he found employment in the industry (like Plessey) or in the building industry, either by making use of the labour exchange or his own personal acquaintances. For the women on the other hand, the most usual employment was as cleaners or helpers in hospitals or private clinics (The Psychiatric Hospital in Devizes, Charleston Private Home for old people for example), or as housemaids in private homes.

The development and definitive building up of the community can be set in the decade between 1955 and 1965. Before long several of the earlier immigrants learned how to find work by themselves and then they

themselves undertook to search for employment and look after the arrival of relatives and friends.

Besides obtaining work permits, Rinaldo found himself increasingly having to look after the social aspects of work and life within an immigrant community which by now was becoming increasingly large. Furthermore in 1956-57 he was officially put in charge as local consular correspondent, by the Italian consul in London.

In 1956 the Italian Mission started to operate in the town as well. At the beginning of the sixties the Mission was caring for about 300 Italian families in Swindon alone (the consular correspondent claimed there were more) and 6,370 people in the entire missionary area (that is Swindon and the neighbouring area).

In 1965 the Italian contingent reached its peak of expansion and among the immigrants there was serious talk of organising and co-ordinating services. It had been the year in which the community most attracted the attention of the local population and the press not only because of its size but also because of the arguments and the attempts to buy an Italian centre. Nothing happened as far as the centre was concerned, but the mission was established definitively with the purchase of a house. A consular agent was nominated and took the place of Rinaldo, and the Italian Consulate started its courses in Italian for the immigrants' children.

From 1965 up to the time of the research, the community did not expand further, as perhaps the immigrants expected it to, but stabilised with few new families arriving (though fifty left) and established itself around a stable nucleus of immigrants made up from a group of little under 300 families (about 280).

It is evident that the connection between plans to expand Swindon and the establishment of an Italian community there, although not the cause of the influx of people (which was not planned), still forms part of the cause, though for the Italians themselves it was not the main motivation for their coming into the area.

Quantification and Composition of the Italian Contingent

The most recent English data in relation to the Italian presence in the region are those offered by the 1971 Census. This gives for the distinct areas:

Gloucestershire	2,030 people
Somerset	1,240 people
Wiltshire	1,380 people

From the Italian side these figures are viewed with a certain degree of scepticism: it is claimed in fact that immigrants are more numerous.

Even at the General Consulate of Italy in London it seems that not much weight is given to these figures though one cannot dispute them in concrete terms and one cannot offer more precise data. The Consulate cannot control the movements of Italians in British territory, and consequently, has no adequate means of defining the numerical composition of the various local Italian communities.

In the final analysis, what the Consulate knows, depends upon the extent to which the Italians use its services. But from the contact it has with the Italians, especially for bureaucratic reasons, it cannot avoid putting the composition of the various communities at a much higher level.

On the occasion of the first European election for example, in order to single out the areas where sufficient numbers of immigrants were present, to require a local polling station, the data of the above English census was adopted as a point of reference, and then they were multiplied threefold. The proportion then of one to three, even if a bit exaggerated, indicated how many Italians the Consulate considered to be present in the area.

Like the Consulate, the social workers and the local immigrants tend to neglect the data given by the English Census, and give figures which come very close to the numbers which one can deduce by using the Consulate's method.

A comparison between the official English statistical data on the Italian presence in Great Britain and the corresponding Italian data, could reveal the reason for the divergence of opinions between the English Census and the local Italians' estimates. According to the data from the Census, there were in 1971 in the whole of Great Britain, 108,800 Italians. On the Italian side the data produced by the "Direzione Generale dell'Emigrazione e Affari Sociali" of the Foreign Office for the same year put the Italian presence in the region of 212,330 people. Between the data then there was a gross divergence of one to two.

The reasons for the difference it seems, should be sought, above all, in the different way in which immigrants' children born during the last twenty to thirty years in Great Britain are regarded [16]. The English census groups all residents in Great Britain by birthplace so children of Italians born in this country do not appear as Italians. Italian data concerning Italian residents in Great Britain on the other hand is based on parentage and citizenship which, for the children of immigrants, is their parents' municipality of origin where they are registered through the Italian consulate.

One can add that the figures given by the Foreign Office represent an estimate which is less than the true figure; a number of "Italians born

[16] J. Rose analysing the English census in order to establish the number of coloured immigrants in England and Wales makes the same observation and shows how the data given should be adjusted. See E.J.B. Rose et al., *Colour and Citizenship*. Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations, London, 1969, pp. 96-103.

abroad" are very often not registered. A number of Italian parents do not always notify their municipalities of the birth of children through the Consulate. This sometimes happens through ignorance (because they don't know how to do it), sometimes through laziness (because they don't want to waste time going to or sending documents to the Consulate), and sometimes on purpose (as for example, when they think that by not registering their children, they keep them free from the duties of Italian military conscription). All these "Italians" are not detected and do not appear in Italian statistics and are excluded from the possible ratio of one to two from the data of the English Census.

The figures of the English Census then, multiplied by two and approximated in excess (without having to go as far as the multiplication by three used by the Italian Consulate) even if in an undetailed way, seems to give more precise numeric value of the composition of Italians in the various areas of the region.

These, at least, are the figures usually given by social workers and the two local Italian Catholic Missions. According to the latter there should be about 10,000 Italians in the area, of which about one third (3,500) are in Bristol, one fourth (2,500) are in Swindon, others, about 800 in Bath, about 800 in the Wells-Glastonbury Street belt and the rest spread in more or less consistent groups throughout the various towns and villages in the region.

For the purposes of this research, it is not so important to decide what the nationality of the immigrants' children is and consequently how many in the area are people with Italian nationality. It is rather more important to know how many "Italians" there are, that is, the people who in the various every day social interactions, consider themselves so and are considered as such.

If, in the choice and analysis of the statistics, the definition which takes the so called second generation into account is preferred, this decision does not derive over all from a value judgement of the statistics in themselves, but rather on a choice of method. In the definition of the composition of the various Italian communities, figures which take more account of and assume the point of view and the criteria of calculation of the communities themselves are preferred.

In this sense, the confirmation given to the latter figures by the statistics extracted from the list of immigrants on the files of the two local Italian missionary centres are particularly important. In these files, gathered in the course of a long and continuous relationship with the immigrants, the point of view of the immigrant himself is almost always taken as the final criterion. In it, even the legal concept of nationality is made relative and Italianship is made to depend on a series of factors which could vary in time and space.

The fact of being "Italian" depends, in the first instance, on the diverse degrees and forms of participation in the activities of the English

associated life in which the immigrant is inserted. This could vary for every person, as much at the factual level from the skill (or not) with which each immigrant can manipulate the socio-political and cultural structures of the environment, as at a level of sense of belonging. It depends then, upon the conceptual distance that each immigrant entertains with his own home-country and above all with his village of origin. Consequently, the way in which "Italians" settle down in relation to the Italian immigrant contingent, and entertain a meaningful social relation with it varies.

In the local Italian communities and in the files of the missions, one can in this way finds Italians "with British passports", but only with difficulty can one find the so called "Italians of passport only". Here the quantification of the contingent is no longer made on the basis of the raw statistical data alone, but is supplemented with an analysis of a qualitative order relating to the varying ways and degrees of belonging to the community.

A brief description of the composition of a typical local Italian immigrant community may give an idea about the value of the given quantification. We have, first of all, the bulk of the Italian contingent which can be subdivided into two categories. Firstly there is the category of immigrants who have, as a clear aim, the return to their home country, and for whom a return and the reinsertion into their village is a realistic aim, even if the fulfilment of this determination remains a difficult decision which is postponed from year to year. These have continuous contact with their kinship group residing in the village of origin where they have their economic interests and go to Italy frequently. Abroad they are present in the activities of the Italian group even if, in general, they never assume a position of leadership.

There is also the category of people who recognise themselves as being compelled by now to remain but who cannot insert themselves into the English way of life. Even if they made the choice of remaining, a choice which they consider final, they continued to remain on the outer fringes of society. It is the worst condition because they find themselves with no means and no future. The elementary premises for the return are absent, since they have either broken or retain only minimal relations with their homeland. They are in a dilemma between the inability of becoming members of the society and country which hosts them, and the idea of a return which, at this point, they wish, but which appears impossible to bring about. They are destined to become the symbol of the immigrants' exclusion from society. For these people the local Italian community is one of their most cherished realities.

We have then the group of "Italians" with English passports who are not counted in the official statistics although they appear in the files of the missionary centres. Even these could be divided into two categories. Firstly, there are the so called "old-immigrants": that is those often elderly

people who were born in Great Britain of Italian parents, in some cases, even before the first world war. In spite of the time which has passed and insertion into English society, they remain fundamentally Italian. Given their special position they were able to care for the various waves of Italian prisoners or labourers who successively arrived in the area. In general, they have always been the soul and the most whole-hearted supporters of the community.

There is also the category of "Italians" who have immigrated more recently and who, by necessity (marriage or business for example) had to change nationality and become British. They are part of the approximate 9,000 who in the whole of Great Britain have become British since the last world war. In spite of everything, their relation to the English world remains extremely ambiguous. Having lost their formal ties with Italy, they retain a nostalgia for citizenship of their original mother country, and for the comfort which an Italian passport has provided. As far as I could observe during my research, and I am going to observe again further in the course of this book, people of this kind are often the most active members within the Italian community.

Then follows the group of Italian immigrants' children who, as we have seen, don't appear in the English statistics, nor entirely in the Italian ones, but in general are always taken into consideration in the missionaries' files. These, who are often identified as "the second generation", are considered and treated by the immigrants as effective members of the Italian community. As a matter of fact, their position in the Italian contingent is vague, and often varies in relation to age (older ones are more Italian), sex (girls are more Italian) and the attitude of their family, but in general they consider themselves to be Italian.

We also have the Italians who entered into mixed marriages. They represent the marginal area which is impossible to quantify; it resolves itself, in fact, into an area of exit from the group for some Italians, and as an area of entrance for some English and Polish people who became sympathisers and became involved in the Italian community activities.

There are finally the "Italians of passport only" who in practice don't care any more about their Italianship. For them the English society represents the symbol of a new and better condition, and their children grow up completely shaped by the country of immigration. Italy for them is a place for tourism, a holiday-land where they take their children and friends. The real Italy has been left behind them. These, whilst appearing in the official statistics, do not appear in the missionaries' files.

Like this last group, the majority of unmarried people and a great many young people who have no fixed residence, appear in the official lists but not in the missionaries' files. This appears to be a large group. Their Italianship in general does not come under discussion but they are not relevant and are not taken into consideration in the quantifications of

the contingent by the local Italians because they are very mobile people and their relationship to the Italian community is somewhat ephemeral.

This brief description of the make up of the Italian contingent shows both how complex a statistical survey is and how open to erroneous interpretation it can be. The statistical data above is quoted to show and somehow help visualise the Italian contingent. It should not, however, be taken at face value, least of all should it be used to express any sociological relevance of the Italian group within English society. We are dealing with people who are not easily identified, belonging to a group which cannot easily be isolated or clearly defined.

The quantification problem gives one the first insight into the particular structure and nature of the community under examination. Immigrants do not live in isolation but are part of the society they insert themselves into and it is not so much the colour of their passport which tells them apart as the condition they find themselves in.

Theoretical Perspectives

The way in which Italians in the Bristol region placed themselves within the society could simply be interpreted as a relations problem between a minority group and a national majority [17] in keeping with theoretical studies on plural societies. This is the approach favoured by various studies carried out in the last twenty years in relation to immigrant groups within English society; studies which tend to concentrate on immigrant groups with race relations problems as is often the case with coloured communities.

Most of these works are modelled on the study by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal on blacks in America [18]. Myrdal concludes that the problem in America is none other than a problem both created and perpetuated by the attitude of that same society towards the black community. This realisation leads to his analysis in which relations between a minority group and the majority is largely governed by the values held in common. He focusses on American society as a whole and shows how the conflict between values, actions and the forces creating and modifying the black problem are an integral part of the society itself.

Studies on the immigrant in England which use the Myrdal approach generally presuppose that in order to understand the demands made on the immigrant by the host society and the opportunities on offer within it, one must study its main ideological and structural characteristics. This theore-

[17] For a more precise definition of the concepts see: L. Wirth, in R. Linton (Ed.), *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1945, p. 347; G.E. Simpson and J.M. Yinger, *Racial and Cultural Minorities*. New York, Harper and Row, 1965.

[18] G. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*. New York, Harper and Row, 1944.

tical approach, however, does not always lead to the best practical approach. An advanced industrial society like the English one is made up of a variety of separate status, class and power groups which cannot easily be linked to a common basic structure.

In their study on race relations in Great Britain, E.J.B. Rose and his associates sum up this complex social order in the concept of citizenship [19] not only in legal terms but in a wider sense as, "the nexus that in any State links society and the individual" [20].

The value of this definition lies in the fact that it goes beyond the concepts of a minority and majority as homogeneous but separate groups. It provides a lively image of the various groups and dynamics at work within society where, "a constant series of challenges produces responses, and their resolution determines where the boundary lines are drawn and who is included" [21].

Thus the basic procedural problem is how to point out "the terms on which the rights conferred by the relationship between State and citizen are guaranteed, and the manner and the extent of access to them" [22]. The various structures fundamental to society are, in a stable and integrated social order, subjectively perceived in terms as three principal images. The image of the occupational structure, the image of the community structure and the image of educational and power structure [23].

In his report on Great Britain Jim Rose mentions how, in spite of the liberality of the concept of citizenship, immigrants, and coloured immigrants in particular, are faced with discrimination in each of these three areas. Rapid social changes, widespread post-war prosperity, the growth of the Welfare State and for the Italians in particular, the entry into the E.E.C. which strengthened the process of inclusion, whilst all favouring social mobility also worsened the position of the weaker members of society.

The immigrants themselves tend to under-estimate the extent of this discrimination as they are not always exposed to it. By making use of the communications network within their own ethnic group, they reduce the problems inherent in their situation. According to Anthony Richmond, however, the more immigrants become used to English life and thus have great expectations, the more they experience direct personal discrimination [24]. Racial tensions might easily develop within this context.

[19] See also T.H. MARSHALL, *Citizenship and Social Class*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1950.

[20] E.J.B. ROSE, et. al., *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[23] See J. REX, *Race Relations in Sociological Theory*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970, pp. 94-95.

[24] A.H. RICHMOND, *Migration and Race Relations in an English City*. London, Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 8-9.

These tensions are usually studied in the light of models based on the hypothesis of conflict between groups in society which are in the competition for limited resources [25].

Having understood that ethnic conflict takes place in the world of work and within the community structure, John Rex and Robert Moore study the latter and confirm that racial relations can be understood in terms of several competing "housing classes". It results in a conflict between the old residents and the new arrivals who are excluded from council housing by the allocations procedure [26].

Experts generally concentrate on the racial problems arising in the world of work. Nicholas Deakin on the subject of "Colour and Citizenship" states that "It was the jobs that the immigrants thought that they could get that drew them to Britain and it is the jobs that they actually obtained which determine their place in British society. The position of any group in society is determined as much by the jobs that its members hold as by any other factor" [27].

From here Marxist sociologists who see English society as fundamentally class divided and the immigrant as someone at the very bottom of the social ladder, see the conflict between groups in society as yet another aspect of the class struggle. Or as J. Horton says, "confrontation of opposed groups and values ... a movement towards basic change of goals and social structures" [28].

For these experts the main concern is how to change society. And in order to justify their soteriology they start from the premise of the existence of a class conflict whatever the social context may be.

In practice the other experts, various general theoretical statements notwithstanding, use a model of analysis based on the idea of conflict within the social context. That is where discrimination creates such a polarisation of attitudes as to produce situations of potential conflict, as is usually the case with coloured minority groups. The "Colour and Citizenship" report which mainly studied ethnic minorities from the Commonwealth, took colour as being such a critical factor as to put certain ethnic groups into a category apart [29].

Anthony Richmond, convinced that when talking of immigration problems one cannot ignore the question of conflict, also indicates the

[25] The idea of "conflict" is borrowed from the theories of R.E. Park and his associates of the Chicago school where it has a rather different implication. In Park, the "conflict" represents a phase of the "race relations cycle" or assimilation process of minority groups.

[26] J. Rex and R.S. Moore, *Race Community and Conflict: A Study of Sparkbrook*. London, Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations, 1967, p. 13.

[27] N. Deakin, *Colour Citizenship and British Society*. London, Panther Modern Society for Institute of Race Relations, 1970, p. 195.

[28] J. Horton, *Order and Conflict Theories of Social Problems as Competing Ideologies*, "A.J.S.", Vol. 7, No. 6, 1966, p. 107.

[29] See N. Deakin, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

possibility of a more subtle conflict which is often not taken into consideration. According to him, besides the "contradiction" between values and actions in Myrdal's study and the "opposition" between groups within society in the various theories on conflict, there can be the conflict of "competition" generated in consensus situations. "It is precisely because individuals and groups value the same material and social goals that they compete for them. If there was less consensus over what was valuable and worth directing energy to achieve, there would be less of this particular type of conflict" [30]. He also observes how, "in a hierarchical society that has achieved more than a subsistence standard for most of its members, the most acute competition is not necessarily for houses or material goods as ends in themselves, but rather as symbols of social status" [31].

For immigrants however, this consensus which could eventually lead to conflict situations of a competitive nature with the national majority, is a reality which especially at a symbolic level is still to be developed. Immigrants in fact rather than being part of the consensus of the host society, face it from the outside.

For this same reason focusing attention on the political and cultural order which ties minority groups with the national majority is not enough to explain the position of immigrants in society adequately. This approach must be integrated with the approach studying how the immigrant himself fits into this order [32].

In their study "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America" Thomas and Znaniecki found three basic ways in which the immigrant fits into the host society [33]. One who rigidly keeps up the customs and traditions of the group of origin (the philistine type), one who goes to the other extreme with a total acceptance of the habits of the host society prepared even to alter, at least in part, his own psychological and social equilibrium (the bohemian type) and one in the middle, consisting of a synthesis of the cultural and social aspects of the two worlds (the creative type). Among the strong points of their study is the fact they pointed out the importance of the immigrants outlook and pin-pointed the importance of the migratory process.

Eisenstadt, in a rather more sophisticated way, analyses the most important psycho-social characteristics of this process. In "The Absorption of Immigrants" he defines emigration as "the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another" [34]. From this he focuses on the three basic phases: 1) The motivation to emigrate. 2) The social

[30] A.H. Richmond, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[32] Cf. J. Stone, *Colonist or Uitlander?*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 11-32.
[33] W.I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe*. London, Constable, 1920.
[34] S.N. Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954, p. 1.

structure of the actual migratory process. 3) The absorption of the immigrants within the social and cultural framework of the new society[35].

In relation to the first phase, he states how every migratory act is accompanied by feelings of unease and frustration which instigate the need to emigrate together with objective opportunities which made it possible. The immigrant in this situation tends to have more or less defined expectations of the new country and society. It is these expectations which in the last instance dictate the immigrant's first impression, his initial attitudes and behaviour models and the level of preparation to accept change.

In the course of his analysis, Eisenstadt observes how these expectations can be limited to the realisation of only a few goals. In this case, the initial impression the immigrant has of the new country is almost exclusively formed in those areas where opportunities to satisfy his expectations are to be found. Consequently the roles he intends to explore within the new society can only develop within those limited areas.

The motives behind the migration of the Italians to the Bristol region were many and varied, motives which we do not need to list at this moment in our discussion. It is enough to observe how for everyone concerned, even those who had migrated in order to be with relatives abroad, expectations were centred around the achieving of goals which would lead to economic security. As a result their relations with the indigenous population tended to be in the economic and occupational spheres. The opportunity to develop roles other than those determined by the basic expectations rarely presented itself.

The second phase of the migration process is to do with the physical transition from the country of origin to the country of imimigration. By leaving his country the immigrant reduces the frequency of contact with his own people and in consequence loses many, at times even most of the roles he had in the past and which he can no longer carry out from a distance. In a more general way too he breaks the various channels of communication which he had with the entire society in the past.

Thus the various points of reference which the immigrant used to have both with the society of origin and society in general weaken and eventually cease to exist. Various images of the new country take their place and mix together with the faded memories of the country of origin to which the immigrant remains attached. These various images however tend to be of a very generalised nature. They are merely expectations of future roles and sense of identity not real institutions, nor readily identifiable groups or symbols.

The physical process of transition from one country to another then actually reduces the immigrant's sphere of participation and, for the immigrant himself, becomes a form of de-socialisation. According to Eisen-

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 1-26.

stadt, the immigrant fits into the new society in the first instance as a social individual and any eventual assimilation requires "re-socialisation" of the immigrant himself [36].

The third and final phase of the migratory process is the process of absorption or integration into the new society. Only in the area described by this phase, and in our opinion, only here, can the works on relations between minority groups and national majorities make a useful contribution to works on the way immigrants place themselves within society.

According to Eisenstadt the absorption or integration process goes side by side with an institutionalisation of the immigrant's role and a transformation in the values of his primary group.

Here in particular the various migratory movements which had a certain uniformity in the earlier phases, now reveal basic differences which are mainly due to the different way in which immigrants adhere to norms and traditional ways of life and the different way in which they develop modern aspirations. Eisenstadt focuses on three of the various migratory movements, for their typical value. 1) The Agricultural immigrants in Europe (particularly Polish and Italian peasants in France). 2) The plantation pattern (especially in South America). 3) The Immigrants in the United States [37].

Without wishing to go into any analysis of the details and the value of this typology, we simply describe the first group as it shows signs of basic characteristics which the Italian migratory movement in the Bristol region also has.

"Agricultural immigrants in Europe" tend to keep strong social and cultural ties with their country of origin and develop few aspirations in the new country. They do not have the tendency to move towards modern groups or economic and professional activities. Their concern is to find more efficient means of maintaining their traditional life-style to which they are deeply attached and which they want to nurture in the new country.

From the structural point of view they tend to keep a solid patriarchal family and eventually community structures for them alone. They prefer to have few contacts with the outside world and generally any such relations are those which are imposed simply by material and economic needs. In other respects they prefer to accept their isolated position even if this means being a permanent stranger in the new country. They have little liking for change or for any form of integration in the "host" society which can only be achieved by means of the abandonment or modification of cherished social behaviour patterns.

Given the characteristics of a migratory movement of the type des-

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 226-257.

cribed, the problem relating to the third phase of the migratory process and the way of fitting into the host society can hardly be put in terms of assimilation or integration.

At this point it seems useful to insert the concept of the family cycle and subdivide the immigrant group according to the succession of the various generations. The growth of modern expectations and the potential transformation and integration of the immigrant group into the indigenous society generally only takes place in part with the second generation but above all with the third. The first generation on the other hand, and partly the second, tend to remain an immigrant group.

The objective situation determined by the socio-cultural and socio-political structures which form the expectation and demands made on the immigrant by the society largely contribute to the definition of this position. In the final instance though this position depends on the attitudes and interests typical to the immigrant himself.

In this study these psycho-sociological factors together are expressed in the concept of "the immigrant condition".

We preferred this phrase to Sheila Patterson's "migrant status" [38] for two reasons. Firstly it seemed to us that "condition" better describes a sociological reality which appears to be a minimally structured situation and which for the immigrant is an essentially transitory one. Secondly because the idea of change can more easily be attached to the word "condition" – a change which in fact not only takes place in the final stages of the family cycle but also with first generation immigrants, as for example in the case of people who go into trade.

The typical way of fitting into society as described by the immigrant condition finds an outlet in separate immigrant groupings or "communities".

In general the research which is moulded around what Neil Sandberg calls "straight-line theory" [39], where acculturation and assimilation are seen as processes culminating in the eventual absorption of immigrant groups into the host society, does not seem to give adequate consideration to the existence of these communities. It fails to recognise the differences between them and the role they might have as secondary social groups [40].

The immigrant community in our research, is one of the ethnic groups which is identified by and tend to identify themselves primarily via the concept of nationality.

Though in time these groups tend to lose the characteristics they had at the time of mass immigration and consequently became a new social

[38] S. PATTERSON, *Dark Strangers*. London, Tavistock Publications, 1963.

[39] N.C. SANDBERG, *Ethnic Identity and Assimilation: The Polish-American Community*. New York, Praeger, 1974.

[40] The most significant application of the straight-line theory is still perhaps that of W.L. WARNER and L. SROLE, in *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1945.

entity, they tend to continue to exist and represent the first social space in which people from the same town identify each other and get together for as long as they continued to consider themselves to be immigrants [41].

Successive new arrivals join these groups and in one sense keep replacing the immigrants who continually move away from both the community and the immigrant condition, either as a result of deciding to insert themselves into the local society or because they go back to their home town.

The aim of this work is to underline the aims, the nature and the meaning of the community activities of the Italians in the Bristol region, with particular reference to their political position.

[41] Cf. H.J. GANS, *The Urban Villagers*. New York, Free Press, 1962; N. GLAZER and D.P. MOYNIHAN, *Beyond the Melting Pot*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1970; M. NOVAK, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*. New York, Macmillan, 1971; H.J. ABRAMSON, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America*. New York, Wiley, 1973; A. GREELEY, *Ethnicity in the United States*. New York, Wiley, 1974; N.C. SANDBERG, *op. cit.*; W. YANCEY, E. ERICKSEN and R. JULIANI, *Emergent Ethnicity: A Review and Reformulation*, "American Sociological Review", Vol. 41, June 1976, pp. 391-403.

THE ITALIANS' IMMIGRANT CONDITION

In January 1973 Great Britain officially became a member of the European Community (EEC) subscribing to the Treaty of Rome where articles 48, 49, 50, 51 relating to the principle of "Freedom of movement for workers" were ratified.

Until 1972, all Italian workers arriving at the border requesting entry into British territory, were not allowed in unless they possessed an official labour contract or "work permit". A work permit did not guarantee residence, but only a temporary stay corresponding to the period described by the labour contract; usually four years. In all cases, after four years of regular work, residence in Great Britain became possible. In practice, a work permit bound the Italian worker to an employer for a given period of time. A breach of contract would mean repatriation [1].

Au-pair girls whose employment was not considered to be a labour contract, were compelled to have an official declaration of acceptance from their host family in their possession. People entering on tourist or study permits, were not allowed to seek employment, otherwise they would be repatriated. This condition was stamped in their passport.

Immigrants' relatives were required to possess an Affidavit: a declaration countersigned by the consular authority stating that the immigrant would assume full responsibility for the relative, be it for subsistence, the expense of any sickness, or for any return journey, or funeral expenses in case of death.

In 1973, under art. 48 c. 2, of the Treaty of Rome, Great Britain pledged herself to abolish "any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States". This meant a change in policy in relation to the Italian workers, allowing them amongst other things, to enter Great Britain freely, to seek employment, and to stay, permanently if they so wished. The work permit, its conditions and the purposes supporting it, were abolished.

For the Italians of the survey area, the abolition of the discriminatory practices in the above sense, did not mean much. They had in fact, long since satisfied the conditions of their indenture and, as they themselves

[1] See J.A. TANNAHILL, *European Volunteer Workers in Britain*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1958.

would say, they were "already free" (to seek employment and reside in G.B.). For them the main benefits of Great Britain's entry into the EEC have to be mainly looked for in the moves undertaken to improve the condition of foreign workers in general, and reduce the social costs of migration.

Among the most pressing social reforms was that of harmonising the diverse statutes relating to social security. This theme has had some precedents, principally in the Treaty of Paris where the necessity of the co-ordination of the national arrangements in the area of social security was stressed, so that they were not an impediment to the labourers' movements.

As often happens with treaties of this kind, many of the declarations were not implemented for a multitude of practical reasons, or had no relevant application. Even today there are big differences, for example, in the contributory sistems and lack of uniformity in categorisation [2].

The diversity of arrangements not withstanding, the principle of accumulation of contributions, which had already been formulated by the CECA High Commission in 1957, has been accepted [3]. Under this principle the Italian workers are entitled to receive full value for all the contributions they have made in the various countries of the EEC. Once accumulated, these contributions give the immigrant the possibility of claiming the same social security and assistance benefits as those accessible to native workers (medical care, sickness benefits, maternity allowances, unemployment benefits, old age pension, allowances for the survivors in case of death and so on) whether he is going to stay in Great Britain or return to Italy, and for the relatives, whether they are with the immigrant or away from him in Italy.

But the regulation relating to the accumulation of contributions is more the expression of an agreement than of a true legislative harmonisation; these still remain diverse and separated, each one bound to the administrative body of the different countries. In this situation, the rights of the Italian worker in Great Britain remain far from effective without the assistance of private individuals or voluntary organisations helping him to achieve this needed harmonisation [4].

Notwithstanding the vast amount of work done by such individuals and organisations, the results are not always proportionate because of bureaucratic complexity. In general the services the immigrants receive are of a lower standard than those that an ordinary worker (English or Italian) could possibly receive in his own country. In the payment of

[2] Cf. Commissione delle Comunità europee, *Tabelle comparative dei regimi di sicurezza sociali nei Paesi membri della Comunità europea. Regime generale: al 1 luglio 1978*. Brussels, 1978.

[3] European Convention on the social security of migrant labourers: arts. 3 and 4.

[4] Cf. E.J.B. Rose, et. al., *op. cit.*, chapter 21 "The Volunteer in the Vacuum", pp. 370-400.

pensions, for example, an immigrant would have to wait for three years at least. An Italian in Swindon waited for seven years for the payment of a pension for which he had been recognised as entitled [5].

These private individuals and voluntary organisations then, are not always easily accessible. Often immigrants do not know of their existence and in the same way they do not even know of the services to which they are entitled.

Great Britain's entry into the EEC has certainly helped in giving impetus to the process of harmonisation of the diverse statutes relating to social security and assistance. The need though for this harmonisation does not derive directly from the ideal of a united Europe, but springs mainly from the necessity of solving, as far as possible, the immigrant workers' own problem. Already, before the necessity of reforms in this sector had even been recognised, several bilateral (between Great Britain and Italy) and multinational agreements had started and developed this process of harmonisation. With Great Britain's entry into the European Union, and the affirmation of the principle of freedom of movement for workers, the necessity had become more urgent.

The proposals relating to social security and assistance have had a certain priority to other social reforms and achieved results, mainly because they happened to be in the sphere which was closer and more directly connected to the problem of labour [6]. This is the sphere where one can recognise the social costs of migration more easily. The more one moves away from problems directly connected with the physical reality of labour, and the proposed reforms concerned with the various worker's needs, the more these reforms remain sterile and immigrants' problems remain unsolved.

This is due first of all to the fact that it is really difficult to isolate and recognise the various immigrants' needs. There is the danger that the foreign worker could be considered by the same standard as any other native worker. A worker in a foreign country, however, finds himself in a particular situation and over and above the necessities of any native worker he also has specific needs as an immigrant.

The immigrant worker's needs then tend to remain in great part unresolved as an adequate solution would require an exaggerated investment of energy. In most cases it would be necessary to isolate the problems typical to the immigrant and operate positive discrimination. Specific investments, especially in this sense, for the people of the indigenous labour organisations (Trade Unions, employers, political parties) appear to be too complicated and over all external to their own interest.

[5] Confidential Files, Case n. 1, see Appendix.

[6] For a discussion on the way in which immigrants fit into the working environment see S. PATTERSON, *Immigrants in Industry*. Oxford, Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations, 1968.

When attention is turned to the foreign worker's needs, solutions are generally looked for in the ambit of the already existing indigenous system of assistance. The rest is left in the hands of circumstance and in the end, to the initiative of the immigrant himself. An immigrant must practise self-help.

A comparison between the native workers who lived in poor houses or dwelt on council estates, and the Italian immigrants who, in a relatively short interval of time, succeeded in buying their own decent houses, was often made by the local population. An Italian making a comment on this comparison was anxious to make English people notice that he owned his own house, bought with his own sweat, and said, "It is the old story about the grasshopper and the ant. The money to buy our own houses had not been found in a ditch. You would have seen and collected it before us".

As a matter of fact the immigrants never had a better or more well paid job than an English person at any stage. To buy their own houses they had worked, as they themselves usually put it, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. From this, among other things, comes their reputation as hard workers.

The truth is that while the English worker could allow himself to behave like a grasshopper, the Italian immigrant could not; he was compelled to behave like an ant. For the immigrant, the idea of buying a house appeared as the first, most elementary and necessary step out of the collective and degrading accommodation of his beginnings, towards having a more decent life.

In Bristol, at the beginning, the majority of the miners were grouped in the neighbourhood of Trowbridge in an ex-P.o.W. camp, which had been converted into a hostel. The girls who came to work in the various hospitals found accommodation in the hospitals themselves, where they were compelled to live "a college life, eating together, going to bed at ten p.m. and so on".

Later, be they miners or girls in the hospitals, they left this accommodation to live in private lodgings, just as all the other immigrants of the area (metal-founders, laundresses, etc.) had done from the beginning. Often the "new" accommodation was in the houses of English colleagues but the preference was for accommodation in the houses of other Italians whenever possible.

At the same time as new immigrants were arriving directly from Italy into the city of Bristol, and the miners too, having completed their period of indentured labour, started to change job and move from the mining area into the same city, that is from about the middle fifties (1956-59), the first Italians of the contingent we are studying started to buy their own houses.

These houses were found mainly in the area of Montpellier initially and later in the area of St. Paul's and Portland. It was a depressed district

of dilapidated houses on the edge of the central area of the city, an area completely rebuilt as a business centre after the last world war. This district, which was already destined for extensive demolition, was left to decay. It was increasingly abandoned by the local population and offered cheap lodgings to successive waves of immigrants (Irish, Poles, Italians, Jamaicans, etc.) [7].

The latest Italian arrivals who didn't have a house started to move into the area initially crowding into the few houses purchased by fellow Italians. Of the thirty miners who were working in the Pensford mines for example, fourteen took accommodation in Adele's house and sixteen in the house of her mother-in-law at 50 and 64 Cheltenham Place (Montpellier). Here, life was very collective. Adele used to cook, wash, and clean the house for all her miners who lived there for quite some time. Whilst living there four got married and celebrated their marriages in the house, and someone else brought his girlfriend there when she was going to give birth to his child. Nearly all the Italian laundresses working at Brooks found accommodation in the five-flat-house of a certain Maria the Neapolitan in St. Paul's. These cases are perhaps the most relevant ones, but the overcrowding in the Italian houses of the area at that time was a widespread phenomenon.

From the early sixties (1962-63) the Italian immigrants who were renting accommodation, began to buy their own houses, still in the district and neighbourhood of St. Paul's. At the same time, the group of Italians (mainly Sicilians) in the Bedminster district was emerging. Several people identify the rise of the post-war Italian community in the city of Bristol, with that period.

As time went by, the Italians slowly started to move away from the decaying area of St. Paul's with its rather bad reputation, and spread themselves throughout the city, especially in the somewhat middle-class district of Bishopston, Horfield and St. Andrews. They were still residing here and here it was that the Italian Missionary Centre was located at the time of this research.

In Swindon, the Italians started their experience as immigrants, working mainly on the farms of the neighbourhood, and here they lived in tied cottages. Very often these cottages were not in a decent state of repair. As the immigrants themselves said, they were dumps with no electricity, no water, no services, "one had to get used to using the paraffin lamp, water had to be carried from the yard with a bucket, and one even had to make use of the yard or stable at night. In the winter it was freezing".

In the second half of the fifties, they started moving into Swindon town, joining those who at that time were arriving straight from Italy,

[7] See A.H. Richmond, *Migration and Race Relations in an English City*. London, Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations, 1973, pp. 114-164.

They nearly all gathered in the old part of the town, around the railway line, in the districts usually known as "Broad Street" and "Gorse Hill". By then, the town plan of building development was well under way, and some locals were starting to leave the old district of the town and move into the new houses built on the outskirts. Thus the Italians found their lodgings at reasonably low prices although houses were old and in need of repair.

At the time of the research, the bulk of the Italian community was still residing in that area. The neighbourhood was a compact area of terraced flats, built between 1875 and 1925. Of the lodgings 23% were still without some of the basic services and 17% had no inside toilet. The neighbourhood was the settlement for all the various immigrant groups, and the area was consideredthe worst in Swindon [8].

The house, which was initially seen as a way out of the very poor lodgings available, started to represent and be used by the Italians in the sixties as an investment that would allow them to further improve their situation.

Initially it was only an "intelligent" way of investing the money earned at work. "It is never wasted money" one individual used to say, and once one had decided to go back to his own country, the house could be sold and so give a return on the invested money. Very soon though, the house started to be visualised as yet a further source of income. For the Italians this was conceived mainly through a series of remodernisations which would increase the value of their property. But at the same time, a boom in capital investment took place throughout Great Britain and the Italians discovered a source of self-made capital in their houses which gave them much more than they had been earning at work.

With the money derived from the sale of the first house, several Italians put down the deposit and opened a mortgage for their second house; this time a better one [9]. At the time of this research, as far as lodgings were concerned, broadly speaking, the situation of the Italians in the area did not appear to be very serious. A lot of Italians already had their own house. In any case though, whatever the solutions and achievements in this field, it could be said that each Italian solved this problem by himself.

The problem of lodgings for the immigrants had never been of serious concern to the employers, and least of all of concern to the indigenous labour movement. Basically there is the idea that, from the latter's side it is sufficient to offer an employment and to define a labour contract which is in the best of cases favourable, as far as possible, to the immigrants. For lodgings it is enough to find an ordinary temporary solution

[8] AA.VV., *Social Profiles of Community Areas in Thamesdown*, Vol. II. Swindon, 1971.

[9] Cf. also R.J. King and P.D. King, *The Spatial Evolution of the Italian Community in Bedford*, "East Midland Geographer", June 1977/47, pp. 337-345.

because the immigrant himself will manage to find what he likes at a later date. An "emergency" solution for a start is considered to be quite a "normal" thing.

Likewise lodgings for the immigrants is not one of the local public authorities' priorities. When, in the best of cases, the foreign worker is considered "equal" to the native worker, a solution to the possible problem of lodging is sought "with no discrimination" in the ambit of the already existing praxis.

But as often happens in the various sectors of the social services, even as far as housing is concerned, amongst the criteria defining a person's rights, a minimum time of residence in the area appears to be essential. The foreign worker consequently, on his arrival into the new country, has to wait and mature his period of residence in order to be eligible. This does not easily happen, as the immigrant, having no fixed residence, initially tends to be very mobile.

Given the shortage of lodgings, priority is given to people in greater need; especially people with families. The immigrant, on leaving his own country, usually moves alone, and afterwards tends to remain alone for quite some time as he can't find family accommodation. Thus a vicious circle ensues, and the immigrant, particularly during the first years of his life in a foreign land, remains locked in a situation which practically excludes him from local housing policy [10].

In general, the indigenous social organisations do not have a specific policy for reducing the social costs of immigration as far as possible. Such a social policy is not their direct concern, and by their nature, they would not take responsibility for it unless they were pushed to by social forces arising from within the society at large. But such social forces in favour of the immigrant, are completely non-existent.

Where the solidarity of the labour world could not go, European idealism too lost momentum. Instead, even in the European context, one still finds elements of an ethnocentric policy which can be used to set limits to immigrants' expectations. The declaration of the Treaty of Rome about the freedom of movement for workers, is conditioned by the actual possibility of employment (art. 48, c. 3: *a, b, c, d*).

In a situation of relative wellbeing and good relations in the European context, this clause is not very relevant: at the most it could be used to repatriate people who otherwise would be a burden to the host community. An immigrant, for example, is allowed to stay unemployed and on the NHSS no longer than six months, after which he could be repatriated. But this clause is present and could be used especially in times of economic difficulties. In this case the immigrant would be the first to suffer.

[10] Cf. E. BURNEY, *Housing on Trial*. London, Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations, 1967, pp. 58-60.

This clause was obviously neither intended to strike at the immigrants, nor was it intended to discourage the use of social security by the immigrants. The intention of the people who made the Treaty was that of preventing the rise of uncontrolled movements of manpower, which could jeopardise the economic equilibrium of some regions, and endanger the welfare of native workers. Indirectly though this clause is also a recognition of the continually existent real cleavage and distinction between native workers and immigrant workers. Immigrants are aliens and as such they cannot be allowed to threaten the welfare of the native workers. Should this welfare require the exclusion of the immigrants, these may be excluded.

This is only part of the exclusion and alienation which defines the Italian immigrant's situation; as a matter of fact he is still a foreigner in Great Britain and is consequently fundamentally excluded. Number 48, c. 3; says that the facilities relating to the freedom of movement for workers have value "subject to the limitations justified on grounds of public policy, public security or public health".

At the customs a ritual takes place which reveals the implications of these limitations. When an Italian immigrant arrives at the border and asks permission to enter British territory, he is first of all separated from people of British nationality. The latter go through a different entrance where the document examination is a speedy operation. One has only to check the authenticity of identity. For foreigners on the other hand, the operation will take much more time, because besides establishing the authenticity of identity, the immigration officers carry out a short interview aimed at discovering the intentions of people wanting to enter British territory.

The instructions printed in the handbook of the officers controlling immigration are very clear on this point. It says that, "The function of the immigration control is to ensure that people who wish to come to the United Kingdom from abroad are admitted only in such numbers and for such purposes as are consistent with national interest. In detail the objectives of the control are to prevent the entry of people who are personally unacceptable, for example, because of a criminal record, to protect the resident labour force, and to keep the rate of immigration within limits at which it will not give rise to serious social problems" [11].

In the category of foreigners a further distinction is made. Citizens of the member states of the EEC are in fact free to enter Great Britain. The concept of foreigner consequently, is not a concept that one could set down in black and white, which clearly divides the native from the foreigner. There is a graduality in the alienation and the suspicion with which the foreigner is perceived and treated. It is often indirectly proportional to the degree of integration and corresponsibility which he has

[11] From *The Guardian*, 24.10.1979.

in the socio-political organisation which received him. In this sense, in the European context, a real change has taken place in relation to the Italian immigrant, even if it is difficult to define. It depends very much on the spirit and European vision that different people and countries like to assume at various periods.

But the above instructions also make it clear that although European citizens could be allowed in with a "minimum of formality" [12], it does not mean they may not be questioned. The immigration officer then ensures whether the Italian immigrant has a residence permit, place to live, employment, enough money to support himself by himself and so on. In the same instructions the immigration officer is reminded that it is not only the Home Office, but he himself too who, under paragraphs 63b-65b of the "Immigration Rules", has the discretion of refusing permission to enter to any individual "if it seems right to him, in the light of the passenger's conduct, character or associations" [13].

This power of discretion applies to all immigrants, Italians included, even though the officer is warned that if he refuses entry, the refusal should be "defensible within the terms of (EEC) legislation and if necessary before the European court" [14]. The Italian immigrant then still remains a danger for the British society, and as such he is set in a situation of liminality in relation to that society which owns the territory and presents itself at the border in the guise of the immigration officer.

The Italian immigrant is a danger first of all because with his presence he could put the whole fabric of local social and political life of the English people under stress. This indigenous organisation, which developed with the practise of associated life through the course of history, cannot stand brusque interruptions or sudden changes, such as a sudden increase of population or destruction of modes of life. Its preservation asks then for a control of immigration even when this is from EEC countries. This control is part of the mechanism of the indigenous organisation which make an ordered evolution of population, of the economy and of people's habits possible, preventing tensions and break-downs of individual and social life [15].

The Italian immigrant then is a danger because as a foreigner he is "a person who comes from outside". The suspicion that he is entertaining relations of solidarity with external groups of little known people, but whose ideals and aims are not always consistent with those of the indigenous population is a burden on every foreigner. The experience of the old Italian immigrants who, during the last world war, were held in internment camps "for security reasons", remains highly significant in

[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Cf. A. Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Tran. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee). London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960.

this sense [16]. The majority of them had been living in Great Britain for quite some time, several had been born here; some were in possession of a regular British passport.

The European union, by making national distinctions relative, has greatly reduced the possibility of suspicion and misunderstanding in relation to the Italian immigrant, and has consequently eliminated several of the motivations supporting possible prejudice of the kind described. The prejudice though, is not completely dissipated, and especially because of this, number 48 c. 4 of the Treaty of Rome adds: "The provisions of this article (no discrimination on the basis of nationality) shall not apply to employment in the public service".

The limitation of category does not only go for public administration, but also for employment in the public sector, national or paranational, territorial and local, regional and provincial companies. Even though the latter are of an industrial nature, they fall within the scope of this article because these are without juridical personality thus employment is with the public body.

In reality, the Italian worker, like any other extra European worker, can find employment even in the ambit of local administration. This though usually takes place in those sectors like cleaning, for example, where the "low" nature of the work and the poor retribution produces a lack of personnel which could only be solved by employing foreign manpower [17]. In any case the foreigners' employment in public administration tends to remain very limited. Priority is always given to the native.

Finally, in talking about the non-participation of the Italian immigrant in administrative and public life of English society, one must notice that every argument always comes to a stand-still when it comes to the subject matter of exercise of civil rights and democratic liberties. Here the themes of co-responsability, participation, integration and parity in the matter of individual and public liberties, runs up against the rigidity of the legislation of the various countries. The immigrant still remains excluded from the most direct, elementary and decisive mechanism through which he could have an impact and change his situation in the foreign country. He cannot vote at either national level or local level.

On the occasion of the first European political election (June 1979), where the Italian and English people have parity of rights in the exercise of the democratic vote, the Italian immigrants of the area, who could vote abroad for the first time, cast their vote at a polling station prepared for them by the Italian Consulate in London, on a different day from the one on which English people voted, to elect delegates for Italian parties and not English ones.

[16] Cf. also C.A. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 214.

[17] Cf. also C. Peach, *West Indian Migration to Britain*. London, Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, 1968, Chap. VI, pp. 62-82.

The European union has not yet scratched the surface of the distinct socio-political units of the nations constituting it. All the forms of assistance conceded to the Italian immigrant on British territory have never cut into the convention which binds the "right" to nationality and in the last instance, to ownership of the territory by the British people.

The social space in which the immigrant actually lives and in which he is kept in a situation of relative segregation, is limited and with minimal "rights".

The immigrant is first of all manpower for the society which receives him. For this reason he has been accepted and as such he has been inserted into the system of English socio-political life. The more he moves away from the physical reality of labour, the more he finds himself without a social identity and without "rights".

From the English point of view, this situation of relative segregation of the foreigner could be understood and accepted in the belief that the immigrant is a citizen and exercises his rights in another social group. From this point of view, in our case, being an immigrant of Italian nationality, he certainly should have significant socio-political relations with Italian society and territory.

In actual fact, the immigrant, by physically leaving his own country, has left the scene of Italian political affairs too. All the Italians would have still been able to vote in Italy in theory, but in practice nobody could. A lot of them, because of the long period of absence, were taken off their municipalities' electoral roll and did not bother to get their electoral rights back. On the other hand when they still had these rights, they could not exercise them for a multitude of practical reasons. To cast their vote at election time, in fact, they would have to ask permission to leave their jobs for a few days, take the train and pay for the journey, all to go to vote in their own village, for politicians of whom they know little or nothing and who were perhaps not concerned with them either.

Physical distance is only an indication of the real distance that there is between the immigrant and the administration of power in his own country. The immigrant in fact, is also far away from Italy in a conceptual sense. The problems of the Italian abroad do not seem to have much relevance to fellow-countrymen in Italy. Through the migratory act, the Italian immigrant has lost a great deal of his political relevance, has dissipated several roles attributing him a place in society and has become practically a stateless person.

On the occasion of the first European election, the Italians of the area were invited to vote at four polling stations, of which the largest was in the city of Bristol, the seat of the only consular agency in the area and where the most conspicuous Italian contingent resided. At this polling station, besides the Italians of Bristol, part of those living in Gloucestershire should have voted too and all those in Somerset and Avon (except

those in Bath). According to an approximate calculation there should have been more than 3,000 people entitled to vote.

But only those Italians who were registered in the emigrant's electoral rolls of their home municipality, and only those whose address the municipality happened to have were registered in the electoral rolls of the polling station there. According to the rolls these people numbered only 625, divided thus:

Bristol	377
Weston Super Mare	18
Wells	40
Bridgewater	13
Street	46
Glastonbury	30
Wellington	23
Others	78

To each one of these people a letter was sent in which information about the place and method of voting was given. Of these letters, eighty-two came back as they were addressed to "unknown person" (this is wrong address, or people who had either emigrated to some other place or who had gone back to Italy for good). Thirteen letters were not sent because of duplications, or because the person involved had long since died. Of the remaining, forty-one were people whose nationality was uncertain, either because they already had a British passport, or because they were non-Italians married to Italian nationals, and consequently in theory entitled to Italian nationality and having the right to vote, but who had never asked to have their position made official.

In the end, out of 487 possible voters, only 126 people cast their vote. Of the others, some did not vote because they lived too far away, others because they never found out where the polling stations were.

The list of voters surprised the very small number of people who had not even thought they were entitled to vote. At the same time they aroused either anger or humour in the many people who, on the other hand, were excluded but thought they should have been entitled to vote. For example, young people liable to conscription in the Italian army, or Italian parents with children born in Great Britain who, unlike their parents, were entitled to vote[18].

The Italian immigrants had been waiting for these elections because they saw in them something more than a simple administrative reality. It appeared to them that as European fact, they were pointing to a

[18] Confidential Files, Case n. 3, see Appendix.

possible area of social interraction where they could have been "citizens" with full rights, equal to all the others (that is British and Italian people in their own country). In particular it appeared to them that, the simple fact of being registered on the Italian rolls for these elections organised for them from Italy would defeat the reality of their everyday experience and show that in the home country they were being considered, and that they themselves were still able to have decisive ties with their own fatherland.

The inadequacies in the organisation of the elections revealed the harsh reality. Europe, more than a socio-political unity, was still a fragile administrative solution, and for Italy its emigrants were by now entities of no great relevance.

An Italian, not admitted to vote on that particular occasion, sadly commented: "We are like lost books in a library; these books are solid and conspicuous on the shelves, but they are not listed in the files and it is as if they do not exist".

The immigrant is in society, but for society, be it Italian or English, he is lost. Migration is not only a passage from one society to another, it is also a journey in which one goes out of a society and the practice of associated life, to find himself living in a situation of liminality.

From this situation, as from any other unstructured and incompletely defined situation, comes a sense of disorientation and a feeling of insecurity and anxiety, as the literature on migrations amply illustrates.

This sense of disorientation and feeling of insecurity and anxiety largely comes from the fact that the new environment in which the immigrant finds himself is not easily understood. From the immigrant's vantage point this environment is perceived as a variety of phenomena which are in turn, complex, incomprehensible, different and so on, while lacking a sense of ethical consistency and put under the common denominator of a situation which one "doesn't know how to deal with".

An Italian working in a bank in the centre of Bristol once told me how, a few days before, a fellow-countryman had appeared at his counter with a lost expression on his face, to ask him how to find a certain street in town. Having asked him why he wanted this information, the immigrant answered, "Well, because I live in that street". The immigrant then explained how he had gone to the town centre to do some shopping and had got lost. He had been trying to find the way again by himself but had been walking for several hours only to end up at the same place time and time again.

The immigrant's uneasiness couldn't only be attributed to the fact that he was in a foreign town. The town as such, first of all, perhaps every town, was for him a foreign reality. The majority of Italians of the survey area come from the countryside or from some small village in Southern

Italy [19]. For many of them the towns of the Bristol region where they found themselves, appeared to be complex realities which they often admired with detachment "from the outside", but into which only few ventured or succeeded in inserting themselves.

The phenomenon of urbanisation, which had developed with the migratory act, brought these Italians to a face to face relationship with the complexity of the organisation of modern social life, with which the town in particular is often associated. The Italians of the area were nearly all people with a vague knowledge and poor experience of these things. Already in their village, in the majority of cases, where things were much simpler, they had learned to help themselves by asking other people to help them.

Furthermore, in the host country these new and complex realities for the immigrants were embedded in a different cultural context. Brought up in the practice of the social life of their village, the Italians of the area did not know at all, or knew only vaguely, the habits and customs, rights and duties, and the administrative mechanisms of the English people.

I had the chance to assist as a translator in a trial originated by the local office of the NHSS against an Italian from Sicily who was supposed to have illegally used its facilities [20]. For some months, having been made redundant in the factory where he was working, he was living on unemployment and supplementary benefits which he was receiving after having signed on at the proper office, accompanied by a friend as he had no idea what to do.

After a certain period of time, the money being insufficient for the subsistence of the family, he had to let his wife do a part-time job. The NHSS should have been notified of all this but it was not done. This Italian thought the money he was receiving was for his unemployment.

He was unconcerned anyway because at that time he had duly filled in an income tax form on which he declared the new income as well and he took the form to the proper office personally which, by coincidence, was in the same building as the NHSS office. For that man the income tax office and NHSS office were both one and the same thing. His duty was to pay taxes; the government then, out of the collected money, would have drawn the necessary funds to help the unemployed, and what he was receiving belonged to him because he was truly unemployed and would have preferred to work.

To the first NHSS officer who went to see him he spoke candidly about his situation and candidly told the same to the second one, a special

[19] See G. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *Il Gattopardo*. Milano, Giacomo Feltrinelli Editore, 1958; and C. Levi, *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*. Torino, Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1945; which give a lively description of the environment from which the Italians in the Bristol region come.

[20] Confidential Files, Case n. 4, see Appendix.

police inspector in plain clothes sent by the first officer, who took notes of the story, asked him to sign, and summoned him to court.

Ignorance is the immigrants' first big handicap. Not knowing the principles and the organisations supporting the environment in which they live, the immigrants do not have that frequency and variety of contact with it, which in theory they could easily have.

This too, because ignorance inflates difficulties and loades the environment with the dangers typical of the unknown so that the immigrants avoid many contacts which may call their ignorance into play. In this way they remain entrenched in their own ignorance.

For several immigrants, like the one quoted above who was lost in Bristol, even though he had been living in the area for at least fifteen years, a long period of residence in a place could be meaningless in contrast to the effects of an experience useful for knowledge of both the environment and the world. Their entire barren social life of twenty or thirty years abroad was practically spent within the daily routine of "home and work".

The immigrant's fear of the environment in which he lives, is not only the generic feeling of panic which one experiences before the unknown, but often becomes the fear of making some mistake and finding oneself in trouble involuntarily. Italians in the area usually had a consistent inferiority complex. They were very much aware of being "in someone else's home", they were afraid of being a nuisance, and were even reluctant to ask those things to which they were entitled (such as unemployment and supplementary benefits, legal aid, and so on). Over all they were morbidly afraid of the police and the courts, of whom they tended to ask no help, and with which they desired "to have nothing to do" as far as possible.

One noticed a difference in behaviour in this connection between the Italians in Bristol and those in Swindon.

In Bristol, the Italians had various relationships with English people, but they were nearly exclusively individual personal relations with a neighbour or a workmate. Even though as a group they used to set up a larger variety of organisations more often than their fellow countrymen in Swindon, they were not able to be a viable noteworthy community.

The entire local administration of social life, having several other problems to concern itself with, considered the immigrant problem as a secondary one which was to be solved with "tea and sympathy". For the local Italian community it was as if officers like the Lord Mayor or the Chief Constable were non-existent. The Italian presence in the CRE (Commission for Racial Equality) was only symbolic and, apart from two people who used to participate in it, this agency remained almost completely unknown to all the Italians.

Bristol, for the Italian immigrants, was a complex reality, a glittering city, full of opportunities but only for individuals who were able to help

themselves. In the press only some Italians made the news; usually the news consisted of anecdotes about business people, or facts about delinquency.

In Swindon, on the other hand, officials of the CRE, and once a year the Lord Mayor, and from time to time even the Chief Constable, would be invited to the Italian festivals. Italians were present, and in their own way active in the local CRE which, in its turn, was informed of the various tensions which harassed the Italian community.

For the Italians in that town, even though they always felt and remained foreign, it was relatively easy to have a certain amount of control over the local environment and to help themselves within it. Compared with Bristol, Swindon appeared to be a town with very simple planning (though poor), a population of very uniform extraction, with a very short history.

The relative ease for the Italian community, however, was mainly due to the fact that local Italians did not have the vivid and constant impression of having to deal with a local indigenous group in which they were considered in a sense, only as guests. Swindon had a largely immigrant population consisting mainly of English people who came from other parts of Great Britain. In a certain sense it was a young community. And, being mainly a community of immigrants, the local administration was more sensitive and attentive to the immigrants' problems. The CRE was an office which carried some weight. From time to time, the local press took notice of events concerning the Italians, not only those relating to individuals, but also of the events within the Italian community.

With time and contact, a certain number of more or less significant relationships may arise between the immigrants and the native population and particular processes have been described and analysed [21]. The code of communication though, especially as far as the immigrants is concerned, always remains very inadequate. Consequently every relationship which possibly gets established between an Italian immigrant and an English person, usually tends to remain a very casual reality.

It's true to say that all the Italians in the area were "able to speak English" by now. But there were among them those who could manage sufficiently well (and they were few), those who could only just make themselves understood (and they were the majority) and those who were

[21] These processes have been examined under labels such as "accommodation", "acculturation", "integration", "absorption", "amalgamation" and "assimilation". We have sought above all to view such processes from the immigrant's own point of view. Thus without denying the significance of relations between immigrant and native population, we are mainly concerned here with the main incongruencies which arise in the relations. It is these incongruencies which are in the main perceived by the immigrants and which impede the dispersion from their community.

not able to make themselves understood at all and expressed themselves with their hands.

There were obviously several English language courses which the immigrants in theory could have taken, but they never used to take them into consideration. Nearly all the immigrants in fact, had hardly even a minimal education and the indifference to learning, which brought them as unskilled manpower abroad, disposed them against intellectual effort. The missionaries, who in the past had organised some language courses, found themselves having to adapt the courses to teaching how to read and write. Participation in these courses was very poor contrary to expectations. Immigrants always had "little time to waste on school". In the majority of cases, each immigrant made up his own elementary dictionary out of his experience of life.

Their imperfect control of the language made them uncomfortable because they were not able to express their feelings and wishes adequately. When they spoke English they felt, as they used to say, "like children". This linguistic difficulty made them uneasy too because it revealed their foreign origin, which they always wanted to keep secret, so that they would be able, as they said, "to insert themselves more easily into society".

These difficulties are not only figments of the imagination of people suffering from an inferiority complex, but it is a reality which greatly contributes to keeping the immigrants in a state of exclusion and social inferiority. In fact lack of control of the language, amongst other things, practically contributes to excluding them from certain professional spheres, a possible entry into which could represent social emancipation, and compels them to confine themselves to physical work. As the immigrants themselves used to notice, in any competitive context, the English person does better as he speaks better English.

At the various meetings with experts on immigrants' problems in which I happened to participate, the Italian representatives, when they wanted to underline the cultural differences between the two groups (English and Italian) and the connected problems, could not find anything better than to bring in the linguistic argument. Even though they were sometimes giving the impression they were reducing all the difficulties to a linguistic difference, they always meant to represent it only as the tip of an iceberg of a social problem which they found difficult to define.

Every possible relationship which occurs between Italian immigrants and the native population, is not always a basis for an osmosis leading to direct integration. These relationships could sometimes bring into relief latent social tensions and cultural variations other than solve them by giving the immigrants further scope for alienating from society and turning themselves inwards into themselves.

In the Bristol region, together with the official Anglicanism, there was a wide-spread Christianity of the non-conformist kind especially

Baptist and Methodist. Roman Catholics were a minority. In any case, religion was mainly a reality of conscience, and beyond the explicitly religious context, whatever each person thought or believed, did not usually condition social relations. Italians in the area, who by education and their own definition were all Roman Catholic, did not find any difficulties to hinder their freedom in declaring and practising their religious identity at an individual level.

Italians did not know much about English people's religious beliefs and practices. They thought that the majority of English people were non-believers. If by any chance they happened to see some non-conformist ritual or have a discussion on these matters with a person of this extraction, they came away with the idea that English people did not believe like they did. If on the other hand they happened to see or participate in some ritual of the more conformist kind, as often happened at weddings, they convinced themselves that basically English people more or less believed in God just as they did.

In any case, Italians had no idea of what English people thought about the Italians' religion. The possible negative opinion of some English person about the Italians' beliefs and practices at the most could be a brief and ephemeral experience of some immigrant, and it often just remained a personal opinion, without great implications for social interrelations.

The irrelevance of the diverse religious convictions in relation to social relations, only found an interesting exception in Swindon. In this town, nearly all the Italian immigrants, together with the English parishioners of Holy Rood church, made up one and the same Catholic congregation.

But the Italian community in this town was more united than in other places of the region and Italians used to express themselves as a group even in the religious practice. It can be easily said that the only, or at least the most relevant, collective phenomenon of typically Italian culture in the whole region could be recognised in the religious practice of the Italian community in Swindon.

The presence of the Italian immigrants as a group inside the parish in a veiled way also made the dialectic defining the relationships between the indigenous English and the foreign Italian emerge. The dialectic mainly took shape in the series of difficulties [22] which from time to time cropped up when accommodating the Italian group within the structures of the parish in some way.

English people, who in their heart of hearts did not accept the presence, or first of all the existence, of a foreign group as owner of the parish premises, without recognising the fact of having duties towards the Italians, did their best to be hospitable. The Italians on their part

[22] Confidential Files, Case n. 5, see Appendix.

were grateful for everything they were granted as a group but remained convinced that as Catholics and members of the same parish, they should have been considered something more than guests.

Even if they all (English and Italian) were members of one and the same religion, the cultural variations of the religious practice were emphasised in a subtly polemical way. English people held a rather critical opinion about the Italians' religious convictions and practices. According to them, Italians did not go to mass every Sunday (which, for the English Catholic is central to his faith), during the ritual they used to talk and laugh and in any case participated with little attention and devotion and finally used to give little money for the collection. They did not hide then a certain tender compassion for the "religious ignorance" of the Italians. According to them, the Catholicism of the Italians was rather superficial, vague, and perhaps even superstitious. Their exaggerated "devotion to the dead" should have been a proof of this [23].

Italians for their part, conscious of this "pity" held by the British towards them, did not make a secret of their annoyance about it. For this reason too they preferred to have their own religious community distinct from the English one, and wanted to be accepted by them as "members of the Italian community".

In any case the tensions between groups within the parish and the possible reciprocal opinions on religious matters, did not make a great difference to the personal relationships between individuals. Even in Swindon, when the Italian participated in parish life as an individual, as in all the other parishes of the Bristol region, he was accepted by the English as one of them.

But in personal relationships of an individual nature, it was often possible to elaborate and define several other socio-cultural distinctions

[23] Though not directly relevant to the principal present focus, it is very useful to examine the religiosity of Southern Italians. Some valuable additional reading would be: G. De Rosa, *Vescovi, popolo e magia nel Sud*. Napoli, 1971; Idem, *Chiesa e religione popolare nel mezzogiorno*. Bari, 1978; Idem, *Religione e società nel Mezzogiorno. Tra cinque e seicento*. Bari, 1976; Idem, *Diocesi e vescovi del Mezzogiorno durante il Viceregno spagnolo*, in "Studi storici in onore di Gabriele Pepe", Bari, 1969, pp. 531-580; R. De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna*, Napoli, 1971; P. Ebner, *Storia di un feudo del Mezzogiorno. La Baronia di Novi*. Roma, 1973; G.A. Colangelo, *La diocesi di Marsico nei secoli XVI-XVIII*, Roma, 1978; AA.VV., *La società religiosa nell'età moderna*. Napoli, 1973; AA.VV., *Società e religione in Basilicata*. Roma, 1972; E. De Martino, *Sud e Magia*. Milano, 1959; Idem, *Morte e pianto rituale*. Torino, 1958; Idem, *La terra del rimorso*. Milano, 1951; Idem, *Magia e civiltà*. Milano, 1952; Idem, *Mondo popolare e magia in Lucania*. Idoc, n. 5, 1976, and n. 8, 1978; G.A. Da Napoli, *Social and Religious Institutions on an Italian Village Community*. Oxford, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Oxford University, 1975. Some anthropological studies on the feasts of Southern Italy may also be of interest, for example: A. Rossi, *Le feste dei poveri*, Bari, 1971; H. Cox, *La festa dei folli*. Milano, 1971; C. Gallini, *Il consumo del sacro. Feste lunghe di Sardegna*. Bari, 1971; A.M. Di Nola, *Aspetti magico-religiosi di una cultura subalterna in Italia*. Torino, 1976.

which in the relationships between Italian immigrants and indigenous population often have deeper consequences than the opinions and behaviour in the religious sphere. (After all, "religion should only concern the individual conscience" as some Italians say).

The theme of mixed marriages is often statistically used to measure the degree of integration of a community in a foreign environment [24]. This method can be extremely misleading. The number of mixed marriages in fact, is not the same as the number of successful marriages. The successful mixed marriage in any case presupposes immigrants' integration rather than creating it.

In the survey area there had been quite a number of mixed marriages between English and Italian people, and the majority of them could be described as successful. But the highest divorce rate was not between Italians or between Poles and Italians, but between English and Italians. This can easily be related to socio-cultural differences.

Among the Italians though, even after making allowances for their experience and analysis of these marriages, there was an extremely negative expectation of the possibility of success in an Anglo-Italian marriage. It was wide-spread conviction that this kind of marriage could only work with difficulty.

In particular, the Italians believe that "when an Italian man married an English woman, there cannot be a happy marriage" [25]. This, mainly because the English woman is "different" from the Italian woman, and doesn't care for her family in the same way the latter does. She does not look after her husband and leaves the children dirty and to their own devices.

From this, still according to this conviction, stem several situations of uneasiness. When her husband returns from work in the evenings, he finds the house cold and in disorder and has to take the trouble to prepare the supper, feed, wash and put the children to bed, put the house in order and so on. His goodwill notwithstanding, all these things are never done properly. A husband in fact, coming from work, arrives home tired and in any case these are not jobs which a man can do properly.

Italian immigrants are convinced that the origin of these situations of unease is in the fact that the English woman does not like to stay at home, but prefers "to go out to work". Such "out-of-the-family" female labour, in this context, does not mean only a job outside the home. The majority of Italian women, even more than in the case of English women, tend to have "second jobs", often very demanding, even full-time.

[24] Cf. for example C. PEACH, *Which Triple Melting Pot? A Reexamination of Ethnic Intermarriage in New Haven*, "Ethnic and Racial Studies", 1980, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 1-16.

[25] For a somewhat colourful picture of the relation between Italian men and women, see P. NICHOLS, *Italia, Italia*. London, Macmillan, 1973, pp. 29-54; cf. also A. PARSONS, *Autorità patriarcale e autorità matriarcale nella famiglia napoletana*, "Quad. Sociologia", 4, pp. 416-452.

The "out-of-the-family" female labour in this case has a particular meaning. It represents an alternative to the labour for the family, and consequently an evasion of the role and responsibilities of the women in the family. In comparison with the labour of the Italian women, the "out-of-the-family" labour of the English woman appears to be an expression of independence which seems unacceptable to the Italian immigrants, both men and women.

This negative opinion of the Italian immigrants, before being directed against the behaviour of English women, falls on the English concept of the family itself, of which female behaviour appears to be nothing but the most critical expression.

According to them, "In the English family there is not the unity that there is in the Italian family". "The English man instead of bringing his pay home, keeps it for himself and spends it drinking with his friends". "His wife then does the same, she goes to work for her own satisfaction, keeps her pay for herself (not for the family) and spends it when she goes out alone (without her husband) to see her friends".

This behaviour, for the Italian immigrants, contradicts those principles of solidarity, care for the family, and conjugal fidelity, which should be respected in marriage be it by a man or a woman.

But the practice of these principles is particularly important with regard to the women who, for the Italian immigrants, becomes the guardian of the family nucleus and in the concept of mother becomes the symbol of what is most sacred in a family.

Questionable behaviour on her part can put the entire ideal institution of the family under stress. The behaviour of an English woman, as it is defined mainly in the "out-of-the-family" labour, is too independent for the Italian immigrant and involves a particular kind of neglect. This is so, not so much because it contradicts her husband's honour, nor only because it is the expression of less interest in the common welfare of the family nucleus, but over all because it allows for a radical omission in the essential role of "heart and hearth" of the family.

It would be true to say that Italians in the area recognised that a mixed marriage of this kind could sometimes work and they used to quote the cases of a few Italians who married English women and were "getting on well". But in these cases the English woman was always an exceptional woman, who cared for her house and family "like an Italian woman", spoke Italian, loved to mix with the Italians and to go on holiday in Italy and so on. "She is". the immigrants used to say, "entirely like us, just one of us".

"When an Italian woman, on the other hand, marries an English man—according to the Italian immigrants—things could even work". For the same reasons in fact that an English woman cannot be suitable for an Italian man, the Italian woman is a good thing for the English man. In these cases the husband unexpectedly finds himself looked after

in the house, taken care of and with the certainty of knowing his children are "in good hands". The English man for this part, makes a good husband. Being used to helping himself, he helps in the house, cooks meals, washes up and so on. He "respects his wife more".

But the lucky complementarity of the latter kind of mixed marriage, or the possible success of any mixed marriage, never makes the mixed marriage better than the marriage between two fellow-countrymen.

This is because binding the immigrant to a native person, also binds him to the foreign country, makes the return more difficult and separates him more from his kindred, his society and his land of origin. In the foreign country then, the immigrant always remains a foreigner, condemned to live "like a prisoner" always in danger of being "put ashore" by the partner and finds himself in trouble because "here they are the owners, they are in their own home and they are always right".

The Italians in the Bristol region in general, resisted all relations which could lead to a mixed marriage. For all these reasons their children were discouraged from being over-friendly with English children of the same age [26].

In their eyes a mixed marriage did not bring about "integration" and in any case, as immigrants it was not integration that they had come looking for.

The main problem on the minds of these immigrants was not so much the problem of understanding the new society, making relations closer and eventually integrating, but rather how to get out of the situation of liminality in which they found themselves. On a day-to-day basis this took the shape of survival, that is to say in the attempt to make the surrounding reality meaningful and therefore of use.

At a more idealistic level and only in few cases, this developed into a wish for change. This only happened with a few of the immigrants who had given up the idea of going home forever and had recognised the failure implicit in their migration. This, as will better be seen in Chap. VII, was often the case for immigrants moving into trade.

The other immigrants fell back on their traditional concepts of life and found refuge in the "fixed idea" of a future return home [27].

For the Italians in the Bristol region, the thought of the return home was generally the ultimate ideal concern which conditioned and ordered

[26] Cf. also C.A. PRICE, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-272.

[27] J. DAVIS (*People of the Mediterranean.* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977, p. 36) observes that when the people of the Mediterranean move away for reasons of work, they generally visualize their decision as a "short-term labour migration", and continue saying that "A man or woman who goes to live in Athens, Turin, Madrid, goes to set up in a new life, while a man who goes to work in these cities, or Stuttgart, Hamburg, Basel, Lyons, Grenoble, that man aims to improve his life but not to live in a different way". Cf. also W.B. BAYLEY, *Bird of Passage*, "American Journal of Sociology", 18 (1912), p. 694.

all their goals. Even when historical realities came into play and the return home became a mere dream, the dream, as will be seen in Chap. VI, did not die but rather tended to become an obsession through which the same motives which had lain at the roots of the original migratory choice were re-examined and often decried.

The Italians of the Bristol region, though they had lived in the area for a long time, never considered their residence on the spot to be permanent or final. They accepted it as a transitory phase, an episode which preceded the final return home.

Within the context of this sense of direction, the sociological situation the immigrant finds himself in takes on the typical connotations which we call the "immigrant condition".

Socio-political inadequacies and discriminations, together with the incongruencies due to the different ways of conceiving associated life (family, religious, administrative and so on) produce such a sense of exclusion that the immigrant can only have meaningful relations with the native population with great difficulty. This sociological situation which in theory could lead to conflict, in general, within the ideology of the final return home, simply becomes an alienating social indifference.

The world of work and neighbourhood life are basically the two principal areas where the immigrant can have relations with the native population. Even in these areas, however, relations are still conditioned. The immigrant tends to experience them within the ephemeral present phase, reducing his own existence to the limits of work which is almost without exception of a physical nature.

The immigrant, who is at once alienated from the society and obsessed by the thought of going home to be amongst his own people, does not seek eventual emancipation in the local society. He doesn't concern himself with it in the same way it doesn't concern itself with him. The society's socio-political problems are not his as they do not represent his own worries and concerns.

The devil-may-care attitude of the Italian immigrants in relation to the British labour movement and the political life in general is understandable at this point. The majority of Italians in the area were employed in small business, where the problems of Trade Unionism were non-existent. But even in large concerns, their participation was often limited to the payment of the membership fee. It was very common to hear some Italian who, commenting on the problems of industrial relations ended by saying: "In any case I only care about my own business and go my own way". Expressions of this kind were proffered in the widespread conviction that if one wanted other peoples' respect one should know how "to mind one's own business".

These thoughts and attitudes were made obvious by their behaviour. The Italians worked hard to earn a lot in the shortest time possible, in order to go back to their own country as soon as possible. Their

availability in certain sectors of the labour market, represented a reserve of manpower which could sometimes frustrate the bargaining power of the labour movement. But the Italians did not usually bother much about the concerns of those who sought to improve the social conditions of labourers; these were not their concern.

The explanation and possible justification of such behaviour has to be found first of all, in causes of a structural nature. There are no elements of either an administrative or practical nature hindering immigrants' participation in the organisations and activities of the indigenous Trade Unions. The non-discrimination pledge in art. 48 concerning remuneration and conditions of employment, is valid even for the situations connected with labour relations, such as participation in the Trade Unions, the elections of representatives, and the active participation in the organisms of representation. But whatever participation in Trade Union organisation and activities, though free and open, is still within the context of the local organisation of labour where there is a real, if not so apparent cleavage, between the British worker and the foreign worker.

The organisation of labour, as we have seen, is functional to indigenous manpower and the foreign worker does not have parity of "rights" and cannot claim a treatment equal to that of the British worker. Even in every day life then, the British worker is not always completely immune from group selfishness [28]. As long as the immigrants contribute in silence to the welfare of English people, British workers do not bother much about their existence. The presence of immigrants is only discovered in times of crisis when there is a surplus of manpower and then it is the trade unionists themselves who are nearly always the first to advocate protectionism and invoke legislation aiming to curb both imports and immigration.

But the Italian workers' "couldn't-care-less" attitude has to be brought back over all to causes of conceptual nature. The indigenous movement's aspirations are not on the same wavelength as the immigrant's ones. His supreme aspiration is that of going back to his own country. Consequently he is interested in whatever he is able to appropriate concretely and speedily over all because this alone allows him to leave as soon as possible.

As long as the objectives of the labour movement are near at hand and concrete, they could have something in common with those of the immigrant. On the other hand, the more these objectives are long-term projects, diffuse in society, the more alien and sometimes contrary to the immigrants' objectives they are.

The socio-political space in which the native worker's rights take shape, is not the place in which the immigrant intends to invest his own interests. The immigrant then, not only does not feel the need to

[28] Cf. J. CHADWICK-JONES on Welsh workers' attitudes to Italian immigrants in a research note on *Inter-Group Attitudes: A Stage in Attitude Formation*, "British Journal of Sociology", Vol. XIII, No. 1, March 1962.

involve himself in the native workers' Trade Union life, but rather asks himself what there is to make him do it when in practical terms, this involvement ends up with him only carrying water to other people's mills (that is the natives').

Finally the British labour movement activities very often enter into the more specific field of politics. Here the immigrant finds himself more out of place, with fewer rights to express an opinion, fewer interests to defend, and less motivation for co-operation. Understanding his own situation, the immigrant has learned not to cultivate too many expectations in relation to the host society. Very often he is grateful for the little he has found (basically the job) and he expects nothing more.

Political life as such, be it the local or the national one, does not concern the immigrants much. The Italian representatives of the various Italian parties present among the immigrants said sometimes that the immigrant was only "an exploited person in need of being sensitized" [29]. But in the end, they themselves had to confess they were not able to get the immigrants involved, not even in the cause of social justice which should have concerned them.

Only the European electoral exercise caught their attention a little. But in reality, that occasion gave them the brief illusion of not having been completely forgotten. The idea of the implications their vote could possibly have had for the society did not impress them very much. Broadly speaking Italian immigrants did not care very much about their inability to exercise the right to vote, whether in relation to Italian society or English society [30].

All political programmes and activities are the concern of social groups to which these immigrants either do not belong any longer or do not intend to belong. Whatever the case may be there are no politicians who concern themselves satisfactorily with the immigrants. At the most they try to improve their situation on the spot but they do not deal directly with the basic problem; the final return home.

The alienation of these Italian workers from the society cannot simply be brought back to a minority which is unsettled or badly settled within the native society, in our case English society. It is shaped by a series of social exclusions, but above all by ideal attitudes and directions typical of a worker in a society and country which both is and continues to be considered foreign.

In the perception of all that surrounds them, these Italian workers convince themselves of the fundamental rationality of individualism, at times going as far as to have a perception of themselves which must be

[29] Cf. also M. ANWAR, *Votes and Policies*. London, CRE Publications, 1980, pp. 14-15, 33-34.

[30] Cf. M. ANWAR, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 34-36, 40.

one of the most selfish visions of life. The world in which their condition and experience are formed, reveals itself as an arena of interrelations almost devoid of personal meanings.

This is true especially for the immigrant with no family; a situation which usually happens in the first stages of the migratory process. The individual in this case, deprived not only of home comforts but also of all home moral limitations, concerns himself, sometimes to the point of obsession, only with his desires and how to satisfy them. The surrounding environment is a jungle where it is difficult to survive but where at the same time one can find the most ample and assorted range of opportunities.

When the immigrant brings his family with him, this becomes the final event which transforms and dominates all his actions [31]. The Italian immigrant considers his family to be an extension of his personality, identifies himself in its problems and interests, and cares for it with the consideration with which he cares for himself. The ethics of family welfare becomes the code which guides the behaviour of the various family members, puts under criticism the less orthodox expressions of individualism and in a sense, brings the once free immigrant back to a certain order. For the welfare of his family, the immigrant often moralises to the point of becoming a moraliser and criticiser of all libertine behaviour and in general all the society around him. In this sense one can say that the Italian immigrants ethic is substantially a family ethic. The family in fact is the value around which his ethical code is almost exclusively conceptualised.

But one can talk of a family ethic in the sense too that the family is basically the only ambit and the maximum social extension of the Italian immigrant's ethical system [32]. The Italian immigrant cares, almost exclusively, only for his own family; others' families he does not care much about, if at all. Society around him is, for the married person as it is for the single person, by itself no-man's land, not worthy of much respect. In it one controls oneself mainly because a libertine behaviour could have disastrous consequences in the family ambit.

[31] For the immigrants born, bred and educated in Italy, the cultural habits learned in the society of origin remain the springboard from which each individual finds his own identity and begins the analysis of his present experience. A study of the structures, ideology and ethics of the family from Southern Italy is therefore essential to an adequate understanding of their behaviour. For a comparative work on the above see J. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-197, 218-234, 89-110.

[32] This ethical vision is above all a typical development of the immigrant condition and cannot be attributed directly to a socio-cultural vision of the environment of origin as N. GLAZER and D.P. MOYNIHAN do (*op. cit.*, pp. 194-197). Besides, the Southern Italian communities the immigrants come from have a rich social ethic. The often quoted "amoral familism" of E. BANFIELD (*The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*. Glencoe, The Free Press, 1958) in which this social ethic is reduced, clearly overlooks the intensity of personal relations and the co-operation existing in the extended family (which goes beyond the household), with "compari" and friends, not to forget the neighbourhood.

But in the Italian immigrant there is not a truly social conscience independent and concerned with the universal and capable of going far beyond the walls of his own house. The Italian immigrant consequently, whilst avoiding everything that could hurt his own family, at the same time is prepared to do almost anything to help it. After all a person who devotes himself to his family is a person worthy of admiration.

Individualist, not completely by nature or by choice, the Italian immigrant trusts no one and expects nothing from others. When he thinks about his emancipation, he does not conceive it in terms of rights to be asserted in solidarity with others. He counts almost exclusively on what he is and in what he has, his own forces and his own labour, his relatives when there, and private property.

As we have seen, the Italian immigrant bought his own house because it was a commodity which was not provided by the employer or the local authorities. But the immigrant himself did not expect it and did not seek it in this way. Daily experiencing the precariousness of his condition and knowing he cannot count on others, the immigrant becomes aware of his inadequate protection, and starts to conceive the house more and more as a sort of insurance.

The native worker, knowing he can rely on a system of social security and assistance which covers him against difficult times, does not feel the need to worry much about certain securities. His concern possibly would be to develop the system of local assistance and make it more efficient.

In the house, amongst other things, the Italian immigrant sought security first of all, one of the first and fundamental securities he had to provide for himself as soon as possible. In the house then, as in general in any sort of private property, the Italian immigrant recognised the best investment through which to emancipate himself and provide a future for himself and his own relatives.

But the most impressive expression of individualism in the search for security and emancipation can be drawn from the case of the Italian immigrant in business.

In a typical Italian immigrant's business, the administration was chaotic and often irregular, the managerial expertise was poor, and the relationship with the personnel (when one could afford to have staff) left much room for improvement.

But for the Italian immigrant his business was above criticism and nobody should have been authorised to argue about it. As private property, the business was his own. As a property which the immigrant earned with his sweat and blood, it was the expression of his personality and the sign of his success. Through his property he freed himself from the slavery of the dependent work, and in general from the limitations of the immigrant condition, providing for himself an independent position.

Independence had been both his goal and his means of reaching it.

For the Italian immigrant self-help is not only one of the several possible ways of living. It is the main way to his emancipation. It is his own life.

When not able to do it by himself any longer he has to go beyond and insert himself in the environment, the Italian immigrant does not do it directly by understanding it, but indirectly by making use of the availability of friends or people whom he knows and who can help him. Through and with the help of a system of personal relations, he shortens the process and period of time necessary for integration and becomes in his own way, part of the society without feeling he belongs to it.

PERSONAL RELATIONS AND THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY

The majority of the Italians living in the Bristol region had arrived and settled there in the fifties and sixties. Great Britain at that time, as has already been mentioned, had not yet joined the EEC and the immigrant's entire life hung on a labour contract further limited by the "work permit" restrictions.

In this context the most painful situations and the most regrettable experiences occurred for the Italians who had been recruited through private agencies. As some of them told me, they were living "with the fear of being dismissed on the spot for the most trivial reasons, and of being sent home at any moment". Amongst the various examples, I was told what happened at Brooks laundries where two girls, having been to a family party in Birmingham, had arrived at work one hour late. They were dismissed and compelled to return immediately to their country [1].

Situations appeared to be decidedly better when recruitment took place through official agencies, like the labour exchange, for example. In the case of the large contingents, like those of the metal founders or the miners, who moved on the basis of a bilateral agreement between the British and Italian governments, one can speak of a real system of social security.

Once, for example, a few Italian miners upset their English colleagues with their irresponsibility and behaviour [2] to the point where the latter asked for the dismissal of all the Italians working with them, and backed their request by refusing to go down the mine together. On that occasion, the Italians were asked to leave, but with the possibility of choosing other employment in other mines or factories, either in Great Britain or Belgium. The right to work, with the security it gave, remained guaranteed.

But the Italians who had been recruited and brought into the area through (both private and public) agencies were only a minority and this phenomenon very soon came to an end. The majority of the

[1] Confidential Files, Case n. 6, see Appendix.
[2] *Ibid.*, Case n. 7, see Appendix.

Italians arrived and settled in the Bristol region through the help of some relative, friend or acquaintance already living there [3].

We shall, from now on, call this network of social relations the "personal relations system". We purposely do not use the word "network" in order to avoid any possible reference to the so-called "network analysis"; a theory which in our opinion does not fully appreciate the various shades of meanings or the different roles which relations, even at the simple personal relations level, can have. In addition we feel that in the concept of "personal relations system" we can include kinship relations without excluding the myriad of personal relations which are at work in the migratory context. In the case of Italian immigration to the Bristol region in fact, a variety of personal relations, often over and above the kinship type, were of considerable importance.

Towards the end of 1945, for instance, some Italian prisoners of war had the opportunity of work on the farms in the region, mainly around Swindon thus forming ties with the local population. Once the war was over they went home, found it difficult to find employment and remembering the contacts they had made during their period of captivity some of them went back.

But those who formed the real bridge-head through which the bulk of the migratory wave of the fifties and sixties found work and entrance into the area, were the Italians themselves, especially the first arrivals. The immigration of the Italians into the Bristol region is a phenomenon which took place above all else through close knit family groups, either from the same neighbourhood or village usually spearheaded by the young who were later followed by relatives.

This means of migration cannot entirely be attributed to socio-cultural behaviour typical of agricultural peoples [4]. This behaviour was further increased because of the series of precarious, insecure situations which arise within the migratory context.

In the first instance, this personal relations system took a hold because it reduced both the precariousness and the insecurity of the immigrant condition, especially in the initial stages. In a sense it placed the future immigrant on the local labour market, thus enabling him to choose and define the job which was essential for his entry into Great Britain rather more freely.

[3] Cf. also E. KATZ and P.E. LAZARSFELD, *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications*. New York, Free Press, 1955; C.A. PRICE, *Immigration and Group Settlement*, in W.D. BORRIE, "The Cultural Integration of Immigrants", Paris, UNESCO, 1959; J.S. MACDONALD and L.D. MACDONALD, *Chain Migration, Ethnic Neighbourhood Formation and Social Networks*, « Millbank Memorial Fund Quarterley", 42, pp. 82-97; J.S. MACDONALD, *Il volto sconosciuto delle "Little Italies". Le reti informali del Mezzogiorno e nelle grandi metropoli statunitensi*, in "Gli Italiani negli Stati Uniti". Firenze, Istituto di Studi Americani, 1972, pp. 247-260.

[4] See S.N. EISENSTADT, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

For quite some time, the poor knowledge which the Italians already on the spot had of the labour market, of the people and of the language, continued to restrict the possibility of choice and, generally speaking, the work the latest arrivals came to do was not much different from that of the earliest arrivals. On their arrival in the area, nearly all the Italian immigrants found themselves having to do the worst jobs: those which the local labourers considered less attractive and which could be described as "second class".

The negative nature of these jobs depended first of all on the fact that they were low paid. The inadequacy of the wages offered can be easily recognised in the fact that these did not appear sufficient to attract the interest of local labourers, not even with the money spent on recruiting manpower in a foreign country. To have this manpower in fact, the employer often paid fees and sometimes even paid the expenses of the journey and the immigrant's first accommodation himself.

But the negative nature of the first job offered to the immigrants, took shape mainly in the fact that these jobs were considered dishonourable or did not offer many opportunities for advancement.

According to the Evening Advertiser of May 1st 1965, Mr. Mervyn Hill, who at the time employed forty-three Italians in his three brick yards in Purton, Devizes and Banbury, "gave the lie to a common saying that foreigners keep Englishmen out of jobs". "It is not fair to say that at all", said Mr. Hill, "I only get Italians when we can't fill a vacancy here". "Englishmen are now going more for work on machines, but the jobs requiring physical labour still have to be done" [5].

It's true that during the early years, immigrants did not bother much about the subtleties of the quality of their jobs, often they were satisfied and sometimes even thankful to have one. This gratitude though did not depend on an objective judgement, but a subjective analysis of the immigrant who was often conditioned by pressing financial needs. In the same article mentioned above, Mr. Hill states that "The only thing they (the Italians) understand is the pay packet".

The personal relations system, even if it did not have a great impact on the possibilities of choice concerning the salary or the quality of work, did allow a considerable reduction of the negative implications of indentured labour.

The necessity of a work permit and its limitations remained unchanged. The intransigence, however, which could derive from an impersonal contract, was partly overcome by the personalisation of the relations with the future employer. The Italians already in the area, did not ask for work from people who had the reputation of being bad

[5] C. PEACH (*West Indian Migration to Britain*, Chap. VI, pp. 62-82) shows how, in general, immigrants are drawn in as "a replacement population" to those spheres where, though there is work, it is impossible to attract sufficient native labour.

employers, but went to see "people with whom one can reason". With these employers then, the Italians in the area either already had or very soon established a personal relation of reciprocal respect and esteem, and it was on this basis that the labour contract, which was later to be sent to Italy to the person waiting to leave, was signed.

Employment found in this way nearly always resulted in a paternalistic labour relation. But this, at least in the beginning of the migratory process, that is when the immigrant was feeling lost and uncomfortable, did not appear to be too repugnant. In any case, it always remained preferable to a relation of exploitation. The necessity of obtaining a work permit in the end, often turned into a formality, sometimes seen by the person getting ready to leave, as a guarantee assuring a job.

But the precariousness and insecurity of the immigrant condition alone does not explain the relevant significance and the role which the personal relations system assumed in the settlement and expansion of the Italian community in the Bristol region.

Here the personal relations system assumed its significance mainly: 1) because it appeared as the best answer to the risk implicit in the liminality typical of the entire migratory process (of which the precariousness and insecurity of the immigrant condition is only one of many expressions), 2) and because it reduced the social costs which migration as such imposed on the people concerned.

In the context of the liminality of the migratory process, precariousness and insecurity could be multiplied indefinitely. The degree of risk implied in the liminality, especially in the first stages of the process, in a certain sense can be described indirectly through some variables.

It is correlated first of all to the spatial distance that there is between the country of origin and the host country. The risk is evident in the emergency journeys, where an immigrant must hurry to his village because, for example, a relative is ill or is, in the extreme, dying. Very often, even if the immigrant would like to be present and help, the distance removed any possibility of realising his desire. When some loved one in the home country dies, often the immigrant cannot participate at the funeral simply because he is unable to arrive in time.

In general the entire period of residence abroad is conditioned by the problem of spatial distance. The Italians of the Bristol region, for example, in comparison with their fellow countryman in Germany, just to avoid the expenses and discomforts of the journey, often find themselves compelled to reduce the frequency of their periodic returns home. Aiming at avoiding "useless" journeys, one slowly sacrifices, without noticing it, personal relations which should be cultivated if one does not want migration to become a journey with no return. At a certain point, as we will see in Chap. VI, the choice of remaining abroad, even if it contradicts the migratory project has to be acknowledged as a fact.

The distance risk is present in a special way at the beginning of the migratory process when, "there are no guarantees one can make it" and the journey is "all unexpected". For every immigrant the "first journey" remains particularly significant, not only because it was the first, but also because it was "full of incidents" and "it was endless". The story of this particular journey is clearly remembered and vividly retold.

The risk then is relative to the degree with which the immigrant moves away from the socio-political and socio-cultural environment of his origins.

In his native land and society the individual, either through birth or because of special attributes, acquires and holds on to those rights and prerogatives which are in general seen to be part and parcel of the concept of citizenship. These rights and prerogatives are first formulated in the roles and conventions of the town or village of origin and later reinforced at a more general level, in the socio-cultural organisation of the country. Once outside his own country, the individual, who is no longer recognised as a citizen but is accepted and perceived as a foreigner, finds he is in a state of isolation and "weakness" [6].

Between the various European countries there are, though very generalized, certain socio-political and socio-cultural ties. These ties, developed in the course of history, have recently been acknowledged and sanctioned in the many treaties and laws of the EEC. If not exactly a union, at least a relationship of reciprocity, which gives their citizens a singular freedom of movement, has developed between the different nations of the EEC. An Italian migrant who enters and lives in Great Britain can go unobserved. He is often described as an "invisible immigrant" [7].

The absence of limitations and differences such as to bring about situations of open conflict [8] alone, does not create easy social interaction. An Italian in Great Britain finds no great obstacles to his insertion into the new society, but neither does he find many realities to help this insertion or to favour the active practice of the limited rights of citizenship which are conceded him.

Apart from relations imposed by the immigrant condition, the Italian in Great Britain does not find many cliches of interaction. The linguistic difficulty is the most expressive of these limitations, as it eventually reduces opportunity where a series of limitations of rights already exists. The Italian immigrant's invisibility is ultimately also an expression of his limited socio-cultural relevance.

Finally the risk is correlated to the preparation of the immigrant himself, and his ability to socialise. In this sense the risk is easily detectable

[6] See for example, the right of shipwreck, or the ease and frequency with which tourists are robbed; (examples taken from A. Van Gennep, *op. cit.*, p. 26).

[7] Cf. J.S. MacDonald and L.D. MacDonald, *The Invisible Immigrants*. Runnymead Industrial Unit Special Publications, 1972.

[8] Cf. E.J.R. Rose, et. al., *op. cit.*, p. 420.

when one observes the free and easy adaptation and insertion of young people from Italy for reasons of study or tourism, and compares it with the immigrant's uneasiness on his first arrival and settlement.

The majority of Italians of the Bristol region had arrived as unskilled labour, often coming straight from the peasant's environment of small and isolated villages of Southern Italy, where a culture of poverty prevailed. Even when efficient organisations to guide his movement were present, the immigrant would often not use them because he did not know much about the way they worked. The immigrant, whose experience of the associated life matured nearly exclusively at a primary level, amongst his relatives and his fellow villagers, turns to the personal relations system, in spite of its limitations.

On his part the immigrant can usually count a mature experience of life, a proven ability of endurance and a singular talent to help himself.

These correlations to a degree, describe the nature of the situation of liminality which the immigrant finds himself facing especially at the beginning of the migratory process. They do not define it at all. Liminality in fact usually describes a very open situation where the risk remains basically unforeseeable.

For the immigrant the risk implicit in the liminality of the migratory process, especially in its first stages, even before it is an empirical reality, is a problem in the realms of knowledge [9].

Before departure, while a person is making up his mind to emigrate, he tries to collect all the possible information to help judge the viability of his intention. Once his decision is taken and he prepares to leave, he tries at the same time to prepare for his arrival and set up in the new land where he intends to immigrate.

Preparations for the arrival and insertion into the new society are extremely difficult. The results leave much room for improvement and the few firm arrangements are nearly always limited to the question of work. All the rest usually remains an unknown quantity. What actually happened to some emigrant who left before him, is always just a description, an index of what may happen to him. His future experience remains fundamentally unforeseeable; "anything can happen". Consequently the only adequate response to the risk implicit in the migratory choice is to be prepared for any eventuality. The person getting ready to leave is first of all "a person prepared for anything".

At the same time, with extreme and sometimes excessive prudence, he explores all the ways of taking every possible precaution. In this context one can understand how fundamentally reasonable is the use of the personal relations system. In any case, from the immigrant's point of view, to move through a system of personal relations appears much safer

[9] Cf. J. Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

than to put himself in the hands of any private or public labour agency.

The personal relations system reduced the unforeseeable and the risk, increased the security to the point that several people thinking of leaving as emigrants, thought it better to search for work and reside in the cities of the Bristol region, rather than in the large industrial areas of Northern Italy like Turin or Milan.

In these cities of Northern Italy, immigrants from the South could very well have found opportunities of work similar to, and even better than those they found in the Bristol region. They would have always been close to their own villages and in an area socially and culturally more consistent with their own. But the absence of a personal relations system which would have inserted them in these cities, made the whole difference. Migration into the cities of the Bristol region appeared less risky and more sensible.

The personal relations system then has been preferred and imposed itself too because actually, in some way, it reduced the social costs of migration. To facilitate the analysis, these costs could be divided into two broad categories:

1) The cost of insertion.
2) The personal costs.

The costs of insertion refer to the sacrifices that immigrants have to make to enter, organise and take control of the environment where they find themselves having to work and reside during the period they intend to spend in the foreign country. I do not intend to speak here of the so-called integration whose process extends beyond the life of an immigrant, ceasing after the succession of several generations.

I refer instead to the first impact and process of insertion in the new environment, and the sacrifices the immigrants must make to reach that level of self-sufficiency in which they can satisfy their basic subsistence needs. This initial stage can be divided usefully into two principal phases, in relation to which one can speak of (*a*) costs of entrance, and (*b*) costs of growth.

The costs of entrance are related to the information, the co-ordination and the first impact with the foreign environment. The main problem of a person arriving abroad is that of finding a point of reference: a person to go to and somewhere to eat something, to sleep and from which to start organising himself. Until he finds and reaches this point of reference, "no expense is too high" to the immigrant. Dragging his parcels and suitcases behind him, he sometimes walks for miles and miles till he wears out his shoes, misses his meals and sleeps in stations. Sometimes, in desperation, he takes a taxi, eats in a restaurant, and sleeps in a hotel. The human sacrifice in fact could be such that the immigrant finds himself compelled to draw on his financial capital and go against the spirit and logic of saving which is, nearly always, the reason behind the migratory choice.

Mainly through the personal relations system, the Italian immigrants of the area found a way of reducing these costs of entrance. From the outset, the person preparing to leave, put himself in touch with a person who was already in Great Britain with whom he had a personal relation.

Through this person on the spot, whilst still in Italy, in some way he was able to form his own opinion about what to expect and to plan his arrival and set up abroad. This person in Great Britain then, knowing how chaotic London traffic was and how difficult it was for a new arrival to find his way, very often went to collect the novice at Victoria Station or at the airport. He then led the new arrival to his house where he offered him the first relief and perhaps even the possibility of making a short telephone call to Italy to reasure his relatives. Very often the first accommodation was in the house of the same immigrant already in the area.

After the help and comfort of the first hospitality, which could have been from a few hours to a few days, the new immigrant was taken to his lodging, often previously arranged, which would become his first official place of residence. Later, the person in the area who had found employment, even took him to his place of work, introduced him to the employer, to the environment and to what in practice he would have to do.

The costs of growth refer to the particular extra sacrifices which are asked of the immigrant, to escape from the status of inferiority and dependence in which he finds himself at the beginning of his residence abroad, and to move, in a sense, to the same level as the local worker.

Here the main problem is "to get to understand and make oneself understood". In fact, as long as the immigrant knows few people, does not speak the local language, does not have an idea of the environment in which he finds himself living and working, he remains severely handicapped, cannot move freely and cannot entertain useful and easy social relations.

When the immigrants came by themselves, not only did they have extreme difficulty with the process of insertion in the environment, but they went to the other extreme and retreated into themselves. Some of them speaking of their first experience said, "We did not speak to anybody ... we did not eat because we did not know how to ask", and after work, "we used to stay closed in at home because we did not know where to go".

The immigrants who had been recruited in bulk through the labour exchange, developed their social life within their own group. English society remained strange and alien for a long time, and when problems and tensions with the local population emerged, solutions were usually mediated through the Italian missionary or some old immigrant.

The ex-miners remembered how, when they first arrived in the Bristol area, they used to spend their Sundays playing football or cards amongst themselves, or going to the cinema together. They used to bore them-

selves to death because they did not know what to do or where to go, and when they went out, they used to move around in often boisterous, free and easy gangs which could not avoid attracting the attention of the local English people with whom they often ended up fighting.

When the immigrant arrived through the personal relations system, he generally found that the person in the area, directly or indirectly, was already inserted in the local environment (or at least he was trying to give this impression) and was able to bridge relations for the new arrival.

The contact in the area functioned as an interpreter, and whenever there was a formality to be gone through, something to clarify with an employer or related to the civil life of a foreign country, the new arrival turned spontaneously to him for advice or help. This personal contact functioned as a guide at the same time and gave the necessary information or personally accompanied the new arrival to the various offices, especially in the early days, as he had no idea of the geography of the environment in which he was living [10].

But over all the local immigrant contact made available the network of his acquaintances and personal relations in the new society to the new arrival. The value of this personal contact with his local connections appeared particularly when it acted as a source of information and assistance for all those realities which, for the new immigrant, turned out to be opportunities for his emancipation. This happened mainly in relation to labour and housing.

The first job abroad did not always satisfy the new arrival. This in any case was taken for granted. The first job was used mainly as an excuse for getting a work permit and entrance to Great Britain. Once in the area, the new immigrant was free to search and choose the job he wanted.

The opportunity for the second job usually arose at short notice and could not be planned in advance. In any case it depended on the new immigrant's decision as to whether it was worth taking or not. In fact, it could sometimes have been even harder than the first one; though it was considered to be a better one, usually because it offered bigger financial rewards, and in this way it justified the migratory act more. At this point not even the conditions of the work permit were a problem. The employer in fact, who signed the first work permit, even if with regret, would never have dared to keep a worder by force and ruin his personal relations in the Italian contingent.

A similar succession of events often occurred in connection with lodgings, when an opportunity for better and cheaper accommodation appeared. Later, always via the personal relations system, the necessary

[10] About the role of pioneers, leaders and interpreters, see also S. PATTERSON, *Immigrants in Industry*, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-273.

information and (even financial) help often came the purchase and modernisation of the first house.

The personal relations system by itself does not remove the social costs necessary for insertion, but it greatly reduces them, above all, saving the immigrant from useless sacrifice and waste of time and money, giving him the possibility of making such economies and such further sacrifices as enabled him to save rapidly and thus to realise in a shorter time those aspirations which brought him abroad in the first place.

But the personal relations system assumes its further significance and role, when in the context of the social costs of migration it reduces the personal costs in particular. The personal costs refer to the sacrifices imposed on the immigrant's personality, as much in the society of origin as in that of arrival.

As far as the personal costs in the society of origin is concerned, I do not intend to make reference here to the immigrant's sentiments, which are always involved, and to his reaction when facing the separations imposed by emigration. I refer instead to the separations themselves which emigration caused in the context of the relations which the emigrant has with the various members of the society to which he belongs.

There are first of all the relations which take shape in the family context, where the emigrant is husband, father, son, brother, and so on. This separation caused by the physical distance of emigration affects all kinship relations to the point where one can say, as the immigrant often say, that "emigration breaks up families". This is the most serious aspect of emigration; the reality which the immigrants describe as "the greatest sacrifice" of their life.

This sacrifice of the separation from the family has an extension beyond the kindred to the sacrifice of the separation from friends, fellow villagers, the bell-tower and the graveyard; the separation from one's own land in fact. Because of this, the migratory act is often compared to death. When a man stays abroad too long, his wife at home is described as a "white widow", and his children are treated with the sympathy which is reserved to boys "brought up without a father, like orphans".

For the immigrant's person it seems there are no images as expressive as those derived from the comparison with death. But a reduction of his personality happens and takes shape as a real process of degradation. "It is not men who immigrate but machine-minders, sweepers, diggers, cement mixers, cleaners, drillers ...". "To re-become a man (husband, father, citizen, patriot) a migrant has to return home" [11].

In recruitment through the personal relations system, contrary to what happens with recruitment through private or public labour agencies,

[11] J. Berger and J. Mohr, *A Seventh Man*. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1975, p. 58.

these social costs of migration are greatly reduced. Indeed, the relations of this system themselves are what remain more concrete and constitute the social personality of an immigrant in a foreign country all the more. The relative or the friend or even a friend of a friend represent a personal relation which in some way evokes and makes real the bulk of social relations left in one's own village.

The social relations defined by the cultural environment of the village of origin are constituent part, and have a relevant role in a personal relations system. But by themselves alone, they do not exhaust that system of personal relations which recruits and gathers the immigrants in a certain area abroad. When the Italian miners gathered in the Mexborough and Maltby training camps were asked, at the end of their training, to choose where they wanted to work, they turned to the solidarity and security of their friendships which, in great part, had been born in that area.

One of them explained to me, "What could I have known about England when I did not even know Sicily where I had been born". "We chose to follow our friends' choice; I knew for example that Bruno was going to Bristol, and I chose to go with Bruno". It was in this way that towards the end of 1951 some miners, mainly Sicilians, arrived in Bristol and there started a Sicilian presence which later became the most consistent section of the Italian community. "We are not all fellow villagers", the same immigrant said, "there were people who came from other Sicilian towns as well; people whom we had met before coming to England, and people from other towns whom we met at the courses in Yorkshire".

At the basis then of the personal relations system, there is not only a tie of an ancestral nature but, over-riding it, there is a fundamental need of a social nature. It is this social need which in the last instance pushed the Italian immigrants of the area to prefer the personal relations system.

This system of recruiting gathers a group of people known to, and familiar with each other, in the foreign land with whom the immigrant is able to entertain meaningful personal relations. In this way, it makes the foreign environment more familiar and favours, sometimes with decisive consequences, attitudes of trust which facilitate insertion in local society. A lady of Swindon [12], who in the first years of her residence abroad, found herself facing the many difficulties of the first impact with local society alone, after about twenty years of residence in the area, told me she was still feeling very much a foreigner. "In a foreign land", she said, "if you go straight, nobody troubles you, but you are always an alien. This is not our country; we have to go back".

I had the opportunity to talk with her daughter-in-law who was

[12] Confidential Files, Case n. 8, see Appendix.

living with her in the same house and who had arrived in Great Britain much later. Her husband, who had come to Great Britain with his parents twenty years before, had gone to Italy after ten years to marry her and had come back to his parents' house with the bride who never had (and never was going to have) any relative from her side of the family in Great Britain. This young lady stated that she liked Swindon and had no intention of going back to Italy. She was happy to stay "because of a lot of things" and summarised all these in her clean job and financial security, together with the fact that she found herself at ease with the neighbours and liked the environment.

The mother-in-law intervened to answer, to my obvious surprise, and explain the seeming anomaly. First of all, "here we live decently", she said, "and we have the satisfaction of having a whole house of our own that we never had and we are able to dress up; then when one needs a document they will do it immediately and they give you satisfaction". Then "She (the daughter-in-law) has been fortunate; when she arrived she was seventeen and came *into the family*; she found the environment already made before her; for her growing accustomed to the ways and habits of the place was not a disastrous experience".

The first reason is the one which is shared by all immigrants. Several left their own villages to escape the hardship of work which was often insecure and badly paid, peasant work for example (as in the case of our two ladies), and free themselves from the limitations of a village life where services were poor. They could look for a more gratifying and financially more secure life in towns.

This is the reason which pushed many Italians from the country-side to the town, from Southern to Northern Italy, and propelled many Italians abroad. For many immigrants this was the raison d'être of their migratory choice; for several others it is one of the reasons; that is, the search for the same "satisfaction" which produced that positive view about Great Britain which mother and daughter-in-law had in common.

The reason which the mother could not share with her daughter-in-law was the second one, and precisely the kind of relation with the English world which in the end had been conditioned by the presence or absence of the facility of insertion. The mother-in-law had a difficult encounter with the English world, in which she had experienced the alienation and understood te diversity which made, and still was making, her feel "always a foreigner", and thrust her to idealize her mother country.

The daughter-in-law, on the other hand, had come "into the family", had been accepted as a person in the new environment; with a house and neighbourhood and services which were part of the "familiar" new world which she had entered. Allowing for the uneasiness of any bride entering a new family, a little accentuated by the migratory factor, she did not experience and did not know the uneasiness of feeling foreign.

In the recruitment through the personal relations system, an immigrant

recovers part of his social personality in the foreign environment, and can, in this way, insert himself in it and practise the relations of social life not only as a worker but as a person as well.

The personal relations system has an impact on the general conception that the emigrant has of the entire migratory experience, in such a way that the decision to go abroad appears more sensible and meaningful [13]. In this perspective one can more fully understand the motives which have been at the origin of the migratory choice, and which brought the Italian immigrants to the Bristol region. Some Italians of the miners' contingent, recruited through the impersonal system of the labour exchange, told me that they had decided to emigrate, "because there was some other person of their village who was going to leave". In this case, the network of the personal relations made the prospect of possible difficulties which one might encounter in the foreign land, much less daunting.

For several other Italians on the other hand, when they were still in their home country, the presence of some personal relation in the foreign country gave them the possibility of conceptualising their departure overseas and the start of their future migratory experience, in a sort of "touring" perspective.

The meaning of the concept the immigrants intend to express remains very ambiguous when they say that initially they came into Great Britain as "tourists". In fact the "tourism" which was how the migratory process of several Italians of the area began, was a reality which served a variety of purposes.

Some Italians, taking the opportunity of having an acquaintance in the area, left Italy motivated exclusively by the desire to know and see the world, and to allow themselves a brief holiday period in Great Britain. Once in the area, they protracted their stay until at the end their decision to stay as immigrants was taken. This is the case of some young people who in the beginning came in order to study, but they remain a tiny minority. It happened to several young people approaching the age of conscription who, once in the area, convinced themselves that a stay abroad as immigrant workers for a certain period of time fixed by law, was after all an attractive alternative to military service in the Italian army. These people constituted 3% of the local Italian contingent.

But the majority of Italians who came "to visit friends" and then became immigrants, in reality had already left with a more or less explicit second purpose behind their "touring" project. Several Italians left their village with the main purpose of searching for a solution to financial

[13] This phenomenon is often recognised as being one of the major "precipitating" factors (cf. J. Stone, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176). It is the main basis for the analytical approach using the "chain migration" theory (cf. C.A. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia*. Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 107-139).

problems. Generally these immigrants arrived in the area to see and judge personally whether it was worth spending a little time working abroad, or else to examine a few firm propositions of work and eventually to choose and co-ordinate their insertion in the Bristol region. Often these people were called by some relative or Italian friend who had gone into some sort of business and was in need of help.

The "touring" in such cases which developed on the basis of personal relations already in the area, rather than being an excuse to enter Great Britain clandestinely, was used as a way of gathering more information on the various opportunities for gain and eventually to enter more freely onto the local labour market.

It would be wrong to visualize the phenomenon of Italian immigration into the Bristol region as a movement of desperate and starving people, escaping from the deep South in search of survival in Great Britain [14]. Several of the Italians who immigrated to the Bristol region mainly for reasons of work, already had a job and sometimes even a satisfactory settled life-style in Italy. These people came mainly because, as the title of a research into the immigrants in Swindon put it: "Someone said it was a nice place" [15].

Sometimes amongst the motives behind the departure overseas, there were reasons which had nothing to do with financial problems as, for example, happened with the majority of the Italian women who later married Poles. In the fifties, in the area there were eligible Poles and some of them had made the few Italian wives of their Polish friends understand that they would like to meet and marry some Italian girls. When the Italian women in the area got the message, perhaps because of loneliness and wanting a girl-friend nearby, they wrote to some acquaintances in Italy, passing on the proposition together with a photograph of the possible future bridegroom [16].

The girl in Italy, if she thought it convenient, left as a tourist and "without any obligation" went to spend some time in her girl-friend's house in Great Britain. Once on the spot, this girl had the opportunity to examine "her party", accept and marry him, or refuse and maybe marry

[14] For a sensible assessment on the economic situation of Southern Italy, see the comparative approach recommended by J. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-74.

[15] JACARY, *Someone said it was a nice place*, from AA.VV., "A study of migration into Swindon". Swindon 1971, paper held at Swindon Central Library. Similar observations are made by C. PEACH (*op. cit.*, Chap. I-IV, pp. 1-50) who shows how the causes in relation to the migratory phenomenon which are generally groups with the "push" factors are above all "permissive" and not "dynamic". It should not be forgotten when considering the work of C. Peach that his approach is that of the social-geographer and as such he mainly limits himself to the analysis of economic factors.

[16] The common practice amongst Euro-mediterranean families of arranging meetings or holidays with relatives abroad with marriage in mind, should not be confused with the phenomenon described, though there are many similarities. The behaviour of the girls in question contradicted rather than conformed to the traditional family habits.

another Pole, or not to marry at all and return to her village after having enjoyed herself and seen Great Britain.

Apart from exceptional cases like those for example, of some girl [17] who "in the past had made a mistake" and "would not have been able to marry in her own village", none of the other girls would have bothered going to Great Britain for a husband. The entire affair was carried out in the utmost freedom in a semi-serious way.

The "touring" framework provided a good alibi which gave everyone concerned a large space to act freely and eventually to retreat "with no offence". It was useful above all for the girl leaving Italy. The touring excuse in fact gave her the possibility of manipulating the situation abroad, but especially in her village in case she returned, not to be told, "She went abroad in search of a husband and she could not find anyone who wanted her".

In all of these cases, the personal relations system played a decisive role, not only as source of the marriage propositions, and eventually of the migratory process, but also because it made their realisation possible. "Tourism" is unlikely to have taken place if there were not a person in Great Britain offering accommodation and consequently, the security necessary for freedom of choice, be it to the departing girl, or to her parents, concerned that their daughter should not find herself in situations "with no way out".

But the majority of the Italians immigrated only because they intended to rejoin their relatives, wanting "to live together". With the development of an Italian contingent in the Bristol region and the intensification of relations amongst the immigrants, a local community increasingly took shape. This made it attractive for a man to bring his wife and children to join him.

It is normal for a man to have his family with him, but it is not normal when it comes to migration, especially when it is for economic reasons. When a person goes abroad exclusively for economic reasons it is normal, even if unnatural, for him to leave his family at home. From the economic point of view, it is a loss to carry one's own family abroad, and when an immigrant decides to have his family with him, he makes a choice in which the possible economic concern at the beginning has by now passed on to a second stage.

The majority of Italians who arrived in the Bristol region in the early post war period, had left Italy for mainly financial reasons. But the majority of them went back later on. For those who remained, motivations of a different nature imposed themselves. At the time of the research, the Italian contingent present in the Bristol region, established itself essentially on the basis of the axiomatic principles governing kinship ties and personal relations.

[17] Confidential Files, Case n. 9, see Appendix.

Consequently, the personal relations system does not appear only as one of the many structures helping emigration, or as one of the alternatives amongst the various lands of immigration, but in some cases it is a true proposition and invitation to go out from one's own village and migrate to rejoin the personal relation wherever he or she may be.

There is no single reason at the origin of the migratory choice, neither for individual nor, least of all, for an entire community. Motivations are many and various. Some Italians left, pushed by the necessity to escape from an inadequate economic, political or cultural environment. But the majority of the Italian contingent arrived and settled down in the area because they were attracted by a positive proposition of a well-paid job, or the prospect of a bit of "touring", but above all by the need to start their own family or to be reunited with relatives who were already in the area.

For nearly all the Italians of the Bristol region, the variety of their motivations had been spun nearly exclusively on the system of personal relations which allowed everyone to answer his individual personal needs.

In the system of personal relations, we can also trace the first elements of that solidarity which constituted the "Italian community". The process of recruitment and selection which took place through this system made several people with kinship relations, friends and acquaintances from the same village, gather in the same area [18].

The most typical example of this sense could be found in Swindon. In this town, as we have seen in the introduction, the majority of Italians originated from Calabria, and more precisely from two small towns: Filadelfia and Curinga. Amongst these Italians, the Mazzotta and Bretti family names were wide-spread, and often there were, more or less, close kinship relations.

The strength of the solidarity existing within these segments of the Italian community, was not limited in the time and space described by the environment in which immigrants were living. The socio-cultural environment from which immigrants had come and where some of these relations originated, was present with all its vigour, and from afar still imposed its presence in a real way, even if it was not easily detectable.

An Italian immigrant, for example, started by leaving home, abandoning his wife and four children, to associate with another woman whom he finished by joining indefinitely [19]. At the beginning the entire affair appeared and was considered as a series of secret adventures about which few people used to talk with sympathy and perhaps even with pleasure.

[18] See J. Brown, *The Un-melting Pot*. London, Macmillan, 1970, pp. 82-97; H. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian Americans*. Glencoe, The Free Press, 1962.

[19] Confidential Files, Case n. 10, see Appendix.

When the extra marital relation though became more serious and started to take the form of a true desertion of the conjugal home, it became the talk of the local Italian community, but above all it became the problem and cause of suffering for two or three relatives and close family friends residing in the area.

They were embittered and tried everything to make the person concerned see reason, till at the end they saw themselves compelled to carry out their extreme threat: they let the relatives in Italy know what was happening. A brother of the guilty party came from Italy to investigate and as long as he remained in the area, the person concerned stayed at home with his family as if everything were back to normal. But when the brother left, the union of the family broke up again and the person concerned left home forever.

At the time of the research the ex-husband did not even dream of returning to his village in Italy. He would have been lynched by his affines as well as by his family group which considered him to be its "shame". For his wife who with her children were struggling to make ends meet, to go back, from the financial point of view, would have been very convenient. She would have been accepted and helped to rear her children by both relatives and affines but she had not the courage to return; she was ashamed of what had happened and did not have the heart to show herself in her village "with her family in such a state".

Even without returning though, both of them (ex-husband and ex-wife) here were ashamed of "what relatives and friends in Italy were thinking and saying".

In the ambit of the various sets of people gathered by the personal relations system and living in the same area, immigrants judged and controlled each other, even measuring themselves on the cultural models of the environment from which they came. This social control exercised by immigrants amongst themselves, which was called into being mainly through the ties that each person kept with people in Italy, carried to the new home the normal tension of the society of origin. In particular the family of origin laid upon the immigrant its ethical necessities.

This was valid for the individual immigrant in relation to the society in which he was living, and it was particularly valid for the immigrant with family in the area, especially in relation to his own family. In such cases, the ethical necessities were not reducible to a mere problem of individual conscience, but remained a problem of relation amongst people, and were defined and controlled in great part by society.

Within the elementary families and amongst families with kinship ties, solidarity was a normative imperative that derived part of its force from the principles animating the kindred of which these families were still part in Italy. The same logic, even if in a less normative way, commanded relationship amongst friends and fellow villagers sharing relations in Italy. Their relationship was not perceived and experienced as a reality

related only to the people concerned in the area, but was often seen and lived as part of the Italian social reality in which it had been born.

But the force of solidarity binding some Italian immigrants and constituting the basic elements of the local Italian community, was not always wholly traceable to the socio-cultural environment of a village of origin. All the local solidarities had been through the sieve of the migratory process.

Some Italians, intolerant of the socio-cultural control of their village of origin, had looked for and found in the emigration and remoteness from home, a certain form of independence. Some personal relationships of the past had simply cooled off. Others, on the other hand, in the difficulties of immigration and the practice of social life abroad, had grown stronger. New personal relations, as in the case of several miners and metal founders who had no other ties besides the one which brought them together as immigrants, had taken shape abroad amongst Italians working and living together.

The solidarity, especially of these latter personal relations took form and moral force from the sympathy and mutual assistance that the Italian immigrants exchanged with each other in the difficulties and necessities of every day life in a foreign land.

In the survey area, a few Italians having special bonds of friendship with some fellow countryman, used to name this as a "compare" of theirs. This expression, very much in use in Southern Italy is, broadly speaking, a term usually employed to describe a person with whom one has singular relations of social solidarity; one's own family friend, or simply a great friend.

Amongst the immigrants, the "compare" of an Italian was sometimes the fellow villager who had helped him in the past and perhaps had called him abroad. This though was not true in general. In the area it was easy to find an Italian calling and treating a fellow countryman, a work-mate or neighbour as a "compare" who perhaps came from a different region and whom he had never met before immigrating.

In the same way as not all personal relations amongst immigrants did not trace back to a common village of origin, so neither did all the bonds of solidarity shaping the basic elements of the Italian community find their ethical force in a common socio-cultural environment of origin. Time and mixing amongst Italians in immigration, had redefined relationships amongst the various people of the Italian contingent, so that these relationships were local both in origin and character [20].

[20] It is still a far cry from what was said about the Chicago Italians, namely that: "the old-world community intimacy that Italians in America 'recalled' so nostalgically originated in the new-world as a response to urban surroundings". This statement quoted by H.S. Nelli ("The Italians in Chicago", New York, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 6) is simply an exaggeration and does not take into consideration the fact that personal relations begin, for the main part, in the country of origin and develop through the migratory process.

The presence and action of these local relationships and solidarities, could have been seen in the concentration of Italians in some district of Bristol and Swindon. As we have seen, in the fifties, Italian immigrants recently arrived and without a house, had gathered and found accommodation in the few houses purchased by earlier Italian immigrants. From these rented houses the Italians, especially with the help of their fellow countrymen, organised their life and inserted themselves in the foreign environment, and purchased their houses near their acquaintances in the same district. At the time of the research, the neighbourhood of Bedminster in Bristol and the area around Beatrice Street and Manchester Street in Swindon, were districts where one was still able to find the main part of the Italian community groups together [21].

But the most noticeable sign of these local relationships and solidarities was to be read in the various marriages celebrated amongst Italians who had met abroad, and increasingly were celebrated amongst Italian immigrants' children.

The term "personal relation" used to describe the system analysed so far, is taken from the nomenclature generally used in kinship studies. Here it is used only in an analogical sense. This etymological statement, together with the work done so far to describe the personal relations system serves to provide a model of analysis in which the reality produced by this system and the process which develops within it (often described as "chain settlement", the first phases of which are composed of what is called "chain migration") are differentiated from the family system and its cycle.

Several people who took interest in the migratory phenomenon, but did not make this latter distinction, have worked out the history of some migratory movements as if it were a family process [22]. They have presented some summarised histories generally divided, and maybe subdivided into the three principal phases of the immigrant's family cycle, that is:

1) The arrival and settlement of the first immigrants, nearly always males and bachelors.
2) The rejoining of the spouses and the organising of the family.
3) The growth and expansion of the second generation.

The numerical increase of certain immigrants' groups in some cases can be due to causes connected with kinship realities so that for a certain

[21] Cf. P. Garigue and R.W. Firth, *Kinship and Organisation of Italianates in London*, in R.W. Firth (ed.), "Two Studies of Kinship in London". London School of Economics-Monographs in Social Antropology 15, pp. 65-93; R.L. King, *The Spatial Evolution of the Italian Community in Bedford*, "East Midland Geographer", 47, pp. 337-345.

[22] See for example C.A. Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-199.

period, the bulk of nuclear families may give a typical character to the group and leave a particular mark on its history. But the history of the migratory movement of a people does not start and finish with the history of a group of individuals and their families.

In the same way, still because of the absence of this distinction, the process of integration connected with the family cycle has often been confused with the process of integration of an immigrant community.

Each individual immigrant goes through a family cycle in which he evolves personally and evolves the motivations supporting his migratory choice. As time passes the family welfare, and especially the children's welfare, impose themselves and increasingly become the basic reason animating, organising and shaping the immigrant's motivations and his relationship to the environment in which he lives. For the individual immigrant the logic and timing regulating the process of their integration develop mainly within their own family cycle.

But in this case, those who decide to stay, insert and integrate in a certain society, are the individual people and their families. The immigrant community to which they belong, as such existed before them, can always continue accepting new immigrants, and can carry on without them, always remaining on the borders of the society.

An immigrant community does not identify itself and must not be confused with the families which constitute it at any given moment. An immigrant community takes shape and defines itself in part beyond the nuclear families and the possible personal relations which branch out from them to some levels where other factors contribute to consolidate its basis and to extend its solidarities.

In one particular part of the Bristol region, the local Italian immigrants all felt in an indistinct way ideally united in a sort of social unity, which they themselves used to describe simply as their "Italian community".

They felt joined first of all by the common immigrant condition and the common sense of exclusion and alienation that it provoked. As foreigners all the Italians of the area lived in the same situation of social exclusion. All of them experienced and, day by day, found themselves facing the organisation and culture of an alien people alone, with no other alternative than to adapt themselves, at least externally, and do as the English people were doing. In spite of all the recent political reforms and the various forms of assistance, the Italians continued to have a very precarious social life and always felt condemned to "work and keep silent". In consequence, this consistent structural and cultural exclusion induced in them, both individually and collectively, an attitude of alienation towards the entire English society.

In general, the Italians did not manifest any deep sentiment of belonging to the English society. They were alien to the pleasures, the

ideals and the attitudes of English people, and disliked "their" land. What was happening in English society did not concern them, and as far as possible they wanted to have nothing to do with it. Sometimes their indifference became rebellion and hate against everything that was English; from food to religion, and in particular against the most repressive sectors of society, such as the police.

Often English society was nothing more than the target for a diffuse sense of discomfort born out of exclusion and alienation from society in general. Immigrants were sometimes very critical of the Italian state and society, and their bitterness was expressed in very harsh words, as for example, "Our country deserted us in this country" or "We have been sold to these people here". But in particular immigrants were critical of the various Italian institutions abroad, especially of the Consulate, towards which no criticism was spared.

In their expressions and attitudes, there was the synthesis of all the exclusions, the frustrations, the fatigues, the humiliations and the sufferings of their destiny. Their common experience and shared destiny joined them and made them feel very close to one another. Often this communion was not only born from the similarity of various parallel histories, but also took shape from a series of concrete events which crossed and tied their lives together.

In this context the common Italian language entered as a decisive element allowing the immigrants to recognise themselves in a social unity. The importance of the linguistic factor could be indirectly observed in the fact that, amongst the people of various nationalities sharing the immigrant condition with them, Italians only met with any noticeable frequency and cordiality those speaking Italian.

Even if they knew of other ethnic groups in the area, broadly speaking, the Italians in practice ignored them almost completely. This was particularly significant in the case of the Polish group, to which some Italians were bound by kinship ties. Apart from the people in these marriages, there was not a particular association between Italian immigrants and Poles, and each of the two groups went its own way.

Between the immigrants of a different nationality, an exception was made of the Italian speaking people, with whom Italians often had rather intense relations and used to meet with a certain frequency.

In the neighbourhood of Stroud, about twenty miles North of Bristol, a group of Maltese refugees resided, having immigrated from Suez at the time of the crisis. These Maltese spoke fluent Italian and English. At the level of social relations, it was easy to detect a situation of conflict with the local English community. Some of them kept the photograph of Charles De Gaulle hanging in their houses, "the only person", in their opinion, "who stood up against the British". The same Maltese easily identified themselves with the local Italian community, and from the

religious point of view, they liked to be assisted by the Italian missionary (who was residing in Bristol). In the Italian community they were accepted and participated as any other Italian immigrant would have done.

Immigrants first of all found the first and direct code of identification amongst one another in the common Italian language. In general, a newly arrived immigrant hearing someone speaking his own language in the confusion of the crowd, tends to immediately recognise an immigrant like himself in that person, one who will certainly understand his unease at being abroad and on whom he could possibly rely for sympathy and help.

For every Italian immigrant, the sound itself of his own language was a reality which, though it did not necessarily revive the memory of the far-away land or culture of origin, did evoke the sense of a common experience in the immigrant condition.

But the Italian language was a uniting factor over all, simply because the Italian immigrants, contrary to what could have happened with the English language, found in it a common means of communication through which they were able to express and satisfy their needs more easily. The fortunes of several Italian shopkeepers in the area originated and continued partly for this simple reason.

A lady in Swindon[23], telling me about the difficulties of the first years in a foreign country said, "I did not know where to go because I did not know the local language, so I used to stay in the house and go out only when I was forced to". "When I had to do some shopping it was a terrible experience. I had to point with my finger to what I wanted, and to buy a loaf of bread I often obliged the shopkeeper to pick up several things and show them to me". Then an Italian shopkeeper started to go around from house to house "and so", continued the lady, "once a week at last I was able to do all my shopping". And concluded, "Oh blessed be that man ... he was simply sent from heaven".

At the time of the research, several Italians did their shopping in the local Italian shops. They used to go there to buy what they needed, but also to have a chat. The Italian shops were the information agencies where one could always have the latest news about what was going on in the local Italian community.

But the practical idiom that Italians used to define and express themselves was mainly the concept of nationality. Generally, Italian immigrants remained deeply bound to their nationality and guarded it jealously. The majority of them never dreamt of renouncing it to become English. It would have been like "a betrayal of one's own home country". A heresy even just to think of it. Even when there was the possibility of taking

[23] Confidential Files, Case n. 8, see Appendix.

a British passport, without renouncing one's own original nationality, the entire affair was regarded with suspicion.

An Italian in his own country, generally does not care much for his nationality, perhaps he sees it best as a charter allowing him access to a set of civil rights and liberties. But in a foreign country, where the daily reality of life continuously puts under discussion even the deepest and most decisive sense of social belonging, the Italian often becomes a stubborn nationalist. In the concept of nationality in fact, he gathers all that could eventually remain of this sense of belonging. The last tenuous bond to the land and society of origin. "Italian I was born and Italian I die", one immigrant used to say, as if in the concept of nationality he wanted to vindicate at least the ultimate rights, that of being carried to and buried in the land of his people on his death.

The sense of belonging expressed in the concept of nationality was present, or at least it was supposed to be, in all the Italians of the area. In this way it became a collective vision and sentiment, and the concept of nationality expressing it became the myth in which the Italian community as such identified itself.

The collective vision and sentiment was made actual and celebrated particularly when the Italians gathered and met amongst themselves. On these occasions, the nationality theme was the reason at the root of the entire event.

One appealed to this reason to convene such meetings and to ensure that the invitations reached all the Italians, reminding those who were somewhat less than enthusiastic of their duty to participate. To this reason each Italian appealed to justify his presence at the meetings, and the "big-wigs" to vindicate their rights to express their opinion or to do something.

When, at these meetings, some person of authority was present and an address was required, the nationality theme was the usual topic. If then this person in authority was Italian, the rhetoric knew no limits and the address often enlarged on some historic resumé, where the sacrifice of the Italian worker abroad was compared to the heroism of the Italian soldiers in the past wars.

The concept of nationality used to convene the Italian community, drawing its force from the convention, implicit in it, that all the Italians came from "one and the same land". In this concept in fact the village or the region in which each immigrant was born and to which, in the first place, was bound, was not distinguished from the "Italy" from which every Italian came. In this way, the sense of belonging that each immigrant had with his land of origin, opened up and diffused itself in the collective concept of all the Italian immigrants' bond to the mother land.

In the reality of Italian society, the two concepts do not correspond and a Sicilian or a Calabrese in a town of Northern Italy is often con-

sidered, as he considers himself, to be "an immigrant"; Northern Italy is not his land [24].

The Italians of the area knew of these regional distinctions and divisions but they always sought to cover them up in every way possible because they did not want them to exist between themselves. Actually the Italians in the area, who came from the same region, used to meet amongst themselves more often than with the other Italians [25]. However, they never used to tolerate being identified as a group apart. Generally when the suspicion of any veiled regionalism was suggested, Italians used to protest and deny it. And as if it were always necessary to make this point very clear, in the various local assemblies one often heard the shout: "We are all Italians".

Since the Italian law on the regions was enacted, some problems of the Italians abroad started to be assisted through regional administrative bodies. Amongst the immigrants this administrative praxis encouraged Italians to form associations based on regional groups. In Great Britain, some association of the kind was already in existence at national level and an Italian from the Bristol region could very well have gone to London, for example to attend some regional meeting or feast, without attracting criticism.

The immigrants of the area though could never tolerate, that at local level, a regional organisation be fostered and developed amongst themselves. Throughout the entire period of time covered by this research in the whole area, only in Swindon in 1979 was an association of the kind sought; one for the Calabresi. Since its birth it has been viewed with suspicion by nearly all the local Italians. It has struggled to come down to grass-roots level, but has remained an ineffectual, bureaucratic entity supported only from above.

For the immigrants of the area, Sicilians or Calabresi groups could not and should not exist; they were all Italians because they all came from the same land. By asserting implicitly a common origin in the concept of nationality, the Italians of the area were able to posit the existence of special bonds amongst themselves and were in this way able to recognise themselves as a community.

Some immigrants, not many, changed nationality and took a British passport. Their decision was not a mere bureaucratic formality. It was

[24] P. Nichols says: "Italians ask each other where they come from in the same way as Englishmen talk about the weather. And for the same reason. There is such a (regional) variety. An Italian who comes from the mountains of southern Calabria, the Aspromonte, and an Italian from the Lombard plain is divided as far as any two people from the same continent could be divided by purely geographical differences of environment", *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[25] See also R.E. Park and H.A. Miller, *Old World Traits Transplanted*, New York, 1921, pp. 146-151; J.H. Mariano, *The Second Generation of Italians in New York City*. Boston, Christopher. 1921, pp. 19-22; and the somewhat popular account of P. Di Donato, *Three Circles of Light*. New York, Messner, 1960.

the consequence of, and was connected with, the choice to integrate definitively into the English environment and put behind them memories and bonds with Italy. In pratice, even if they kept all the personal ties they used to have with individual Italian immigrants, their choice allowed for a detachment from the Italian community as such.

Usually Italian immigrants respected these "drop-outs" as people, but severely judged their choice and in practice they kept them out of the activities in which the welfare of their community was involved.

Generally, as long as the community remained an informally organised entity (without "democratic" elected committees, see Chap. IV) these restrictive practices were not applied to the so-called old-immigrants. These restrictive practices were not even applied to those few immigrants of the post-war wave, who in the past had had to change nationality for reasons of work. The latter in any case never hid their regret of having had to change nationality and always used to express the intention of retaking an Italian passport.

The concept of nationality was the ultimate idiom, more comprehensive and discriminatory, defining the Italian community and distinguishing it from the English society.

The concept of nationality alone did not constitute the Italian community. It served and was used to visualise the social space of the community and confusedly describe its boundaries. It was, above all, the personal relations system which together with the linguistic code of recognition and the nationality myth, constituted the Italian community amongst the immigrants.

More precisely one can say that, while the solidarity described by the personal relations system involved an imperative of a normative kind, the myth of nationality involved an imperative of a more categorical order. Social interrelations articulated exclusively on the idiom of nationality could have produced at best, a unity of insecure social expectations for sympathy and trust.

The ethical imperative of these expectations nearly always took form in an indirect or negative way. While taking notice, for example, of the various discriminations and exclusions to which, as immigrants, they were subjected, Italians of the area would sometimes express the need for more justice, especially from the English society side, in which their condition took shape. They would add though, "But if we do not help even amongst Italians, what right have we got to expect something from the others?".

At other times they used to put forward their ideal of correctness in the sphere of social relations, complaining and criticising the Italians of the area, whose behaviour always left much scope for improvement. "Amongst us Italians", one used to say with disapproval, "we love to tread on each other, if only we could do it".

As a matter of fact, Italians in the area, as a group, did not show a great deal of efficient organised solidarity amongst themselves. They

loved to meet and spend time together and always fancied the idea of extending and giving continuity to those moments of intimacy with a more organised Italian community. Each one though used to care exclusively for his own business and for the welfare of the people closest to him; relatives first and acquaintances next. For the Italian community as such, they gave only a lot of wise advice, but they generally expected someone else to take care of its welfare.

THE COMMUNITY'S POLITICAL ORGANISATION

Political activities were conducted in an intensely personal way, as were a great many of the affairs within the community, and they very often ended up in a game of personality chess.

In any local Italian group there was some person, very often there were several, who in some way considered himself authorised to take care of individual fellow countrymen as much as of the community. Amongst these, the various people who were considered and considered themselves to be "important" deserve special attention, if only because they were the ones who made the most noise.

The special position of these people did not arise from an economic, legal or political context of the Italian community proper binding Italians amongst themselves. The Italian community had no specific base in this field, and the Italians amongst themselves had little or nothing in common at these levels. There were consequently, no true structures in this sense to define positions within the community and ascribe particular roles and prestige to any individual. The "important" Italians in the community were essentially self-made people.

Amongst these there were first of all the people one may describe as "do-gooders" who got into the limelight above all by doing good to the others. They were the Italians who perhaps knew or were able to do more than the others, and who willingly lent their assistance to fellow countrymen in need. This concern of theirs was motivated by a variety of reasons which might have come from the most unexceptionable search for justice to the meanest and toughest speculation, from the most sincere expression of solidarity to a mere desire for prestige.

As we have seen, the personal relations system described the principal form of interrelation within the community, and represented the principal bond uniting the Italians. The elementary phenomena of social differentiation developing within the community and making the "do-gooders" important, arose nearly exclusively from this system. A "do-gooder" remained one as long as he cared for his personal relations.

[1] Confidential Files, Case n. 11, see Appendix.

A typical example of a "do-gooder" could be seen in a gentleman, a pensioner, who had come from Sicily and was living abroad, as he used to say, because he had lost everything in his village in the 1973 earthquake [1]. In the town where he was residing, this gentleman was one of the few Italians whose name was often mentioned in the immigrants' conversation, and whom one could not avoid meeting sooner or later. Meeting him one had the impression of dealing with a mysterious and rather slippery customer who controlled his own behaviour and speech in order to give the impression of being an important and educated person. In actual fact, he had no qualifications and he was not very educated; he was only a poor man with a measure of cunning who was in relation with several local Italians to whom he loved to devote himself, and who perhaps believed in what he did. For several of these Italians, he was the man who was able to solve a variety of problems, perhaps because he did sometimes help them.

He himself liked to present himself as "the man in the know". With the authorities he presented himself as the man who personally had knowledge of all his local Italians and their problems, and with the Italians he presented himself as the man who knew how to solve any problem, as he knew the right people in the right places, by whom he was highly regarded. In conversation in fact, he loved to hint at highly placed people who were personal friends of his, but whose name and office he never used to mention, like for example, a certain "personal acquaintance" in the Foreign Office; one never actually learnt whether he was the minister or the door-keeper.

To both fulfill and exploit the need of the Italians who maintained close ties with their fatherland, and made numerous journeys there, several agencies which chartered aeroplanes and offered low price tickets opened. The sale of these tickets did not usually take place at these agencies, the existence of which several immigrants did not even know, but rather through one or two immigrants, agents, sub-agents and go-betweens of every sort, who resided in the Bristol region and knew the local Italians.

Our man was one of these go-betweens and gladly devoted himself to this market not only for the profit involved, but also in order to boast with the people he served and the managers of these agencies (who were nearly all Sicilians). He telephoned, collected the money, delivered the tickets, recommended and gave assurances.

That is not to say that he gave a good service, and even less that he offered the Italians the best service on the market. As a matter of fact, he knew only a set of people all depending on the same agency. He could consequently only choose what he was offered, and he was often offered a very poor service. But he used to present it as if it were the best and the only one on the market, at times supporting his explanation with the excuse that people called on him too late, when all the aeroplanes were full up.

After all this then he would pitch into a great act in order to show that it had been very difficult to solve the problem, that he was only able to do it because he had some personal acquaintance, and that in spite of all this he had had to labour, make hundreds of telephone calls, go without sleep, and so on, so that people were convinced they had received a great favour and left feeling deeply thankful.

His expertise did not stop at tickets, but he took the trouble to provide consular discounts, to collect passports for renewal, birth and marriage certificates for registration, to distribute and collect forms for registration on the electoral rolls, applications for pensions and so on. The sight of printed paper made him feel on top of the world. The more abstruse the printed matter the more amazed were the Italians who could only read with difficulty, the more our man felt important.

Very often he gave the wrong explanations and advice and made mistakes thus creating complications and delays, but he was able to understand his own mistakes and find a way of covering them up, maybe by placing blame somewhere in the bureaucracy.

People could very well have gone in person to the consular agent who was residing in the area. The consular agent for his part never made a mystery of his dislike of always having to deal with a middle-man who instead of helping was, in fact, complicating matters. But others besides the consular agent were not able to free themselves of this person, because he always knew how to interfere kindly.

As if all this were not enough, in order always to be around the Italians and to be on the crest of the wave, he always used to invent something new. When, for example, a poor but highly respected Italian died, he tood the initiative and went collecting money from door to door to help the family send the dead body to Italy. At the funeral then, as at several other funerals, he was present and involved himself in the ritual carrying an Italian flag and providing a wreath on behalf of the "Italian community" [2].

He represented nobody and was nobody, but in the various situations he was never missing and used to act as lord mayor, priest, social worker, Italian consul and general helper.

And as always, at the end he would place his hand on his heart as if he was feeling sick, and with a long-drawn sigh he said that he was so tired of working and going without sleep for the Italian immigrants who never thanked him. In any case, he added, he was not working for his own honour, only for the community.

Obviously a lot of people did avoid him, while many others simply endured him. But a few, especially a tiny group of Sicilians, believed him, valued him and treated him with regard.

[2] In the Chicago immigrant community, John Powers "became so adept at his use of funerals for political purposes that he won the nick-name" "The Mourner" (H.S. NELLI, *op. cit.*, p. 95).

Like this pensioner, all the "do-gooders" broadly speaking appeared to take a lot of care of anything taking place amongst the Italian immigrants and where some large scale initiative arose in the community, none of them ever failed to be present. Their participation was justified by the right of nationality as well as in the name of their philathropic work and their experience.

In these community exercises, their main concern was that of securing any sort of representative position for themselves. A position which in some way would have ratified their work and allowed them to extend it throughout the entire community. Their philanthropic work not being of sufficient credit in order to secure the desired position of leaders in the community, they could not find anything better than to resort to the artifices of democracy. "Do-gooders" usually appeared to be the most active people in defining constitutions and organising elections. In the context then, they used to involve themselves by calling on their personal relations, and they nearly always ended up creating factions and divisions.

The Italians in business were then amongst the "important people" in the community. It was common opinion that these were the people who in the new country made a fortune and achieved "success". In the local English community, they were the best know Italians, so that sometimes the people external to the Italian contingent, used them as "of necessity representatives" of a community which had no natural representatives.

In this sense, in relation to the Italian community, they were asked by the police to stand bail, or they were sometimes used by the local authorities as a point of reference. They obviously enjoyed carrying out these functions and did not miss a chance to extol their significance in order to present them as an acknowledgement, not only of their economic success, but also of their own personal success.

In actual fact, their "success" did not endow them with much importance in the local English society, and in the English business community, they were nonentities. In the end their social destiny still remained within the local Italian community.

Amongst the immigrants, they were regarded as people who had made a solid economic position for themselves and had succeeded in leaving the flock. At the same time they were regarded as self-made people. Consequently they represented the symbol of emancipation and the model of the procedure for achieving it.

Considerations about their success did not necessarily ascribe a special position of prestige in the Italian community to them. On the contrary, Italian immigrants did not allow them any expression of special regard or respect. Often, they esteemed them very little and criticised them for their stinginess, but above all for their ostentation. "Who do they think they are?", they used to say, "even they came here with a cardboard

suitcase looking for a piece of bread". In the end, these people's success was not shaped from within the community and did not concern the Italians, but remained something which was external to them and which concerned only the individual businessman.

Italian business people did not usually care very much about what their fellow countrymen thought of them. Some of them though, who were not content with results achieved in the economic field, but wanted to crown their success with some sort of social acknowledgement, did their utmost in order to break the circle of cold admiration surrounding them in the community by cultivating public relations and doing their best to show up everywhere.

One was able to find these business people at the most diverse events, such as on the occasion of some family feast (birthdays, engagements, weddings, etc.) or at the opening of any new Italian business. Usually they were invited on the basis of an old friendship, or perhaps only with the excuse that the host had done his shopping for the occasion at their shop. In the same way, every time some relevant initiative, such as a feast or a subscription or the organisation of an association took place in the Italian community, these people were always present.

I had the chance of observing two of them[3] in 1978 when the mission in Bristol took the initiative of buying some premises in order to give a home to the religious and social services for the local Italian community. At the various meetings which took place for all the Italians in order to discuss the various aspects of the initiative our two shopkeepers distinguished themselves by the number of interventions, but above all by the contents of their observations.

Their position in the end defined itself around the request for guarantees that the money collected would go towards and remain for the use of the venture. Every time they were requested to decide upon a solution though, or themselves to suggest any possible working procedure, they used to withdraw and "wash their hands" of it. In actual fact they were not against the initiative itself but warmly wanted it. They even wanted to be in some way part of it, but they did not want any responsibility whatever, be it of a legal, financial or practical order. They wanted to be present in their own way, so they invented the hypothesis of possible trickery so as to be able, in this way, to rise as pillars of morality and godfathers of the community.

For the Italian business people who took an interest in community affairs, the need to make others acknowledge the different economic heights they themselves had reached, usually imposed itself in such a way as to end up conditioning all their best intentions. In this way they entered into the context, remaining above factions and laying the weight of their success down in the balance in the hope of being offered any position of

[3] Confidential Files, Case n. 12, see Appendix.

importance. They were always present, but only to be the godfathers of the different activities, the auditors of the community's finances, the Italians' representatives when there was some important person to be met. They were the eminences, the power behind the throne; always present but never involved in the internal struggle of the immigrant group.

The behaviour of all "important people" in these social "exercises" within the Italian community very often develops according to clientage relations models. All this is not reduceable simply to a cultural phenomenon typical of the Italians, in particular of those from the South. This behaviour has to be read in the context of the immigrant condition and liminality where, as we have seen, the personal relations system finds no better alternatives. In the survey area, clientage relations present themselves as an extension, a development and an exploitation of the personal relations system, and as such they could be found in all sections of the community.

These clientage relations can be reduced to three main models.

1) The model in which one appeals to the ethic of reciprocity.
2) The model in which one exploits the power of knowledge.
3) The model in which one manipulates the meanings attributed to "success".

The model in which one appeals to the ethic of reciprocity basically refers to the logic of the "gift-exchange" described by Mauss in his essay "The Gift". In order to overcome the numerous difficulties arising from the immigrant condition and liminality, Italians often give each other a helping hand. These exchanges have an implicit moral character which appeals to and binds people in a context that goes beyond the mere prestation itself. In this context, they create ties of gratitude, friendship and solidarity which could endure in time and space.

But the prestation per se, is not completely overcome; it remains present even in the ethical context where in a more or less relevant way, it defines the relationship between the giver and the receiver of assistance. This logic which defines the relations in the reciprocity exchanges, can be exploited in a "clientelistic" way in order to assume positions of social importance. The number and quality of prestations on one side, and the seriousness of the satisfied needs on the other, could be such as to describe a generosity "without limits" which leaves people with the impossibility of reciprocating adequately, and compels them to correspond with attitudes of filial devotion which are "without limits". Benefactors in this context emerge and sometimes go as far as to become a little like godfathers and godmothers within the situations, the social and individual events of the Italian community.

The terms "godfather" and "godmother" derive here from the

Christian religious practice whereby in certain important rituals, a person, often a friend of the family, in the ritual assumes a role similar to the one which a father or a mother has in a family. People who succeed in emerging in the interplay of reciprocity, often actually become the religious godfathers and godmothers of the children of Italian immigrants who have been helped by them.

Relations of reciprocity assume a particular pronounced character amongst Sicilian immigrants where one is usually more careful of the requirements of correct social behaviour. In Italian, one can address a person using two different pronouns: "Tu" when there is a friendly and familiar relationship, and "Lei" which shows more respect and is used when one wants to recognise a more detached relationship. During my residence in the area, in my various relations with the Sicilians, I started always indiscriminately using the form "Tu", as I used to do with all immigrants, until it was brought to my notice that I ought to distinguish depending on the importance of the people, and address some with "Tu" and others with "Lei". "Amongst the Sicilians", I was told, "a person who can make out the difference between 'Tu' and 'Lei', is an intelligent person who knows the rules of living in society".

In order to understand all this it is not necessary to refer to a set of ideal values organised around the concept of honour. In the migrant's context, these social considerations are above all rules of etiquette. But these rules are not mere formalities without serious implications; in the social praxis in fact, they can further develop the logic of clientage relations.

In the survey area, one could easily observe that several Sicilian immigrants, when going to any person in authority, be it consular agent, missionary, estate agent, social security employee, etc., asked to be accompanied by some "important person".

A Sicilian immigrant practises this behaviour first of all because when accompanied by a "good" person he was able to create a "good" impression. With an "important person" nearby, he is not an ordinary person alone and unprovided for any longer, but he can show that in the end even he is someone, because he can count on friendships and protection at a certain level. In the last instance, this is the matter of credentials, which in other contexts degenerates into the classic begging for preferential treatment.

But the Sicilian immigrant seeks to be accompanied by an "important person" because he is convinced that it would be very incorrect on his part to go and talk directly with a person in authority. His dialogue should be mediated through a person who, in his own eyes, is at least at the same level as the person in authority. This behaviour does not stem from an inferiority complex, but rather from a form of respect towards the authority.

But when a Sicilian immigrant asks to be accompanied, he knows that in the representative role carried out by the "important person",

there is not only a service to himself, but there is also honour implicit for the mediator himself. By asking or allowing a person to act as mediator, the Sicilian immigrant is also convinced he is doing this person a favour and consequently uses the situation to express his gratitude towards possible benefactors.

If the Sicilian immigrant disregarded these attentions in his social relations and should go to talk with the person in authority by himself, he would make show of a self-sufficiency which would seem to be a serious act of incorrectness towards his own benefactors. These in fact could think, as actually several of them made me understand, "But who does he (the ordinary immigrant) think he is? Is he the one who has to look after relations with authority?". "In the past, when he was in need, he used to run to me, but now that there is the chance of me carrying out the role of representative a little, he does it by himself. So I only suit then when I can solve his problems". The respect and honour of "representativeness" in the end is the best recompense that a Sicilian benefactor could receive for assistance given.

These forms of behaviour should not be read too negatively. The role of mediator and the honour of "representativeness" are usually more connected to the degree of wisdom than to the degree of power an individual possesses. In the end the chosen person is the sensible immigrant who knows how to say the right and conciliatory word; the typical wise man of the village.

This behaviour in any case, is not based on a judgement of a person's interior attitudes, in the last instance these are kept as secret as possible, but is based on their social expression. Amongst the immigrants, the social ethic then is mainly the ethic of knowing how to get by well in day to day social life.

In this context the relations of reciprocity can shape themselves more easily on models closely resembling the patron-client relations. A person who knows how to manipulate these social conventions could reach positions of power and authority[4]. The Sicilian quoted in my first example was able to command the faithful solidarity of a few Sicilian immigrants, and was one with whom any person wanting to do something in the local Italian community had to deal.

There are then the clientage relations in which it is the power of knowledge which is mainly exploited.

[4] See for example: H.S. Nelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-66, 92-122, 140-142; E. Fenton, *Immigrants and Union. A Case Study: Italians and American Labour, 1870-1920.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1957, pp. 378, 209, 92. The main achievement to which the "important people" might aspire in the Bristol region was to satisfy their own petty ambitions. The comparison with the observations made in the quoted works should not lead to the idea that these people in any way had the similar powers to the leaders of the Chicago "underground".

The administrative system seems especially complex for people of little or no education, as is the case of the majority of immigrants. In their own country, with the practice of associate life they have, in some way, acquired some sort of experience and expertise, or they get help from a friend who is more competent in a particular sphere. In a foreign country, they find they are completely lost, left to their own devices, facing a system which revolves around alien rules and customs.

One must add to this the difficulty in communication that the immigrants have not only with British society, but also amongst themselves and with the official Italian organisations which look after them. There is not a newspaper with a wide readership and the Italian Consulate has no channel of information with its own immigrants; it often does not even know of their existence. Every time they have to deal with, and move in the forest of bureaucracy, immigrants grope their way and are consequently compelled to depend on any person who knows a bit more than them, or is in some way part of the system.

These people can lord it over the immigrants. Their special knowledge of the system (especially their knowledge of a few right people in the right places) places them in a privileged position. When in need, a lot of immigrants, in spite of everything, prefer to bend, if only for a moment, and ask the advice of these people who know.

This situation could sometimes be exploited for purely economic purposes, and then people who know do not care about what the others think and say about them and they look after their own interests. But if someone has ambitions and is looking for prestige and power, he can very well use his own position to assemble a clientele around himself which gives him respect and elevates him so that he becomes a different superior person who cannot be left out of any activity within the community.

The game of knowledge can sometimes become an exercise of power, even if it has nothing to do with real knowledge as such. The cunning person can pretend to know and easily mislead the immigrants. As the immigrant's situation is so precarious and so devoid of any possibility of verification that desperation makes him believe everything and trust everybody, like the hopeless sick person who seeks help from doctors and faith healers at the same time.

Obviously the power of knowledge works as long as one has a monopoly and these people then, instead of opening and facilitating the ways to information, prevent it and keep it as secret as possible. All this becomes enhanced when authorities use these same people to communicate with the immigrants. This administrative practice in fact only makes an already imperfect mechanism of communication with the immigrant worse.

The net result is that these people become as mysterious as the source of their information, and they end up ascribing to themselves an importance and authority that they do not really possess. The person "in

the know" is an important person because he can help, but also because he is a superior person by intelligence and social relations. Even if not all immigrants regard these people as superior beings, many of them befriend them and show them respect because, as it is said, "One never knows; we might need them in future".

The clientage relations in which the meanings of "success" are manipulated, are practised nearly exclusively in relation to the people who had gone into business: the "successful people" that is.

The interplay of this model can easily be detected in the context of the visits exchanged especially between business people. Usually every time a party or a feast of any sort is organised, the "successful" Italian, even if he cannot always participate, seeks to be invited because this, amongst other things, indirectly could ratify his importance. In any case he avoids situations in which he could find himself with people too low in the "pecking order", and far below his status; here he would be involved in a "too democratic" society, to which he does not like to belong (as one of the above mentioned shopkeepers put it). The "successful man" does not like to be considered an "immigrant" like the others and for this reason, amongst others, would like all the dirty jobs he might have done in the past, such as miner, dustman, and so on to be forgotten.

For an ordinary Italian on the other hand, the possibility of inviting those who are considered the biggest ones, the richest ones, and in a certain sense the extra-ordinary ones, is already a demonstration to the public that even he himself has by now entered the Olympus of "successful people" and that he is not one of the common immigrants any longer.

It is interesting to notice here how one forgets or avoids inviting other people of some relevance in the community to these events, such as the missionary, the consular agent, the Italian teachers, or some honest worthy person in the community. These people, even if they have prestige and authority, are not of economic order, but are only of moral or intellectual order. What is worse then, these people have "the bad habit of mixing with everybody".

The feasts in which the business people are interested are not of a moral order. Their feasts are mainly secret, materialistic competitions whereby one makes a show of the opportunities which have been grasped and consequently of the waste that one can afford.

The main purpose of these events is that of establishing a social claim through the negation of all that one could possibly have in common with the other immigrants, and therefore the negation of what one has been and what, in spite of everything, one still remains. It is playing at aristocracy amongst people who lack any aristocracy and need somebody around who give them the title, considering that it does not come from above or from anywhere else for that matter. People who really succeeded and are recognised as such in English society, are simply inaccessible. They

prefer to have nothing to do with the Italians, and the community has no reason to and no means of getting them involved.

The fact that we talk of proximity in prestige does not presuppose a status stratification. It is the very absence of this social ladder of prestige which is at the source of these phenomena, and their continual repetition amongst other things is the expression of the need to define and redefine some position of prestige, in the continual quest of some status stratification that one cannot find.

Often "successful people" are also invited to participate in the events of the Italian community as such. Their presence is suggested mainly by the wide-spread conviction that "they can make a special contribution". "Successful people" can first of all give that economic contribution which in a radical way solves the financial aspect of all the activities which on the poor subscriptions of the ordinary immigrants would otherwise never get off the ground.

"Successful people" always promise large amounts of money but intend to hand it over only at the last moment when they have been convinced that the initiative is going to work. Behind this excuse there is mainly the wish to see what their peers are eventually going to give, so that they can behave accordingly, maybe by giving a penny more. In this impasse, the "successful people's" money is never to be seen. In fact since all the initiatives usually fail, one reason being that the "successful people's" contribution never comes, the prestige and proclaimed magnanimity of these people always remain unverified [5].

But "successful people" are invited above all because with their presence they contribute reputation and credibility to the activities and to the immigrants involved. In the immigrants' mind in fact, the presence of these people gives stability to the activities which would otherwise remain very volatile, and gives credibility to every committee and to the entire Italian group in general which would otherwise give the impression of being economically in a very precarious state. In the last instance, this credibility is the stability and proof of their solid economic position.

Their success has an effect not only on the activities and organisation, but also on people. The minor leaders of the community are very proud of themselves when they can sit around a table at the various meetings with some business man. They have the vague impression of having, that certain definable importance which is supposed to be necessary in order to be with "important people" such as the "successful people" are.

[5] In the history of other migrant Italian communities one easily finds the name of some Italian who, either in the name of generosity or for business interests, took care of his compatriots by making a donation of some kind. Amongst the Italians in this research this could not be ascertained, one reason being that there was no-one amongst the immigrants, who had come after the war, successful enough to do so. Alternatively the "old immigrants" who were in a position to help did not feel close enough to their countrymen to want to do so. The events of the second world war had divided their own community and broken their ties with the new Italian community.

In the survey area, the clientele activities of the "important" Italians, be they "do-gooders" or "successful people", basically remained a very innocent reality. The preferred stage in fact, where the majority of these people used to unfold their political skills and sought to enter, was mainly the associational activities of the Italian contingent. Every organisation arising amongst the Italians, at least ideally tended to cover the entire local collectivity, and defined some offices where a person in some way would have been able to declare himself "representative of the Italians". In the end, the very thing the "important people" were pursuing in the community as such, was the honour of this "representativeness".

Their political activity amongst the Italians was in any case never ending. Organisations to be infiltrated in fact were never lacking. Practising relations amongst fellow countrymen gave the immigrants the idea that the Italian contingent in the area should have a certain numerical consistency which, in relation to the indigenous society, was very often visualised in exaggerated figures and forms. The support then, and the co-operation they used to exchange between themselves, brought them to recognise a singularly important social space in the contingent which was worthy of fuller appreciation. From here the idea of venturing into certain projects started.

Indeed in the minds of the same people proposing them, these projects were only vague and confused ideas. It does not seem that the planned associations aspired to cover all or even only the most important aspects of the Italian community's life. Immigrants remained people used to self-help. Everyone was in some way self-sufficient.

These associational projects were seen from time to time in various ways; for example, as an after-work club for immigrants, a cultural centre, an above-board meeting place for their children, and so on. They were then mainly leisure time organisations. But they always remained open projects, implicitly orientated to possible wider functions too, like those of a representative order and sometimes like those of a union. Actually in the praxis, the associations claimed roles like these for themselves too. The history of every local Italian community is rich with events related to the making of these projects, which immigrants, at least the few who had an historic perspective and were able to remember, described as a saga of failures.

For the Italians of Bristol, the first attempt at organising an association goes back to 1950 when, interpreting the needs of their fellow countrymen, a group of people, without asking for election, took the initiative, gathered themselves into a committee and formed the "Bristol Club Associazione Italiana".

The initial purpose was only to give the Italians a chance to meet.

For this purpose they hired some premises in the Bathurst Hotel (Prince Street) where every Sunday from 7.00 p.m. the Italians could meet, discuss their own problems and above all, enjoy themselves. The club had no formal constitution. The only explicit concern was not to talk politics; a requirement more than understandable at that time if one wanted to avoid divisions after the tensions of the fascist period, and misunderstandings with the local English community after the events of the second world war. For those who wanted it, there was formal membership. This membership had the aim of singling out a group of supporters and raising money for any expense which might occur. Non-members were not excluded from the activities of the association.

The success of the initiative suggested the idea of a more efficient organisation with a completely Italian centre. By chance, at that time the premises of the Communist party in Bristol were on sale. These premises were in Jamaica Street, at the corner of Queen Square, very close to the St. Paul-Portland-Montpellier district where at that time the majority of the local Italians had started to concentrate. Some talk of buying these premises was made, one of the reasons being that Mr. Conti, an old-immigrant, without asking for any interest and without wanting to interfere in the life of the Club, was advancing the £ 500 at that time necessary for the purchase. Everyone was convinced that the initiative was valid and that it should be followed up. Several meetings and big discussions took place, but when they reached the stage of concrete details and started to talk of the per capita subscription though, difficulties started.

The majority of the Italians were thinking of not staying long in this country and could not see a reason why they should make a contribution. The idea of becoming benefactors for those who would come after them did not convince them. And as to the management and property of the premises, no one could see how all the Italians could possibly be participants. In practice it was asked what would be done with the premises in future when all the Italians had gone.

The sceptics discouraged the uncertain supporters and the rest became convinced that they were not going to succeed. Mr. Conti washed his hands of the whole affair, the committee broke up and the failure of the initiative cooled everybody down somewhat so that even the "Bristol Club Associazione Italiana" ended. The initiative lasted about two years.

In 1956 the first Italian missionary arrived and took up residence at a convent in Jamaica Street, which became at once the point of reference for all the local Italian immigrants. In St. Mary on the Quay, this missionary started a religious service in Italian, which became a true institution. At the time of this research, that service was still on (every Sunday at 5.15 p.m.) and even if by now it was performed largely in English, it was known as "the Italian mass" and the same church where this service used to take place, was referred to as "the church where the Italians go".

In 1957 a new association started, this time called, "Circolo Cattolico

Italiano". The association was basically an off-shoot of the Catholic organisation headed by the Italian missionary, and had a leading committee made up mainly by the people who had made up the 1950-52 Italian committee. The mission, which at that time was deeply involved in social activities, as well as religious ones, allowed the association to define itself more and more freely in the socio-recreational activities area so that this became in practice the association of all the Italian immigrants, for both believers and non-believers.

Even this association started providing a place for the Italians to gather and amuse themselves. Every Saturday a dance was organised at a hall in Trinchard Street, and in summertime, outings of a cultural (theatre, concerts, etc.) and recreational nature were organised. Here too was a sort of membership for the supporters who were paying a subscription of six shillings every six months. It did not however limit in any way the participation in the activities of the association.

In the opinion of all the local Italians, this association represented the best experience in this sense in the area. The group was able to count on more than one hundred enrolled members, and the Italians' participation was very high. As some informer explained, this success was due to the fact that "Italians at that time had just arrived and the majority were bachelors". The fortunes though of this association very much depended also on its aims and its structures. It never adventured into demanding projects like those of purchasing an Italian centre.

The committee people were people who chose each other amongst themselves on the basis of reciprocal esteem and with the will to work; but above all they always remained united to the missionary of the time, a very sensible person who also supported them in their financial difficulties out of his own pocket.

The golden times of this association lasted till 1961 when this missionary left, and another one, who had arrived as an assistant in 1959, took over management of the mission. The latter, who had a slightly different vision of the role of the mission amongst the immigrants, believed it right to reduce the social activities of the association and to return this to the ambit of more religious activities. Amongst other things, this also involved a centralisation of the activities of the association in the hands of the missionary. The structure of the committee remained but some of the members in it were substituted by others considered more suitable to the new functions of the association by the missionary. The economic sector of the association became the responsibility of the mission, and the supporters' membership revealed itself to be useless and was suspended. Slowly all the activities died out and only an annual dancing evening, which took place at the Corn Exchange, remained and this was in support of the mission.

Participation did not decrease considerably; immigrants, in fact, continued to consider the "Circolo Cattolico Italiano" as their association.

Compared with its past though, the association was now considered to be going through a crisis. Many attributed this decline to the fact that "Italians by now were settling down and were only thinking of setting up their family". Others observed that part of the responsibility lay at the door of the missionary of the time and his authoritarianism. Towards the end of the sixties, some differences of opinion occurred between the missionary in charge and another who had arrived to help him. In the tension, the committee dissolved.

On the 10th May 1969 a new committee (mainly made up of people coming from the previous committees) organised a meeting for all the local Italians, at which a new association was presented to the public; this time completely independent of the mission and called "Centro per la Comunità Italiana".

Some time later a constitution was published expressing the aims, the aspirations and indirectly, the problems of the immigrants' community. The association set itself the aim to answer the Italians' great dream, and purchase the centre for them. It was not clear what the purposes of this centre were to be, nor how it would survive economically. It was not even known what money it would be bought with. It was only clearly stated that the committee should have full power, "to purchase, hold, sell, mortgage, rent, lease or sublease, demolish, repair, alter or otherwise deal with any building thereon" (Art. 18).

The other concern was the definition of the organisation and the limits of the community. An Italian who wanted "the right to the use and the privilege of the Comunità", had to present an application supported by two members of the association (Art. 6). The application was to have been subsequently examined and voted in the committee where two votes against would be sufficient for a refusal.

The committee in any case would always have the right, after a constitutionally very well defined trial, to expel any member "guilty of conduct likely to endanger the welfare or good order of the Comunità" (Art. 13). The committee, which at the start was made up of the nine founding members (and writers of the constitution) was to be renewed annually by one-third only.

The centre has never been bought, and the constitution, up to now at least, has remained a rhetorical declaration of ideals, very much in tune with the character of the people who, in succession, became members of the committee. In practice it was born and has remained an association that through discussions and arguments, has kept alive the conviction that something should eventually be done with the problems concerning the organisation of the Italian group.

In 1974, with the excuse that nothing positive had been done, especially in relation to the centre, the committee started coming under attack and being increasingly accused of immobility, incompetence and undemocratic behaviour. Finally, it was decided to completely wind up

the committee; the constitution was suspended and a new election open to all the local Italians was organised.

A completely Sicilian committee was elected; a fact which could not avoid alienating the sympathies of all the other Italians[6]. The people constituting this committee then revealed themselves to be a group of petty, badly prepared, leaders with little experience and little education, who reduced the association to an arena for the affirmation of the several petty personal ambitions which had nothing to do with the welfare of the community.

With the most naive economic idealism, they started the subscriptions to collect the money necessary for the purchase of the Italian centre. They persevered for about a year, supported more by the regional pride than by clarity of ideas. Finally, internal factions developed and the committee broke up. Everything came to a standstill except the collected money which was hastily redistributed to the original donors.

Several months passed till at the end, with the Italian missionary's help, a truce was called in order to organise fresh general elections and pass the problems on to the new committee. The eternal problem of who was entitled to vote came up again. A "temporary" solution of two years earlier was adopted for the occasion and an election open to all the local Italians was again called.

When the new committee appeared in 1976, the Italian community was by now very much dissaffected, and the association had lost the attention and interest of everyone. The association continued by inertia, restricted to the people with membership, amongst whom successive elections were organised at which the same person was always re-elected.

At the end of 1969, the "Centro per la Comunità Italiana" was a small, useless association, which served as pedestal for the same self-styled community leader who aspired to represent the local Italians, on the basis of about fifty voters, members recruited by himself, who periodically elected and re-elected him.

In Swindon, the birth of an organisation of the associated life started in 1956 with the arrival of the missionary, the rise of the mission, and the establishment in this context of a small action committee.

In the first half of the sixties, the Italian contingent in the area reached its highest number and in it the committee of the mission increasingly found itself taking on the role of guide. Beside the occasional dances, trips, films, etc. they even organised courses in Italian for the

[6] These results were not an explicit choice made by the Sicilians, simply the largely unwanted consequence of the logic behind the personal relations system which was appealed to during the elections. The newly-elected members tried to put the results of the elections to rights by inviting a few non-Sicilian Italians to join the new community. None of the latter, however, did get involved in the situation which was by now considered to be a monopoly of the Sicilian majority.

immigrants' children. In 1965, the general consul in London made some money available for the purchase of premises, which were supposed to become the seat of the community and in particular a place to hold the Italian courses. For some time indeed there had been some talk in the community of putting efforts together for an initiative of this kind, and already some opinions were becoming defined, and some movements were coagulating for the purpose. The consul's bequest though, which was supposed to make the realisation possible, ended by dividing the community into two factions.

One man [7], who wanted to gain prestige at any cost and assume a leading position in the community, did everything in his power to exploit his fortunes at the moment which was so important for the community, organisationally speaking. This man developed a dialectic position against the old committee and the mission, upholding a different opinion to the missionary in relation to the place where the future Italian centre was to be located. This gave him the possibility of gathering around himself a group of Italians and, in order to gain more weight for his faction, he even tried to get the local consular correspondent on his side.

A second fellow immigrant who didn't care much about the community's quarrels, entered into the contest, but who was seeking to find a way of replacing the consular correspondent of the time in order to take his place. This second man joined the old committee's side and faction, not so much because he thought that the welfare of the community was to be found only if this moved with the mission, but because from that side he would have a better chance of criticising the consular correspondent.

The community came to a standstill because of a series of tensions which served the purposes of the only two people who had interests in polarising the factions and subverting the prestige of the only two local authorities: the missionary and the consular correspondent.

The general consul of London in the end found himself compelled to withdraw the bequest making all the community's projects collapse in this way, its organisation and the aspirations of the first man with it. The old worthy consular correspondent was discharged of his duties and was succeeded by the only person in the area who from the beginning has sought just that [8].

After a few years, the small group of friends making up the mission committee took over the organisation of activities once more with the tacit consent of the whole community. In 1979, this committee was still carrying out its functions.

The associational activities of the community periodically swung between two main phases. There is first the phase in which the com-

[7] Confidential Files, Case n. 13, see Appendix.
[8] See *The Evening Advertiser*, 1.10.1965, 6.10.1965.

munity is gathered and animated by a group of people who, out of their own initiative, start giving life to a series of activities which are open to all Italians[9].

I will describe this as the "seniority phase", mainly because of the way in which its initiatives are activated, but also because the leading committees are entirely constituted of immigrants who have in some measure settled in the new country. These immigrants in fact are very often Italians who belong to the old-immigration. There are also Italians who belong to the post-war migratory movement, but often they are people who for reasons of personal choice, matrimony, or economic activity, have practically decided not to return to their home country any more.

The main concern of these immigrants is that of entering fully into the indigenous population's economy and network of social relations, and to this they give all their time and energies. They accept living in the English society then, of which they recognise themselves as part, and they accept the position assigned to them in it, even if it is a marginal one.

The acceptance though is mainly an expedient; their relationship with the host society and the territory in which they reside, is not yet significant. They live the immigrant condition, and their heart is with the Italians. These attitudes tie them together; they cultivate deep relationships of reciprocal esteem and solidarity, and frequently meet amongst themselves.

It is mainly this kind of solidarity that they want to extend to their fellow countrymen. For this purpose they organise social events and activities open to all the Italians, and in which all the Italians can participate freely. They might sometimes even produce some sort of membership. They intend this though only as a means of identifying and gathering sympathetic supporters, and they don't ever use it to set limits to participation or to exclude anyone from the various activities they organise.

In all cases, these committees are groups of people who do not wait for authorisation from the base, but take initiative themselves for doing things. They are groups of people who, in some way, detach themselves from the community, taking themselves out and doing something *for* the community. They are never an expression of the community, and as such they cannot expect the consensus of the community when they do something, and they cannot regard themselves as representatives of the community.

In any case, they do not even dream of representing the community, because they regard themselves to be in transit in it, but above all they regard the community itself to be in transit and they do not visualise it as a small entity distinct from English people, and in this sense as representable.

[9] Cf. also S.N. Eisenstadt, *The Place of Elites and Primary Groups in the Process of Absorption of New Immigrants*. "American Journal of Sociology", November 1951.

There is then, the second phase; that in which Italian immigrants, basing themselves on the vague presuppositions of constituting an autonomous entity, in some way take their destiny in their own hands in order to define and organise themselves as a community.

I will describe this as the "democratic phase" because it represents, at least in theory, a grass-roots phenomenon (in practice immigrants are manipulated) and because in it there is an abundant use of constitutions and elections.

The committees which in some way get elected are mainly made up of people coming from the post-war migratory wave. Old-immigrants are rare. All these people usually put the fact that immigrants are part of the native society into second place and they prefer to hold a dialectical position in relation to it. This is also true for the few who in practice have chosen to live abroad, as for example, the "successful people" present in these committees who, because of demagogic reasons consider it convenient to enter into the logic of this second phase.

In their policy they appeal mainly to the deep need of every immigrant to have a community which could give a more global significance to their existence; a community which the immigrant cannot find in English society because he feels alienated even if structurally part of it, and feels he can find it only by associating himself with his co-nationals.

They try to create a sort of independent society amongst the Italian immigrants, with a representative committee, with a constitutionally controlled authority, and with some presupposed availability of resources. What they try to reproduce is the social life that English people practice, and which they themselves have practiced in Italy, and they do not see why it is not possible to practice again.

In the periodic swing then, in which we synthesised the associational process of the Italian community, the two described phases are not only two different ways of mobilising the Italian contingent, but in the first instance they represent two different sets of attitudes and ways of relating to the host society.

The series of activities which the Italians undertook in the framework of the democratic phase, appears as the history of a continuous and pathetic quest for an "ubi consistam" which inexorably finished in failure.

At the beginning of the process, there was always some "important person" who started preaching the gospel which all the Italians wished to hear; that is, that they should unite and organise themselves in order to give themselves a community.

The first essential requirement was always the definition of a constitution. This was presented as the guarantee that there would not be tricks with power, and as clear evidence of the honest intentions of the "important people" who came forward "not for their own interest, but for the community's well-being". Democratic elections in these constitutions were

always seen as the most adequate mechanism through which all immigrants could be involved, and through which the various committees could justify their right of representation.

But every time they went from theory to practice, they inexorably found themselves facing the problem of having to decide who was entitled to vote. In practice it was necessary to both identify and define the boundaries and nature of the community that they wanted. In emergency situations usually they held open elections in which "all the Italians" could vote. These solutions though always remained emergency measures, they were in fact seen as cumbersome affairs for which a remedy had to be found as soon as possible. The problem was raised by the mixed families. Here it appeared that people with different nationality were able to vote. This in the long run could have corrupted "the group's identity" that recognised itself above all in the nationality myth.

At a second stage then, they found their bearings with a definition on a national basis, nearly always ending by admitting only people with Italian passports to the vote. This decision always revealed itself as the first step towards a split in the immigrant community and the beginning of failure. The choice of the passport as the point of reference opened the association to tourists, students and several other Italians, who may have been good at reading and writing (and might have been able then to lead a group of people) but who had nothing to do with the immigrants, and who did not care at all about them. But above all, this choice excluded those old-immigrants who already had a British passport, but who had always been the first supporters of the Italian community; those who had been working more and perhaps the only ones with the necessary expertise to do anything.

The "constitutional" elections were always arrived at with a divided community and only few people, sixty at the most, participated. In this context then, the votes of some family or set of families conditioned the outcome of the elections so heavily that in the end "always the same people" of partisan views, were elected. The final results disappointed the majority of the few Italians who had gone to vote in good faith and further alienated the community.

Every committee emerging from these elections found itself having to work in a climate of general indifference from the start.

A little support sometimes came frome outside, when some authority, in order to get in touch with the Italians, used these committees indirectly attributing some representative role to them. These occasions though were always isolated facts. In any case they were never formal acknowledgements sanctioning the role of these committees in the community, and helping them to insure the observance of norms and the implementation of plans.

Such acknowledgements did not usually come from the English society first, one of the reasons being that the democratic committees avoided

looking for it there. The basic attitude of the immigrant group in the democratic phase was that of calling attention to itself through what distinguished it from English society, in order to define itself on the basis of its nationality. Showing need and seeking the support of the English administrative system simply did not conform with the Italian group's aspirations.

They did however seek to ensure formal acknowledgement of some sort for themselves from the Italian society. They were building castles in the air. In fact the acknowledgement, support and sanctions which the Italian society could have given, when it was prepared to give them, were always rather limited in a foreign country.

But the lack of success of the various democratic committees was not largely due to the organisational inadequacies. The basic problem perhaps was that a truly "democratic association", as the Italians wanted it, could not be organised amongst the immigrants because in their community there was not a true basis for such an association.

Every local community first of all did not have precise boundaries. Italians were not grouped in any one area but lived amongst English people. Every immigrant could very well freely seek and easily find anything he wanted outside the Italian community; in the English society opportunities were unlimited. There were chances of a way out, at the base, for people in need of help, and at the top, for the people who wanted "to succeed" without having to rely on Italian clientele in order to do so. Such a possibility of evasion allowed the Italians to be "friends with everybody and faithful to nobody", and gave them the freedom, if they wanted it, of not bothering with the community. Actually a lot of Italians lived happily on the peripheries of both Italian and English groups, lonely and independent.

But above all, there was a lack of true common interest inside the community, binding the Italians together. With or without association, for example, Italians always talked of the necessity of a centre entirely for themselves, and they would sincerely guarantee their commitment to any such venture. Every time there was a serious move in this direction though, the majority dawdled and deferred their contribution until eventually the plan completely failed.

These contradictory attitudes are not simply a manifestation of the individualism typical of Italians [10], or of the avarice typical to immigrants who left their home country for largely economic reasons.

The lack of willingness necessary to bring about a community venture such as an Italian centre, stemmed from the fact that the Italian immigrants did not consider themselves to be in permanent residence there and only accepted the situation as a transitory reality. In fact almost all of them lived with the thought of each returning to his own village; "Down

[10] See for example N. GLAZER and D.P. MOYNIHAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-194.

there, alive or dead, into the holy land" as a Sicilian who had already been in Bath for twenty-six years used to say. In a land where they considered themselves to be in transit, the Italians could not avoid considering their relationship with the Italian community which they found there, and to which they belonged as both temporary and transitory. They enjoyed it as long as there was one, but considered every investment in it as "with no returns" and "wasted".

The democratic phase never resolved itself into a final stage but running against reality, increasingly revealed itself as utopia, from which the community very slowly moved away as it became more and more disenchanted with it. Committees remained increasingly isolated with their nice, neat constitutions and with an increasingly smaller number of followers who constituted a "community" increasingly at the periphery of the community, and ended up by becoming the private property of a few activists who used to perpetuate themselves and did not accept any outside interference. Once these small associations ceased to be the talking point of the community, the Italians used to start all over again, as if past experience had taught them nothing.

In this connection it is interesting to notice how little historical depth in the Italian community as such there was. Group discussions and activities together with failures repeated themselves periodically. Few people remembered past experiences and very few quoted from them for a lesson. Only one immigrant was able to tell me the entire history of the Italian community in Bristol. He was an "Italian" born in Great Britain of Italian parents, with a British passport [11]. All that the others were able to tell me of the history of the community was their own history, together with a few episodes from community life, in which they had been personally involved.

Sadly commenting on this history, my informer said, "It has really been a tragedy all the way through", and then discouraged he added, "I say, the Italians who are here now are not worth anything; they are rubbish". Although lacking the same historic perspective, the local Italians shared this pessimistic vision and negative judgement of their fellow countrymen.

At the basis of this pessimistic vision there was the dialectic lived out in the community on a daily basis, between the pleasure of meeting and staying together amongst Italians on the one hand and the inability on the other, of giving themselves an organisation which could give stability and continuity to this experience of theirs. One of them describing this dialectic said, "We Italian immigrants are like the proverbial lost sheep who seek the fold and do not know where to find it".

The lack of clear reference points and organisational models meant

[11] The main historical documentation available on the Italian community in the Bristol region is the oral tradition. For any future historical study it would be useful to consult the older family members quoted at note 7, ch. I.

that all the political activity inside the community as such, was entirely to be invented and consequently open to the fantasies and creative capacities of each individual. As a matter of fact, the history of the community's associational exercises, especially in the democratic phase, was mainly a history made by the various "important people" who more or less consciously sought somehow to define positions of prestige which would serve them in their social climb.

The various constitutions and the various elections, as we have seen, were more a problem than a clear working procedure in order to organise the associated life of the community democratically. Nevertheless they were often resorted to.

The various constitutions were born one after the other with the successive organisations, during their existence they were frequently changed and lacking a tradition by which to interpret them, they were used functionally by the person who invented them and they would die with him.

The radical solutions were always the elections and even with their ambiguities, they were abundantly used whenever a person wished to strengthen his position, but especially when some person wished to challenge the role of any existing committee.

At the bottom of the community's political agitation, especially in the democratic phases, the very mechanism used was nearly always the creation and mobilisation of a clientele. Prestige, authority and power which few Italians succeeded in achieving in the community as such, grew mainly in proportion to the clientele which they gathered, and remained with them as long as they were able to keep it.

The system of clientele relations though, never gave rise to associations which lasted in time and space. To the extent it went beyond the personal relations system, the clientage system remained an ephemeral reality within which several sets of relations were created and dissolved rather freely.

In any case it always remained very difficult to manipulate the clientage relations in the ambit of the community in order to infiltrate its associations. Often these attempts back-fired and community problems were reflected on the clientage relations, introducing elements which made the latter even more inconsistent.

The sets of people gathered amongst the Sicilians by this system lasted a little longer. But even here a true consistency was not to be found. As a matter of fact, factions in the Sicilian group used to rise more easily, but only to produce deeper divisions, so that people hurt each other with considerable intensity, frequency and freedom.

Control over the community always remained unattainable. There never were in the community as such, real positions of prestige and least of all positions of authority and power. If sometimes something of the sort came into being, it was never a lasting position.

The "important people" who from time to time entered the political arena of the Italian community, were not assured a place in history, but only a lift in the "big wheel" of an ever-repeated succession of events. The political manoeuvring of these people in the end only hastened this succession of events and the decomposition of the committees.

The consequent tensions always left a victim. From time to time an irritated Italian would leave and retire to private life, at least for some time.

These periodical drop-outs further reveal the nature of the Italian immigrants' community. It always remained an unenduring reality, almost fortuitous, without either consistency or limits. It pointed to a social space where some values were shared, but it never concretised in a network of relations of the kind through which a person could have been incorporated or excluded. Every immigrant was free to leave and return at will; he was always free to call himself an "Italian immigrant" or not.

THE COMMUNITY'S POLITICAL SYSTEM

The pivot of relations with society at large and of communal activities in the Italian contingent lay not so much in the community but outside, and was usually some institution or private person who would work for the immigrants [1].

In the areas of this research, one could find a variety of institutions which cared for the immigrants. Some, like the English Social Services or the Trade Unions, for example, whose work could, among other things, come up against the immigrants' problem, used to lend a basic service. Sometimes they gave more direct help by setting up an office or enlisting a person for a more specific service.

Other institutions set out to deal with the immigrants' exclusively. These could be distinguished as either political, religious, of the state, or by their level of organisation and the time they lasted; some remained phenomena of good will and were very short-lived. Over all they could be distinguished by the kind of problems they recognised as being at the root of the immigrant condition, and the kind of service they intended to give. A group, for example, having established that the immigrants had no adequate knowledge of the resources available to them, proposed to supply immigrants with the information about the various ways of exploiting the English economic and legal systems. Other groups, which saw control of the English language as the way to emancipation, proposed the teaching of English as their aim.

The degree of success of these various groups and institutions, and consequently the efficiency with which they carried out their work depended, in the last instance, on the standing which they had amongst the immigrants. The only institutions which had a definite role, were used by the Italians and worked efficiently were: the Italian Catholic Missions, the "Patronati", the Italian teachers and schools, and the consular agencies.

[1] See also E.J.B. ROSE et al., *op. cit.*, Chap. XXI "The Volunteer in the Vacuum", pp. 370-400.

The majority of Italian immigrants are Catholic, or at least they consider themselves to be, and to answer their needs in the religious field, the Italian Church organised the Italian Missions in Great Britain. In the survey area, two distinct missionary centres had been operating since the mid-fifties, one in Bristol and the other in Swindon. In 1973, due to economic difficulties and lack of personnel, the centre in Swindon was reorganised. The house where the Mission was based was sold and a more modest correspondent office was opened in the local English parish premises. The personnel was reduced to one missionary, who took up residence in Bristol, where he continued to look after the various local Italian groups, as well as the one in Swindon.

The religious function brings a missionary into direct touch with the people, to participate in the totality of individuals' and families' lives, even in the most intimate of situations. The nature of the religious function alone ascribes such a wide-ranging role and authority to the Italian missionary amongst the immigrants that it has no comparison [2]. This role and authority however, in the local missionary's case were greatly reduced especially because of two working conditions: the Mission's geographical extension and the lack of means.

Each of the two missionary centres did not identify with a local nucleus. The Bristol and Swindon Missions covered the entire Bristol region, a wide area then where various local groups of Italian immigrants resided. The two missions, from 1973, were served by only one missionary.

The immediate presence and the frequency of contact of the missionary with the Italian people were discontinuous. The Italian missionary was not the only religious authority to whom the Italians had access. Indeed, from the quantitative point of view, English priests sometimes had much greater contact with the immigrants than the missionary himself.

One should mention the lack of means and facilities with which the missionary operated. The organisation of the Missions and their system of information and communication was very simple; it is worthwhile describing because it was, in practice, the only existing formal organisation

[2] A comparison with the role of the priest in Southern Europe may be of use to a discussion on the relationship between the missionary and the Italian community. See G.A. Da Napoli, *Social and Religious Institutions on an Italian Village Community*. Oxford, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Oxford University, pp. 211-217; A. Anfossi, *Socialità e organizzazione in Sardegna*. Milano, Franco Angeli Editore, 1968, pp. 85-94; J. Boissevain, *Saints and Fireworks. Religion and Politics in Rural Malta*. London, Anthone, 1965; S.T. Freedman, *Religious Aspects of the Social Organisation of a Castilian Village*, "American Anth.", 70, 34-49; S.T. Freedman, *Neighbours. The Social Contract in a Castilian Hamlet*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1970.

covering the whole contingent of immigrants in the area, and the main system from which all the activities started.

In the various areas, where there was some Italian nucleus residing, there were offices (in the most diverse of premises) where at a certain time on certain days of the week, the immigrants were able to see the missionary. Here and there, there were various people helping; they were the point of reference when the missionary was not present, keeping him informed of every emergency that arose. A bimonthly newsletter was sent by mail to all Italians in the area.

The Italians in the area never had had suitable premises for their religious and para-religious activities. Wherever the missionary went, he had to use the English community facilities which had gross drawbacks; not always was one able to find the desired premises and, where these were available, their use was conditional.

In Bristol, for the Sunday mass which is the most significant religious activity with the Catholic community, the Italians started the tradition of a service in St. Mary on the Quay church at 5.15 p.m. The initiative also made an impression upon English people who began to participate in it. The people in charge of the English community and owners of the church, impressed by the success, asked to participate and join in the ritual if partly in English. By 1977, the mass was entirely in English so that in the end the Italian missionary and his community had to look for another church.

In Swindon however, the Italians never succeeded in entering a church. At the beginning, for the Sunday mass, they had the use of the hall of St. Joseph's school. In 1968, they moved from there and settled down in the Holy Rood school gymnasium which was part of the Holy Rood parish centre. Just to avoid being reduced to a ghetto, the local Italians, who always participated in the English community's activities, several times expressed the desire of celebrating their Sunday mass in a church instead of the gymnasium. To achieve this, in 1975 they organised themselves and entered into a lively epistolary exchange with the English community and parish priest. The discussion lasted for more than two years and ended negatively. To make space for the Italian community, as the parish priest's letter said, one had "to operate a change in the time-table of the masses at Holy Rood ... that was not acceptable".

English religious officials show an attitude of benign tolerance in relation to the Italian missions. In any case they do not consider them necessary. For the English religious authorities, the Italian immigrants "are like anybody else" and consequently there is no need to do anything special for them. They have at their disposal "the same parish activities, the same Catholic organisation, the same apostolate movement that the indigenous people have". From here stems that passive commitment which often makes available to the Italian missionary and community only those things which they do not use.

The inadequacies of facilities and organisations are the reality which have the greatest impact on the local Italian communities and their relationship to their Missions. The necessity on the one hand to reconcile the time table of the missionary who has various groups to attend to, and on the other the demands of the English community which owns and lets its facilities, together contribute to produce absurd timings or occasionally, inadequate premises. In this way, even if immigrants would like to participate in the religious services and the social activities guided by the Italian missionary, gathering with their fellow countrymen, the necessity of negotiating the situation to find more suitable times and comfortable places, often drives them to set aside their ethnic and linguistic difficulties, and join in the English community at more convenient times and better venues.

In general, the presence, role and function of the Italian Mission and missionary amongst the immigrants, besides being discontinuous, is always mediated, for better or worse, by the English religious organisation.

From this one can see, amongst other things, how the service of the Mission is practically placed beyond systems of social control. It would be far from the truth to visualise the Mission as one of the various religious associations which gather their followers in the networks of their organisations and in some way control them. The Mission is not in a position to do that and consequently has not even the chance of moulding and shaping the religious outlook of the Italian contingent. The ideology of the Mission does not model the Italian immigrants' families or the evolution of the second generation's attitudes. The Mission does not make culture in the traditional sense of the word. These functions have been performed by the religious community or the society from which immigrants came, and is unfolded, at least in theory, by the English parish and more generally by the entire English society.

The latter in practice recognise in the missionary only a supplementary function, and the English parish and school (like the Social Services, the Police and so on) resort to the missionary when they have difficulties of communication, or some friction arises between the English social organisation and the immigrants.

On the other hand, immigrants generally resort to the missionary whenever they have some difficulty of a personal or familial kind. If, when everything goes well they may resort indiscriminately both to the Mission and the English parish, in moments of crisis they tend to go only to "their" priest.

The role of the missionary amongst the immigrants in this way is more precisely defined: it places and unfolds its function as an answer to emergency situations and the missionary becomes pre-eminently the problem-solver in the continuously precarious crisis situations of the Italian immigrants' lives.

Being outside any system of social control, relationships between the

missionary and Italian immigrants, tend to assume an amicable form. This kind of relationship is very much reflected in the religious practice of the Italians. The missionary cannot oblige anybody to follow the religious services in Italian, neither with the explicit threat of an exclusion from the rituals of the Catholic community (i.e. not to baptise immigrants' children, etc.) nor with the veiled promise of possible positive references and social benefits. The widest religious freedom in this sense, and the difficulties in finding suitable times and places mentioned already, together concur to produce very loose relations and to further reduce the number of Italian community members who noticeably follow the missionary.

On the other hand, however, the nature of the services rendered by the missionary (in the most inconceivable crisis situations) brings him to an unusually deep relationship and into singularly direct touch with the personal and familial situations of Italian immigrant life. The quantitative shortcomings in relations are compensated by their qualitative aspect, and at the same time the missionary's authority, which in terms of power is nothing compared with that of other people, is substantial in moral terms.

Given then the particular condition of inferiority in which the immigrant lives, and the lack of adequate machinery and problem-solving devices, this relationship with "their" missionary, easily finds its basis on emotional rather than rational grounds. In times of crisis, the need to unburden oneself and find support and security in the missionary increases, and the sacred and profane function easily merge. The missionary then finds himself operating a wide social field and his authority ultimately extends itself very much beyond the limits of simple religious functions.

The dialectic of this sort of relationship is confirmed and further illuminated if one visualises it in a historic perspective. As the immigrants themselves said, at the time of the research, the Mission, though better organised, was less noticeable than it was in the sixties and fifties when the Italians were in "greater need" [3]. As a matter of fact, the Mission had been the first institution to arrive in the area and give its assistance to the Italians of the post-war migratory wave. Allowing for some exceptions, all the other Italian institutions had been completely absent and the Mission had had to sustain a variety of roles.

As time passed, Italians learned to help themselves and other institutions became represented, so that the role of the Mission was reduced and defined increasingly in the pattern described above. In any case, it continued having a leading and noticeable function in the community and remained an essential support for the Italian institutions which arrived

[3] Cf. also H.J. Brown, *The Italian Problem in the Catholic Church of the United States*, "Catholic Historical Society, Historical Studies and Records", Vol. 35, 1946.

later. It was the Mission who brought about the presence of these institutions in the area and even though they are public and remain independent, they have always had very good relations with the Mission.

The "Patronati"

The qualified agency, which in the area at the time of this research attended to the problems related to social assistance, was the Patronato INAS: an organ of the section CISL of the Italian Trade-Unions. From 1972, the South-West of England National Railway Union's representative on the executive in London, was an English gentleman married to an Italian lady. At a conference, this gentleman happened to meet the representative in England of the Italian Trade-Union CISL, and from that meeting the idea of an INAS agency for the Italians in the South-West of England arose. Some time later they got in touch with the local missionary who encouraged the idea and supported it, making the Missions' premises available to them.

In 1974 an INAS office opened in each of the two missionary centres of the area; one in Bristol, open every Thursday, and one in Swindon open twice a month. To look after the two offices a young Italian teacher from the area was employed from the outset. Later on, when the work became too demanding, the Swindon office was looked after directly by the INAS head office in London. These were still the arrangements at the time of this research.

The main task of these patronal agencies is to assist the immigrant in dealing with the bureaucratic proceedings related to the problems of state insurance and social assistance. While in Great Britain these functions are performed by the state, and activated by state personnel, in Italy a great deal of this work is dealt with by proper offices of the Trade-Unions which prepare the proceedings and are subsequently forwarded to the INPS, that is to the state office corresponding to the English NHSS. In the Italian tradition then, a sort of brokerage is implicit in the organisation of the system of assistance and this brokerage is undertaken by organs of the Trade-Union movement.

This brokerage, however, assumes a particular role in the field of migration. These agencies in fact find themselves bridging the English and Italian bureaucratic systems, and provide in this way for the immigrant a real form of assistance which, although recognised by the agreements which came into being in the framework of the Treaty of Rome, would have remained largely ineffective for lack of a specific organisation adequate for the job. Without these agencies, immigrants would have remained marginal people somewhere beyond the state functions, lost and with no assistance.

This form of brokerage sometimes reveals its Trade-Union origins more explicitly and grows rich in dimensions of a more political nature.

In fact, the people in charge of these local offices sometimes find themselves having to defend their clients' interest, even raising their voice and making a fuss to remind some private or state body of the existence of forgotten laws and agreements, or when bringing their complaints to court.

Their functions are further developed in the sense that these people are often requested, especially by various English organisations, to give their help in areas which go beyond their specific field as for example, to search for any missing Italians, or to help when an Italian child has to be taken into care by the Social Services, and so on.

But it is above all in connection with the immigrants themselves that their functions become more complex and enriched with meanings. The nature of their work places them particularly near to the immigrant's condition and problems, so that the social assistance proceedings always appear embedded in the wider and more complex situations which surround every case. Every proceeding of a social nature in fact is deeply rooted in a "human" context, so that people tend to bring to the "Patronati" their overall experience without making distinctions or discerning the very precise lines on which to make or build up the request for assistential service.

These services, even if they were to make the welfare of the state available, in the end are, and always remain, services activated by the Trade-Union, and are thus given freely, as a voluntary service. As the selection of staff in charge of these local agencies is not tied to the bureaucracy of the state competitive examinations or conditioned by the possession of qualifications, motivated and efficient people are always chosen.

On the other hand, the services are perceived by the immigrants as an expression of commitment, and are consequently used with much understanding and sympathy for the people in charge.

The officers must not play at politics and have to abstain from making any kind of movement amongst the immigrants. At a personal level though, they can't help being appreciated and seen as people with a special charisma, so that they are recognised as "defenders of the underdog": people who know what they are doing, who can do a lot even if they can't do everything, and who are constantly committed.

Italian Teachers and Schools

Through the Direzione Didattica (Office for Education) the General Consulate in London organises some courses of Italian culture and language for the immigrants' children.

In Bristol, these kind of courses were started in 1962 by the missionary, with the help of a local Italian teacher at the missionary centre then in Jamaica Street. When the centre moved from these premises a

room was rented in Dockland Settlement Road for the courses, in the St. Paul's-Portland area, and there they remained till 1973. By the beginning of the seventies, many Italians had left that neighbourhood and some families complained because the school was in an area of "ill repute". So in 1973, when the local Mission bought its seat, the courses too were moved and settled in the Mission premises. At the time of this research, the nucleus of these courses was there.

In Swindon in 1962, these courses were started in the same way by the missionary of the time who entrusted the teaching to a local qualified Italian lady. To cover the expenses, every schoolboy contributed a shilling a week, and out of this contribution something was paid to the teacher and for the premises which at the time were in an emergency room in Maxwell Road. Later, when the Mission bought its house, the courses were moved and they always remained tied to the missionary centre, even when the latter sold the house and moved into Holy Rood (1973).

In both Bristol and Swindon, initially the courses had a difficult time till the Italian Consulate, which in the meanwhile was convinced of the validity of the initiative, intervened in 1964-65, increasingly taking charge of their organisation. In 1971 these courses were replaced by new ones, officially organised by the Italian Government. Under the well known law 153, they were extended to all the countries where there had been intensive Italian immigration. Alongside the courses, which were seated at the local missionary centres, others were organised, especially in some English schools (sometimes during school, often after school) where headmasters were more sympathetic, or simply had been impressed by the good results achieved by some pupils in the O and A level examinations.

At the time of this research, these courses were formally organised on the basis of well defined syllabus and content, with legally recognised examinations and the Direzione Didattica employed only qualified teachers, supplied the educational material, paid for the hire of premises and many other expenses. Undoubtedly, these courses represent the main commitment of the Italian authorities for the local immigrants.

We should not under-estimate the role that the immigrant contingent itself played in the development of this phenomenon. From the outset of the seventies the school-population grew in the contingent, and it poses the problem of a policy for them in an increasingly pressing way.

In the context, above all, the Italian parents' concern for their children's education brought particular interest and attention upon these courses. This was a decisive factor in the expansion and success of the initiative. Several parents made long journeys by car to take their children to the courses. In Bristol there were even children from Weston-Super-Mare and Cheddar (30 to 40 miles away). Other parents paid the teacher to give their children private lessons in addition to the ones provided by the Consulate. In spite of all the deficiencies, these courses were the

happiest point of encounter between immigrants and the Italian state through the Consulate.

To understand the value of these things, and give a possible judgement about the utility of the courses, it is not enough to see and measure them in terms of practical utility (that is whether they help the Italian children to achieve a degree or to speak Italian), rather we should also view them as being symbolic. The courses offer a great emotional substitute to the Italian immigrants, who are always thinking of their return to Italy, and with each passing day, see the possibility of realising their dream fading away. Through the courses, parents on the one hand think they are in some way reproducing themselves and passing their culture and world to their children. On the other, all the Italians have the impression that their distant homeland cares for them in some way, and is near.

In the context we can understand that special position which the Italian teachers occupy. Although they themselves are immigrants amongst immigrants, they remain in a sense privileged by a special relation with the Italian Consulate and institutions (they are listed employees, have refresher courses, and so on). Amongst themselves, and with the Italian teachers abroad in Europe, they are in a union. These connections of theirs free them from the isolation in which immigrants find themselves and in a sense place them outside the immigrant condition.

In the Italian contingent the teachers do not have political standing; they meet their fellow countrymen in the school and through the school problems, but they are seen by the Italian immigrants as people sharing their own destiny; they are treated with the special respect that is given to the person in a teaching position that only people with a degree can reach, and they receive the sympathy that the local school of Italian receives. In fact, as each one of them is the only personal entity around which the local school is organised, for the Italian immigrants they are "their school" and "their Italian school abroad".

Consular Agencies

At the time of this research, Bristol was the only town with a consular agency, and this was seated in hired premises in the local missionary centre. This agency had existed since 1978 when the young Italian lady in charge of the Patronato INAS, and already consular correspondent, took on the responsibility of also being consular agent. Previously in the same town there had been a consular agent from 1961 till 1970, and this was another young Italian lady who at the same time was working as a social worker, employed by the local English administration. In Swindon, a pensioner had acted as local consular correspondent from 1956-57 till 1965, when he was replaced by another person who undertook the

responsibility of consular agent till 1973. Since then there had not been an agency in the area.

Given the conspicuous presence of Italians in the area, the General Consulate in London would have liked to keep an agency continuously open in Bristol and in Swindon, but the nature of this office did not always allow for a continuity in the service. This appointment is not paid employment, but an honorary title which enables a person to deal with the required administrative work. Consequently it can be given only to people with another job, who have both the time and the possibility of rendering this further service. This is the source of the main difficulty in finding a sufficiently competent person who is acceptable both to the local Italians and the Consulate and who is available and prepared to accept further burdens.

No representative function is attached to this appointment, and the person in charge has no leading role amongst the immigrants. Moreover, the Consulate itself explicitly asks the person in charge to refrain from any activity that could involve and dishonour the office. The incumbent should be, and behave as, an ordinary civil-servant.

The appointment however, does carry some prestige. The agent's signature has a certain administrative value and the agent finds himself at the centre of a flow of documents. For these reasons the appointment could become the object of secret (or open) competitions, especially of any "important person" (ref. Chap. IV) who, via this seeks some sort of role in the community.

Some individuals could even want it for purposes beyond the proper activities of the office. This office in fact, giving the opportunity of meeting different people, gives scope for operating collateral activities (i.e. economic ones). For this reason also it is difficult to find an adequate person available and with the right professional qualifications.

In actual fact, the consular agent's functions are not extremely important. He is just a local point of reference between the immigrants and the General Consulate in London, and is empowered to solve a few minor administrative problems. But having a consular agent in an area is very useful, mainly because of the bulk of (humble) work he is able to deal with. He relieves the Consulate in London of much time wasting and frees the local immigrants from pointless journeys and considerable expense to solve problems of only secondary importance. When there was no consular agency (as in Swindon for example) Italians had to go as far as London when they needed something, and where often they were not able to do anything because they arrived late, or some vital document was missing.

Besides the functions which are specific and connected to their work, the four institutions mentioned above carried out some others which could be described as services of mediation.

These functions arose in answer to a series of situations of need and took shape in the context of the immigrant condition. They were indiscriminately ascribed to and carried out by all the four institutions to the extent that they were present in the area and involved in the immigrants' life.

Firstly these four institutions activated a system of communication and information in the area which was very useful to the immigrants. Each one of these local agencies was in direct touch with the central organisation which set them up and maintained them and from this they continuously received all particular and general information related to their work.

All four then were often used as a point of reference for the broadcasting of news by various organisations not directly connected with them. When the Consulate, for example, needed to spread some information about a new regulation related to the issuing of passports, military service, news about political elections or holidays for immigrants' children, etc. it sent a stock of leaflets to each of the agencies asking them to be circulated amongst the immigrants.

In the same way, the four agencies helped and used each other at a local level. In this way, besides the information connected to their respective field, they were supplied with a mass of other information thus becoming true information agencies.

The people in charge of the various local agencies themselves had personal competence and experience to both discern and supply precise and accurate information. These people, as appointees to their offices and employed by organisations external to life of the local Italian community, had no relevant interest in it and consequently had few reasons to manipulate any knowledge, so that information was able to circulate in an impersonal and clear manner. The continuous presence then of these agencies in the area, by bringing the source of information to the immigrants themselves, reduced the number of middle-men, reducing also the possibilities of manipulation and exploitation and making the information more precise, accurate and efficient.

The four local agencies were not associated with the mass media, and consequently remained limited in means, isolated in time and space. Accessibility to their information depended very much upon distances and in the last instance upon the knowledge itself of their existence. The role of the Mission was valuable in this context because of its contact with people and its more widespread presence so that it became the final and most efficient information agent.

The content of the supplied information was also limited. It concentrated on the sphere of social assistance and a few other services useful to the immigrants, but it did not give to the latter that breadth of information which would be necessary for a more intense social and political life. In any case it was closely related to the difficulties connected with the

immigrant condition, and consequently that was what the local Italians were more interested in.

The relatively direct, precise and general information that these agencies supplied, produced in the immigrant's experience an awareness of the existence of an assistential and administrative organisation of which he knew only vaguely. Even if the motivating themes which were at the source of this organisation were perceived only indistinctly by the immigrant, filtrated through the reality of his needs and aspirations, the awareness of the existence of this organisation gave the immigrant the sense of belonging to a wider society than his every day world.

These institutions however, were above all means of assistance and intended for practical help. As we have seen they brought amongst the immigrants the variety of services which were their due and at the same time they facilitated a number of administrative practices which would otherwise have been too long, complicated and expensive for the immigrants alone.

Given then the width and variety of the immigrants' problems, people in charge of these agencies often found themselves having to go beyond their specific functions and give a hand in spheres which would have been dealt with by other agencies in a different context but which, given the lack of the proper machinery, would not be solved amongst the immigrants.

In a similar way to the Mission, even the other agencies mentioned above were outside the area of power by which the immigrant condition was determined and from which they would have been in a position to provide a valid solution. They gave only emergency solutions, a sort of "first aid" which was as useful and precious as the situations were desperate.

The first to understand the limitation of these agencies were the immigrants themselves. From their contact with these agencies they developed a sense of their rights, yet they also vaguely understood that final solutions were not to be found in them. Above all, the people appointed to these agencies understood it, and while giving practical help to the immigrants, they lived day by day with a deep sense of frustration, because they knew they could not answer adequately and knew that any final solution was not within their power.

Given the generalisation of the offered services, these agencies turned out to be scantily formal and rather personalised. It was inevitable then that in the context some personal relationship between immigrants and people in charge of the agencies, would spring into being in the form of ties of gratitude and reciprocity, and which, like all personal relationships, were potentially ambiguous.

The most conspicuous ambiguities though, even if less evident, were first of all those connected to the system that was used for catering for the immigrants' needs: the patronage system.

In truth, the fact that in the midst of the immigrants this system is used instead of others, in the final analysis, stems from the immigrant condition itself. Given the marginality in which immigrants live, a wide distance of both spatial and conceptual order separates the immigrants' group from the society to which it belongs. Immigrants consequently could hardly become a political component and could with difficulty become involved in the administration of their own welfare.

The services which are given to the immigrants, when someone thinks of, and provides for them, are mainly in the form of assistance which is distributed through a patronage system and in a paternalistic manner. People, who in the local agencies operate this system, are chosen from above, and are presented on the basis of personal, political or ideological convictions. Their relationship with the immigrants is shaped as a sort of brokerage, in various degrees incorporated in a patronage system. Even if this does not necessarily imply that one is dealing here with a system of corruption and privileges, the entire process can be exposed to malpractices.

The guarantees that the locally appointed agents were able to give about their professional honesty, both to the English or the Italian authorities and to the immigrants amongst whom they worked besides their own behaviour, were mainly the guarantees associated with the credibility and reputation of the organisations employing them to go amongst the immigrants. The institutions employing them, besides giving them the support of a solid organisation, also controlled them and gave them a political, legal and economic identity.

On this institutional identity, immigrants based their criteria of judgement, allowing them to discriminate the four mentioned bodies from other Italian institutions (like, for example, the political parties) and give to the people appointed a certain degree of trust which facilitated working relations.

This welfare inserted at a local level, besides facilitating the proceedings, also made the social services more accessible and functional. The officers in charge of the agencies mentioned above were people near to and known by the immigrants, in whom immigrants recognised themselves and had trust. Through these officers, bureaucracy, amongst other things (for the very reason it was personalised) came close, so that the unknown and inaccessible became familiar and possible, and the welfare organisation made sense.

Often the very presence of these agents in the area made that first casual approach possible which set the welfare procedure moving where the immigrant was unaware of his rights, as, for example, in relation to the Italian old-age pension being earlier than the English one, or the financial assistance given by the regions to the immigrants returning to Italy permanently, to help them resettle.

The brokerage of the people in charge of the four agencies mentioned

above was valuable especially in relation to the bureaucracy of the Italian state, where in its absence it would be more inarticulated and dislocated; more so than that of the British state. Their brokerage though also unfolded in relation to the organisation of the English society with which immigrants were daily facing and in which they found themselves uneasy because they did not understand it fully.

When called to court as a translator, sometimes I had been invited by the judge to make use of "a certain discretion" and "to explain" the question for the defendant, and the answers for the judge. The use of this "discretion" was usually given to all the officers of the mentioned agencies and facilitated access to the courts, the prisons, the hospitals and the various branches of the local administration, where they often went to assist the Italian immigrants in order to help them to understand the meaning of what was going on around them, and of the situations in which they found themselves.

Clearing the field of difficulties and obstacles which, for the immigrants alone, would be insurmountable, and building bridges with the society (Italian and English) the incumbent of the four agencies prevented frustrations and regressions. Consequently they also performed a humanitarian service by preventing the immigrants, prisoners of their condition, from just becoming numbers on a sheet of paper[4].

The vague knowledge of each agency's function and the acknowledgement of the undeniable positive results due to the presence on the spot of these agents, made the immigrants boost the function of the agencies, getting the impression of having something of their national reality and of its organisation in their midst. The comparison with other minority ethnic groups living besides them, but of whose internal life the Italians did not know much, and who they thought were less provided for, also contributed to developing this conviction.

In the context of this new meaning, immigrants often sought a pivot on which to solve their need for an associated life in these agencies, which they continuously tried to organise for themselves but without success.

In actual fact, Italian immigrants as a group felt and considered themselves to be a community with an identity of its own. They had the tendency then to regard any external help which would move the centre of gravity of its existence outside the community with suspicion so that they tended to define every organisation and association of theirs as apolitical, areligious, and so on.

From the solidarities within the community, some spontaneous initiative could have arisen. When, for example, some misfortune befell

[4] Cf. also R.E. PARK, *Immigrant Heritage*, "Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work", 1921, p. 495; and H.S. NELLI, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

any immigrant family (i.e. a serious accident or a death), several Italians with a certain degree of independence and not waiting for advice, took the initiative and sought to help. Very often they all ended up organising a collection amongst the people they knew, in favour of the unfortunate relatives. The success of these initiatives reveals how deep and alive was the solidarity amongst the immigrants, and how in the network of personal and clientage relations there were possible leaders with whom every person from outside had to deal.

But this commitment always remained ephemeral. When anyone tried to organise it to last, it did not survive. Longer term projects (as for example the collection for the victims of the earthquake in the Friuli) needed an organisation and necessitated some help from outside in order to keep going.

At this point the apolitical or areligious character of the community would be quietly put aside. People opposing this new outlook, in the opinion of the Italians, did nothing but defend the inherent impotence of the immigrant group, and easily ended up by being criticised as people who "did not want to do anything because they were afraid of having to pay for something out of their own pocket".

The minor leaders themselves who, moved by good will and perhaps some vanity, had set the community in motion, carried on as long as the momentum lasted. When, as time passed, the need for better organisation arose, these people could do nothing but run to safety and ask for help, relinquishing part of the leader's honour and responsibility to "someone who could be trusted", nearly always the Italian missionary. In as much as they wanted to hold on and continue carrying out their responsibility alone, they exposed themselves to the increasingly heavy criticism of their fellow countrymen, who usually accused them of looking after "some personal interest".

In the political field, where activities were carried on more through criticism rather than positive suggestions, the opinions about the leaders were usually shaped by opinion of their honesty or dishonesty in the economic sphere.

Every time a person or a group of people seeking to raise the Italian contingent from its impotence tried to organise it, they were not very often greeted with open arms, rather it was very often insinuated they were out to make themselves a bit of money.

When, once a series of difficulties and tensions had been overcome, and a committee succeeded in forming in the community, usually, as we have seen, the Italians immediately denied it any authority, power or right of representation. Even here, criticism did not focus so much on the always present possible electoral irregularities, but on the insinuation that the people of the committee were wasting or misappropriating the community's money.

To understand the true significance of this criticism, one must re-

member that the various local Italian communities never had wealth worth stealing. To appropriate even a penny then was nearly impossible because the money was always kept very safe in a bank, and to withdraw it an indefinite series of formalities and signatures was required. The small amount of money belonging to one of these local communities that had been dissolved for some time is still in a bank today. The people responsible can't take that money out because they can't agree on how to spend it or whom to give it to[5]. Finally in these accusations, one often spoke not of a large theft, but of petty amounts, too small to make the risk wirthwhile.

When divisions occurred inside the committees themselves and one faction wanted to criticise another, the customary accusation was always that of possible personal interest in the community's resources.

When in 1975 the Sicilian committee which was leading the community of Bristol dissolved, the basic accusations were nothing more than those of falsifying receipts thus making possible discount disappear, or those of exploiting the community with the purpose of selling one's own food-stuffs.

The last straw was the fact that at a meeting of the committee, in one of the member's houses, some wine was offered to those present, that was later paid for out of the community money by the committee's board of directors. The fact became the basic argument and strong point of a rebel faction. In the end the board of directors had to resign and the new president, who came from the rebel faction, ensured that the reaction of the community was codified in a special article (Article 29) of the new constitution, produced later on. It was decreed that, "No person shall at any time be entitled to receive at the expenses of the Association, or any member thereof, any commission, percentage or similar payment on or with reference to purchases of intoxicating liquor by the Association; nor shall any person directly or indirectly derive any pecuniary benefit from the supply of intoxicating liquor by, or on behalf of the Association to members or guests apart from any benefit occurring to the Association as a whole and apart also from any benefit which a person derives indirectly by reason of the supply giving rise to or contributing to a general gain from the carrying on of the Association".

Pedantic concerns of this sort are understandable only when one remembers that in the Italian community, very often the economic arguments at the bottom were nothing other than the language of political criticism. It was through these criticisms that the Italians either controlled or got rid of the people who managed their community.

Through an analysis of this language one can easily detect the ambiguous relationship of the community with the four agencies mentioned above. As long as the people in charge of the local Italian institutions

[5] Confidential Files, Case n. 15, see Appendix.

remain within their proper functions, by the nature of their work, they were beyond possible criticism. But the more they became involved in the associational activities of the community, and entered the political stage, the more they became a topic for discussion.

This was particularly significant in the case of the Italian missionary who, as we have seen, very often became the heart and soul of a great deal of the immigrants' activities. Not all the Italians held the same opinion about the "honesty" of their missionary. The trust that derives from the religious function and was given to the Italian missionary, was not sufficient to place him beyond every shadow of suspicion.

One of my informants [6], who had always been close to the successive local missionaries, because of his convictions, told me that the main criticism aimed against the missionary in Bristol in the sixties was the economic one. According to this person, the authoritarian character of that missionary was the true cause of the Italians' disliking him, but "it all started when the missionary bought the car"

Even at the time of this research, several people expressed their lack of confidence in the missionaries, quoting the example of that particular missionary who, "took everything away with him when he left". One could ask what he could possibly have "taken away" since he was compelled to live in a convent because he could not afford a house, and even he himself, like all the other missionaries in Bristol, could barely make ends meet on the local Italians' donations.

The economic criticisms were above all a way of defining a certain kind of relationship between the Italian community and the Mission. That missionary, as we have seen, led the small Mission committee of the time back under his control in a very authoritarian way when it was previously moved and operated very independently and without many religious concerns during the second half of the fifties. This authority proved to be too much for the Italians.

The Italian committee formed in Bristol at the end of the sixties was outside the sphere of the Mission for the first time. Besides defining itself as apolitical, it tried to shape itself also as areligious, and Article 29 of its constitution stated that "A minister of the church, whilst he can be a member of the Comunità, cannot become a member of the committee. This rule must be binding on all future committees" From here one can understand some of the criticisms of the missionary of the time.

Those who used to say, "The missionary pockets the Italians' money" could nearly exclusively be shown to be amongst those who wanted to keep the missionary out of the associational activities of the community.

In the second half of the seventies, the Bristol Mission took the initiative of buying a place for a future Italian centre. The local community was disappointed at the time above all because of the behaviour

[6] *Ibid.*, Case n. 14, see Appendix.

of its committee which had alienated everyone. Widespread amongst the Italians was the conviction that "only with the Mission" would it be possible to get things moving.

When the plans were about to be put into action though, "guarantees" that the future centre would always remain "for the Italians of Bristol" were asked for. As we have seen, the idea of guarantees came from two local Italian businessmen who, by doing this, thought they could become part of, and indispensable to, the initiative (maybe as guarantors). They were not asking for guarantees for themselves, but "for the Italians, so that they could feel confidence in the initiative and in this way be persuaded to support it and subscribe".

The suggestion of a guarantee had the effect of creating great confusion. In fact it evoked the kind of ideas from which the Italians themselves wanted to keep away when asking the Mission to organise and lead the initiative. These ideas were grounded on the never precisely or explicitly voiced presupposition that those Italian immigrants would remain immigrants forever to constitute a permanent community which would always be distinguished and separated from the indigenous society in which it was living. They were basically the ambiguous and confused presuppositions on which all the community's activities of the "democratic phase" were based.

Analysing all the discussions of the time, relating to that Italian centre, one could have noticed that all the confusion revolved around one not explicitly voiced question, that is, whether the Mission or the community was going to assume the financial responsibility of buying the centre. With the idea of a guarantee, the Italian immigrants sought a means of regaining control over an initiative, for which they had had to give up every responsibility.

On the other hand, for the same reasons, when the immigrants accepted help and sought to involve those in charge of the local Italian institutions, their basic argument pointed to these people's economic morality. These people "are honest" it was said, and in the discussions it was also sometimes claimed, "they are more honest than the others (that is the community's leaders)". The positive opinion derived first of all from the positions these people held. As they were employees of the respective institutions, according to the Italians, they had no self-interest in the community, they were not exposed to the temptations to speculate with the immigrants' resources.

In the particular case of the missionary, another dimension was present, deriving from the special nature of the field of him employment. Since he was a religious officer, it was assumed that the missionary was honest. This made him more resistent to possible criticism and gained him special confidence from any immigrants. As a religious person, even the English priest was the object of special respect and confidence from the Italians. Amongst all the English officers, the English priest was with-

out any doubt the person whom the Italians perceived as the most sympathetic and recognised as the most understanding towards them.

The religious dimension presents a deeper and exceptionally revealing aspect about the immigrant condition and his associational activities. A religious community is a charitable entity as well, consequently one can always be sure, as the Italians used to say, that "the money given to the Mission is always money in aid of charity". "Even allowing for the worst", they explained, "and the most desperate case, that is, when the missionary keeps the money to himself, one would know in advance that their money had been "given away".

Catholic Italian immigrants, like the majority of the Italian Catholics, are religious "only in church", that is, in a religious context. "Outside church" they constitute a secular community in which their priest is considered to be just one of them. If in associational activities Italian immigrants tend to rely on the Mission, this is not necessarily because they see it as the adequate means through which the community gathers and expresses itself. Neither can one state that the majority of the Italians have confidence in their missionary because they recognise in him above all a person of exceptional moral integrity. When the Italian immigrants seeking an organisation appeal and rely on the Mission, it is because they visualise every attempt to get organised as a "sure loss".

It is a loss because, according to these Italians, what is given is given to a community that is not to last for eternity, or will end up by benefitting future Italian immigrants who will take their place when they are back in Italy or integrated in English society.

If they have to run the risk then, better that the final loss be with their missionary, and with any charity in general, rather than with any other person or entity.

In their giving "to a loss", that is without guarantees of possible benefits in return, to someone or something which by its very nature is beyond their self-interest and outside the community, immigrants reveal the resignation which is at the basis of all the activities which took place in the "seniority phase".

Committees of the "seniority phase" were always a reality internal to the community, and in their own way, they were its expression. Consequently they were always a reality distinguished from the Mission and the missionary.

The fact though that they had always been living and collaborating with the Mission, was a sign of their disposition to lose, and a clear expression of their basic attitude.

This basic attitude was not only to be found in the religious people or in those closer to the missionary. When the Bristol missionary, for example, launched the initiative of the Italian centre, one of the first supporters had been the local secretary of the Italian Communist Party who considered it his duty to talk in favour of the initiative publicly and

make his considerable donation[7]. He was not a religious person at all, and among other things, he was a member of the committee of that "Comunità Italiana ..." which had arisen from the split from the Mission at the beginning of the seventies, even if he was on the minority side in it. It was his conviction though that "without the Mission nothing would be done" and that only with the Mission could one have carried out an initiative which would be "most certainly of the greatest use to all the immigrants".

In general, the opinions and attitudes of the Italian immigrants about the relationship between their community and the four institutions mentioned above, tended to define themselves on the basis of political aims (and interests) of individuals and appeared to be very divergent.

History seemed to be more consistent. The more any investment in the Italian community necessitated long-term programmes divorced from the near and personal interest of the local immigrants, the less they had come directly from the community as such.

When initiatives amongst the immigrants showed a continuity in time, this continuity nearly always came from some entity external to the community. A lot of what had been done for the Italian community in the area had been generated by the initiative, the resources and the voluntary work of the four above mentioned agencies, with which the Italian immigrants eventually associated themselves and co-operated.

The most significant results of this symbiosis were to be found in the history of the Swindon community where local Italians, led by a committee shaped on the "seniority" model, together with the missionary, succeeded in buying a building which became the centre for the Mission and the local Italian community. No similar success occurred in any of the other local communities: not even with the most consistent and "democratic" one in Bristol.

At the time of this research, there was only one building belonging to the Italians in the whole region; that was the Bristol missionary centre. But the Italians of Bristol contributed not a penny to its purchase. It was bought and furnished by the Italian Mission in great part, ironically, with the money yielded from the sale of the centre in Swindon.

The "democratic" committees themselves, which always tried their best to defend their own identity, in the end could not find anything better than to flirt with the Mission and induce it to help them. In Bristol the "democratic" committee of 1975, reduced to impotence by its internal factions, succeeded in patching up an internal truce only with the help of the local missionary who had been invited for that purpose. Even afterwards, during the five years of this research, the successive "democratic" committees made use of the Mission premises for their

[7] *Ibid.*, Case n. 16, see Appendix.

special meetings, or for the duplicator, and for the missionary himself for advice or correction of their "proclamations".

The brokerage of the various Italian institutions offered the framework which at most contributed and made some sort of associated life possible amongst the immigrants. This was particularly true for the Mission which was more in touch with and inserted in the globality of the immigrants' life and condition, and which on its own activity had gathered a certain number of people.

In spite of the importance of their role, people appointed to these local agencies never reached and were never able to claim decisive control over the community. They always remained rather alien to the system of personal and clientage relations, in which the ties shaping the community arose and intermingled.

The Italian community, which continuously defended its own identity and sought an "ubi consistam" within itself, could be easily mobilised from inside, even against the local Italian institutions. As a social worker said, "Innumerable petty chiefs could be found in the community and if only one of them moves all the Italians follow like sheep". These petty leaders, who seemed to suffer from permanent restlessness, were continuously in search of initiatives of any kind, which could have various degrees of success, but which invariably have the ability of limiting any initiative coming from outside[8].

Whenever a person appointed to the local Italian agencies wanted to do something in the community, he always found himself having to deal with these minor leaders. Often these agents found themselves having to extricate these leaders from awkward situations into which they drifted, not foreseeing the consequences of their actions, but above all not knowing how to move outside the community.

On the other hand, those in charge of the local Italian agencies were not able to refuse their help. Thel could in fact be blackmailed with the accusation "they do not care for other peoples' misfortunes". And in the end, they did not even receive much credit because somebody else (some minor leader) was always said to have done the main body of work.

In spite of appearances, broadly speaking, the Italian immigrants used, and sometimes heavily exploited, the people in charge of the local Italian agencies. As an informant[9] nicely put it, the Italian Mission had more followers in the past "because at that time the Italians had just arrived and did not know where to go, were in need of everything", and they remained with it "as long as they found how to get merry at no cost".

What has so far been said about the Italian institutions was not detectable in the case of English people (or bodies) caring for the immi-

[8] See also N. GLAZER and D.P. MOYNIHAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.
[9] Confidential Files, Case n. 14, see Appendix.

grants; at least those caring for the Italians. Part of this difference could be related to the linguistic problem. Many Italians did not feel at ease when they used the English services because they were not able to express themselves adequately. The few who spoke fluent English were less dependant on the services given by the local Italian agencies.

But this explanation is not exhaustive. Basically the linguistic problem in this sense was only a problem, if one may say so, of a technical nature, rather relative and abundantly counter-balanced by other factors of the same order which should have eventually brought the Italians to use the English institutions more freely. English bodies were often much better organised and efficient than the Italian ones. This was the case of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) for example, that had been created for the purpose of meeting the specific immigrants' problem and promoting better relations between immigrants and the host society. For financial means, qualified personnel and organisation, this institution was certainly the most qualified agency to be found in the area.

English agencies then were organically inserted in the host society administrative structures, and consequently they were able to activate for the immigrants all or a great part of the services that English society makes available to its people more easily. In this context, the analysis of the use the immigrants made of legal covenants, which is the economic basis of the majority of the charitable bodies in Great Britain, is very revealing. In this scheme, when a person promises to give a weekly amount to charity, English administration gives back the related amount to this charity which in the form of taxes had previously been paid on the donation.

The Italian immigrants, who could operate this scheme in favour of their own Mission, and more in general, in favour of any association or club of theirs, found that every eventual Covenant of theirs practically was monopolised through Catholic schools, by the local English parish.

For religious reasons in fact, but above all because they considered Catholic schools more efficient and closer to them, Italian immigrants did whatever was in their power to send their children to the local parish school. But in these schools, when places were scarce, preference was always given to the "true Catholic" who subscribing to the Covenant showed he was particularly interested in the religious education of his children. The Italian immigrant then, by not subscribing to the Covenant, would find himself in the position of seeing his children last in the list of possible entries to these schools.

With the money collected through the Covenant, the administration of the English parish organisation was able to provide for the building maintenance (from the school to the church and the priest's house) and for the personnel (teachers, priests, catechists, etc.). The Italian Catholic Mission, however, was compelled to move prudently and sometimes to give up operating this scheme, because a possible Covenant in its favour,

in this context, was often in conflict with English parish interests to which an immigrant cannot help belonging.

In situations of this kind, "the haves get more and the have nots lose even the little they have got" so that any immigrant's club or agency always finds itself with small resources, and would never be able to compete for efficiency, wealth and the variety of services with a parallel English club or agency. Immigrants on their side find themselves wrapped up in the logic with no alternatives, either to capitulate and capitalise on the little they have in the host society, or to remain in poverty.

But the Italians who read the various situations from within the immigrant condition (with the ideology of return) and were unable to make an investment in any institution of their own, such as an Italian centre, were able to conceive of an investment in the English society with difficulty. If it were only possible, they would avoid even caring and supporting the English parish. Their existential concerns were not to be realised in the English society and institutions.

As far as they were concerned neither English institutions nor individuals wishing to care for the immigrants, took into account their point of view sufficiently. These English institutions and individuals, according to the Italians, had a "paternalistic" attitude, and in the end their only concern was that of selling England to the immigrants, and making them accept the English way of life.

The structural dialectic and the divergence of attitude which shaped their different sense of belonging easily defined themselves in the concept of nationality. Italian immigrants trusted and felt more at ease with the Italian institutions. In the context of the common nationality, they felt they could make an appeal to their fellow countrymen which they knew they could not make in the same way to an English person.

The national consistency was particularly important when immigrants acted as a group. In these circumstances, as we have seen, Italians were mobilised and gathered above all in the myth of nationality. For the Italian immigrants, only an Italian entity as an ideal point of reference, could mobilise their commitment and offer them that "ubi consistam" by which they could escape their impotence.

The national myth explains, at least partly, why immigrants tend to load their institutions, which alone would have very specific and limited functions, with meanings. On the other hand, the lack of financial means of these institutions further underlines the important role that the nationality myth has for the immigrants.

"GOING BACK". THE IDEOLOGY AND THE REALITY

The Italians of the survey area, in spite of the long time spent abroad, considered their stay away from home as a temporary measure and thought they would be able to go back to their town or village in some distant future [1].

Almost all of them, in some way or another, cultivated an ideology of return which, while sustaining them, prevented them from either looking at or resigning themselves to their immigrant condition; prevented them from looking at the English society and country in more positive terms as a place where they could envisage their own future, and at the same time prevented them from recognising the points in common with their future destiny and thus feel more united in a local Italian community.

Notwithstanding this consistent ideology, from a practical examination of the behaviour of these immigrants and the actual circumstances in which they lived, in most cases, there were very few elements which could have indicated a realisation of this utopia of theirs. In actual fact, the Italian immigrants *continued to stay* and postponed from day to day, or put in parenthesis, as it were, any practical choice that could have started the return process.

Some would not risk going back "for yet awhile", they argued, because back home, even though few things had changed, there were still socio-economic conditions similar to those that had made them leave home in the first place [2].

It is to be remembered that the big crisis in Italy soon after the war was the start of only the first migratory wave into the area. Indeed many of these Italians from first waves of immigration, went back soon after. The Italian group we are dealing with now was made up mainly of people who had arrived and settled in the region, between the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties. For the local Italians therefore,

[1] Cf. W.D. BAYLEY, *Bird of passage*, "American Journal of Sociology", n. 18 (1912), p. 694.

[2] Cf. also R. KING, *Problem of Returning Migration: A Case Study of Italians Returning from Britain*, "Tijdscrift Voor Economische en Sociale Geografie" 68 (4), pp. 241-246.

the terms of their comparison are to be found in the socio-economic conditions that there were in their own village during this second period.

To be more precise, in some cases the Italian immigrants continued to stay abroad because, according to them, back home the labour problem had yet to be resolved and unemployment was still too high. In such situations, the chances of getting a job were very limited, and any immigrant intending to go back, would have to face a competitive situation in which he would enter at a disadvantage. In the labour market in fact, the young are usually given preference, whilst the re-entry man in most cases is rather old and is considered less productive. Moreover, preference is always given to the labourers already on the spot, whilst the ex-immigrant, being the last to arrive, is usually positioned at the end of the queue. At the time of this research, various immigrants underlined these problems, and the possible risk implicit in a too quick and ill prepared re-entry into their own country.

In some other cases, the immigrants stayed put because, even though they were convinced that back home there were perhaps opportunities of jobs, these defined themselves in employment of a too precarious nature and without the assurance of a continuity the whole year round. Such employment in Southern Italy, whence nearly all the local immigrants came, are nearly always jobs connected with tourism, building and agriculture. In this case, people work in summer locally, whilst in winter they go to Northern Italy, or to Switzerland or Germany "for the season". For many local Italians this prospect was not at all attractive, since above all, there were altogether too many unknown factors for their family and children. There was a chance that their children would have to be uprooted in future, just as they themselves had been in the past.

Some immigrants had a little plot of land at home, a small property of a kind, inherited from their own parents, or which they had bought with their savings earned abroad. To those, such little holdings assured a value beyond the mere economic order. Especially when inherited no one would dream of selling. "The old folk's earth", they said, "is not to be sold".

In any case, these small holdings, for those who owned them, represented a link with the native land and a base for a re-entry. On these plots of land some had started building their own house, while others thought of building it on their return. These small holdings then, according to the immigrants, would have allowed some form of farming "if at a loose end". The fixed idea of the eventual return in some near or distant future, often took shape in the image of an easy life in the freedom of the countryside for many Italians, where one would be able to devote oneself to the farming hobby for the needs of the family.

But for the immigrants who intended going back, the land they owned was generally never taken into account, above all, for its productive value, and did not therefore represent a solution to the labour problem. Many

immigrants had come abroad indeed to get away from the restriction of peasant farming, and the plots of land we are talking about were nearly always small and represented a very limited economic resource.

In any case, farming as such was synonymous with a hard and dishonourable livelihood, the very symbol of that situation of hardship from which everyone had wanted to get away from by emigration. Going back and looking to the fields in order to have the main source of subsistence for the family, would have been like confessing that their migratory period had not been a complete success. Only a few would have been willing to "dig the land" for the sake of returning. This however was considered something to be ashamed of and the majority of immigrants had no intention of going back "to be peasants again".

Immigration moreover had also been a phenomenon of urbanisation. With the time spent abroad and the experience of new realities, new needs had come into being which the immigrants would have been unwilling to give up, and they could not see how that could be accomplished once back in the old village. In the cities and the Bristol region, the Italians had experienced among other things an organisation of social services a little smoother and more efficient than in their own village. In particular they had noticed a certain correctness in office procedure that was not to be found at home, where bureaucracy and clientage represented a very frustrating business.

On coming back from their holiday in Italy, nearly all the immigrants loved to talk enthusiastically of the time spent in the home town, of the parties with their friends, and of the simple cordiality they had found. At other times though, it was easy enough to hear the very same people criticising their country and telling how people there would talk behind one's back, to gossip about what one was wearing and to judge everything one did. In the end, even their ideal old place was, at any rate, too small, too insular, with people always quarrelling.

In actual fact the great majority of these comments, more than just a motivation for not going back, seemed to be a justification for their remaining abroad, when there was really little hope of going back. One cannot deny however, that many arguments were in part a genuine expression of a new way of life acquired abroad.

But though the socio-economic condition in Italy might have been different, they were never considered worse than those in the Bristol region. They were not however, the main reason that kept the Italians abroad. In the Bristol region, the majority of Italians were employed in very ordinary jobs, which had nothing exceptional either from the economic or from the personal gratification points of view. Quite often they had very poor kinds of jobs, and several immigrants were convinced that, had they wanted to go home, they would surely have found something similar or perhaps even better than the one they were doing now abroad.

Five Italians from Swindon[3], thinking of going home, went as far as Piedmont to visit the FIAT workshops where they had been offered a job. Coming back to Swindon, they all argued that the job offered by the FIAT people was undoubtedly better than the one they had in England and they were all convinced that they had a golden opportunity for going back to Italy. Strangely enough, at Turin station they had met an old friend who had been with them in Swindon and who long since had gone back and settled in Piedmont. This friend, on saying goodbye to them light heartedly, but not without seriousness, had said, "What are you still doing up there? This is where America is now". Of those five Italians only one returned to his own country. The other four, though remaining with the fixed idea of going back home, thought of postponing, waiting yet a while before making a final decision.

In their case, and indeed for many other Italian immigrants in the same situation, it was not the uncertainty of the perspective of returning that kept them back, but the series of considerations and daily worries which came about from the very immigrant condition and which stopped them from thinking more positively about going back.

For many immigrants, one of the problems which kept them from going back was the very nature of the job they were doing. At times these little jobs were such as assured them only a day-to-day livelihood, preventing them from saving any consistent amount of money. These immigrants were not going back simply because they had not the necessary capital to risk going home, to survive in the first few days with the family, and perhaps to face yet another departure abroad, in case of failure at home. These little jobs they had were also an impediment in the sense that the immigrants were not able to put aside "that money" which they had come to find, and which they had to show off to the rest of the township, they had made abroad. Some indeed refrained because they could not face going back "empty handed".

This attitude should be read in the wider context of such a mentality common amongst the Italian immigrants, where returning home is looked upon as a final emancipation from working life, a retirement to enjoy the fruits of the migratory sacrifices. The future existence at their village is conceived as a sort of living on an income where one may indulge in some hobby in order to occupy oneself but in fact, one does not do any more work. So it is not only the fear of other people's judgement that keeps the poor immigrant in a foreign land, but it is also that very same concept of life he had offered himself when he had emigrated, and that, motivating him, keeps him abroad.

In the same context one may partly understand the outlook of the Italian immigrant who has a profession that can be considered lucrative and that therefore can easily get the necessary capital to risk a return

[3] Confidential Files, Case n. 17, see Appendix.

home. In such cases, a return which is seen simply in terms of passing from a well-paid job abroad to another similarly well-paid job at home, generally is not even taken into consideration. Above all, because the going home is conceived as an emancipation from labour, this type of immigrant is inclined to posit the problem of re-entry in terms of a "little clean job" (some sort of occupation that will maybe allow him to till a little plot of land too) possibly in an independent activity.

This attitude was easily detectable especially amongst the Italian immigrants who were employed in some trade activity (such as cooks, waiters, barbers, helpers in shops, etc.) and who were not only able to put aside some money, but in the practice of their jobs, had acquired a certain professional expertise. For these people the unforeseen elements of re-entry, and possibly starting some small business at home, did not seem to worry them a great deal.

Indeed, many such immigrants did go back and a certain number did go into business. Nearly all of these settled and stayed home. Some, however, "had no luck" and came back once more, always of course with the conviction of trying the return again at some later date. Some tried it over and over again. Of those who just had no luck, several ended up in business abroad.

The analysis of the problem of return for the immigrant who has gone into, and established himself in business, is more complex. At the basis of the engagement in some independent trade, as we shall see in the following chapter, there is not only that process of economic development, in which someone who has been able to put aside a little capital, changes job and passes from one activity to another more gratifying one, as an independent activity could be. When an immigrant decides to go into an independent activity abroad, he wants to break away from a condition of dependence he accepted only because he considered his stay in the place where he was living as temporary. In this decision therefore, the immigrant who becomes a free-lance business man, casts doubt onto his temporary stay abroad, and though he may still wish to go back home, this thought is pushed aside in a somewhat radical manner.

But before any personal attitude on the immigrant's part, the nature itself of any business poses very big obstacles to a re-entry home. A business of any kind poses the question of a clientele that one cannot take with him or find ready-made at home. Connected with a clientele there is not only the financial aspect but also an identity, a social role. A business man who wants to go back at all costs would have to destroy a greater part of the results obtained abroad with his own hands only to start once again without the certainty of success.

By and large, the local Italian business people did not worry much about going back. Those who thought about it envisaged their village as a place where one goes "to enjoy old age", or for the more positive and radical, as a place where one would enjoy the "dolce far niente", after

selling lock, stock and barrel. In the meantime, whilst dreaming about the future, they too continued to work and live abroad.

The fixed idea and the will to go home also depended on the fact of having or not having a house in Italy. The house problem is relevant in this context, firstly as a physical necessity but also as a symbol of the personal and family experience of those who live in it.

The idea of "having a house in Italy" then, does not necessarily only imply the possession of a building. Least of all does it only mean the building which the immigrant puts up with the savings made abroad. The luckier ones, who still had their parents, considered their parents' house as their own. Often enough they had grown up and lived there until they had gone abroad. When they went "home" for their annual holidays, they went to their parents' house. Very often though immigrants' parents were old people who had retired from active life, and had let a married son or daughter live in and administer the place. In such cases, the immigrant, though knowing they could go back whenever they wanted to, felt they no longer had the right to enter the old house "as they had done before".

For others, "the house back home" was a dwelling they owned. Very often this dwelling was the same old family house that had been their parents' in the past. Whilst in fact the sisters and brothers who stayed at home usually preferred a more productive property, immigrants tended to secure the old family dwelling for themselves. This old house, although often in a bad state of repair, could have easily also assumed a practical value for the immigrant above all as a solution for a make-shift residence during their periodic visits home. In order to keep it habitable and to have "a place to go to" when on holiday, the immigrant did some essential repair work from time to time, thus keeping it standing for their eventual return for good too.

In other cases, the dwelling the immigrants had in Italy was a completely new lodging. It was not always a completed one. In the best of cases it was a building with a roof on, furnished as best one could, that again was a place to go to when they went home for a brief period and that it was hoped they would put together properly one day when the going back was to be for good.

Whenever the nature or the state of the place that the immigrant had in Italy, there was also an association tied up to a definitive re-entry which strengthened the ideology of return. As a "place to go to" first of all, the lodging in Italy allowed them more frequent visits home and also made their final return home more desirable and easier to realise. As an investment then, it rather forced the immigrant to think more positively toward going home, if he did not want to make it into a loss of capital investment.

These facts must be read in the context of the local Italian migratory

phenomenon, where the aim of the house for the family, for several people, had been the reason for their migration in the first place. In this sense, the "house" could have been the very motive that had made the immigrant prolong his stay abroad, till sometimes in the end an absurd situation arose, since he found himself with a house in Italy and a great longing to go back, without the possibility of realising his dream, because other factors had made the migratory process irreversible.

Others indeed kept on cultivating the fixed idea of the return even if they did not have a house in Italy. This fixed idea, however, was for many in the end just an idea. The lack of a place to stay in Italy cut down their visits home, so that the ideal of a definitive return became less and less pressing.

This "houselessness" also put impediment upon a real probability of realising their project. Unlike in the past when they were young in going abroad, nearly all the Italian immigrants were by now married and had a family "on their shoulders"; they could not then simply pack and go, without first making sure of having a temporary lodging to go to.

Generally the immigrant without a house in Italy who was about to go back, usually found a temporary lodging with some relative, or by renting one. Such an arrangement however, was not considered a suitable one by several people because with the need of a decent convenient accommodation as far as possible, they thought they had to be careful not to decimate the little capital they had made abroad. A final return home, sooner or later, also involved a permanent solution; the immigrant who intended to remain at home had to buy a place, or had to build one. Such a heavy undertaking which meant time and sacrifice in order to bring it about discouraged many.

Moreover, nearly all the Italian immigrants already owned a house where they were living abroad and often had owned one for several years. The comfort of a secure dwelling, even if in a foreign land, made the risk and sacrifice of a search for a new accommodation in their home country less attractive.

An eventual return, amongst other things, also involved the selling of the house abroad, and the concern of possibly selling it at a good price. Several Italians had for quite some time only remained on the point of leaving because they always remained entangled in the process of selling, for quite some time. They did not accept underselling a house on which they had spent a lot of money and made a lot of sacrifices in order to improve it over the years just for the sake of going home.

It has to be added, that even these in the foreign land dwellings in which immigrants had been living and which they had modified, each according to his needs and inclination, had assumed a familiar significance and value. This was true for several Italians, especially in Bristol, who had changed house abroad. The second house, after the first nearly always a humble and casual one, had been chosen with care, bought with the

intention of dwelling in it for some time, and transformed to make it both functional and pleasing. Though always thinking of going back, Italians could not help looking at their house abroad with affection, the place they had managed to buy with the sweat of their brow and many sacrifices, the house they had lived in through hard times in the tough experience as immigrants in a foreign land[4].

But the gravest problem and the biggest worry for those who were contemplating going back was always the wellbeing of the family, especially the children. As they were always thinking of going home, the local Italian parents were very concerned in giving their children an Italian education as far as possible. In their opinion, a solid and indiscriminate education in the Anglo-Saxon way of life would also have jeopardised their chances of going back.

The education problem upon which the obsession of the Italian parents was focussed, was mainly the teaching of the mother tongue. The knowledge of the Italian language in fact, was the index and the term of comparison on which one more easily recognised the Italianness of one's own children, and the best guarantee which would assure their easy re-entry into Italian society. But teaching their children Italian was not an easy task. At home, Italian was not always spoken. In most cases, parents spoke their dialect, and the children answered them in English. The impossibility of making their children speak proper Italian was, for the Italian parents, a very frustrating business.

For the immigrants' children there were courses in the Italian language and culture in the area provided by the Italian authorities in London. The Italian parents held on to these courses as a dying man to the last plank of a sinking ship, which permitted them to receive back their children and keep open the way for the return home. In order to allow the children to take part in these courses which, by the way, seemed to be grossly overrated, the immigrants underwent often exaggerated sacrifices which were not altogether proportionate to the results which could be achieved. Always in order "to save the children", families participated in all sorts of activities put on by the Italian community, they did their best to keep them close and in touch with the Italian missionary and frequently they either sent or took their children to Italy themselves.

Broadly speaking the education problem for the immigrants was a rather intense and confused concern always burdened with meanings related to the fixed idea of going back. The problem, however, somehow always remained outside their control. All the effort of the immigrants seems destined not to have a direct and deep effect on their children's education. Whatever they undertook, invariably gave modest results, certainly not matching their expectations. Daily experience kept putting

[4] Cf. also R.L. King and P.D. King, *The Spatial Evolution of the Italian Community in Bedford*, "East Midland Geographer", June 1977, 47, pp. 337-345.

in evidence the fact that for the immigrants there was not much choice and the only solution was to go home "before it was too late", and "before losing their children forever". Moved by this concern, some made every effort to speed up their return, and mainly because of this some did indeed return home.

In general there was the opinion that children under ten years would not have to face big problems once home, and would insert themselves easily into the new life. The Italian immigrants loved to point out that when they visited home on holiday, the youngest children "adapted themselves very quickly" and in a matter of days "they behaved as if they had always lived there". Not even the language seemed to be a problem.

Their biggest worry was the teenagers. In this case immigrants kept on scrutinising their children's behaviour, ready to notice, take up and encourage any claim or attitude on their part expressing if not a really positive desire for the final return, at least some vague interest for anything Italian. These immigrants, however, were seldom explicit about a programme for going home. They feared that a final re-entry might have in some way damaged their children. Some indeed, having gone back, had made it known that their children had had great difficulties in adapting themselves. Others who had gone back with the intention of staying for good, because of the children, had to migrate again whence they came.

The wellbeing of the children over 10-12 years was generally defined around the problem of school education. Parents whose children were of that age were convinced their children at school in England were doing very well and this, above all because they said, in these schools they had better opportunities than in the Italian schools. They therefore thought it would not have been wise to interrupt school education and the progress of their children. When they had gone through school and learnt some sort of trade or profession, then it would be the time to go home. With this in mind, they left the various choices of planning a return from day to day thus making the realisation of their original migratory project more and more utopian.

Only a few who were "more realistic" in their activities admitted that once school was over their children would be part of the English society and take up jobs or professions in England. These "resigned" ones, consoled themselves in the thought of a vague chance of going home "when the children had grown up and married" and they could retire.

When the children finished school, the immigrants found themselves "with little time" and fewer choices. Except for a few, the Italian immigrants generally found that their off-spring were not particularly concerned with their parents' "sentimental feelings" Their "sole problem" was that of being able to go out at night with their friend of the same age, many of whom were often English. In the best of cases they looked for well-paid jobs possibly in the locality where they lived.

Parents tried to meet their demands as far as they could without

encouraging their mixing with the English too much. In particular parents tried their best to avoid their children's liaising with the English society in a way which would become irreversible, and they could not help treating with suspicion and often interfering in their childrens' matrimonial decisions.

When the children got married they became independent and parents found themselves free from the undertakings which had previously absorbed a great part of their lives and kept them abroad. Some prepared to go home; the majority though were by now resigned to staying. "How can one go back and leave the children behind", they argued, "they are our own flesh and blood, and the only thing we have left in our lives".

The Italian immigrants were deeply attached to their society and land of origin but in the end they preferred to be with the present rather than with the past, with the living rather than with the dead. Talking with the Italian immigrants, one was easily able to see that preoccupation with their children was one of the main concerns which shaped their choices. In this context, whilst it could have been argued that the intention of going back was there in nearly all of them, when it came to facing the problems connected with it, one could see that only a few had the will actually to bring it about. For all the others the idea of return was just a vague nostalgia

At times when talking in a more concrete fashion about going home, they confessed they lacked the courage; they were not "like before". "In the past", they argued, at the time they emigrated, they had been young and they had no idea of what they were going to face. "At that age", moved by the restlessness and irresponsibility of the young, one could leave. When they had left, they had nothing to lose in any case, either because they did not care for anything, or because they had nothing to care for.

Now on the other hand, they were no longer young and had a family to support. Moreover they had too many things to lose. They were not going back as they did not think it was wise to put to task what they had worked so hard for, for so many years for firstly "sentimental" reasons. The position reached had become the very reason for their life. Several immigrants lacked the courage to go back, because they just could not give everything up "to start from scratch all over again".

In some way, for the immigrant to go back is really like starting all over again. This is true, not only in so far as it involves making the sacrifices necessary in order to establish oneself in a new place all over again, sacrifices which one had made on first going abroad. Going back means starting all over again because it too implies meeting and experiencing social anonymity similar to that which an immigrant meets when abroad. "After so many years spent abroad", the immigrant no longer has as significant a relationship with the society and land which he still considers to be his own society and land.

As many immigrants said, the village from which they came and they still considered as their own village, was not the same as before. Every time they revisited the old place they found it "changed"; old buildings had been demolished, roads and factories had been put in their place and a lot of new buildings had appeared. The way of life had changed too. Once upon a time everybody knew everybody else back home, as they belonged to one and the same family. Now instead nothing was like before, "there was no respect for anything or anybody ... you just could not go about in the street at ease: so much delinquency".

Even the folk had changed. There were a lot of new faces one had not seen before. "People did not seem to know who you were", they said, "they just treated you like a stranger, a foreigner". People they had known so well were no longer there or less easily found; friends had got married, others were very busy with their own business affairs, still others had emigrated, others had simply died. "Everytime I go back home", one immigrant said, "the people I knew are fewer and fewer. The others, when I visited the old grave yard, are all there". For several immigrants the place of origin had lost the old identity, and its power of attraction.

Besides those who had some sort of property back home (house, plot of land, or something else) though, generally speaking, in a variety of single cases one can say that the immigrants did go back from time to time, cherishing the thought of going back for good for the only reason that they still had some kinsman "down there".

But even in this, things had changed from the times when one went home to "mamma e papà". In many cases, the original family nucleus had long since broken up and the new families coming from it had taken on a different identity, relatively independent from one another, each one engaged in its own present reality. Apart from personal relationships, these new families had not much left in common with the immigrant. The immigrant on the other hand had had no means of caring for them, and indeed had not done much for them.

When someone gets married and starts a new family, he is somehow unable to think much about his family of origin, its components and their affairs. His concern and care is for his own immediate family of marriage, and the fruit of his labours belongs exclusively to that. To subtract anything from his own family in order to help the family of origin, is like taking bread out of "the children's mouths". The act of matrimony separates the new family nucleus from the old one.

The migratory act however, reinforces and makes this separation more dramatic. Spatial distance together with the act of marriage, come between the immediate immigrant's family and his family of origin, getting in the way of even the most normal contacts which would have been possible when the two families were nearer. The lack of these contacts and communications becomes an obstacle to any maintenance of frequent

and intense personal relationships, and almost totally excludes any possibility of co-operative relationships. The separation brought about by physical distance will be further stressed by the conceptual one, which will develop with time, in the context of the gradual alienation of the immigrant from the society and land in which the family of origin lives.

The physical distance and the fact of being abroad, by themselves do not completely make up the described reshuffle of family relationships. A young man abroad, as long as he is unmarried, is in some way or another still tied to his family of origin by both personal and co-operative relationships; he always considers himself as a son of the family who is temporarily abroad. With marriage, and the implicit breaking up of several personal and co-operative relationships with the family of origin, a person finds him or herself in a new sociological situation. In a migratory context, this new sociological situation makes the immigrant and his family more isolated in space (abroad) and in time (separated from his past as lived in his family of origin).

With the birth of the offspring, the outlook and the co-operative relationships gather decisively around the elementary family nucleus and even the personal relationships with his own family at home can become strained and are bound to be sacrificed "for the welfare of the children". The physical distance from the family of origin, kept up by time, restrict the real effective number of kinsmen more and more, putting all the relations which go beyond the elementary family into second place, thus increasing the process of individualisation and isolation of the immigrant family.

The immigrants whose parents were dead, or had no place in Italy to which to go, tended to ask their brothers and sisters to put them up when they went down there. Here though they could not help feeling uncomfortable and as they themselves admitted, they felt "as if they were strangers amongst strangers, living in a stranger's home". "In the old folk's home", they explained, "it was different; if you needed anything, you simply asked, 'Papà, tell me where it is and I'll go fetch it', not having to ask for anybody's consent".

The relationship which the immigrant kept with their kinsmen in Italy might have been more or less close. For everyone it was the reality which bound them to their country of origin in the first instance. For many, however, this tie was no longer as significant as before. With the development of motives which kept the immigrants on the spot, a process which modified their relationship to their kinsmen, the society, their land, had come into being. The motives which recalled them home had become less pressing. Going home for several of them meant starting all over again; for some it had no sense [5].

[5] Cf. also R. PALMER, *Process of Estrangement and Disengagement in an Italian Emigrant Community*, "New Community", 1980, Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 277-294. On that topic however, the principal structural processes which give rise to the phenomenon of "estrangement and disengagement" do not seem to be sufficiently outlined.

The eventual existence and activity of relationships between the land, the society and the family of origin on the one hand, and the Italian abroad on the other, could easily be observed when some immigrant died and a place of burial had to be chosen. When these ties existed and were still firm, the obvious thing was to have him or her buried at home in Italy. From Italy where there were still people who felt tied and cared for the dead, the body was claimed (in a sense) and it was not allowed to be buried abroad.

The existence and intensity of these relationships were the very source which kept the will to return home in the immigrant alive. In his conviction of going back, the immigrant found it reasonable to take the body of the dear one who had died abroad, back home. If this conviction had not been clear and precise, it seems doubtful whether the immigrant would have undergone the trouble of paying the burdensome expenses for the transport of the body home.

Even though one could not always make a parallel, generally speaking one could say that only those immigrants who had a real prospect of going home, who really intended to do so, took their dead back. These were numerous but always remained a minority; about a third of the total. In the majority of cases, the Italian immigrants of the Bristol region buried their dead on the spot. Of all those, almost no one declared themselves resigned and willing to remain abroad. Nearly all had the fixed idea and thought that "some day" they would be going home. On that day, they said, they would exhume their loved ones and take them home too.

The relationships however, with the land, the society and the family of origin seemed to be very weak. It was significant that "down there" no one seemed to mind very much about the dead and claimed the body. The immigrant was left to his own devices on the choice of burial, but he was primarily left to his own devices on deciding about his own future.

In such cases, the immigrant, with the idea of exhuming the body of the dear one "some day" could cultivate the thought of going back, without having to put his own will to stay "a while longer" under discussion at the same time and without having to face the burdensome expense of having to take the body home. These expenses, according to the immigrant, were decisively excessive and could have been even "useless" in the long run.

The Distance Factor

Many decisions defining the immigrants' situation in relation to their return home are forced upon them by the problem connected to the distance between the place of origin and the place of immigration. The widening distance increases the number of obstacles which make both contacts and communications a difficult and costly affair.

The Italian immigrants of the Bristol region, with the intention of spending their holidays at home, when faced with the planning of the trip, were only able to set the date of their departure with difficulty because that depended on the chaotic and uncertain means of transport amongst other things. Charter flights were limited and the immigrants who wanted to fly home were often subjected to time limits with changes and waiting around. This was not always suitable insomuch as these possible changes were conditioned by the needs of the employers, who were not always magnanimous about it, were only willing to help a few times without creating any precedent.

The majority of the Italian immigrants were in the end forced to go by train. A trip home by train meant two days there and two days back. The perspective of prolonged use of a means of transport such as the train, presented a series of unforeseen problems, and before leaving quite a lot of people, especially women, could not help worrying about the problems they might have to face. At holiday times trains and other means of transport were invariably crowded, with little comfort to offer the weary traveller; often there was nowhere to sit. The difficulties increased for the immigrant with a family, especially when children, or old people, were involved. These means of transport moreover were not by any means cheap and though cases varied, in the end, they were decimating the immigrant's savings.

At the beginning of their stay abroad, the Italian immigrants of the area used to go home frequently, about once a year. Later, however, to offset the tiredness of the long journey, and above all, to save a little more money, many of them had cut back on the yearly holiday home, resigning themselves to seeing their country as rarely as every three or four years. In this situation, the immigrant's contacts and communications with the place of origin are reduced in such a way that any relationships or business interest in the old place can be looked after only with great difficulty, and often, in a very precarious and unsatisfactory way.

The Italians of the Bristol region who had to attend to business at home, generally entrusted their affairs to some relation or friend living in their own town. They confined themselves to keeping in touch from afar, resolved to deal with the most serious situations when able to go on holiday. Though when they did eventually go home, in the only too brief a period of stay, they were faced with an enormous number of matters to attend to, and they were able to look after all the numerous problems which had accumulated during their absence, with difficulty.

In spite of the intense efforts the immigrants and their relations in Italy made, interests at "home" in Italy were never really attended to satisfactorily. Often the plots of land were left uncultivated and the building of houses half done. From here therefore, the tendency of the Italian immigrants to leave aside business matters at home which were not so vital, putting off everything which was connected with the organisation

of the final entry home, and concentrating their attention to their present plight.

The incidence of the distance from the place of origin in the outcome of these attitudes, can be easily read into the practice of the associated life amongst fellow countrymen abroad. As seen, this practice of associated life is inversely proportional to the relevance of the return ideology, and it is directly proportional to the acceptance of a positive relationship with the society and the land of immigration. Such practice of associated life therefore is the index of the degree of residence stability of an immigrant community.

The Italian immigrants of the Bristol region who had been to visit some relation in America or Australia, always referred to the results reached by the Italian communities as such, in those very distant countries, with enthusiasm and admiration. Those communities, they used to say, were "more united" and "more organised", and very often had their clubs, churches, and so on. When asked if such far away relations were thinking of going home though, the local Italian immigrants felt absolutely sure that from America or Australia, "no one ever went back". Similarly the Italian immigrants of the area often compared themselves with the local Polish group, which always seems more united and better organised than the Italian one. In the end, however, the comment they made to explain the different behaviour was always the same: "But the Poles", they said, "can never go back home, they have to resign themselves to living in this land".

For the Italians in America or Australia, and the Poles in the Bristol region, both the spatial and conceptual distance of the native land was such that it reduced the possibility of return and forced them to look more positively at establishing themselves in the foreign land.

The same Italians in the Bristol region, when speaking of their fellow countrymen on the Continent, usually pointed out how much luckier they were, as they were "nearer home" they could go home more frequently. They never spoke of their associated life amongst fellow countrymen, and when one pointed out that they (the ones in Germany or Switzerland) generally did not have either decent jobs or lodgings, the local Italians always answered, "But the concern of our fellow countrymen in Germany or Switzerland is only that of putting money aside and then to go back as quickly as they can" [6].

The Italian of the Bristol region felt "too far from home" to do the same as the fellow countrymen on the Continent, and had therefore felt the need to organise themselves locally more. Thus they had begun a process of investing in the foreign land, which as time went by, had made the decision of going home more difficult and more costly.

[6] Cfr. table on pag. 161, which could be taken as empirical evidence of the above observation.

A more settled immigration, such as in a country a fair distance from the homeland, by it's very nature, tends to prolong itself in time to come. On the one hand, once the hardships typical of a situation of extreme precariousness are eliminated, such as that the immigrants on the Continent maintain, or that the immigrants in Great Britain experienced when first they arrived in the foreign land, the immigrant feels the need of a speedy return is less pressing. On the other hand, the same temporary arrangement organised to remove the hardships of precariousness, involve some costs which slow down the process through which the objective of immigration are achieved, and make them attainable in a longer period of time.

But as time goes on, the realities connected with the immigrant condition evolve, sometimes to such an extent as to reach the status of irreversibility. In the end the immigrant has to recognise that his wish to go home is out of the realm of possibility and lives only in the sphere of ideals.

In general, the majority of Italians in the Bristol region emphasised that when they first left their home country, they had the intention of staying abroad "only for a little while" clear in mind, and they declared that this intention of theirs remained at the bottom of everything for quite some time. The majority of them were convinced that the best opportunities for realising their intention of going back, would have been after "five or six years"; at the beginning then of their migratory experience, that is when they were "still in time". Many thought that if they had gone back "at that time", they would still have had a chance of re-entering their township, and if they really had wanted to, they would easily have been able to stay there. "After twenty odd years spent abroad", it was "too late", and though their fixed idea was always the same, they did not have many illusions "by now".

From their statements it seemed they were conscious of the gap and estrangement which by now existed between themselves and their home country. They also seemed conscious of the decisive role that twenty or thirty years of life abroad had had in the rise of this situation. In their statements, however, there was a naive sense of surprise, as if they had never been aware that time was passing even for them, and as if the terms of their situation were always a surprise.

Their particular vision of history in this sense was revealing. Generally speaking, one might say that for each immigrant his own personal story in the beginning was woven into the stories of his own native village. In these stories, that many of them remembered vividly and narrated with an abundance of detail, one was able to trace clearly amongst other things, many of the reasons which had made them emigrate, as well as many of the reasons which made them wish to go back.

However, from the day they had left their home town, their stories got shorter and shorter, and reduced themselves just to facts of daily experience. In the land of immigration their life had turned into a routine process (home and work) where the main trace of development could have been summed up by a series of private matters in their personal evolution. The landmarks of this history were signed basically by the happenings that had taken place within the family nucleus, and in the end it did nothing but repeat the typical family cycle of every Italian immigrant family. The more or less numerous sequence of events of the successive progresses made by them "in spite of much hardship", on the road towards emancipation and economic security, fitted into this history.

Over and above this very simple history, the Italian immigrants had but a vague knowledge of what had happened around them. As we have seen, the local Italian community only made history in a fragmentary and confused way. In the wider sector, society (English and Italian) in which they lived, did not make history in a relevant way. Of the EEC, for example, the Italian immigrants knew little or nothing and of its benefits they had a very vague idea. Several still kept their nationality for fear of being repatriated. "You never know", someone said, "they might throw us out of here, the same as the ones from Uganda".

They really had no coherent ideas even of the succession of events which had happened in their native village. News about the social events down there easily reached them, and of these matters they often talked. The grasp though of these events was altogether anecdotal and fragmentary, they always remained a subject that touched them relatively, which they discussed with detachment and without a comprehensive vision. For each immigrant, the history of his own village had gone out of focus from the very first day of his emigration.

The evolution whether of society in general or of the society of origin in particular, seemed not to have had much importance for the immigrant, not even to have offered terms upon which to reflect and compare oneself. The "too long a time spent abroad" experienced in a shortened version through one's own impoverished personal history had imperceptibly taken over. They had made a reckoning alone, without taking into account that society was making its history without them. In the end they had found themselves on the peripheries of society's life and its own history. The wish to go back, kept alive in the course of the years spent in the foreign land, could only be recognised by the majority of the Italian immigrants as a fixed idea. For some it was indeed too late to put it into action.

A Judgement

At this point, we may try to answer if and in what measure one can say that the Italians of the Bristol region "have been successful" or "have made their fortune". This discussion, besides throwing further light on what has been said up till now, establishes the synthetic basic context in which the following two chapters should be read, where we look at: 1) the phenomenon of the Italian business people (Chap. VII); 2) the phenomenon of the second generation (Chap. VIII).

Concepts such as "success" or "fortune" when termed as formula to judge the results obtained by immigrants, are but relative; their value depends on the elements and terms of comparison which one takes into account.

By saying that the Italians of the Bristol region have done well, one sometimes brings out as an example the fact that they, by and large, speak English, or more or less manage with it, that they know and are friendly with various English people, that they understand how British social services operate and make use of them well enough, and so on. To strengthen these opinions, the cases of the various Italian business people are quoted, and the fact that the immigrants' children attend English schools, in some way they are part of the English society and increasingly they envisage their future life in Great Britain.

Underneath these statements about immigrants "success" is perhaps implicit a comparison with the Italians in Germany and Switzerland who, we hear, have but a poor knowledge of the language, have little more than not, even unfriendly relationships with the indigenous people. Their children at school are quite often cast outs, and so on.

This comparison though, does not hold water; indeed it is a comparison of two different realities. The Italian immigrants on the Continent are nearer to their country, go home more frequently, tend to invest their savings in their native places, they consider their stay abroad as more temporary, they feel less inclined to either organise more adequately or to better their situations abroad. The majority of the Italians who immigrated there, at the time of the coming of the Italians of the Bristol region to Great Britain, went home and are now well established in the motherland [7].

The Italian immigrants of the Bristol region have been living in the area for several years. The time factor, combined with the distance from the place of origin, makes the immigrant condition in Great Britain a

[7] These observations are taken from conversation with missionaries, social workers, union men and politicians who work among Italian emigrants in Europe and above all from direct contact with ex-emigrants from North East Italy who, up to the mid-sixties, used to emigrate to Germany or Switzerland (leaving their families in their home town and coming home at harvest time or at Christmas). Statistics to use as a check are not easy to find.

reality which is radically different from that in other countries. For the Italian in Great Britain, contacts with the motherland are not easy, and his migratory experience defines itself in terms of a great stability and a longer permanence in time. The fact that the Italians of the Bristol region speak the local language, are more easily assimilated to the new system of life, and are more inclined to remain, basically is a by-product of a typical immigrant condition; that is of the condition that arises when a group of people have lived in one place as immigrants for twenty or thirty years.

At other times, in the statements that the immigrants of the Bristol region have done well, implicit one may find a comparison with their condition when they first arrived in the area. At that time, the immigrants were in an extremely needy state, had little or nothing and were starting from scratch. After twenty or thirty years of being there, in a relatively short time then, they brought about results which could amply justify their migratory choice. In this country, they found opportunities which they would never have found in their own, and perhaps not even their fellow countrymen in Germany or Switzerland have. The fact then that they do remain could be a sure sign of their satisfaction, the index that in spite of everything, they have come to love the place and have elected it as their own.

First of all one must see the price the immigrant has to pay in order to achieve such results. If one is to talk of a land for the immigrants, rich in opportunities, one must also recognise a minimum of proportion between costs and results. The Italians in the survey area adapted to all sorts of jobs, and the last of their worries was to have a gratifying one. They have indeed paid for their commodities, like the house for example, often with extra work and very often even with their health.

These Italians then are people who in an endeavour to reach a goal, have migrated, had in other words sacrificed a great deal of the relationship they had with their kinsmen, their people, and their land, and abroad they had paid, accepting extra sacrifices such as those of social anonymity.

Analysing then the aims reached, generally speaking these are to be found in the sector defined by a job, a house, a measure of economic security, a school for their children, and so on. The Italian immigrants themselves were satisfied by these results, and they presented them as the very sign of their achievements. This relative well being though, underneath it all, is not so extraordinary; it is a level which can be reached by any person of that category that we may describe as the low working class.

Whenever I asked them about their relations in Italy, the Italian immigrants had to admit that they were as well off as they were, in fact better off [8]. Their brothers and sisters, each owned their own house,

[8] This is what the immigrants think. It cannot be said that their opinions are always the result of objective verification.

often with a plot of land nearby which they tilled as a hobby, they had a profession, their children went to school, and so on. Many admitted that if they had stayed home, they would have had the same as they had in Great Britain.

At last it is to be noted how these achievements are not often transportable to the place of origin, as the majority of immigrants intended at the beginning and still would like to, after twenty or thirty years of life abroad. In the concept of immigrant condition one must also bear in mind the point of view of the immigrant himself; in the last instance it is he who decided to migrate in order to better himself, and a judgement on an eventual success or not of the migratory experience has a bearing even from his point of view.

At the back of the migratory choice there are several motives, as seen (Chap. III) it is difficult to establish a common motive for all the Italians of the Bristol region. Perhaps the will "to make a bit of money" is the motive which is present in the majority of the Italian immigrants, even though this may not suit everyone and is not the main one. The one thing however common to all the Italian immigrants of the survey area was that they had not come here because they were starving, or because they were not making a living at home, least of all because they were fed up with their own country and had wanted to leave it for good.

Nearly everybody wanted and intended to go back home, as far as possible, the sooner the better, and if they had known at the time that they would not have been able to go back, they would never have left.

Many observing the behaviour of the Italian immigrants in the Bristol region described it as "a process of integration". For the Italian immigrants it was only the acceptance of a condition without choices, the beginning of a process of assimilation which they had never intended to start, and in which they set out unwillingly.

VALUE OF REMITTANCES OF ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS
BY COUNTRY OF EARNING (IN BILLION LIRAE)

Country	*Value*						*Percent*					
	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Benelux	106.3	121.6	128.1	141.3	169.6	173.8	6.4	6.1	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.1
France	161.3	210.6	243.6	303.2	350.7	359.7	9.7	10.5	11	11.6	11.1	10.4
Germany	616.3	766.4	829.7	856.1	956.3	1,014.6	37	38.3	37.6	32.8	30.2	29.4
United Kingdom	30	43	64.3	86.9	100.5	107.7	1.8	2.1	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.1
Switzerland	310.9	339.5	360.6	423.3	608.6	755.3	18.7	17	16.3	16.2	19.2	21.9
Others	14.9	16.4	17.4	17.5	25.8	34.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	1
Europe	1,239.9	1,497.5	1,643.7	1,828.3	2,211.5	2,445.8	74.5	74.8	74.4	70	69.9	70.9
United States	224.9	263.8	293.3	403.2	503.2	605.3	13.5	13.1	13.3	15.4	15.8	17.5
Canada	44.7	45.5	46.9	71	81.3	117	2.7	2.3	2.1	2.7	2.6	3.4
Argentina	7.2	12.4	20.1	22.2	15.4	16.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5
Brasil	5.4	6.6	6	7.6	11.6	7.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2
Uruguay	2.4	2.1	1.6	—	1.2	1.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	—	—	—
Venezuela	63.4	89.1	106.7	152	198	89.8	3.8	4.5	4.8	5.8	6.3	2.9
Others	1.3	2.6	3	5.4	6.8	5.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	—
America	349.3	422.1	477.6	661.4	817.5	843.5	21	21	21.6	25.3	25.8	24.5
Oceania	38.1	45.5	46.1	66.4	61.3	66.8	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.5	1.9	1.9
Africa-Asia	35.8	37.6	42.6	56.8	76	93.4	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.7
Grand Total	1,663.7	2,002.7	2,210	2,612.9	3,166.3	3,449.5	100	100	100	100	100	100

CHAPTER VII

THE "SUCCESSFUL" PEOPLE

In the area of this research, especially in the city of Bristol, a good many Italians were running some sort of business, or were employed in some independent activity. This Italian presence in the business world was easily detectable in the restaurant sector, as it was in hairdressing and the ice-cream business. Besides these, there was a variety of other enterprises such as grocers, delicatessen, small builders who would do small jobs of any kind, bricklayers, carpenters, pipe-layers, electricians, shoemakers, cobblers, garage mechanics, and so on.

To explain this phenomenon, it was often said that the Italians would have had a certain inclination for these types of activities, a sort of predisposition born out of family tradition, as it would have been, for example, of the other ethnic minorities present in the area, such as the Chinese, Pakistani, Greek and others.

The Italians then, together with the other just mentioned ethnic minorities, would have found a singularly stimulating and favourable socio-economic environment for them in the area. In England the Italians would have first of all found a "very tolerant and liberal" way of life which offered a wide scope for any type of private enterprise. In this context then, there would have been a series of economic opportunities in certain trading sectors which, through lack of initiative, the native population would not have fully exploited or indeed had completely overlooked.

The Italian immigrants therefore would have done no more than take these opportunities which were on the spot, as the other ethnic minorities, who were very much like the Italian in this sense, would have done.

These rather general observations may have a certain value and may constitute part of the explanation of the phenomenon that is being analysed. They are not, however, sufficient explanation and as far as the Italian community is concerned, these observations have rather marginal values.

The great majority of Italian immigrants who had successfully gone into business on their own, had none of what is known as family tradition, nor had they any previous personal experience in the entrepreneurial field. All of these Italians when leaving home to go abroad were first and fore-

most simply "emigrants", that is people who moved by various needs had gone abroad to "seek their fortune".

Already in this first characterisation one may discover part of the explanation of our problem: the immigrant as such is a person of initiative. Back home these Italians shared the limitations and routine of their village life with their compatriots. But whilst their relatives and friends back home had endeavoured to do their best in the old place, the immigrant had made a more radical analysis of the situation and had had the courage to envisage a more decisive vision and choice for themselves. The basic attitude of every person leaving to go abroad was that of seeking a better future by exploring new avenues.

In general, they envisaged this future by looking for a well paid job, put away enough money, and then go back home where they would be all right. Many such immigrants had not the least idea of starting a business to begin with, and least of all did they dream of one day being well-established business people. The idea and purpose of starting an independent activity nearly always came about later on. Indeed it came about out of the immigrant condition, in particular, it matured by the understanding of a failure which was implicit in the immigrant experience.

Angelo had been an immigrant for twenty years. He was all right in Italy; his father owned land, but Angelo never liked tilling the land. At eighteen, also in order to avoid the military service, he decided to leave home. He had some friends in Switzerland; he joined them and stayed there for six years. From there he came to Great Britain and took up residence in Bristol where, after a year, he married an English girl. With time, he qualified and took a job in the computer field.

The new position however did not satisfy him. Explaining this, he said, "I had a good job, but lived a miserable life. To bring up my family I worked extra hours for seven days a week. I was fed up with it, and it didn't make enough". He tried to change jobs for something that brought in more money. He applied to Rolls-Royce and BAC, but they did not take him because he was a foreigner. He had similar answers to other applications. "It's useless for them to say that there is no racial discrimination", he said. "It's always existed and it always will; one is not given the opportunity of getting into the jobs with better money".

In the period between 1978 and 1979 he started assessing his situation. "If I am to eat bread and onions here, I may as well go and eat it at home, at least I don't have to sacrifice my life by being away". He concluded by posing to himself this precise alternative: "Either I go into business, or I go home". His friend Leonardo, to whom I shall refer later on, was against Angelo's going back: instead he encouraged him to go into business and told him that he knew a certain shoemaker in Trowbridge who was wanting to sell his business as he was about to retire. Angelo bought the business and became a shoemaker. He had never known anything about shoes before.

When describing his new activity he said, "It gives me satisfaction and I see results. In a factory no one appreciates your work: they pay you, that's all; if you're happy with your pay, all's well, if not, you can go. Working for yourself, on the other hand, you can learn to love your work, and if you worked a little more, that extra penny is yours. You are your own boss, no one is going to tell you what to do; you do as you please, when you want and how you want". The fact of being a "shoemaker" did not bother him at all. In his new work he had at last found that independence which realised and represented his emancipation from the limitation of the immigrant condition.

Angelo had entered into the world of business as he himself said, "In order to try my luck in a new venture and not to go begging all the time". The restlessness typical of the immigrant, exasperated by the failure implicit in twenty years experience abroad without getting anywhere that might have justified the migratory act, had made him eager to try "a new way".

For most of the Italians in the area, the idea of starting one's own business had come about in the same way that the idea of emigrating had come several years before. When asked why they had chosen to go into business, these Italians never failed to make mention of an initial disappointment which they described in an extremely figurative way, with their impressions on their arrival into the Bristol region [1].

As they said, the weather was always bad: it snowed (it seems they all found snow on their arrival) or it always rained. The houses all seemed to be shacks, there was dirt everywhere, and the food was unbearable. People were unkempt: men all dressed like Charlie Chaplin and women didn't even know what make-up was. "They were poorer than us", someone said, "they went to buy food with ration cards". Their disappointment was not only in relation to the society in which they happened to find themselves, but in relation to the social life they thought were going to practise too. In the new society, they couldn't find themselves and felt they didn't have an identity. When commenting they often said, "In Italy we were poor, but at least we were somebody".

Some of them told me how, even from the very first few days on arrival, they wondered whether it was worth staying on. They didn't go back because, according to them, they had undertaken a big journey entailing great expenses and they could not afford to give up now. Others added that they had only stayed because they were ashamed of appearing in front of their families and people empty-handed, having achieved nothing abroad.

Basically emigration in itself brings an act of rejection of the established order, together with a will to create a new one, made more

[1] For a lively description of the birth of this modern conception of life in immigrants, see GIUSEPPE GRIECO's novel, *L'America si chiama Milano*. Milano, Rizzoli Editore, 1961.

to measure, whereby the person who decides to emigrate may find himself in a better socio-economic position. When the migratory experience itself proved to be a disappointment, the possibility of a socio-economic independence through some sort of activity in the business world, started to assume a particular significance. From this stemmed the will to make good which strongly pushed a lot of Italian immigrants to organise themselves in some sort of independent activity.

At the beginning they burdened themselves with frightening debts, they underwent privations, working extremely hard and indeed for quite a while, never put anything aside as they did when working for others. Once established in business then, apart from what it might have appeared to be from outside, only a few made any real money. In the majority of cases, all the family was employed in the business, and in the end, the immigrant had only just what was needed to have a decent living.

The effort to go into and maintain themselves in the business world was therefore not only a phenomenon of an economic nature, and more than just opportunities found in the environment. In the case of these Italians one should speak, above all, of the limitations of the immigrant condition and of the frustrations and anger at not being able to realise what they had hoped to obtain on going abroad.

Nor can one assert that these immigrants, once abroad, had converted to the ideology of entrepreneurial capitalism, maybe under the influence of some sort of capitalistic spirit which was in the Anglo-Saxon world. The Italians who for the first time abroad became business men, remained fundamentally what they had been in Italy. Like the selfish Neapolitan and the avaricious Venetian described by Max Weber [2], these Italians did not bother to make money in order to run a business, but wanted any business whatsoever in order to make the money necessary to enjoy life, perhaps without ever having to work so hard again. In opening their own independent activity, the objective of these people was to build a business "to give in marriage", that is, a sort of business which, once established, one could sell for a profit.

Vaguely speaking about their definitive re-entry in Italy, these same immigrants envisaged their future life down there, in some form or other of independent activity, mostly because through their business concern, they had seen what it meant to be one's own boss, they had enjoyed some kind of economic benefit, and they had felt they were somebody.

In planning an independent activity, once home, they meant to guarantee for themselves economic security for the rest of their lives a hobby to pass the time away, besides that social emancipation that they had come to find abroad, and which their business concerns had come to represent. In this way they would be able to reap the fruits of the

[2] M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Republished in London by Allen and Unwin, 1974, p. 56.

sacrifice and sweat of their migratory experience, and at the same time they could show the folks back home that they had "done well" abroad, and could then be considered to be successful people.

Every time an Italian immigrant had chosen to go into business, in a more or less explicit way, they had always foreseen and discussed also their return home, and like all the others, had resolved the problem with a vague hope of the future. When this fixed idea was put aside and the implicit ideal escape from reality abandoned, the emancipation through a business concern assumed its more intense significance.

Leonardo was an immigrant who had lived in Bristol for about twenty years and managed a small shoe shop in the Clifton area together with two helpers. In Italy he had had the same trade, but he had never been particularly happy about being a cobbler, neither socially satisfied, nor for that matter financially rewarded. In any case, had he remained at home, he felt sure he would have bettered his position. He himself couldn't explain why he had left home; "I always felt I had to go somewhere", he told me, "I thought I would stay away a little while and then go home". He had worked in Germany for some time, and in 1961 he had come to Great Britain, to Bristol, where he got a job in a foundry. After some time, he sent for his wife.

He didn't have much luck in Bristol. His situation deteriorated more and more, so much so that his father thought of sending him money for his fare back. The only reason he never did go back was only because he was ashamed of facing his people and neighbours with a family to keep and no money in his pocket. He decided to stay put and resolved to make enough money to go back in a dignified manner.

In 1972, having reached his goal, he went home and settled in Milan where by means of a competitive exam he had secured a job and started working at the Alfa Romeo complex. Until he was actually in Milan the thought of going into business never entered his mind; what he wanted was a steady job that assured a peaceful life for him and his family. In this sense he never had any problem with his work, indeed he found ample chance for choice so much so that without much effort he was able to change from being a workman in a factory, to being a janitor at the University and later a security officer in another factory.

He never managed however to enter into local social life as he wanted to. As a foreigner abroad he didn't expect much, but as an Italian in his own country, he expected "a little more respect". "The way of life down there was altogether different from the British one" to which he was by now accustomed. Before leaving Bristol to go home, he knew that "after so many years spent abroad" he might possibly feel out of place; he had gone through all the same, because "if one doesn't try, one never sees".

After a few years, he left Milan and went back to Bristol. This time he was "surer and more serene"; the idea and yearning to go home

did not torment him as it had done before. After four months, he went into business, he opened a shoe shop and went back to his old trade, as he had done back home.

Clearly Leonardo had not gone abroad in order to open up a business; he already had one. Least of all had he left his country with the idea of opening a business abroad. But in the foreign land he didn't have much luck, he had indeed found himself in the same situation of unease the majority of Italian immigrants find themselves in. He had accepted this condition only in the hope of being able to go home some day soon. Once this fixed idea had been put aside, however, and he had resigned himself to being abroad for good, he refused the limitations of the immigrant condition and entered into business.

The few Italians who on leaving home intended to emancipate themselves by going into business, generally intended to realise this project on their re-entry home, where they were known, knew the people and their needs, and could lever several socio-economic factors in order to succeed.

These people did not usually take full advantage of the opportunities and did not venture decidedly into business in the country of immigration, but they remained in a precarious situation, often "temporarily" employed in dependent jobs.

Alberto, before leaving Italy was employed as a boy in a hairdressing salon. In 1956 he left home and went to manage the hairdressing shop his brother had in Bristol. His intention was to stay abroad for only a short time, then to go home and open a shop. He went abroad in order to gain experience. His town was on the Adriatic coast, a tourist place; Alberto thought that some knowledge of English would be of great help. Besides wanting to learn the language, he had also left to avoid doing his military service.

As far as he knew, in order to avoid military service, he had to remain abroad either until he was twenty-eight or got married and had a child. In 1961 he married an Italian girl, and in 1962 he began making arrangements to go home. He left a written declaration to his brother to sell his house and, in order to get closer to home, he went to Zurich. There, he and his wife took a job in a printing works, and in the evening, more as a hobby than anything else, cut and dressed his friends' hair. From Zurich he tried to organise his re-entry home but ran into trouble over his military service. After five months of useless waiting around, he went back to Bristol. He took up his old job in his brother's shop and bought himself a house for the second time abroad.

In 1968, having found a solution to the military service problem, he went home determined he would stay put. He worked as a helper in a tailor shop whilst waiting to open his own hairdressing salon. After some time, having had no luck in this venture, he went back to Bristol.

Here he opened a hairdressers' shop in partnership with a cousin and later bought some shares in a restaurant below the shop. He considered all this an investment, his real intention was still to go back home.

In 1975 he found the shop he was looking for in his wife's home-town, sold up everything he had in Bristol and went back home for good. Once home, however, he never got on with the locals, and never managed to fit in. "Too much distrust", he said, "down there, if you don't open your purse, you never get anywhere. I kept saying to myself: "But in England they do things differently", and somehow I was never able to live as they did". So back again he went to Bristol, this time though resolved to stay for ever. He bought yet another house, he took up the shop he had run together with his cousin alone and later he bought the restaurant too, the one below the shop.

All the Italians who in the area of the research were working in some sort of private enterprise, both those who had had the idea of going into business once they were abroad, and those who had had it before leaving their own country, realised their entrepreneurial vision to the extent that their dream of going home went beyond the range of concrete feasability. For all these Italians, whether they had never attempted to return home or had examined and discussed the project from abroad, the private and independent work was an imperative undertaking in order to obtain social status which would enable them to climb out of the immigrant condition, would compensate their losses and thus justify their migratory act.

A native, being born and bred on the spot, fits into the socio-economic environment of his country, so that whenever he wants to venture into the business world, he meets with fewer problems and has better opportunities. But he lives in a more secure environment, feels the need to venture in search of new fortunes less and cannot take risks as the immigrant can.

The immigrant on the other hand is an uprooted man with a great urge to establish his identity, and grow into the new society in which he finds himself. He can try anything since he has little to defend and less to lose. His need and will to break out of the limitations of the immigrant condition makes him tense and aggressive in such a way that he ends up by ignoring all conventions when conducting his business. He works when others close their shops and always offers his services for a penny less than his neighbour [3].

As was easily detectable from the individuals' process of insertion in the business world, the Italian immigrants went looking for their emancipation in this sector, because this appeared in the order of factual realities, it was consequently the socio-economic reality which was most

[3] Cf. also H.S. Nelli, *op. cit.*; W.D. Borrie, *Italians and Germans in Australia*. Melbourne, F.W. Cheshire for the Australian National University, 1954, p. 105; C.A. Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-187.

accessible to them. In it then, the Italian immigrants took up those activities where they felt they knew more "tricks of the trade".

The dynamics of their gradual approach and entrance into the business world can be described in a typical four stage process which is present in the experience of the great majority of the Italians in question, though in different ways and at different times.

Some of them arrived in the Bristol region without any qualification, or experience in the trade that they were to undertake later when going into private business. These people learned their trade, not so much by attending special courses in various local centres for professional training, but they learned whilst working for an employer, often enough an Italian one.

Several Italians however, who entered into the business world, had already done some sort of apprenticeship in Italy. This is true of the barbers and hairdressers but it is particularly true of the restaurant people, the majority of whom had undergone training in the various Italian catering schools, and were qualified cooks and waiters.

When they arrived in the Bristol region, not all of them went straight into their trade. Many, especially the first lot after the war had to take anything that was going at the beginning and do what was fixed by the labour contract which allowed them to enter Great Britain. These jobs (farmers, miners, street cleaners and so on) had nothing to do with their own professional training. This work period in which their qualifications were set apart, could make someone overlook the value of the previous experience, which had had a relevant influence to the effect of the entry into the business world. Many such Italians were already skilled people.

The second phase is represented by the period during which the immigrant enters "into trade". "To be in trade" is an expression commonly used amongst the Italians, and is used in reference to the practice of a profession located in one place, so that the work becomes a place of information, encounter and mediation of social relations.

The previous professional experience obtained in Italy was not sufficient to give the immigrants the necessary confidence to venture into business in a foreign country where they didn't know the ways, the customs, or indeed anybody. "Even when you know the tricks of your trade", a barber[4] used to tell me, "you will always find yourself in difficulty initially, above all because you don't know the language, so that you have to guess what the customer wants; I am not saying understand, because you just don't understand, but have a guess. Once in trade, however, you gain confidence little by little. Confidence in yourself first of all; you have to have some sort of personality in order to mix with people. Confidence then in the ability of your fingers, in the sense that you know your job and can satisfy the customer".

[4] Confidential Files, Case n. 18, see Appendix.

In relation to entry into the business world, the confidence also means the knowledge and ability to cope with all the aspects connected with a business concern, economic, legal or otherwise in a foreign country. In the practise of their profession, the Italian immigrants had come to the conclusion that if they wanted to go into business, they could have done so without major difficulty. From the legal point of view, they were convinced that having completed the four years fixed by the labour contract, they were "free" to open up a business. They did not know of other existing obstacles. From the economic point of view, working for a boss had given them an idea about the actual running of a business in the area. In other words, an idea on the amount of work, expenditure and income needed.

Nearly all the Italians who had gone into business had had only a vague idea of how it would work out; they had little knowledge of what the income would be. They only had an idea of what the expenses might be and on this basis they had calculated their risk at the beginning and the time they could keep going.

The barber mentioned above, speaking about his trade, said that before entering into business he had not had a clear idea of how things were going to work out, he was simply convinced that in this trade there were "not many liabilities to begin with, and it would have taken at least three years to succeed". The expenses and risks were far greater for those who intended to open a restaurant; indeed these people never ventured into it unless they owned a house that could be mortgaged. Expenditure and risk came down a lot for the less important activities such as ice-cream vendors, whereby "a month's salary was sufficient capital to start with".

In this second phase, even the now-established Italian presence in the area took a role. The immigrants who from the very beginning had come to practise their own profession had been called over by a friend or relation who was already settled on the spot. This sort of insertion allowed these Italians to enter the local labour market as qualified labourers thus avoiding the humiliation and waste of energy which the other immigrants had had to undergo during the period of unskilled labour.

But the Italian presence in the area had a relevant impact, above all through the Italians who had already established themselves in business. This was the factor that most contributed to their "being in trade" for most of the last comers who were later able to go into independent business for themselves.

Giannetto was a barber from Central Italy. Some of his relations were in the USA and his continual prayer was to emigrate to that country. He found it difficult to obtain a visa, due to the limited number of Italians allowed entry to America, and in his case in particular, because of his past political activity. Thus he turned his attention to Great Britain, thinking it might be easier to realise his dream after perhaps becoming a British subject.

In 1953 he arrived in the Bristol region and took a job as an unskilled worker in a metal foundry (Westling House) at Chippenham. There he met an English woman who ran a barber shop where he undertook to do a few extra hours after night work, mostly serving the Italians in the area. In 1955 he left his job at Westling House to work full-time in the barber shop, not before going home and coming back with a new contract endorsed by the barber shop owner. In 1957 Giannetto became "free"; he bought his own shop in Bristol, the first of several others, and kept on being a barber for the rest of his life. He died in 1977.

Giannetto owned four barber shops in Bristol. The first from 1957 to 1966, bought later by the Bristol Royal Infirmary for the extension of a Maternity Clinic. The second in 1962; the widow remained the owner but she let it to an Italian barber. The third from 1963 to 1966, later bought by another Italian barber. And lastly a fourth one from 1966 to 1971, later bought by yet another Italian barber.

Giannetto had seventeen Italian immigrants working for him, the majority of whom were barbers by profession, having been brought over and put under contract by Giannetto himself. Of these barbers at the time of this research, four had gone home, one worked as an assistant to another Italian barber, the other twelve took up business of their own. Of the latter, eleven had opened their own shops, two had bought theirs from Giannetto (his third and fourth) and one worked independently in the shop let by Giannetto's widow (that is the second).

Giannetto's enterprises became more significant when one thinks of the various other Italian barbers in the area who had managed to go into business on their own and who in the past had been brought over and had worked for some of Giannetto's twelve ex-workers. These Italian barbers represented about a fifth of all the self-employed barbers in Bristol. Cases such as Giannetto's were to be found in other sectors as well, as for example Verrecchia, the ice-cream vendors and in catering, the Puledri.

The role of the Italian immigrants established in business, in relation to the enrolment, and later on the entry into trade of other Italians, may explain, at least in part, the difference in involvement in the business world by the Italian community in Swindon and Bristol. In Swindon at the time of this research, though several Italians were attempting to, or at least were intending to go into business, those with an independent activity were very few. The first influencing factor might have been the town itself, which did not present the wealth and social diversification which might have stimulated the trade sectors in which the Italians intended to enter. But the local Italian community itself was not very helpful in this matter. The Italian community in Swindon was of a different type from the Bristol one, it was new and lacked a tradition in the business sector. The few Italians who worked on their own in Swindon did not generally employ anyone else; they could not therefore offer anything to their fellow countrymen who might then enter into "trade"

The series of analysis and concrete choices which get the independent activity started constitute the third phase in the process of insertion into the business world. The Italian immigrants generally looked for their future undertaking in the same sort of trade they had been employed in. As some of them told me, the economic activity into which they entered, had not been created by them "from scratch", but they had "in part found it there, ready made". Broadly speaking nearly all the restaurant owners, and, to a certain extent barbers as well, had gone into business by buying out the going concerns which they were familiar with. The same thing could be said of the ice-cream vendors, who had started working and taking risks first by hiring, then by buying the ice-cream van from their ex-employer.

The Italian immigrants usually found their clientele in the socio-economic area of their experience. A barber who had worked for Giannetto since 1956 and later got his own business [5], told me, "The customers I have today are more or less the same ones I had when I was working for Giannetto; they brought their children and friends, so work was never slack".

Even in this phase the role played by the Italian community was relevant. The need at the beginning, and the "greater satisfaction" that one had when served by somebody who speaks the same language, together with the ethnic sympathy and solidarity, both offered a steady clientele and eliminated the uncertainty to a certain extent, thus allowing the many Italians to go into business on their own. The phenomenon was easily detectable with the barbers, but it was incontrovertible in the case of grocers. Their fortune had been born out of an Italian clientele. At the time of this research, the Italians in Swindon who were thinking of opening a grocer shop, used to deliver their goods to the Italians by going from house to house in a van, as the Italian immigrants who had later become well established in the grocery business had done many years before. The Italian clientele was still seen as the sole certainty in the uncertain venture of going into business.

The fourth and last phase in the process of insertion into the business world is constituted by the game of chance and the series of activities which serve to establish a person in an independent business. When an immigrant had decided on going into some sort of business and had chosen his future economic activity, he had never quite analysed this undertaking of his in the context of the possible relations and reactions of the socio-economic environment he was going to deal with. He had reckoned almost exclusively on his own resources. He had opened a business within the limits of his savings [6] and his knowledge of his trade.

[5] *Ibid.*, Case n. 19, see Appendix.

[6] J. DAVIS (Anth. Q., 43, III, pp. 171-185) observes that in Pisticci, men usually keep their land when beginning a commercial venture, as a line of retreat in the case of failure.

He envisaged his undertaking mainly as "an attempt" where the chances of success were left mostly in the hands of "Lady Luck". Many immigrants told me that they started their activity "by opening the shop and waiting in the hope that customers would come in". In the period of time described by this phase then, the new initiative went through the sieve of reality, showing whether the attemp was going to work or not.

Some, of course, didn't quite make it, and after a while, resigned themselves to failure. Of these cases, however, no one came out of the attempt declaring defeat, but each one paid up the debts, trying not to leave any bad feeling behind. Having gone into it in the same way that one may gamble his money on roulette, they came out like those who had tried their luck and failed.

The relatively high number of such failures, and the philosophy with which these people accepted their fate, was a close indication of the spirit in which these enterprises had been undertaken, and on the nature of the entrepreneurial activities of the immigrants in the Bristol region. These immigrants described their plight as "unlucky attempts". Their outlook was supported by the widespread opinion amongst the Italian immigrants that any venture in the business world depended largely on luck, and that even those who had made it "when all said and done they had only made it by a series of lucky chances".

As a matter of fact, often those who had made it, had not been able to avoid the hardships of this fourth phase; even their undertakings in fact, in spirit and nature, were fundamentally similar to those who had failed. Nearly all of them testified that it had been extremely hard to begin with, harder than they had expected. They admitted that "they had bitten off more than they could chew", in other words their risk was big, if not beyond reach.

The hardship of the fourth phase, in the measure it could be confronted, was generally overcome in the typical manner of the immigrants, that is besides working very hard, they also exploited in every way possible the personal relations system. For advice, legal and economic assistance, the immigrant who had just ventured into business, usually tended to avoid coming into direct contact with various institutions but preferred instead to be helped by private people he knew personally.

Friends and people they knew did indeed play their role by sometimes making a concrete contribution towards the establishment of the business venture. Their assistance came in several ways, according to the different cases. It would be the person who found or offered the premises, or the one who became a partner or indeed loaned the necessary money at little or no interest. Relatives and friends did their best to find a suitable trustworthy workman, or even undertook the job themselves.

The very back-bone of the clientele came from the personal relations system, especially that very first lot, born out of emergency, who helped to get the venture on its feet. For example, when someone first opened

a restaurant, he was encouraged and helped by his closest friends who, though not very affluent themselves, and not accustomed to eating out, would take the whole family out from time to time in order to give a "helping hand". The same thing happened when someone else who intended to open a shop went from house to house to sell in order to make a reputation as a merchant for himself. In such cases, both relatives and friends immediately became steady customers, whilst the other fellow countrymen bought something from time to time out of a vague sense of solidarity, or even compassion, making sure that what they bought would never be thrown out anyway.

With time, every enterprise found its own clientele, a little less dependent on the personal relations systems, and eventually reached some kind of economic self-sufficiency. At this stage, the Italian immigrant who had ventured into business, was able to consider himself an established business man, and could start putting on the airs of a "successful man".

The immigrant with a business concern considered himself to be a "successful person" and by and large he was considered as such amongst his fellow countrymen. As a typical emancipation ideal consequently, he represents the arrival of the final emancipation accessible to the first generation of immigrants in a foreign land. From his story, one can easily get the theoretical model and the concrete logic which commands the process of the immigrant's emancipation [7].

Emancipation is a realisation that depends above all on the degree of control that the immigrant is able to establish on the economic resources and the social relations defining the environment in which he lives. The social convention that offers the immigrant the key to turn and develop this control, is in the end mainly private property. Like all their fellow countrymen, even the immigrants in business had sought the first form of an economic and social emancipation in the ownership of a house. Not satisfied with that though, they tried to better themselves further by changing the context of working relations in which they were employed. By expanding their property in the business world, they freed themselves from their dependence on native employers, and created their independent activity.

[7] We use the term "emancipation" to describe what is usually called the process of integration. In our opinion, emancipation is better used to express a reality which, from the immigrant's point of view, is meaningful above all when developed through a series of relations (both of co-operation ad personal) with the native population in which the immigrant takes an active part. This, amongst other things, also comprises a revision of the ideology of return and an open determination to abandon the immigrant condition. This attitude is vital to business men for their entry into the tertiary sector. Consequently the process of emancipation is speeded up and more obvious in these people. The description of the emancipation process is presented very briefly here as it doesn't directly come into the area dealt with by this study. It is only used to describe the role and setting of the business men within the Italian community.

Their emancipation process is commanded by a deeply felt individualistic attitude and moved by an ideal of independence. Thus, as conceived by the immigrants, this process as such does not free them from the "captivity" of isolation and loneliness of the immigrant condition.

This process, however, is brought about in the local socio-economic context, and thus it brings the immigrants to a closer relationship with the native population. It is in this sense, above all, that it becomes a process of emancipation. Working and buying, accepting therefore the logic and controls the access to private property, the immigrant comes out of the isolation and loneliness of his condition, and in an orderly manner and without violence enters into the context of the local society. With the ownership of a house first, and of a business later, the immigrant invests his interest in the interest of the natives and becomes a participant in the administration of the local community's welfare.

At the same time always through his property he differentiates, qualifies and defines himself socially. Through his working activity he gets himself known further. In this way fear and prejudice towards a stranger, which exists in the local society, as in any society for that matter, is dissipated. The running of an independent business in particular offers him the opportunity of giving a professional service, where the immigrant may express the best of his creative nature, not only in the administration of his capital, but also in the administration of his relationships with people. Clientele is the foundation stone of any business.

The immigrant who has gone into business, is no longer an ambiguous, dangerous person, and someone of "no fixed address" or no proper identity would be. The immigrant business man is a well-known person accepted and integrated in local society, at least in part. The quest for an economic independence is translated in this sense, into some sort of social emancipation.

In the survey area, several police officers showed a less than formal relationship towards some of the Italian business men. With such people, there was a sort of reciprocal friendly collaboration which would have been inconceivable with an ordinary Italian. One day, for instance, an Italian boy in his early teens, was brought to the consular agency as he had lost his way. A policeman on the spot, after hearing about it, suggested getting in touch with an Italian shopkeeper he knew, and asked to make a call [8]. Unbeknown to himself, by his behaviour, he had overlooked, though in good faith, the fact that the child was indeed in the proper place, but such a place either meant nothing to that particular police officer or at any rate, he placed the shopkeeper above the consular agency as far as efficiency was concerned. In the end, it was the consular agent who solved the problem.

Another time, a youth who, for some desperate reason had got drunk,

[8] Confidential Files, Case n. 20, see Appendix.

started smashing the church window panes with his fists [9]. He was arrested and taken to the Police Station. The following day a friend of his went to find the Italian missionary asking him to act as interpreter. When the missionary arrived at the Police Station, he found his help was not needed; they had just called a local Italian barber [10] and he was doing the job. The officer in charge of the case hadn't even bothered to consult the local official translators' list at the Police headquarters where, amongst the various people, there was indeed the above mentioned missionary, but not the barber. Having found the language a problem the whole night, the officer in charge finally thought it best to call on his barber friend, ask him to leave his shop for a while, and make himself useful.

The immigrant business man is part of the English socio-economic system, is better known by English people, and thus, for them, is more reliable. There is no need for officialdom.

The quest for an economic independence is translated into a form of social emancipation, not only because it favours social acceptance, but most of all because it starts co-operation thus making a greater control on the resources of the environment possible. An immigrant who has become a business man, because of the nature of his work, comes into contact with the natives more frequently, i.e. workers, suppliers, estate agents, lawyers, police and so on.

The contact itself with all these people allows him to unravel the system which lies behind the organisation of social events, to understand the function of these various administrative offices, notice the relationship they have to each other and become aware of the rights and social duties connected to them, which leads to an understanding of the customs and life-style of the native society. Pre-eminently, the points of reference though are not the single offices, but tend to be some individual or other with whom there has been a business transaction, or who might have been in charge of one of the various administrative jobs.

The series of services which an immigrant business man exchanges with the native people, through the exercise of his activities, creates ties of continuity as though in a kind of communion. The logic leading to this communion is of a particularly compelling nature in the case of the Italian who, be it by his personality, or for business reasons, seems to force certain degrees of personal involvement into each relationship.

This is particularly true for the immigrants from Southern Italy. A consular agent from Sicily, for example, who I knew in London [11] and to whom I pointed out the amount of damage he could do his office through his connection with certain Italian big business people whose reputation was none too good, confessed that he would have liked to follow my

[9] *Ibid.*, Case n. 21, see Appendix.
[10] *Ibid.*, Case n. 22, see Appendix.
[11] *Ibid.*, Case n. 23, see Appendix.

advice but that he didn't feel inclined to "turn his back on a friend". An Italian missionary in explaining this type of relationship, said, "I can't tell them that as a man I am a friend, but as a priest I must follow the principles of professional honesty; they would say, either you are a friend, or you are not". In these societies the relationships of reciprocity are really a total exchange.

The various business relationships which the interest in expanding transactions plus the Italian character tend to maintain, reinforce, and expand, give the immigrant business man access to the resources of the local socio-economic environment which is not available to any ordinary immigrant.

Before going into this survey area, I lived among the North London Italian immigrants for a few years. There I was asked by some local Italians who wanted to start a club, if I would undertake to find out who the owner of an abandoned plot of land, which was suitable for their purpose, was. After various unsuccessful attempts I met an English man [12] who suggested asking for information at the local tax office, as he had always done; there, he said, one could certainly find out who owned the land in question. I went to the tax office there I was told that, though the proprietor of the land was known to them, they couldn't help me as it was confidential and because it was not their policy to give information of that type out over the counter.

In Bristol at the time of this survey the local Italian mission came up with a similar request. They wanted to know who owned certain premises which seemed suitable for a social centre. Here too, I wasted my time in useless research until I met an Italian shopkeeper [13] who said he could solve the problem easily as he was friendly with an estate agent whom he had done several business deals with. This estate agent could give him all the information wanted because he had easy access to the tax office. When I told him about my past failure, he laughed, and just asked me to wait a few days. Three days later I knew that the proprietor was an alderly man who lived in Kent and that there was another person in Bristol entrusted to deal with the property. I also knew that whoever intended to buy, should not let the person in Bristol know about it but should get in touch with the proprietor himself, who would only be amenable to a religious argument.

Clearly the principle of office confidentiality is not a dogma but can be broken with a few "trusted" outsiders. An immigrant who has become a business man is more acquainted with the local socio-economic system, has great possibility of access to knowledge and control of the environment, and in this sense, is more socially emancipated.

[12] *Ibid.*, Case n. 24, see Appendix.
[13] *Ibid.*, Case n. 25, see Appendix.

The participation in the business world not only brings about relationships of co-operation, but easily generates a series of personal relationships with the indigenous population, thus creating a first phase of social integration. This does not only depend on the greater frequency of relationships, but depends also on the very nature of these relationships. The immigrant business man has a new social identity.

Many locals become more amenable once the threshold of prejudice has been reduced and they let themselves get involved in the universal custom that induces a person to cultivate the friendship of "successful" people more easily. The immigrant, on his part, having relieved himself of the feeling of inferiority and convinced of being a "successful" person, loves to have relationships with people who either directly or indirectly consider and treat him as such. Whatever logic that brings about the personal relation may be, the social remuneration can be of such value that at times for the immigrant business man, his commercial activity, meeting and chatting with his customer, almost becomes a hobby.

The restaurant "Da Renato" was the place where several personalities of the theatre world, especially those in passing, regularly met to eat and relax after the show. They talked about the place as if it were their home, and they would jokingly give each other appointments, "I'll see you at home". For the owner, making the clientele happy was the greatest of satisfactions and he himself was really at home in every way among them. Business allowed him to live well, without excessive gains. However, he kept the place open and continued to work there himself largely "for the pleasure of doing so". Though he remained and Italian at heart, he considered himself and was considered by his clients to be one of them.

It is at this level of emancipation that one may really speak of social integration. The foreign culture, together with the personality that represents it, is being appreciated and the immigrant feels "free".

The progressive emancipation from the immigrant condition, in its logic brings about a progressive weakening of the ideology of return which, as we have seen, is an integral part of this condition. For the immigrant running an independent activity, the fixed idea of going back, loses much of its appeal and the place of origin becames merely a cherished memory.

This is because with the progressive direct or indirect participation in business, the immigrant always confronts himself with the project of going back, and with his practical choice contradicting it, he puts it under discussion positively. At the same time, whilst the certain level of emancipation he has gained through his own work justified his choice, it also makes him positively participate in the socio-economic environment of the new country which becomes less and less foreign to him. There is not only the possible economic problem that keeps him in the country, but also the fact that he feels well, and "at home", in it.

The Italian immigrants who had become business men used to say: "I'll always be an Italian, but I know everybody here, everybody knows me, and I feel at home". By and large, they seemed to be more settled and resolved to stay put. Whatever motivations had brought the Italians into business, and however they were running it, this type of employment had made them participate in the English society network.

The emancipation of the Italian immigrants who were established in business is not limited to themselves or to the various members of their families, but also has an impact on the entire local contingent of fellow countrymen. The Italian businesses and activities create an ethnic environment which, for several Italians, gives privilegd inter-relationship with the native community.

In Bristol, in the space of four years taken in this research, about 250 young men, especially students from Italy, used to go to the local Italian mission for help in looking for some sort of remunerative work. Nearly all of them found some casual employment in Italian restaurants, as dish washers, cooks help, barmen, waiters, and so on. Since their stay was always brief, it was hard for them to find a proper job. In any case, they didn't have much time to waste in going around with application forms and interviews which were usually required for a job of this sort. They didn't bother to find a proper job and even went so far as to prefer one which allowed them, among other things, to avoid taxes and earn a little more. They were, however, in need of same sort of employment right away. The Italians resident in the area also often took advantage of the availability of these casual jobs to make extra cash, either in their spare time, or as a temporary solution when they were out of work.

The Italian business enterprise then, by and large, offered the first chance of a job to the new immigrants from Italy who intended to take up residence in the area. The Italians in the area usually found jobs in the Italian business world for the latest arrivals, as this was the working environment nearest to them, better known to them, in which they could more easily find and ask for a special treatment. The preference was for these types of jobs also because, as it was said, the latest arrivals would find "less difficulty with the language problem". The hardship of the first impact with the foreign country was summarised in the language problem, a hardship that the resident Italian in the area knew from experience and one that they wanted to spare friends and relatives from undergoing. The Italian business world thus became a "shock absorber" and a framework of reference for the new immigrants who, in this way, found it less hard to enter into the foreign society.

This was also the environment to which several long resident Italians in the area moved to work, having left a former employment they had had in the English environment. The Italians who made this choice preferred this new job because by and large, it allowed them more flexible

working hours, and also by working either more or less, they had a better chance of deciding their own income, and in the last instance, the economic situation for their family. Some said they preferred the Italian working environment because they felt better working among Italians and they felt "more respected". These statements did not necessarily imply the existence of cordial relationships with the employers, nor for that matter with colleagues at work. There was simply an implicit comparison with the working situation in an English environment, where an Italian immigrant could not feel foreign and going to work with the feeling of "begging for charity".

Independently of the motivations that made the workers look for a job in the Italian business world, the proprietors of these enterprises usually preferred employing their fellow countrymen. In the various local Italian trades, at the time of this research, the personnel was nearly all Italian. The explanation for this phenomenon was not merely kindness of heart and the sense of solidarity the employers had, but was rather a question of advantage and pressing needs imposed by their very poor enterpreneurial expertise.

The majority of Italians running a business, hadn't the slightest idea of where they were in the world of economics and did not know how to deal with the personnel. Their awareness of being "successful people" often gave them an arrogance which somehow made their ignorance even harder to bear. These Italian entrepreneurs were nothing more than successful workers who only understood the gains of their own labour, and who made money in so far as they were able to squeeze the labour-force: themselves and their relatives first of all. As the employees did not have the same interests and were not as zealous as the Italian employers, they were thought to be only interested in money without working. Hence the tendency to keep the business strictly within the family. Where one couldn't help it, the preference was to employ the trusted people: that is the Italians. Not all Italians though were eligible in the same way; first came friends and acquaintences, that is the people they know they could count on even though at times this meant inducing them to came directly from Italy.

In whatever way the Italian business enterprise developed, it created in the heart of the English society, a place where the Italian immigrant who was given a job, felt "freer"; as if he were "at home" and where he was able to treat the native "on a more equal basis". As we have pointed out, some Italians at times found an introduction into trade which allowed them to move into an independent activity in the local socio-economic context, thus breaking every tie of dependency in the working relationship and gaining his ultimate emancipation.

Seen as a phenomenon as a whole, the activities of the Italians in business conveyed, at least in a certain sense, a flavour of Italy on the local market and neighbourhood. Such distinctive Italian elements (Italian

trade good, restaurants, elegant shop windows, Italian music, ice cream vendors) all have tended to make plain the existence of an Italian presence in the area.

Such a massive ethnic foreign reality could have given rise to xenophobic reactions. However since it was mediated by the numerous co-operative and personal relations which the Italians, especially those in business, preserved with the indigenous population, the Italian presence has been welcomed rather than resented.

During this research, as soon as it became known that I was an Italian, on meeting English people, they often expressed esteem for the Italians in general, and for the local Italian immigrant group in particular. Asking me whether I knew any of them, they would mention one of the local Italians, very often an Italian business man they knew, and with whom they said they were on very good terms. To express their sympathy, these people at times underlined some aspect of the Italian character, for example the ease with which they familiarised, at times even taking the trouble of making comparisons with their fellow countrymen whom they described as cold, unwilling to work, not family lovers, narrow in their outlook, and so on.

Obviously these comments were often observations of convenience that a native could allow himself in so far as he was conscious of and accepted his ethnic identity. They showed, however, the wish to establish a tie of friendship, understanding and conviviality with the foreigner. The most important factor in this sense, mediating the meeting of cultures, seemed to be found indeed in the local Italian community to which the business enterprise had given a face.

The business activities put the Italians involved in a particular position in the local socio-economic context, giving them a special role in relation to the entire Italian community too. On account of their particular knowledge and connections, the Italian immigrant business men were often asked by other ordinary Italians to perform some role that could be described as one of mediation.

The ordinary Italian immigrant, contrary to the one in business, had neither accountant, or lawyer, nor had he much to do with the real estate or banking world; his daily life did not require them. When any such necessity arose, he wound simply approach a local fellow countryman in business for help. The requests varied according to the degree of inexperience and the need, and could range from advice on how to fill in a tax form, to a guarantee and help to get an overdraft at a bank.

The Italian business men were generally willing to give their help and they easily introduced the one in need to their business connections. And this they did, friendship apart, also in order to show their goodwill which did not cost much but did indirectly prove to the uncertain ones that they really were successful people.

Generally speaking, those who had reached a level of emancipation and integration in the local context, even in personal relations, did not bother much with the organisations and activities of the Italian community. But the greater part of the Italian business people did not yet have this level of emancipation, and though having relationships of co-operation with the English people, still felt foreign. The fact then that by and large they had partly put aside the thought of going home, brought them to regard the local Italian community as their own world in a way.

Divorced from the far distant home country, and from the English people who lived nearby, they felt a solidarity only with the rest of the local Italians, without, however, being able to identify with them, nor put themselves on the same social level. They couldn't bear the thought of still being considered "immigrants"; they had come out of that condition and they did not even wish to hear the word.

When one such Italian went into the community's politics, he always tried to do it by differentiating his position, avoiding getting mixed up in games of democracy as far as possible; games which might have put him on the same level as the others: the ordinary immigrants. Their participation in the community's activities seems cordial and sincere. Their obsession, however, with always maintaining clear distinctions, eventually corrupted their basic commitment so that eventually their own worry was to put their "success" in evidence at any cost.

THE SECOND GENERATION

A substantial group within the Italian community in the survey area was made up of people who had either been brought abroad by their parents when still very young, or had been born in Great Britain of Italian parents. These are the first generation immigrants' children, and they are usually called "the second generation". This category of people has, by and large, a characteristic way of relating to its community of origin: the local Italian community that is and to the society in which it has grown and within which it lives.

In the area at the time of this research, the second generation was nearly all made up of young people under marriageable age. Of these, the boys and girls under 10/12 years, one may say, did not have a relevant role: their existence was shaped by the family group, and their presence did not modify the original migratory project of their parents much nor their relation to society. The problem arose with the others; the children over 10/12 years of age. The second generation theme then was defined exclusively by the presence and role of the teenage offspring of the Italian immigrants.

For the second generation, as for the first, its presence in Great Britain is settled on the basis of nationality, more specifically, on the praxis that controls entry to the country. In this sense, for the Italian teenagers there was no noticeable legal or administrative impediment to limit their right to reside and live on British territory, nor was there any impediment on their part in participating in the activities of the indigenous associated life. Many of them had been born in Great Britain. All of them had been born of Italian immigrants: that is citizens of a member state of the EEC, who moreover, had by and large been residing and working in Great Britain for quite some time. In any case, if there were any difficulties, they were either discussed or dealt with by their parents; it was not taken up with them.

The relative ease of their condition was not however determined only by their ignorance of conventions which regulated the social reality in which they lived. This ease was above all the fruit of the praxis practised with them which was different from that practised with their

parents. Towards the second generation, by and large, there was a praxis that left aside any possible examination and judgement on the limits of their rights. A sort of policy which one may term as "laissez faire, laissez passer", had been adopted towards them by which the access to all the opportunities open to the indigenous boy, were open to the Anglo-Italian boy as well.

At the time of this research in particular, one was able to detect a certain unease in the area in the field of racial relations; possibly the premonitory indications of the riots which broke out in Bristol in the St. Paul's district at the beginning of April 1980 [1]. Conscious of this social unease, several social workers and some local civil servants, especially those in charge of youth problems, undertook to do their best to overcome all possible cases of discrimination towards foreigners and bring about, at least in theory, a sort of social equality.

An Italian boy of thirteen [2], for example, who had left his parents in France and had come to live in Bristol with relatives, could not attend the local state school "because his parents were not living and working in Great Britain". A CRE officer, together with a priest and an English Trade Union member became interested in this case and having understood the deadlock in normal channels of communication, tried elsewhere until they found him a place at a private school "because basic education is a fundamental right of every man".

The praxis defining the English society's attitude towards the Italian second generation took shape, above all in the educational institutions. All the Italian teenagers in the area, like all the natives of their age, either attended or had attended English schools. At school first of all, and later in any training and initial participation in the world of work, the fact that they were of Italian nationality or were born in Great Britain of Italian parents, was not a cause for discrimination. In the environment in which they were, the Italian teenagers were considered and considered themselves to be equal to English boys of the same age group. Both teachers and instructors treated everyone alike.

The presence of the Italian second generation and its special position in society, especially through school, indirectly had an impact in the relationship between the Italian community and English society as well. The educational institutions are interested, by the very nature of their purpose, in establishing and maintaining contacts with their pupils' families. Where immigrants' children are present, this educational attention put them in contact with the foreign communities, and to a certain extent, made them more familiar and understandable.

As far as the Italians in the area were concerned, this phenamenon was easily detectable everywhere in the various local schools, though in

[1] See *Financial Times*, 5.4.1980, 11.4.1980; *The Guardian*, 5.4.1980; *The Times*, 5.4.1980, 7.4.1980, 16.7.1980.

[2] Confidential Files, Case n. 26, see Appendix.

different ways and to different degrees. In some schools where Italian children were fairly numerous, there was a most explicit and better organised effort in this sense. In the Bristol school of St. Bonaventure, for example, where there was a conspicuous number of Italian pupils, school notices were often printed both in English and Italian, frequently an Italian style party was organised, to which both the local missionary and Italian teachers were invited. The school headmaster was often invited to, and attended private parties given by Italian families, often playing the accordion and singing Italian songs. At times he even went to Italy to spend his holidays as a guest of one of his pupils.

Because of their educational purpose too, educational institutions tend to involve their pupils' parents in their activities. Through their children consequently, the immigrants too are brought within the context of the school where a new ambient of social interrelation comes into being for them; an interaction which ties them even further to the indigenous society.

One of the major efforts of the school authorities in the survey area was to interest Italian parents and make them participate in their own educational efforts in any way possible. With the exception of a few, the Italian parents were hard to catch and their participation was always rather poor. Italians were "too busy with their jobs" to which they dedicated all the extra hours available, and therefore they had no time left to participate in the parents' association and, in the school activities in general.

Work however, was very often just an excuse to justify their absence. In actual fact they did not take part simply because they were ill at ease in the school. When their reticence was overcome, they gave each other courage and did attend but tended to be passive spectators, without ever expressing any opinions by and large.

An Italian woman teacher living in the area with a teenage son attending the local Catholic school where there were several Italian pupils, told me of a parents' meeting that took place there[3]. Nearly a third of the parents present were Italians. They had to decide upon a suitable age for Confirmation, and the procedure that was to be established for the preparation. After a brief introduction, they were divided into several groups in various rooms to discuss the issue. She told me that in her group, "the Italians never opened their mouths, only the English people spoke". The discussion over, they were given a questionnaire to fill in. About a third of the papers were handed in uncompleted. The same teacher confessed, "The unanswered papers were undoubtedly those of the Italian parents ... there were certain questions which were difficult to answer even for me; I had to think before filling in the word and be very careful not to make mistakes".

[3] *Ibid.*, Case n. 27, see Appendix.

The Italian parents are not indifferent to the educational problems of their children, indeed one can say that this is their biggest preoccupation. Their poor participation in school activities, and their passive attitude is, above all, the expression of a sort of "conformist collaboration".

This conformism of theirs is born above all out of the realisation of their own limitations. The little English learned at their place of work or at the shop, does not allow them a full understanding or an ability to discuss the various problems of education adequately. Because of their own education and social origins then, they simply do not have enough knowledge of the English educational system, nor of the modern ways of teaching.

But the conformism of the Italians in the survey area was also born out of the conviction that whatever the school authorities did, or intended to do, was undoubtedly right. They showed faith in the English teachers. They were convinced that the teachers knew their jobs, and knew how to educate their children. If at times some criticism was made, it was mainly because they thought their children had "too much free time to play", or that there was "a great deal of time lost in teaching useless things" and not enough for learning "how to read and write". They exhorted the teachers to do more for their children, to be more demanding and, if need be, to use punishment.

This attitude of trust and insistence on the discipline factor cannot only be brought back to a traditional vision of education and the role of authority. These concepts are also the expression of the way the immigrant places himself in the context of the English scholastic environment, to which he is forcibly introduced, and towards which he feels he must be grateful for the effort made there for his children. More generally it is the expression of the way the immigrant places himself in relation to the native society as a whole, who own the territory in which he is a guest.

The immigrant's conformism is not only expressed in his behaviour within the scholastic institutions, but also takes shape in the idea of what he expects, and his children should receive from these institutions. The Italian immigrants who did not see any form of emancipation for themselves abroad, apart from that offered by private property, and possibly by trade, envisaged emancipation mainly through education for their children. Education meant, above all, emancipation from the slavery of ordinary work because "a person with qualifications has no need to get his hands dirty to make a living". This was particularly true for the Italian immigrants of the area, who resigned themselves to do "certain jobs" only because they were abroad [4].

[4] L. Covelli (in *The Social Background of Italo-Americal School Child*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1944) and H.S. Nelli (*op. cit.*, pp. 66-72) make affirmations which seem to contradict our observations. Without wishing to question the results of their research in any way, it seems opportune to

Any kind of education however, represented an emancipation also because it would allow their children to speak "proper English" and thus to be treated as English and be accepted in society. By and large the immigrants refused to integrate in the society in which they were living. But at the same time they felt the humiliation of being foreigners, they were under the impression of "begging for charity" when working for a living, and they did not want their children to feel the same anger and humiliation they had experienced. Thus they took a lot of interest in their children's education, and as best as they could, in a conformist way, they co-operated with the educational institutions. They wanted their children to do well at school.

When their children did not do well at school, they were bitter about it and often very severe with them. Those who were established in business were very upset if one of their children left school because he preferred to help his parents in their business. When their children did well, however, they were really happy and proudly showed everybody their good reports. If a child went to college, they took every opportunity possible to broadcast the fact.

By and large the Italians were convinced that their children were fitting in well in the English schools. At the same time they were convinced that if they did go back home, the children might have trouble in adapting to another scholastic system. In order to educate their children in the best possible manner they underwent hardship, and in order not to disturb the harmonious development of their offspring, they put off even the thought of a return home, at least for the time being.

Broadly speaking, amongst the Italian immigrants there was the conviction that the best place to raise and give a future to their children was in their village, or at any rate in Italy. Their concern for their children's wellbeing and their wish to go home were one and the same life project.

But the decision was to be taken in time, that is "before the children would start liking the English way of life". When there were teenagers in a family, the Italian immigrants were convinced that the inevitable had already taken place. The children, according to the same immigrants, were by now tied to the local environment, and the parents who wanted the wellbeing of their offspring, had no other alternative but to seek this

mention here that as Italian children (and this seems to be true for Mediterraneans in general) grow, the more they are called upon to help around the house. Thus they go into both work and the different male/female models of behaviour spontaneously without actually feeling the weight of responsibility. All this can sometimes distract them from schooling and could give the impression that Italian parents do not place much value on schooling. In reality Italians, especially those from the South, have an image of work which clearly separates the "clean" from the "dirty" work. Thus they tend to value education, at times going as far as to forget the practical value and seeing only the kudos it brings with it.

on the spot. A return home for good would be in conflict with the children's wellbeing.

For the Italian immigrants, the wellbeing of their offspring was, by and large, the ultimate reality which determined the choice they made, and in the end tied them to the place of immigration. One can undoubtedly state that the presence of the second generation was the sociological element that contributed most to stabilising the Italian community in the area.

The second generation, even before it was a factor which favoured a further advance of the Italian community into the native society, thus tying it to the foreign land, was above all a factor which favoured integration within the family.

Paolo, for example, had arrived in Great Britain in 1956 and during the twenty years of his stay abroad, he had married and had had three daughters who, in 1976 were two fifteen years olds (twins) and one eleven year old. In 1970 he had bought a house in his native town where he always spent the summers with his family, investing the greater part of his savings in it. In September 1976 he went to Italy, for what should have been his final re-entry home.

In 1978, after two years at home, he was forced to come back to Bristol and "start all over again". The only reason was that the elder daughters had not been able to fit in in their new community and had decided to return to Bristol. The father unsuccessfully tried his best to convince them to stay, but in the end he found that there was nothing else left except to take them back, entrust them to a close friend, and go home "to pack his bags once more". After three months he was back in Bristol with the rest of the family where he once again bought a house and started to work as a hairdresser.

He came back to Bristol, as he said "only under pressure". "Just think", he explained "when I left here I loaded a lorry full of goods and chattels and went home ... after two years, I packed everything up again and I came to live in a rented flat here as I had done twenty-two years ago. You could say that I came back here because I knew the place, I knew what was waiting for me ... oh yes! it's not so easy. What I really knew was what I had left at home: I left a house, bought with twenty years of sweat abroad, I left my parents' plot of land ... I am not talking about money ... it's my house, my land. I left my old father ... I always thought I would be near him and look after him in his last years. I can't explain all this to my children".

The second departure for abroad assumed a special significance and was radically different from the one twenty years earlier. It demolished the very reason that had justified the sacrifice of immigrant life, making the twenty years spent abroad an absurdity, and it presented itself as a penalty, since all the motives which had made him go abroad in the first

place were missing. He had "resigned" himself to immigrate again only because of the daughters and in order "not to break up the family". And he explained, "I stayed here for twenty years (I made such a big sacrifice); if I had stayed home and left my children here, what sort of a life would I have had?".

When talking to the immigrants about their eventual chances of going home, they collected and reduced their concerns, as we have seen, to the idea of the wellbeing of their children and what could happen to them. This problem however was always analysed within the framework of family unity which went without saying and as never questioned. Clarifying what was said earlier then, one can say that the wellbeing of the children determined the choices made by each family group and consequently shaped its objectives and programmes.

The general welfare of the family group appears as a varied composite of objectives and programmes which, at times, are quite different or altogether in absolute contrast, but which happily coexist until a crisis situation takes place which calls for a clarification and a choice to be made.

In the migratory context, the evolution of the family group and the emergence of the second generation with its problems, bring the family into a situation of conflict whereby the choice of the family unity requires the sacrifice of several objectives and programmes. These objectives and programmes are often the basic motivations which had initially justified that self-same migratory act.

The sacrifice somehow reinforces the preferential choice, and the family group emerges and increasingly presents itself to its members as the most meaningful social reality. The presence of the second generation consequently, by concentrating the objectives and programmes of the family group, gathers and strengthens the personal and co-operative ties typical of the average Italian family even further; ties which had already been made stronger by the isolation of the immigrant condition.

Contrary to what happens in the ordinary Italian or English family, in the Italian immigrant family there was no noticeable conflict between generations [5]. The Italian teenagers each had their friends, either English or Italian, though these friendship ties nearly always remained fragmentary and varied, they never became a group of solidarity and identity. The Italian teenagers had no consciousness of belonging to, and least of all

[5] The authors of the *Rapporto di Sintesi sulle caratteristiche, il sistema religioso e il sistema sociale personale della seconda generazione italiana in Gran Bretagna.* (Roma, C.S.E.R., 1974) state that the immigrant situation has increased the tension between the second generation and their parents. We have only noticed the opposite. Some sort of division between generations is also characteristic of Italian socio-cultural reality. If this is increased or diminished in the migratory context however, it is the matter of a judgement which in this case was based on a analysis of what might have happened to these same families in Italy.

of constituting a separate social group with their peers. They did not identify themselves with the social category of young people whose fashionable preoccupations (for example the desire to have social standing) or the concern of life (for example the youth unemployment problem), they did not share. The Italian teenagers were rather sceptical and often critical of this category of people, which in both their language, and their parents' language was known as "English youth".

Neither did they identify with a possible category of "Italian youth" with problems or specific roles of their own. For the Italian second generation, any group identity or solidarity was conditioned by the relationship that each teenager had with his own family, to which he was deeply attached and with which he first identified.

During my stay in the survey area, as far as I could gather, there had only been five cases of a teenager running away from home[6]. These five cases, with exceptions of little importance, all basically shared the same motivation, a similar pattern of behaviour, and received the same wrong explanations.

In each case it was a girl who had left home and in each case it was thought that the reason for running away was to be found in her wish to have more social intercourse or be with a boyfriend her parents did not like. Inevitably these flights appeared as an indicator of a crisis in the Italian immigrant family network, especially in relation to the problem of matrimonial choice; the symptom of a new vision of the family.

The explanation of this crisis was always sought in the model of a conflict between generations which was aggravated in the immigrant context as the children would grow up under the influence of both native and foreign patterns of behaviour, which were very different from those of the parents. To this analysis, vague and rough understanding of the diverse social conventions of the immigrants from Southern Italy was often added and in particular a rather negative opinion about the parents concerned, who still lived by "antiquated and obsolete customs" and by "ignorance", still expecting "to impose a certain husband on their daughters".

On the basis of these convictions various school masters, nuns, social workers and others, both Italian and English who sought to help, saw yet another point scored in favour of every girl's right to choose her own boyfriend in these flights. At times, someone also took the trouble of openly encouraging some of these girls, inviting them "to stand firm" and in this way become the suffragettes of new and "more civilised" social relationship within the Italian community, the symbol of a more dignified and humane life for all the other young girls of the second generation.

Ironically the same parents concerned, and the entire Italian community in general, were mainly responsible in spreading the idea that an

[6] Confidential Files, Cases n. 28-29-30-31-32, see Appendix.

explanation for the flights was to be found in the area of matrimonial choice. There was indeed the conviction amongst Italian parents that when a girl of a certain age started giving trouble, or left home, it was a sure sign that she wanted a husband. To each of the five girls in question, the respective parents sent word, sometimes begging, others threatening, that provided she came back she could "take the boyfriend she loved if she really wanted to".

In actual fact, the basic reason for running away from home were never strictly concerned with boyfriend problems and least of all with problems of matrimonial choice. In two of the mentioned cases, there had not been, and never was a boyfriend. In another, the girl ended by taking up with a married man, separated from his wife, but they met and started going about together only after she had left home and had lived on her own for quite some time.

In the other two cases, the girls each had an English boyfriend whose presence was not welcomed by the parents; this fact however had only been one of the arguments within their families. When the two girls in question left home, not knowing where to go, they took refuge in their boyfriends' house. In both cases, however, there was no true cohabitation. Each boy was living at home with his family and after a couple of nights or so sleeping on a sofa, both girls left so as not to give trouble and one of them went to live with a girl friend, the other in a convent with some nuns she knew.

For none of them was the motive for leaving home a deep love which their parents were against, least of all the terrible fear of being forced to marry against their will. The five girls told me that the reasons for leaving home were different, and one of the greatest hardships they had had to face, even "in order to defend their good name and reputation", was that of having to explain to their people that they had not run away from home to be with a boyfriend.

They had only left home because, as they said, they had wanted to try out being alone. They wanted to show their parents that they were able to support themselves. They wanted to be free to go home whenever they wanted to at night, they wanted to try doing things in the same way as English girls and so on. Whilst at home they could never do these things because their parents were far too strict.

These concepts must be read within the attitudes and behaviour in use within the Italian group and families. From the Italian immigrants' point of view, Anglo-Saxon youth is independent and self sufficient from a very early age and often they leave home to be on their own. As one of these girls explained: "English parents let their children of our age go out, find a job, so that they learn how to look after themselves, earn a living. With my English friends, their parents just want to push them out".

In the case of the Italian immigrants though, children by and large

do not leave home until they marry. One reason is that Italian immigrants perceive the role of the family differently from the way English people do. In the Italian immigrant family, individual interests are merged in the general interest of the family group. All members put their efforts in the service of the family and when one starts thinking of getting out (usually by marrying) all the members of the family contribute in order to help him or her settle. One of the above mentioned girls lived for a month at a girl friend's house until her parents, although not happy about their daughter's behaviour, thought, "But if she really wants to live outside, why should she waste money on rent?" and helped her to buy her own house.

The complexity of the personal and co-operative relationships and the richness of values transmitted within the Italian family group, expand the role of the family, extending it in space and time, till marriage and even afterwards.

The family praxis could at times translate itself into that limitation of privacy from which a lot of the discussions and conflicts stem within the Italian immigrant families, as in the case of the five mentioned girls. In any case, these discussions and conflicts are an every day reality and usually tend to remain at a very superficial level. Italian teenagers understood the peculiarity of their families' role and accepted it. In their discussion about it with their English friends, they underlined this peculiarity and defended it.

Even the five girls in question appreciated this peculiarity of the Italian family, and they wanted to underline that they held no bitterness against their parents, and that they still loved both them and their families. One of them told me, "I feel there is more love and understanding in an Italian family than in an English one". During the period they were away from home, after the first few troubled days, they often rang the family up or went back from time to time to assure the parents that they were all right, and not to worry about them. They were deeply concerned about their parents' serenity, so that in all five cases the problem of choice seemed to be present mainly in the dilemma of wanting the experience of being free, but at the same time the anguish of knowing their parents plight.

Their choice had not been directed against their family and the things they received from it; but on the contrary. As one of them explained, "Italian parents tend to be ... not too possessive, but they just won't let go; it's too much". The immigrant who sacrifices his migratory project for the sake of his children, invests all his future in his children's future. His preoccupation for his children's wellbeing could be so pressing as to become a true intrusion of the kind that provokes the need for an alternative experience of autonomy and responsibility.

One cannot deny that in the Italian immigrant family, parents' authority over their children was exercised with more than a good dose

of severity and strictness. In the Italian family in Italy, parents' authority is usually not exercised with the same severity. The immigrant Italian parents did not hold much esteem for the English environment in which their children were growing, and showed an excessive preoccupation, especially with regard to the female members of the family [7]. The fact that in the five mentioned cases, they were all girls, is particularly meaningful in this sense. Generally Italian parents were stricter with girls than boys. During the time covered by this research, some boy may have left home too; such cases however were not recorded as there wasn't much fuss made about that.

It is also undeniable that the need to imitate and act like "English friends" of the same age acted, had its influence on these flights from home. These suggestions taken in from the English environment however, only remained almost exclusively a point of comparison. Immigration, by tightening personal and co-operative relations within the family group, prevented the Italian teenagers assuming alternative or contrary models of behaviour to those proposed by the family culture. By and large young people of the second generation were not terribly keen to imitate their English counterparts, at least in so far as the most important aspect of life was concerned.

In the Italian immigrants' families there were always arguments which included disagreements for the various reasons mentioned above, but generally speaking there were never real conflcts. "After all", one of the above girls said, "children rebel, no matter what nationality they belong to".

An analysis of the ethical system of the second generation as shown in the sociological survey C.S.E.R. [8] presents a vision of an ideal behaviour in harmony with the data described up to now. This ethical system seems to organise itself almost exclusively around two basic principles: the respect for life, and the respect for the family.

For the Italian teenagers the duty to respect every creature's life is fundamental in particular that of the weakest and the one less able to defend itself, for example, children and socially deprived people.

The principles which sustain and defend the family institution soon follow. Generally, parental figures are kept in great esteem, their role of authority is accepted and respected. In any case, a child has to feel an attitude of filial piety towards his parents. It would be incorrect and shameful if a son were to abandon his parents or send them to an old people's home. Marital duties are looked upon in the same manner.

[7] For a wider discussion on this problem, see M. DOUGLAS, *Purity and Danger*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, pp. 114-128.

[8] AA.VV., *Rapporto di Sintesi sulle caratteristiche, il sistema religioso e il sistema sociale personale della seconda generazione italiana in Gran Bretagna*. Roma, C.S.E.R., 1974.

Divorce is frowned upon as an evil; it is accepted only in the case of incompatibility, and only when there are no children. A person's duty is to take care of his offspring. It is extremely bad behaviour to get a girl pregnant and leave her or to encourage her to have an abortion.

Adultery and pre-marital intercourse are not generally considered to be serious matters. This attitude is rather interesting if one sees it in relation to the statement about the unity of matrimony and the duty to take up responsibilities in the case of a pregnant girl. The family institution could have a self-evident value of its own, independent of sexual behaviour.

The immigrant condition, therefore, rather than breaking up family ties, seems to tighten them and brings about a way of looking at things which perpetuates them. The young people of the second generation live and come out from the family experience with a basically "familistic" vision.

For the Italian teenagers their introduction to the external environment of Britain occurred chiefly through their schools and other educational institutions. Thereafter they might develop a general acquaintance with British ways.

At school, from the disciplinary point of view, teachers said they had no great problems with Italian teenagers. With very few exceptions Italian youth seemed to be "docile and kind", never showing any sign of anti-conformist attitudes and behaviour. One cannot help noticing a correlation between the parents behaviour, as seen above, and that of their children. The practical and ideal conformism of the parents towards educational institutions, translated itself in a series of warnings and advice to the children, to do their very best at school.

The attitude of the Italian teenagers at school, however, is not reducible to a mere pedantic duty of fulfilment of their parents' wishes, nor to a mere imitation of their behaviour; it is above all the expression of a model of social interrelation, typical of the second generation. The Italian teenagers were conformists by their own nature.

From the sociological survey C.S.E.R., it appears that for the Italian teenagers the ideal youth is "the one who takes notice of his parents advice and does well at school". If the family and school are the most argued over institutions by young people, this does not seem to be the case of the Italian second generation. The gratifying and qualifying environment of the immigrant family group, reduces the need to break with the family institution and tradition. The Italian teenager is a respectful and dutiful child to his parents.

At the same time, the respect and sense of duty towards the parents brings about a tendency to collect and take to heart the hopes his parents thrust on him. The parents, having immigrated in search of bettering their economic and social life, tend to project their aspirations on to their children. The socio-professional mobility easily becomes the basic

attitude that filters through, organises and gives content to the social behaviour of the second generation. As confirmed in the sociological survey C.S.E.R. too, one of the most pressing preoccupations of the Italian teenagers was indeed to qualify for a professional career.

The Italian teenagers, besides having good personal and co-operative relations within their family group, were kind and co-operative with their master, because "doing well at school" meant an opening to do well in society and life in general. The realisation of such professional and social ambitions was facilitated and encouraged by the egalitarian praxis which ruled in all local schools.

But in the scholastic environment, these teenagers also met their English counterparts and got incorporated into the English environment. The scholastic institutions were the melting pot, where the Italian teenagers found their first out-of-the-family relationships and were exposed to the norms and the value systems of English society. The cumulative action of school relationships within the educative process made the Italian teenager an effective and rightful member of the local teenage group.

By and large Italian teenagers each had his set of personal friendships, most of which were born in the school environment, and were cultivated outside school. Often these friendships continued even if at a certain age they were broken and substituted by others made in the ambit of the neighbourhood or at the place of work.

The equality of treatment at school did not necessarily mean an equal ability from school boys and girls, in so far as making use of opportunities offered by the scholastic environment was concerned. Even for the second generation one could easily detect some of the cultural limitations typical of the immigrant condition.

For an Italian boy in Great Britain, the initial participation and then the successive progress in the native school system, is first of all conditioned by the language difficulty. At home usually English is not spoken, thus the Italian boy starting school has to start from scratch by learning a new language. This does not substitute the mother tongue, but is added to it; the fact that the boy is forced to speak two languages makes him excel in neither. "The two languages", a headmaster used to say, "seems to confuse the ability of the child in perceiving the meaning of things".

To this is to be added the diversity of the family cultural background, in which the child grows up, so that in order to reach complete knowledge of the English language, the child has to change the shape of his very thoughts, thus making his own a new and different culture. A psychiatrist [9], who from time to time visited St. Bonaventure school, put the absenteeism and poor results of a particular Italian boy at that school down to this different cultural backgroud. The teacher described the child as a very intelligent one, but absent and disinterested, who did not like group activities and was happy only when allowed to run about on his own.

[9] Confidential Files, Case n. 33, see Appendix.

Finally the social background from which the immigrant's child comes, as happens in the native working class environment for that matter, is very limited in schooling or education of any kind, and at times can make things much worse. Often enough the teachers pointed out to me disapprovingly how Italian children were not very free after school hours but often had to work, for example, take care of their younger sisters and brothers, or do household chores whilst their parents were at work. The courses in Italian organised by the Consulate were another of these further undertakings the Italian child had to bear.

All these difficulties obstruct a smooth entry into the native school system, and make it an often rushed and superficial one, with negative effects on the further development of the child's education. A headmaster used to say that, "The Italian immigrants' children sent to school at five, take four years to reach the same level as English children of the same age". In the stream class division "the most lazy English children", went on the same headmaster, "are at the bottom of the first stream, whilst the more brilliant Italian children are top of the third stream".

From the sociological survey C.S.E.R. it was shown that 72% of Italian young people left school without any qualifications and that the majority of those who got "O" and "A" levels and had continued their education, mainly went into the technical field. From this one can easily speculate upon the future placement of these Italian teenagers within the socio-economic English context [10].

Notwithstanding the evident positive impact of the school on the effects of social relations even this should not be exaggerated. School was not radically resolving the socialisation problem of the Italian second generation, and the Italian teenagers in relation to the native society revealed particular attitudes which are typical of the immigrant group.

The C.S.E.R. survey showed how the ethical system of the second generation was lacking in values of a general nature (such as justice, freedom, and so on) and of an idealistic nature (such as religion). For the Italian teenagers the principles of commutative justice was not of great importance; honesty in social interrelations was one of the last things

[10] For a discussion of the educational and social problems of immigrants children in English schools, see ILEA, *The Education of Immigrants Pupils in Primary Schools*. Report of a working party of members of the inspectorate and schools psychological service, 1967; A. Little, *Performance of Children from Ethnic Minority Background in Primary Schools*, in "Oxford Review of Education", 1975, Vol. 1, No. 2; N. Blok and G. Dworkin (eds.), *The IQ Controversy*. Quartet Books, 1976; E. Stone, *The Colour of Conceptual Learning*, in G.K. Verma and C. Bagley (ed.), "Race Education and Identity". London, Heineman Educ., 1979; H.E.R. Townsend and E. Brittan, *Organisation in Multi-Racial Schools*. NFER, 1972; DES, *The Continuing Needs of Immigrants*. Educational Survey 14, HMSO, 1970; G. Driver and R. Ballard, *Comparing Performance in Multi-Racial Schools*, in "New Community", 1979, Vol. VII, No. 2; C. Bagley, *A Comparative Perspective on the Education of Black Children in Britain*, in "Comparative Education", 1979, Vol. 15, No. 1.

they were concerned with. The "self-help" ability, such as cheating during exams, or evading taxes, was appreciated. As seen before, their sparse ethical system reduced itself to the principle of defending the sanctity of life and the family institution.

This ethical system then did not appear to be sustained by a religious concept. The majority (86%) of the young people interviewed were unanimous in stating that they believed in God's existence. About half of them (48%) were unanimous also in the probability of a life after death as something of the human being should survive. Given the difference in proportion of 86% to 48% between these two beliefs, the first idea, relative to God's existence, does not seem to fit in directly with the second, relative to ultra-terrestrial life, so that the concepts about God are not defined on a God image as remunerator, praising good, punishing evil, done in the course of life on earth.

This observation is confirmed also by the fact that the same concept of the life after death seems to be devoid of the concept of remuneration Two-thirds of them were unanimous on the existence of a paradise as a prize, and a little less than a third were for the existence of a hell as punishment. Ultra-terrestrial life therefore, though it may not appear simply as a prolonging of a terrestrial life, it being a better one, fundamentally remains an expression of a need that the wholeness is not bound to die. It does not seem to be considered as a sanction of what one has done in the course of life. By and large these religious concepts did not present themselves as moral monitors.

A great majority of Italian teenagers attended or had attended local English Catholic schools. Before this, in support of the formal religious education at school, almost the entire generation had been in contact and had been influenced by the fundamentally Catholic environment of their families and of the Italian immigrant group. Almost all the parents were Catholic and had grown up in Italy where Catholicism is part of social life. The Italian community was Catholic. The local parish, with which the Italian group and the second generation were in contact and in which, with the Italian missionary, they celebrated the most important events of their life (births, weddings, deaths, etc.) was Catholic.

Consequently, the Italian teenagers by and large had grown up in a Catholic environment and some of them had received a formal Catholic education. They themselves declared they were fundamentally Catholics. On examination however, their religious concepts and behaviour did not appear to be consistent with their statements. Their religious concepts appeared to be a composite of fragmentary disorganised ideas which were not very consistent with any real doctrinal system of the Catholic confession. Religious practice then, was in clear contradiction with their beliefs.

On being asked about the role of a priest, many affirmed that it was his main duty to teach catechism to the children and explain religion.

This however was not an expression of interest for their own religious instruction. Nearly all confessed they didn't know much about religion, but neither did they express a need to know more, nor did they ask the question whether one of the priest's duties should also be to teach them.

The idea of a necessity to belong to the Catholic movement, and accept its mediation, was either irrelevant or quite absent; convictions that for a Catholic are typical and essential. In the Sunday mass precept they see one of the fundamental duties of the Catholic religion. At the same time they did not think that the non-fulfilment of this precept was a grave lack of duty, and the great majority of them actually did not go to mass.

They refused to identify religion with ritual duties, they stated that the undertaking for social justice and the help for others were part of religious life. On being asked, however, which were the things that most interested them in life, the involvement of social justice and the problems connected with social interrelations were invariably put last. There was never an anxiety to know, nor the concern to practise.

By and large the second generation's religious education in the English Catholic schools seems to remain a rather superficial one. This was also due to the fact that there was not a very consistent relationship between school education and immigrant family.

The Catholic school is an institution belonging to the local English parish, and is therefore a body which finds its origin in, and owes its existence to, the local parish community. The English Catholic family is an integral part of this parish community, and as such, through the parish institution, the family of the English teenager creates, supports and administers that which it considers to be its school. In this case, there is a certain continuity between school and family, and the local Catholic school defines itself funtionally towards the local Catholic families and community who create it and keep it in existence. For the English teenager then, school religious education appears as the systematic and deepened elaboration of the data learned and lived within the family and the parish community.

The Italian immigrant family, however, does not participate in the local English parish community in the same way. It either finds its religious community in the precarious community which is grouped around the Italian missionary (to which the second generation participate marginally), or does not find it at all. The Italian immigrant's presence within the English parish is not an active one, and when it is there it is always a solitary one, often fairly anonymous, without much direct participation. Any religious education given in it to the Italian teenager is poorly connected with the religiosity of his family group and his community, it tends to remain in the realm of technical information which is part of the scholastic training.

Taking this anaysis even further one may say that the indigenous

school institution is above all an expression of English society. The systematic and scientific presentation of the broad ideal values, typical of the English family and society, are offered within it. But all this is not always adequately connected with an ideal and ethical system of the average Italian immigrant family and group. Consequently the Italian teenager, apart from the technical instruction, will rarely find generic social suggestions there in which he can identify himself.

At times these suggestions could indeed even be contradictory, so much so as to create confusion which weighs heavily, not only on the scholastic progress as seen above, but also in the development of a concept of social relations. On talking with an Italian teenager who was about to go and spend a few days vacation with his relatives at his parent's home town, I asked him if the thought of going to Italy was exciting. He answered that he was not going to Italy, but to Sicily. When I pointed out that he too was Italian, he answered in English, "No, I am British".

The religious and social education that the Italian teenager gets at English Catholic schools is not directly connected to a clear experience in social interrelations. What he learns in the last instance, only directly acquires an ethical dimension in so far as it is supported by the respect for what is being taught, believed, and practised in his own family. The ethical system of the Italian teenager tends to remain within the limits of family relations, and seldom extends to a wider context beyond a tribal solidarity. It is born out of the cultural tradition of the immigrant family and group, and in it, it undergoes a parallel transformation process.

In it, and with it, the aiming to a material success brings about an undervaluation of all that is not immediately verifiable and translatable into concrete terms. At the same time, the concept of individual success develops an attitude of competition towards the world outside-the-family and expresses itself in a form of social conformism with the tendency to profit on all occasions and to exploit social relations in order to achieve an aim.

The process, which makes the second generation participate in the indigenous environment, and which gives them an alternative socialisation to the family, is largely attributed to the school but does not in fact stem from it. Though part of the educational process, the series of contacts that the Italian teenager has at school can, and often do, remain comparable to the relations that the first generation had at the place of work.

The cumulative effect of contacts in the educational process has a different impact from the cumulative effect at the place of work because the former takes place in the context of the development typical of the second generation. That is the category of people who are born in a foreign land, or had come here when still very young. In other words, people who had practically only known this environment. The educational

process that influences the second generation is within the context of the development which almost exclusively takes place in the new country.

The second generation Italians in the area had grown up with the habit of taking the environment in which they lived for granted and had learned to know the country and the society in which they lived as their own natal environment. In this context the educational process had fitted in as a natural development, which supplied the technology and enabled the second generation to take control and possess the environment to which it belonged. The attitude typical of the second generation towards the society and land of immigration stems mainly from this. By and large, Italian teenagers, unlike their parents, considered themselves to be incorporated in the local environment and visualised their life in Great Britain.

In actual fact, some teenagers confessed a certain "love" for Italy, and stated that if and when their parents went back, they would willingly go too. But of those young people, only a few knew the real Italy, and no one had had a serious confrontation with the reality of re-entry.

Nearly all had only known the nostalgic image of Italy which emerged from the tales of their parents, in which only the better aspects of life were reported and the worst were left out. It was the idealised Italy, that land where the sun always shone, tomatoes as red as fire and as big as balloons ripened and where people had a great big heart [11]. The only too brief holidays the children had been able to spend in their parents' home village had further corroborated these beliefs. They had in fact experienced the free time and holiday Italy, and had no idea of the every day working Italy.

One of the reasons why Paolo's two daughters, of whom we spoke before, had decided to go back to Bristol, was indeed "the disappointment" of not having found what they had expected in their home town.

As they told me, Roseto degli Abruzzi is a lovely town, a tourist resort on the Adriatic coast. In the past, they had gone there on their annual holidays, and they still liked to do so. The only problem was that "one only lives when it's summer, when the holiday-makers come, the other ten months there is no life". For the rest of the year during the period they spend there, they did nothing else but "go to school and stay at home". "Truthfully speaking", they added, "we were out all the afternoon, but in the evening ... either because we had homework to do, or because we had nothing better to do, we stayed at home ... we practically only went out to visit friends, or to go to the local Bar".

But the reason for their disappointment was more deeply rooted. Indeed when I asked them what they did in Bristol, they had to admit

[11] See H.J. GANS, *Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America*, "Ethnic and Racial Studies", Vol. 2, No. 1, Jan. 1979, in which the meaning is explained and indirectly shows the trends implicit in these ethnic feelings of the Italian second generation.

that life there was very much the same as in Italy. "We don't like going to the discotheques", they said, "and occasionally we go to the cinema; we go out once or twice a week in the evening, most of the time to visit some Italian friends". The ultimate reason for their discontent with Italy was to be found in the fact that in coming face to face with the reality of the re-entry and the prospect of having to live there for good, they understood that they cound not do it simply because down there, in the old place, they were foreigners. At the beginning they never thought about it, but it all started when they went to school. They felt they were treated differently and, they explained, "they used to call us 'Inglesine' (little English girls), and every time we did anything, they used to say it. They never treated us badly, in fact, they treated us very well, but always as foreigners".

There was a local solidarity amongst the young people of the town in which the two girls had no part. It was because of this that they did not feel "at ease" in their parents' native town. "They (the town's young people)", the two girls said, "they could say what they liked; we couldn't; we were no match for them. We could only talk about the local people amongst ourselves, or with some girl from outside". And they went on, "we had some friends, but they were all from some other town, like Rome, Foggia, Milan, Turin, never from the same town. We had a German friend in particular ... she was an Italian born abroad, like us, and she had, like us, come back with her family, and like us started going to the local school. We had a lot in common, we were always together".

The dialect of the relationships was thus expressed in a form of structural opposition, where when confronting local solidarity, of which they were no part, the two girls discovered what distinguished them from the native Italians: the common alliance which tied them to those people in the self-same situation. As the two girls themselves said, the reaction of the rest of the local teenagers stemmed from this very fact. "The others, seeing that we were always together, said we didn't want to mix with them".

On listening, it seemed to be the same argument expressed by the immigrants when they were telling me of their experience in a foreign country. Though with less intensity and in a different way, the story of the parents was being repeated by their children. The Italian second generation in Italy was in a foreign land.

But with few exceptions apart, in general, the second generation had never known a direct confrontation with the reality of a definitive re-entry to Italy, and their positive statements about it remained rather relative opinions. In the second generation, one could not see a real and concrete ideology of return. The great majority of the Italian teenagers did not seem to have the same desire as their parents to go back for good.

In the Italian teenageers of the Bristol region, one could not detect the ambivalence that the C.S.E.R. in its sociological surveys had found in

many young Italians in both Switzerland and Germany. The latter, interviewed on the same theme, appeared to be unable to programme a future for themselves, because they couldn't decide whether to stay or to go back to Italy. The Italian teenagers in the Bristol region, however, showed an "oriented pragmatism" in their daily activities which presupposed the sufficiently certain decision to remain on the spot.

This basic orientation at times emerged more clearly especially when there was a strain or a crisis, particularly within the family group. An immigrant [12] who, like many others, had a little house in Italy with a small plot of land nearby, told me how every time a bill arrived at home or a son asked for help in order to set himself up, and there was not any money, that small holding in Italy was always brought up in arguments. "I should like to keep it", he said sadly, "even if only for holidays, but my children insist on my selling it".

These daily crisis were the manifestation of the conflict that the evolution of the family group on a foreign land had opened up between the first and the second generations. This conflict was usually resolved by the sacrificing of the parents' migratory project, so that the second generation never experienced the dilemma of choosing whether to go home or to stay put, and could look forward to a future by fitting in where they were, without having doubts about it.

On the other hand the knowledge of the environment and the chance to satisfy their aspiration of professional and social promotion, favoured this fitting in and facilitated acceptance of the English society and country.

This insertion and acceptance did not yet imply total participation in the activities of the native associated life. The alienation of the Italian family from the English environment, and the approach to the native society by the second generation, according to an individualistic, pragmatic and competitive manner, hindered the development of normal personal and co-operative relationships.

According to the C.S.E.R. survey, in front of the statement "Loneliness is something which most of us feel in today's world", 80% of the people interviewed were strongly in agreement. The Italian teenager cannot find a group in society besides his own family one, with which to identify, therefore he remains isolated and lonely. His condition could be described with, and compared to the condition of an adopted child. He always feels the nostalgia to know his parents' mother-land though he does not really care about it. He has good relationships with English society which receives and accepts him in its house, though he remains conscious of being an adopted child.

The two elder daughters of Paolo, of whom we talked before, concluded their story with a phrase in which all the tragedy of the young people of the second generation can be summed up. "We", they said,

[12] Confidential Files, Case n. 34, see Appendix.

"when we are in Italy we are English, when we are here, we are Italians ... that is why the immigrants' children never have a country of their own".

The same concept was being expressed by all the young people of the second generation when I asked them if they considered themselves to be Italian or English. The answer was always the same, "Neither one nor the other".

With them the immigrants had arrived at the end of the road on which many years before they had started out with so much hope. The first generation had a motherland, but lived in a land which was not home. They were lost. The second generation took the land they lived in as home, but had no motherland and no sense of belonging. They were more lost than the first generation. The Italian collectivity in the Bristol region was a collection of families without a "polis" of their own: a people without a bell-tower, without a graveyard.

INDIVIDUAL INFORMANTS AND CONFIDENTIAL CASES

First must be acknowledged the indispensable information supplied to me over a period of five years by the members of the Italian communities among whom I lived and worked.

Experience led me to identify those informants who were more reliable and better informed than others. These are: Enrico and Giulia Ambrosino, Elvatore Buccione, Adele Chiovi, Carmelo and Maria Cocchiara, Felicia Coiro, Andrea Contino, Alberto De Juliis, Alfonso De Paola, Giuseppe Fantini, Maria Fiore, James and Laura King, Giacomo Licata, Maria Martin, Concetta Mazzotta, Francesco Mazzotta, Carla Morotti, Maura Penasa, Leonardo Polisena, Paolo Sacchetti, Lillo Sarullo, Angelo Semeraro, Rinaldo Stefani, Maria Stranieri, Dante Toson. To them I returned from time to time to cross-check and verify my data.

Such key informants though were set in a matrix of the scores of other individuals who supplied good information, and the hundreds whom I also served and came to know. Considerations of confidentiality, not least those of a priest in relation to the parishioners whom he serves, lead me to record details with caution. Nevertheless my observations were made systematically. Notebooks and files were kept by me containing important facts and views expressed by individuals, women and men of all ages, both on their own and in family and group contexts. Information was recorded over time in the light of changes and modifications in perspective. Hence no single date can be attached to any particular source, but all information was given during the period 1975-1980.

Understanding, affection, I believe, can and do serve to facilitate rapport and to secure accurate details and honest opinions, but as a research worker I also attempted to preserve a sufficient and necessary degree of detachment for purposes of observation and scholarly analysis.


LIECHTENSTEIN
SWITZERLAND
AUSTRIA
FRANCE
TRENTINO
ALTO-ADIGE
FRIULI-
VENEZIA
GIULIA
VALLE
D'AOSTA
LOMBARDY
Milan
VENETO
Venice
Turin
Po
PIEDMONT
LIGURIA
Genoa
EMILIA-ROMAGNA
Bologna
YUGOSLAVIA
MONACO
Ligurian Sea
SAN MARINO
Florence
TUSCANY
MARCHES
Ancona
Elba
UMBRIA
Adriatic Sea
CORSICA
(to France)
Ajaccio
ABRUZZO
Rome
LATIUM
MOLISE
CAMPANIA
BASILICATA
APULIA
Bari
Naples
SARDINIA
Tyrrhenian Sea
Taranto
Cagliari
CALABRIA
Palermo
Messina
Reggio
SICILY
Catania
Ionian Sea
ALGERIA
TUNISIA
Mediterranean Sea
AREAS FROM WHICH
THE ITALIANS OF THE
BRISTOL REGION ORIGINATE
100
Km
Miles

TABLES

Tab. 1. ITALIAN MIGRATORY MOVEMENT FROM AND TO GREAT BRITAIN 1947-70

Years	Entering G.B.	Leaving G.B.	Net Result	Years	Entering G.B.	Leaving G.B.	Net Result
1947	365	112	— 253	1959	7,360	1,288	— 6,072
1948	2,679	2	— 2,677	1960	10,118	1,576	— 8,542
1949	6,592	10	— 6,582	1961	11,003	1,868	— 9,135
1950	3,451	51	— 3,400	1962	8,907	2,504	— 6,403
1951	9,967	75	— 9,892	1963	4,681	2,476	— 2,205
1952	3,522	641	— 2,881	1964	4,979	2,308	— 2,671
1953	5,502	272	— 5,230	1965	7,098	2,971	— 4,127
1954	7,787	1,039	— 6,748	1966	4,346	3,357	— 3,989
1955	10,400	519	— 9,881	1967	4,392	2,495	— 1,897
1956	11,520	1,150	—10,370	1968	3,777	3,082	— 695
1957	10,595	1,060	— 9,535	1969	2,971	2,992	+ 21
1958	6,464	838	— 5,626	1970	2,476	2,838	+ 362

Source: ISTAT (Central Statistics Institute).

Tab. 2. ITALIAN MIGRATORY MOVEMENT FROM AND TO GREAT BRITAIN 1971-80 ACCORDING TO SEX

	MALES			FEMALES		
Years	Entering G.B.	Leaving G.B.	Net Result	Entering G.B.	Leaving G.B.	Net Result
1971	1,490	1,504	+ 14	963	1,434	+ 471
1972	1,384	2,116	+ 732	845	1,669	+ 824
1973	1,132	1,575	+ 443	724	1,423	+ 699
1974	1,169	1,483	+ 314	906	1,300	+ 394
1975	1,123	1,469	+ 346	753	1,153	+ 400
1976	1,131	1,334	+ 203	830	1,216	+ 386
1977	1,012	1,345	+ 333	835	1,236	+ 401
1978	1,264	1,298	+ 34	872	1,143	+ 271
1979	1,355	1,270	— 85	973	1,128	+ 155
1980	1,224	1,374	+ 150	854	1,239	+ 385

	ALL PERSONS		
Years	Entering G.B.	Leaving G.B.	Net Result
1971	2,453	2,938	+ 485
1972	2,229	3,785	+ 1,556
1973	1,856	2,998	+ 1,142
1974	2,075	2,783	+ 708
1975	1,876	2,622	+ 746
1976	1,961	2,550	+ 589
1977	1,847	2,581	+ 734
1978	2,136	2,441	+ 305
1979	2,328	2,398	+ 70
1980	2,078	2,613	+ 535

Source: ISTAT (Central Statistics Institute).

Tab. 3. Italians (holders of Italian passports) in Great Britain according to region of origin, 1980

Piedmont	200	Campania	32,000
Valle d'Aosta	—	Abruzzi	6,000
Liguria	500	Molise	6,600
Lombardy	300	Puglia	11,000
		Basilicata	9,000
Italy: North West	1,000	Calabria	14,000
Trentino Alto Adige	1,000		
Veneto	6,900	Italy: South	78,000
Friuli Venezia Giulia	1,200		
Italy: North East	9,100	Sicily	46,000
		Sardinia	1,000
Emilia Romagna	16,000		
Marches	200	Italy: Islands	47,000
Tuscany	9,000		
Umbria	200		
Latium	8,900	Others (born abroad unspecified region)	50,000
Italy: Central North	34,300	Italy: Total	220,000

Source: Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Tab. 4. Italians (holders of Italian passports) in Great Britain 1975-80

According to the areas of consular jurisdiction

Year	*Edinburgh*	*London*	*Manchester*	*Total*
1975	30,000	140,000	58,000	228.000
1976	30,500	140,000	58,500	229,000
1977	31,000	140,000	59,000	230,000
1978	31,000	140,000	49,000	220,000
1979	31,000	140,000	49,000	220,000
1980	31,000	141,000	48,000	220,000

Source: Extracts from data published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs – MAE (Embassies' Estimates).

Tab. 5. Composition of the Italian groups (holders of Italian passports) in Great Britain, 1980

Composition according to sex:	
Males	127,000 (57.7%)
Fermales	93,000 (42.3%)
	220,000 (100%)
Composition according to age:	
Up to the age of 6	16,000 (7.2%)
From the age of 6 to 14	25,000 (11.4%)
From the age of 15 to 29	59,000 (26.8%)
From the age of 30 to 49	70,000 (31.8%)
From the age of 50 to 65	38,000 (17.3%)
Over the age of 65	12,000 (5.5%)
	12,000 (5.5%)

Source: Extracts from data published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs – MAE (Embassies' Estimates).

Tab. 6. Italians in the "Bristol Region" Area according to the English Census 1971

ALL PERSONS	
Bristol C.B.	1,000
Gloucester C.B.	300
Gloucester A.C.	730
Gloucestershire	2,025
Bath C.B.	360
Somerset A.C.	885
Somerset C.B., A.C.	1,245
Wiltshire	1,380

MALES					FEMALES				
Single	*Married*	*Widowed*	*Divorced*	*Total*	*Single*	*Married*	*Widowed*	*Divorced*	*Total*
125	355	5	5	490	90	390	25	5	510
35	110	—	5	150	30	115	5	—	150
90	255	—	—	345	65	300	15	5	385
245	720	5	5	975	185	810	45	10	1,050
50	125	5	—	180	40	130	10	—	180
110	320	5	5	440	75	345	20	5	445
160	445	10	5	620	115	475	30	5	625
185	455	5	—	645	135	560	35	5	735

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