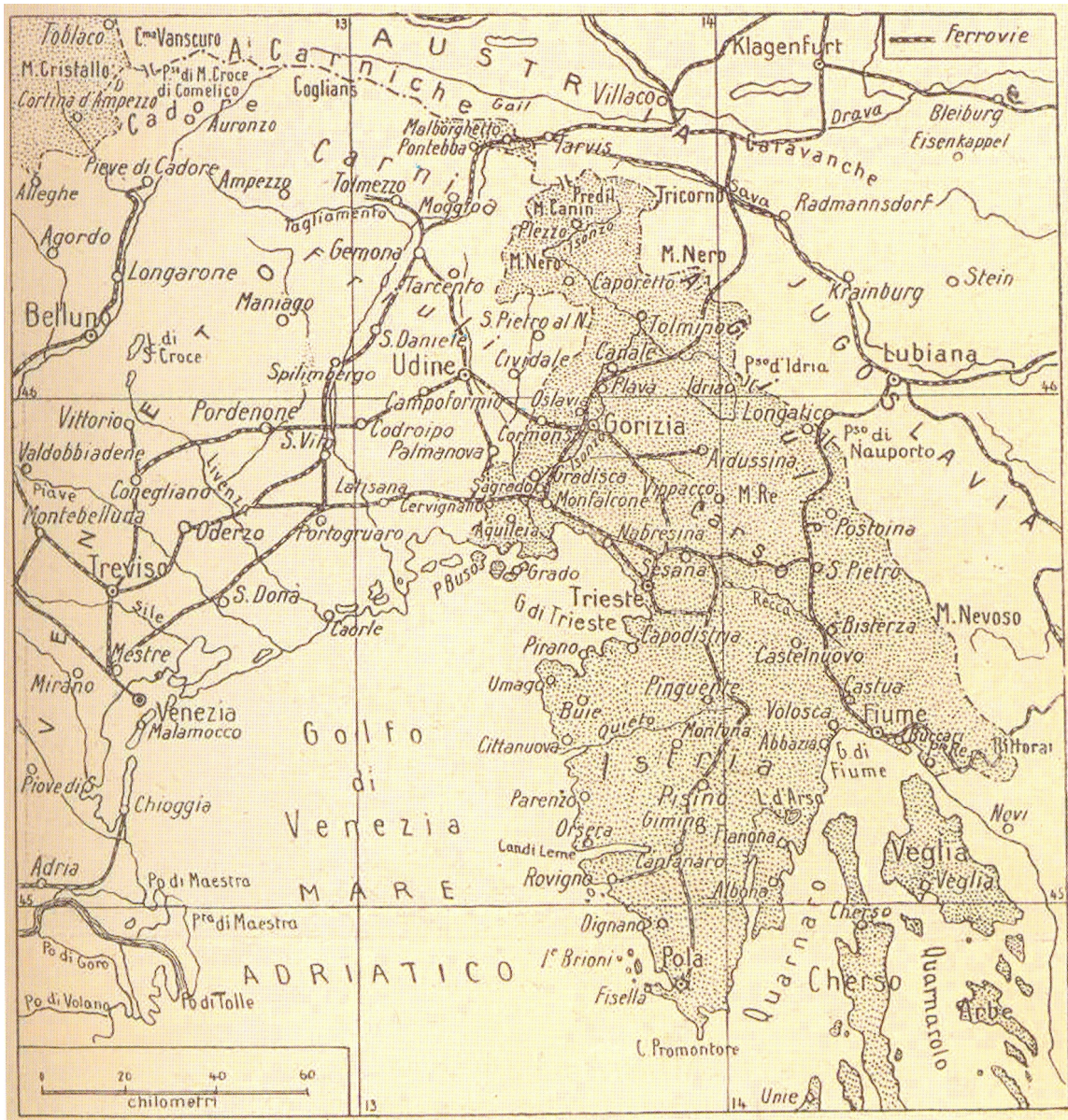


THE HISTORY OF VENETIA JULIA

from Gorizia to Istria
from the origins up until today



Translated into English by Fr. Marco Bagnarol IMC
Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association
Provincial Committee of Gorizia
2007 Editions

The Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association in Gorizia

Since 1947 the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association represents the Italians who escaped from Istria, Fiume and Dalmatia at the end of the Second World War upon the thrust of the ethnic cleansing of the Yugoslavian militias, which provoked the exodus of 350,000 people of every social class and the violent death of thousands of innocents in the crevices.

The Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association was the first association of a national character which arose in order to link up and organize the tens of thousands of refugees originating from the territories of Venetia Julia and Dalmatia which the Paris Peace Treaty of the 10th February, 1947, had handed over to the former Yugoslavia or assigned to Zone B of the Free Territory of Trieste. Its national headquarters has always been in Rome, in order to maintain a constant relationship with parliament, the government and the central administrations of the State. The Association, which right from the beginning enjoyed great consideration for its apolitical and non-party nature, was reorganized with the constitutive act of the 7th June, 1956.

The objective has always been the one of keeping the exiles united through charitable and cultural activities, the celebration of civil and religious festivities, the participation and organization of study conventions and conferences. The activity is constantly promoted in tight cooperation with the State administrations, local entities, universities, schools, veterans' and army associations and cultural institutions.

The initiatives of the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association has allowed for the attainment of concrete results, by providing an important contribution to legislative provisions adopted by the Italian parliament in order to resolve the problems generated by the exodus, like the laws for popular housing and the ones for the compensation of lost goods in the territories that were handed over. The daily struggle for the maintenance of cultural and traditional values was eased by law no. 92/2004, with which parliament, almost unanimously, instituted the national solemnity of the "Day of Remembrance", which is celebrated on the 10th February.

The Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association is still the most representative association of exiles in all of Italy, by its membership and presence over the territory: almost 10,000 members for the over 50 provincial committees, present in almost all of the Italian regions.

Great personalities in the field of culture and the institutions have been national presidents and the magistrate from Zara, Lucio Toth, is presently its president. The provincial committee of Gorizia has instead been lead by different presidents of great prominence and capacity, amongst whom Pasquale De Simone (former mayor, regional director and director of "L'Arena di Pola"), Mattioli, Toto Cattalini (journalist, chief editor), Giorgio Marsan (Air Force General), Edo Apollonio (from 1980 to 2001), Gaetano Valenti (former mayor, presently regional councillor) and since 2002 Rodolfo Ziberna (leader, former municipal councillor, President of the National League of Gorizia), who is even a component of the National Executive. An active Delegation has been operating for years in Grado, where a big group of exiles lives, in particular at Fossalon. Many are the books and audiovisuals published by the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association, at the service of those interested, on the topics of the exodus, of the history, culture and art of the lands of Istria, Fiume and Dalmatia.

The activity of the Association has had a further increase in these last years, after the break up of the former Yugoslavia. The Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association works in order to make Italian public opinion aware of the events of the Italian eastern border and of the Balkan area, and in order to make relations with Slovenia and Croatia grow in a pragmatic and apolitical way, even with the aim of shedding light upon the dramatic facts which lead to the deportation at the end of the war of more than 650 natives of Gorizia, who never ever returned, on the part of Tito's militia, only guilty of representing a danger to Tito's annexationist aspirations. Moreover, it sets out to reawaken amongst Italians the sense of identity and national unity, and to help the fellow countrymen who have remained in their lands of origin to defend the Italian language and traditions. In fact, contacts have become evermore frequent with the Italian Union, which in fact represents the Italian communities which still reside in the territories belonging to the Republics of Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro.

Maria Grazia Ziberna

THE HISTORY OF VENETIA JULIA
from Gorizia to Istria
from the origins up until today

Translated into English by Fr. Marco Bagnarol IMC

Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association
Provincial Committee of Gorizia
2007 Editions

c ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Front cover: Venetia Julia in 1866, Isontina State Library

A work published thanks to the contribution of the Italian government according to law no. 193/2004.

Preface



This publication is born from the awareness of how little the history of Gorizia, of the Isontino, of our region and of Istria, is known which in the definition coined by Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, a well-known linguist from Gorizia, constitute Venetia Julia.

The publication aspires to represent, deliberately in a few pages, with a clear language and accessible references, a synthetic instrument in order to make this history which is little or not at all known.

It is destined to everybody, but above all to young secondary school students, as an educational instrument to be added to textbooks, which as is known do not face our history. It will certainly be useful, however, even to the many university students who come from other provinces and regions of Italy, and to all those, even non-students, who would like to know something more about the land which they live and work on.

The distribution takes place freely and intends to constitute a compliment of the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association to our land.

Naturally, the narration of the facts takes place in a national and European context: it is not possible, in fact, to fully grasp the reason of a fact if it is not placed in relation to what happens in the same geographical area, or in places which exercise influence upon it.

The drama of the Exodus tore away, at the end of the Second World War, more than 350 thousand Italians from Istria, Fiume and Dalmatia, which were Roman before, Venetian after and finally Italian, before the Peace Treaty of Paris of 1947 handed them over to the newly constituted Yugoslavian Federative Republic of Marshall Tito.

Trieste, above all, but certainly even Gorizia and the Isontine, welcomed a significant part of these Italian brothers and sisters. It is estimated that, today, in the Isontine headquarters, the Istrians, Fiumians and Dalmatians of first, second or third generation constitute 15% of the residing population. Gorizia knew how to welcome the Exiles by becoming an adoptive homeland. But even Monfalcone, Grado, Fossalon and other centres of the province and of the region did the same. There were seventy thousand exiles who settled instead in Trieste.

Gorizia has been the theatre of highly dramatic events, from the First World War and the twelve battles on the Isonzo River, through the drama of the occupation of the troops of Marshall Tito, right up until the wait for the Treaties of Paris which definitely sanctioned the stay of Gorizia in Italy, thus snatching it away from the expansionist aims of Yugoslavia. From a place of tragedies, today, Gorizia has become a laboratory example, where different languages and ethnic groups cooperate for the growth of a community which goes beyond a border.

A sincere thanks goes to Professor Maria Grazia Ziberna, dean of Letters in a higher institute of learning in Gorizia, who wrote the work.

It is my hope that this editorial initiative can find the public's pleasure, with the presumption of having provided a modest contribution of ours towards the spreading of the knowledge of history.

Rodolfo Ziberna

President of the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia
National Association of Gorizia

In a school which tends to overcome the traditional model founded upon the frontal relationship with students and which conceives the student as a person at the centre of the learning process, it is necessary that the student be able to use all of the instruments, materials, opportunities in order to deepen knowledge and competences, by means of contact with the sources that the environment offers.

Therefore, the present publication on the history of Venetia Julia can without a doubt represent for the secondary school student, with the guidance of the dean, a useful historical research instrument of his own territory which is not contained in the books usually used at school.

It is a matter of an opportunity which can contribute towards the acquisition on the part of young people of knowledge which gives concreteness to the sense of belonging of each one to his/her own specific territory, to his/her own peculiar history, to the ensemble of values which characterize it, in an optic of overcoming barriers and meeting cultures.

Ugo Panetta
Director General
of the Regional Scholastic Office
for Friuli Venetia Julia

A proposal of regional history for secondary schools

Fulvio Salimbeni

By reading the booklet of Maria Grazia Ziberna, devised for secondary schools and printed by the Provincial Committee of Gorizia of the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association, it was natural to think about a work with an analogous didactic and civil aim, published a hundred and thirty years ago by the Municipality of Trieste (1877), *La storia di Trieste raccontata ai giovanetti*, by the abbot Jacopo Cavalli, which, summarizing the widest and binding erudite contributions of the scholar, set out with the aim of providing a useful specific aide for what was held to be a correct knowledge of the history of the motherland within the widest programme of general history, which had to, above all else, duly keep in mind the not only didactic but even broadly speaking political directives of the imperial government, oriented in an entirely different ideological direction. And, moreover, not by chance but the year before, in 1876, just over the border with the Kingdom of Italy, the *Compendium of Friulian history* by Count Francesco di Manzano had appeared, with evident patriotic finalities dedicated to the “studious Friulian youth” and which constituted a valuable summary of the monumental enterprise of the *Annals of Friuli*, obviously which cannot be proposed for scholastic use. In the moment in which the idea of a nation was explicitly founded upon a common language, history and religion and on the eastern border of Italy was developing itself into an irredentist movement which on the cultural level would have invested all of its energies into linguistic and historiographic investigations in order to attest with the reasons of science, held to be incontrovertible, the Italianness of the territories then belonging to the Austrian Coast (since 1918 Venetia Julia), it was obvious that more agile texts and instruments, addressed to the future citizens and to the school world, be begun facing the most demanding works of erudition and of scientific set up, destined to the learned public and to specialists. This process, common to all of Europe then, with the opening up of the twentieth century would have found a further increase in the pedagogical renewal promoted by Gentile, who in the scholastic reform of 1923 foresaw in an explicit manner a specific room for regional history as a preliminary and introductory step to the national one – just as the teaching of the dialect had to be so for the one of Italian -, where the launch of multiple editorial initiatives in such a sense, which, insofar as the Upper Adriatic area is concerned, in good time developed into the *Brief History of Friuli* by Pier Silverio Leicht (1923) and into the agile introduction to the *Literary History of Trieste and of Istria* by Baccio Ziliotto (1924), both updated summaries of the vastest researches for sometime done on the subject by the two authors. Then this valid methodological indication progressively got lost within the counter-reforms which, in fact, emptied or shook up the project of Gentile, eliminating local history from the scholastic programmes, to which a further blow was dealt, in the second postwar period, given its predominant political-institutional connotation, from the affirmation of the orientations of the “*Annales*”, bearing upon privileging economic and social history and the big frameworks of civilization – in this regards the primary summary of Fernand Braudel on the Mediterranean in the era of Philip II should be kept present -, and of the Anglo-Saxon *New Economic History*.

But, given that even in history fashions fade, with the wearing out of the innovating thrust of French historiography and Atlantic econometric extremisms a cautious and gradual rethinking of the epistemological statutes and of the theoretical

trends of historical research has come along affirming itself, which lead to the development of micro-history and of the particular, from which to depart in order to reconstruct the general and macro-history, while the affirming of the multidisciplinary would lead to a fruitful dialogue amongst the different social and humanistic sciences, with positive relapses upon the very same teaching of history in primary and secondary schools, of which the renewed programmes of 1979, 1982 and of the end of the 1980s (the Brocca project) are proof, which foresaw a specific space for local history, to be proposed – this, however, was a valid indication for the whole subject – in a correct multidisciplinary perspective, without, however, in the meantime worrying about providing the teachers with ad hoc bibliographical instruments and leaving, therefore, free expression to often impromptu and disorganized editorial operations. For such a need, in any case, the anticipating project of Stelio Spadaro, who at the beginning of the 1980s as a councillor for culture of the Province of Trieste launched a series of monographs, directed in the first place to schools, printed by the “Italo Svevo Printing Company” and entrusted to specialists in the sector – Elvio Guagnini, Silvana De Lugnani, Joze Pirjevec -, on the different national cultural components present at the same time in the Julian capital (Italian, German and Slovenian), and even the monograph of Pietro Sarzana, Friuli Venezia Giulia, which came out in 1989 printed by the Printing School of Brescia in the specific series “Letteratura delle regioni d’Italia – Literature of the regions of Italy”, moreover with a robust set up of cultural history, as well as Istria. *Storia di una regione di frontiera*, which gathered together the acts of an updating course for teachers promoted by the Regional Institute for Istrian, Fiumian and Dalmatian Culture (IRCI) and, in 1994, published by the Morcelliana Press of Brescia, without forgetting the immediate successive monographic booklet of the “Quaderni Giuliani di storia – Julian Notebooks of History”, a six-monthly publication of the Deputation of the motherland’s history for Venetia Julia (XIX, 2, 1998), significantly entitled *Per la didattica della storia locale. Il caso di Trieste. Il recente e ponderosa Istria nel tempo. Manuale di storia regionale dell’Istria con cenni alla città di Fiume*, by Egidio Ivetic for the Historical Research Centre of Rovigno (2006), is, for the moment, the last one, a successful initiative in such a sense, expressly thought out for a scholastic destination – in this case for Italian language educational institutions in the Slovenian and Croatian Republics, where, for understandable reasons, the problem is particularly alive and felt – and for a wider public of non-experts, qualifying itself as a successful attempted work aware of the many Istrian identities living together on the same geographical area, without abuses of power of any kind of a nationalistic nature in any way, but even attentive to claiming the originality and autochthony of the Venetian-Italian one, managing, therefore, to obtain a text of undoubted civil value, as well as of undeniable scientific quality and didactic content, respond, in order to remain within the regional sphere and signal the best initiatives in this regards. In any case, this rapid excursus of the history of regional historiography cannot be concluded leaving out of consideration the volume Friuli Venezia Giulia, which came out, in 2002, in the Einaudi Press chain dedicated to the *Storia d’Italia. Le regioni dall’Unità’ a oggi*, whose ideal point of reference on the methodological level is the classic *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* by Carlo Dionisotti, always for the Einaudi Press, of 1967, which pointed out the centrality of the regional dimension of civil history, and not only literary, national at least up until the beginning of the 20th century, when a process of integration and homogenization of post-unity Italy came along imposing itself.

It is in this so qualified tradition that the pages which follow are placed, planned in order to make young people, and not only them, know – they, in fact, due to their expositive clarity and the organic unity of the set up lend themselves to being used also in a popular key, in order to even reach a wider general audience, being able to constitute a fruitful reading even for those who have not entered into a classroom for quite sometime -, the history of the city, seen, however, in the context of the overall history of Venetia Julia from the origins up until our day, with frequent openings even on Friuli and on Italy, except for then the panels on the main events contemporarily taking place in Europe, where to make the analysis less provincial, freeing it from every petty local formulation, a frequent risk, but avoided here, in publications of this kind. The author, active in teaching for a lifetime, with this toil – that, for now, as far as we understand, does not have many comparisons neither in the region nor outside of its borders – adds herself to that praiseworthy group of teachers from the Isonzo area even committed to the historical spreading and studies of the motherland's history, which can boast, for example, of a prestigious name like the one of the unforgettable teacher Camillo Medeot, with the still valid and stimulating little volume of Biagio Marin placing itself apart, of 1940, on Gorizia, which should be recovered and reread with attention due to the not only literary merits it has, but even due its multiple research cues and suggestions and due to its original interpretative key which characterize it and in which transpires the subtended memory of the youthful and fruitful primary experience of Gorizia, interrupted only by intolerant and factious clerical churchiness.

It is not to say that in the last years serious works, like the *Contributi alla storia di Gorizia moderna*, to which is dedicated no. 1 of the “Quaderni Giuliani di storia” of 1998, and some contributions from the local Institute of social and religious history, on the capital of the Isonzo area and about its history, even to some measure keeping in mind the needs of the school, have not appeared, but a concise and essential one was missing, written with in a straightforward and accessible language even for the new generations, by now unaccustomed by a television that is evermore forgetful of its own formative tasks and by the devastating fashion of the sms of the cell phones to face a style even of minimum complexity, in which the moments and the central phenomena of regional history were to be indicated with clarity, grasped in all of its ethnic, linguistic, cultural and social complexity. Because, even if the essay in question is sponsored by a National Association such as the “Venetia Julia and Dalmatia” one, it should be said that there is no nationalistic streak in it, but rather only and solely the desire to have one's own peculiar history made known to students who, finding themselves living in a globalized world, in which distinctions and diversities tend to be erased in order to substitute them with an uncritical homologation and with a drastic levelling in a generic and indistinct universalism, in which all of the specificities and varieties disappear, they are in need of adequate instruments in order to discover and maintain their own roots, outside of any municipalistic closure. And this is an objective substantially reached by Maria Grazia Ziberna, who, at a proper time inserting suitable references to art, intellectual life and to its main protagonists, to the economy and society, manages to provide a lively and moving profile of the reality of Gorizia and Julia, never forgetting that the geopolitical centrality of the region in the European context has it that wherever the Latin, German and Slav worlds have met, they reciprocally fructified each other and, in the last century,

dramatically clashed with each other, giving origin to a unitary civilization and at the same time varied and multiple, which is perhaps the element of greatest fascination.

Upon finishing the reading one can rightly affirm that the booklet, intentionally such in order not to discourage with its own size and because it is conceived in order to only offer the essential lineaments of the discussion, by means of the concise final bibliographical note referring whoever wants to know much more to works of a greater size and more scientific cut, makes it very well known how from the medieval Slav place name Gorica, with which it appears in history for the first time (1001), the Isontine city was able to become the Holy Gorizia of the Great War, for which the best Italian youth lost their lives for its conquest, and a patriotic myth of indisputable meaningfulness. These are tortuous and complex, often contradictory, journeys of history which are delineated here with sobriety and without rhetorical strained interpretations, not keeping quiet, moreover, about the main aspects of the presence of the Slovenian community and, up until 1918, of the German one, just as neither the bloody clashes and the tragic events of the Second World War in order to decide about its state destination, nor the tiring and contrasted postwar rebirth, aggravated by the loss of a good part of the old provincial territory, now gravitating upon Nova Gorica, edified by the communist regime as a challenge to the old Italian capital.

The organic and synthetic historical reconstruction finds an efficacious and useful crowning in the appendix, owed to Rodolfo Ziberna, President of the sponsoring entity of the publication, in which the process is lucidly outlined which starting from the turn of 1980, the year of Tito's death and the date of the beginning of the decomposition of socialist Yugoslavia, lead to the birth, following the crisis of the beginning of the 1990s, of the Republic of Slovenia, which, in particular after its entry, in 2004, into the European Union and the imminent, definitive fall of the border with the application of the Schengen Accords, opens up positive perspectives and new horizons in Gorizia, suffocated for almost fifty years by a border with an ideological and political reality entirely extraneous and countered, which compressed its natural central European vocation and as a place par excellence of mediation and of linkage, which is a peculiarity many times highlighted and reasserted in the ensemble of the treatment. And it is upon this optimistic scenario of hope that the description is grafted of the economic, tourist and cultural potentialities both of the Isonzo area and of the entire region, turning this text into both a valid didactic guide and an efficacious popular work, which knows how to happily conjugate the reasons of the past with the ones of the present.

Author's introduction

The pages that follow are not an academic research but a contribution towards the knowledge of the history of Gorizia, mainly addressed to the students of the higher institutes of learning, who generally know very little about the oldest events of local history, and even less about the ones of contemporary history, both because of the set up of the programmes and of the insufficient time in order to carry them out, and because of a lack of the majority of history texts, which neglect what has happened in these territories. They are addressed, however, even to those who are interested in at least getting to know in general the past of our lands in order to better understand the present reality.

Wanting to summarize the main historical events which followed each other in the territory, where the city of Gorizia arises today, it is necessary to insert it into the vaster area of Venetia Julia, which in the meaning of Graziadio Isaia Acoli, the linguist from Gorizia who coined the term, it comprised of the territories of Gorizia, Trieste and Istria. Even if they are separated by a border today, in fact, in different moments of history these areas were interested by the presence of the same peoples and united by the same cultural, historical and political phenomena, even finding themselves centralized under the same administrative organisms.

Having to face a span of time which goes from prehistory up until our days, it will be necessary to select the events which have had major relevance in the local sphere, referring however to what was happening in the rest of Europe, in the awareness that local history cannot be understood outside of a more general context. This will not keep us from taking our time to pause at times even upon particular aspects of society and culture, with the aim of highlighting their peculiarity and making comparisons with the present reality possible. The students of the higher institutes of learning, to whom these pages are first addressed, can therefore better understand the facts narrated and easily place them with what they have learnt by studying the programmes of history.

This territorial area has found itself at the intersection point between the Latin, German and Slav civilizations, between the Danube and Adriatic area, between the Po plain and the Balkans, and this has determined the presence of different peoples and cultures. It has been and still is a border land and insofar as such of coexistences which were at times peaceful and other times conflictive, of misunderstandings and sufferings, of encounters and clashes. It has been a witness of the industriousness and capacity of various ethnic groups living together, which lived side by side with the peoples that already found themselves in this area, cooperating with them and integrating themselves, but it has even unfortunately been a theatre of battles in every historical time.

In the pre-Roman era, the Venetians faced the Carnians, later on Rome extended its own government by subjecting the local populations and fortifying the defences of the territory in the attempt to push back the Barbarian peoples, which actually through the valleys of the Isonzo and of the Vipacco they transited in order to go down to Italy. It was then the turn, in the Upper Medieval period, of the clashes between the Longobards and the Slavs, of the incursions of the Hungarians, of the disputes between the Byzantine patriarchate of Grado and the Longobard one of Cividale, followed by the ones between the Patriarchate and the counts of Gorizia, in order to continue into the sixteenth century

and the seventeenth century with the incursions of the Turks, with the contrasts between the Republic of Venice and the Hapsburg, until arriving at the contemporary age, which saw Gorizia, Venetia Julia and Istria disputed over by the Italians and Germans in the First World War, and between the Italians and Slavs in the Second World War.

After having lived together for centuries in a quite peaceful way, the peoples of these regions experienced in the second postwar period the “Cold War” and the clash between communism and anticommunism, here more than in other regions of Italy, both because precisely here that border was traced which deprived the city of well over two-thirds of its territory and divided not only two States, but even two ideologically opposed blocks, and because of the consequences of the tragic episodes which took place at the end of the war, when the troops of Marshall Tito deported and killed hundreds of defenceless citizens of Gorizia by hurling them into the crevices.

The last sixty years saw the arrival and integration into the social fibre of thousands of exiles, fleeing from the lands of Istria, Fiume and Dalmatia, handed over to Yugoslavia, the economic problems owed to the postwar crisis, the worsening first and then the dissolving afterwards of the tensions with the communist nationalism of Tito, and finally, in the 1990s, the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the birth from its ashes of different republics, amongst which the ones of Slovenia and Croatia.

If we look back, we find pages that we would prefer to forget, but only the memory can impede travelling along the same road again and committing the same mistakes. For this reason no page of our history can be cancelled. Our land, multiethnic and straddled along the border, should become a laboratory of peaceful living together, in order to draw benefit from the confrontation and from reciprocal respect. In order to do it, however, it is indispensable to recognize merits but even to admit mistakes and responsibilities, shed light and accept the past in order to build the future. This is the challenge in the upcoming years.

Maria Grazia Ziberna

Prehistory

About a hundred thousand years ago, at the beginning of the Middle Palaeolithic period, the climatic and environmental conditions of Italy were rather different from the present ones: uninterrupted expanses of forests and woods made the climate humid and fresh, while strong snowfalls on the mountains assured copious quantities of water for the rivers. At the time, there was a phase of glaciation, the fourth: the alpine icecaps were much more extended and our region was covered in tundra and alpine vegetation, while Italy was connected to the Balkan Peninsula almost up until the height of the Puglia region by lands above sea level. Huge herds of reindeer grazed in Western Europe, to which in Eastern Europe mammoths and wild horses would graze beside them.

As in the rest of Europe, we know very little about the origins and the life of the most ancient inhabitants of the territories of the Isontine and of Venetia Julia, although we are left with numerous archaeological traces of them. We, however, know that the valley of the Isonzo was inhabited right from the Middle Palaeolithic period (about 100,000 to 40,000 years ago) when the Neanderthal Man, who departing from Africa had populated almost all of Europe precisely during the last glaciation, left traces of his presence even in the caves of the valley of Vipacco. The more consistent archaeological findings go back, however, to the Neolithic era (8,000 to 3,000 years ago) and to the Bronze Age (about 3,000 to 2,000 BC), when men, with the end of the last glaciation, had to adapt to the new environment. The climate became meeker, the big herds of herbivores which had allowed for the survival of the hunters of the Palaeolithic Age during the great cold, decreased and, therefore, the various human groups, gathered together in clans and tribes, abandoned the nomadic lifestyle and began to live together in the first villages, dedicating themselves to rearing animals and the cultivation of the land and then inventing ceramics and weaving.

In our area the development of Neolithic civilization took place during the course of the sixth millennium BC, clearly much later with regards to the middle-eastern and Mediterranean area. The Neolithic culture reached us from the “fertile half-moon”, that is, the region comprised between Zagros Mountains, east of the Tigris, Mesopotamia and the territories which face the Mediterranean. Still for another four thousand years, however, the inhabitants of prehistoric Italy continued to live off on hunting, fishing and livestock, due to the scarcity of the flat areas, and so the diffusion of livestock rearing and agriculture did not comprise those developments which had it had produced in the middle-eastern civilizations. At that time, the first cities had by then been born in the fluvial valleys of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China and the Sumerians began to use the first forms of writing. The Egyptians, after having united Lower and Upper Egypt around 3,000 BC, began their millenary history under the pharaohs and the Jews, after having left Egypt around 1,300 BC lead by Moses, had returned to Palestine. Next to them, the civilization of the Phoenicians had developed itself, characterized by rich and populous city-states like Byblos, Tyre and Sidon, ably governed by mercantile aristocracies. While Crete extended its dominion over the Mediterranean Sea enriching itself thanks to maritime traffic and international trade, in nearby Greece the Ionians, the Aeolians and the Achaeans had descended, and the Mycenaean civilization had flourished, suffocated around the year 1,150 BC by the Doreans, who took possession of almost all of Peloponnese, giving birth to the so-called “Hellenic Middle Ages”.

Megalithic cultures arose in central-northern Europe, while in some areas of Germany, Switzerland and in northern Italy, villages on stilts spread out.

In Italy, the Nuragic culture (Sardinia) flourished starting from the third millennium BC, which was followed a thousand years later by the Villanovian one (Tuscany and Emilia), until the Indo-European peoples did not arrive at the beginning of the second millennium, of whom we will extensively talk about in a little while, amongst whom the most important ones for the history of our region were the Venetians and the Latins.

Stone graves would be erected and the dead would be placed in graves like the one discovered at Tolmino, on Mount Calvary and at San Pietro in the area studied by us in this period. The first stable settlements, defended by walls whose remains we can still see today, placed upon heights, like the castlers of Monfalcone, Redipuglia, Polazzo, Castellazzo, Doberdo, but even of Trieste and a greater part of Istria, where no less than five hundred of them can be counted, go back to this period. These defence structures would protect the communities that would work stone and forge objects in bronze, and were dedicated to agriculture, to the rearing of livestock, hunting and fishing. The ruins of the external walls of castlers from the Bronze Age have been found even on the various hills which surround the plains of Gorizia, something which leads to the supposition that there could have been one on the city's hill, whose stones could have been used in a later period for other constructions. Traces, however, are not even missing of the Venetian culture which at Este had its vital centre and which spread its influence all the way up to this area.

Both the eight thousand graves and the remains of a settlement of huts found at Santa Lucia (Most na Soci), and the remains on the height of Santa Caterina above New Gorizia (Nova Gorica) which had suggested in the seventeenth century to the first scholars from Gorizia to identify the place with the ancient city of Noreia, quoted by the historian Strabone, belong to the Iron Age instead.

Right from the beginnings, the area, which constituted a point of passage between the mountain areas of the Karst region and of the Collio and the Venetian-Friulian plain, was characterized by the joint presence of different languages and cultures, insofar as different peoples settled here: proto-Illyrians, Venetians, Istrians and Karst Gauls.

They all belonged to the Indo-European group, a term with which the peoples are indicated who are presumed to have lived around the fifth millennium BC in the steppes of present southern Russia to the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. These human groups, which spoke very similar languages, during the course of successive migrations which took place at even a distance of many centuries from each other allocated themselves in a very vast area, by occupying India (Ariuses), the present day Iran and Afghanistan, Anatolia (Hittites) and Europe (Celts, Achaeans, Dorians, Italics, Venetians, Latins, Oscans, Umbrians, Sabellians and Siculians, Germans and Slavs).

Almost all of the languages spoken today in Europe are Indo-European: Russian and all of the Slav languages, Greek, the neo-Latin languages, German and English.

In our region, the proto-Illyrians, belonging to the Illyrian stock, reached Istria in the Bronze Age by climbing up the Balkan Peninsula. The construction of villages defended by big dry walls, castlers, is owed to them. There were then the Venetians, already mentioned by the Greek historian Herodotus, who occupied our regions between the second and first millenniums BC. They were a peaceful people, dedicated to commerce, which had a firsthand role in the amber trade of the Baltic and which left traces of its presence in various areas of Europe, from the Karst region to Carinthia (ancient Norico), to northern Italy, but even in Asia Minor. Their civilization reached its maximum splendour between 500 to 400 BC, when the invasions began of some tribes of

Celts, the ones of the Karst Gauls. Considerable testimonies of the civilization of the Venetians have been ascertained in the upper valley of the Isonzo, at Caporetto and at Santa Lucia di Tolmino, where thousands of graves have been found. According to historians, it seems that in those times the Venetians bordered onto the Timavo with the Istrians.

After the 5th century BC, with the full Iron Age, the first centres began to arise from which many of the present ones will then have their origin, first amongst them all is Aquileia, founded in an area where both the Venetians and the Illyrians and Celts were present.

With regards to the Istrians, we know that they were a bellicose people which had fought for a first time against Rome in 229 BC. Later on, defeated in the area of the Timavo, they took refuge in a city not too far from modern day Pola, Nesazio, which was besieged in 177. The historian Livy tells us that it only fell when the Romans damaged the aqueduct which supplied the city. The defenders killed the women and children so that they would not have fell into slavery and the war ended with the destruction or submission of various cities, which still for a few years continued, however, to be independent. In 27 BC, all of the territories from Istria to Macedonia, from the Adriatic to the Sava and to the Danube were transformed into Roman provinces and, notwithstanding, the initial resistances they profoundly Romanized themselves. In the third century AD, it was actually the Illyrian emperors (Aurelian, Diocletian and, later on, Constantine) who managed to maintain with firmness the unity of the empire faced with the barbarian threat.

The Karst Gauls, instead, were a Celtic population of Danubian origin. The Karsts descended between the 5th and 4th centuries BC, and after bloody clashes with the Venetians and the Istrians, they settled in the Isontine area, in Friuli and in Veneto, where they left testimonies of their presence in the numerous localities with place-names ending in -icco, -ico, -icca, -acco, -aco, -aca, -ago. According to Titus Livy and Pliny the Old, they built a fortified city, which was destroyed by Rome, not too far from where Aquileia would have arose.

The beginning of history: the Roman conquest and the foundation of Aquileia

The prehistory of Friuli Venetia Julia ended in 181 BC, when the Roman consuls Publius Scipio Nasica, Caius Flaminius and Lucius Manlius Acidinus founded the colony of Aquileia. The city was initially populated by 3,000 infantrymen and by 250 horsemen with their families, who were reinforced a few years later with another 1,500 Latin families. The colony had to constitute the basis for the defence of the territory after the descent of 12 thousand Transalpine Gauls, which took place in 186 BC, and in order to expand towards Istria, the eastern Alps and all of the regions to the northeast, all the way to the Danube. The surrounding area was reclaimed and the land, distributed to the colonists (from the Latin, *colere*, to cultivate) after a careful work of centurionization, it was divided into *praedia* (farms, properties) where villas arose of various noble families which constituted the nucleus of various towns of the Lower Isontine, like Staranzano (*Praedium Terentianum*), Fogliano (*Praedium Furianum*), Soleschiano (*Praedium Sollustianum*), Vermegliano (*Praedium Formilianum*).

Aquileia arose along the bank of modern day Natissa, which at that time had a wide and deep riverbed and was perfectly navigable, in an area inhabited as we have seen by the Venetians, by the Illyrians and by the Celts. The city became quite soon a reference point not only for the surrounding area but for that entire macro-region which is today called Alpe Adria, because it found itself at the centre of important transportation routes, initially traced for military purposes: Postumia Street, Annia Street, Gemina Street, Julia Augusta Street and Flavia Street.

In the meantime, the Roman colonies were multiplying themselves in the region: since 179 BC, the Romans had placed an encampment in the vicinities of the community that lived at Tergeste (Trieste) elevated to a colony in 46 BC and equipped with solid walls in 33 BC by Octavian Augustus, who in the same year re-baptized the colony of Pola (Pollentia Herculeana), founded around 42 BC, with the name of Pietas Julia. In the city, equipped with a well protected natural port and surrounded by walls, an Amphitheatre or Arena was built, its most ancient part going back to the era of Augustus. After its widening, it was able to hold well over 23 thousand spectators, an indicative piece of information in order to give us an idea of the dimensions and importance of the city.



The division of Italy into regions wanted by Emperor Augustus.

Augustus brought the borders of Italy all the way to the Arsa River, in Istria, by creating the tenth region (X Regio) of Italy, the “Venetia et Histria”, of which Aquileia became the capital city. The city was widened by building the imperial palace, a circus, an amphitheatre, temples, fountains, obelisks, aqueducts, and evermore assumed the role and aspect of a city-fortress, of fundamental importance for the security of the entire Italian peninsula.

The building development of Aquileia was impressive. From three thousand infantrymen-colonists who in 181 BC had traced a quadrilateral from the perimeter of about a kilometre (*castra stativa*, that is, stable, permanent encampment, at whose centre the Mausoleum of the unknown arises today, on Julia Augusta Street) went on to almost 200,000 inhabitants. Julius Caesar and well over 28 emperors stopped or transited through the city which kept its importance as a defensive bulwark against the populations coming from the East up until when (after the *Natissa* changed its course decreasing the flow of water and following the Lombard invasion and the creation of the duchy of Cividale) progressively lost its role as a political and military centre acquiescing power and prestige as a religious centre.

Even the territorial order of the *Isontine*, which was a part of the countryside of Aquileia, was determined by the Roman presence, and in particular by the layout of the road network, along which stations arose for the change of horses and for much longer stays. The area had a strategic importance insofar as it was a border area, and so works of defence were erected, towers arranged along a pre-established route, at a distance of about 3-6 kilometres from each other, placed upon the heights on the edges of the plain in which Aquileia arose.

Even in the vicinities of the “*castrum Syliganum*”, the castle of Salcano, a military establishment existed which probably comprised in its system of defence even the hill of Gorizia, and the one of the mansion (stop, rest station) *Fulvio Frigido*, at modern day Aidussina. There was then another rest station tied to *Gemina Street* and even to the presence of one of the biggest bridges of the X Regio, the bridge over the Isonzo River, “*pons Sontii*”, in the area of the *Mainizza*, the road which connects Gorizia with *Gradisca*. Even close to *Farra d’Isonzo* (which owes its actual name to a previous settlement of Lombard warriors) first an establishment defending the passage over the Isonzo River and then a fortified structure, the *castrum Farrae*, were built while another Roman fortification existed on mount *Quarin* close to *Cormons* (the place-name, of Celtic origin, derives from the name of a tribe of Gauls *Carmones* or *Carmonenses*).

The bridge over the Isonzo River and the station are signalled even on the famous “*Tabula Peutingeriana*”, a medieval map which is the copy of an ancient map of the 3rd-4th century AD and which depicts the whole Roman Empire, by offering useful indications for travellers: roads, rivers, bridges, distances between the localities, presence of ports and stations, names of cities and peoples.

Even many localities of the north eastern area of Italy, of Istria and of Dalmatian turn out to be indicated in it: Aquileia, *Tergeste*, *Parenzo*, *Pola*, *Zara*...

The invasions: 5th-7th centuries

The region saw various barbarian armies pass through: in 401, Halaric crossed the Alps with his Visigoths, and stormed Aquileia, which was ransacked but not destroyed. In 452, it was instead the turn of Attila with the Huns and their allies who conquered the city after a three month long assault and devastated it, causing amongst other things the flight of the inhabitants towards the coastal strip and, in particular, towards nearby Grado, where the headquarters of the bishop of Aquileia was transferred to, one of the maximum authorities of Christianity in the West. A few years later, the Ostrogoths of Theodoric inflicted right in a battle on the Isonzo in 490 a heavy defeat upon Odoacre, king of the Herules, who had deposed the last Roman emperor, the young Romulus Augustolus.

During the invasions, the territory depopulated itself because of the massacres, the famines and epidemics, in particular the ones of the plague, which accompanied the migrations.

In 539, the territory was united, together with Veneto, Trieste and Istria, to the Empire of the East.

In 568, about a hundred thousand Lombards descended into Italy lead by Alboinus. Originally from the Baltic territories, they arrived through the valley of Vipacco and occupied all of Friuli, northern Italy and some territories of the centre-southern one. They established the capital of their first duchy at Forum Julii, which after the devastations suffered in 610 by the Avars was rebuilt with the name of Civitas Austriae (eastern city), modern day Cividale.



Italy divided between the Byzantines and the Lombards.

■ Byzantine dominions

□ Lombard dominions

* sees of Lombard duchies

The settlement of the Lombards had lasting consequences, because it broke the unity of the peninsula, which would have only been recomposed after the First World War. The Italian peninsula thus found itself divided into two parts: Lombard Italy, with its capital city in Pavia, which was made up of Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, except for a strip of the lagoon from Chioggia to Grado, a part of Emilia Romagna and of Tuscany, the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, and Byzantine Italy, with its capital city in Ravenna, which was made up of the Exarchate, that is, part of Emilia and of Romagna, the Ligurian and Tuscan coast, the so-called maritime Pentapolis and the food-rationing one, the duchy of Rome, the coasts of Campania and all the rest of the South. Istria remained subjected to the empire of Byzantium, which even kept its dominion over Dalmatia.

For our lands, therefore, all of this comprised the separation of the Adriatic coast, which remained Byzantine, from the internal territory.

Unlike the Goths, who had respected the institutions and the Roman administrative structures, the Lombards knocked them down, by confiscating all of the lands from the aristocracy and placing the subjects of Roman origin in a position of inferiority. Their settlement took place in small family groups, called *fare*, closed and detached with regards to the local populations, in places that were chosen on the basis of the needs for the military control of the territory. We are left not only with numerous testimonies in the language and toponymy of them – the numerous little cities which are called “*Farra*”-, but even very many graves, like the ones found at Romans, at *Farra d’Isonzo*, at *Moraro*, at *Salcano* (Slovenia), or those casually found in the present day *Piazza Medaglie d’oro* in *Gorizia*. The movement towards the West of the Germans and the descent of the Lombards into Italy opened up the way for other populations who arrived in the area and devastated these territories starting from the 6th century: the *Avars*, a people coming from central Asia, akin to the *Huns*, who ransacked and burnt *Cividale*, killing almost all of the male population and reducing women and children into slavery, and the *Slavs*.

The *Slavs*, indicated in the past by the Roman historians *Pliny* and *Tacitus* with the name of *Venedes*, towards the middle of the first millennium found themselves northeast of the *Carpathian Hills*, between the *Vistola* and *Dnepr Rivers*. Of quite a primitive culture, they were influenced by the *Germans*, *Celts* and *Illyrians*, peoples with whom they were in contact to the west, and between the 2nd and 4th centuries after Christ they were subjected by the *Goths* and the *Huns*, who dragged them along with them. While, however, these peoples continued in the search for new lands, the *Slavs* stably stopped in the occupied regions where, starting from the end of 500 BC, they tried to create their own States. Though being quite numerous, they did not manage to create united and stable State entities because they always remained politically disunited, so much so that the majority of Slav States was created by foreign gentlemen who knew how to impose themselves upon those people. After having invaded the *Balkan peninsula* they settled in *Slovakia*, in *Silesia*, in *Carinthia*, *Slovenia*, *Serbia* (580 AD), *Greece* (610) and *Croatia* (640).

Starting from the 6th century AD, these peoples appeared in many writings of the *Western chroniclers*, but after having entered into contact with the *Byzantines* they were indicated with the name of “*sklabenoi*”, or “*sclavi*”. In *Latin*, the term “*slavus*” was used in order to indicate the prisoners of war who came from *Slavonia* and who were used in humble and heavy work, from which the term of the *English language* “*slave*”.

Just like for all of the peoples without writing, it is difficult to establish their origin and the meaning of their name, which could derive from “slava”, glory or from “slovo”, word, or from the Indo-European root “klew”, to wet. It could therefore be hypothesized that the Slavs were those who spoke a determined language, compared to nearby peoples who did not know it, or warriors or peoples who had appropriated themselves of a nearby river.

The first settlement of the Slavs in Isontine and Friulian territory took place in the 6th and 7th centuries AD followed by a successive one around the 10th and 11th centuries, after the incursions of the Hungarians, when in order to repopulate the region further settlements of Slav colonists were favoured. The Hungarians, even called Magyars, were a people of probable Turkish origin, who towards the end of the 9th century had occupied Pannonia and devastated Germany, Flanders and Bourgogne and northern Italy, arriving all the way to Pavia, Brescia and Bergamo.

In the “Storia dei Longobardi” Paolo Diacono, the man of letters originally from Cividale who lived in the 8th century and was at the service of Charlemagne, narrates that the Slav populations appeared in Friuli after the Lombard invasion, devastating these lands, and who lead a life that was still rather wild dedicating themselves to pagan rites. The land was owned in common, power was delegated to a man elected temporarily of for life.

From 568 to 774, the Isontine remained under the Lombard State, while clashes with the Avars and the Slavs followed each other, so much so that the Lombards maintained a military garrison close to Farra d’Isonzo and the roads to Aquileia and Cividale.

With time, the Slavs of these areas founded small communities scattered and separate on abandoned territories, in areas that could be farmed in a karstic, mountainous or hilly character, generally made up of groups tied bonds of parentage and run by a head of the family or a clan leader (zupan). This precisely hindered their unification, favouring internal contrasts and clashes, leading the Slavs into accepting to become vassals of the local lords. Called to repopulate the territories of Friuli, they descended later on into the piedmont plain and were peacefully absorbed by the Latin population, first as servants of the feudal lords and successively as free colonists and small property owners, without managing to reach positions of importance in the society of the time.

They instead penetrated into Istria in the 8th century, badly welcomed by the local population, which protested due to the damage caused by them, so much so that the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charlemagne, in 804 had to send two imperial envoys on the spot. They, after having gathered together the representatives of the Istrian cities and the bishops and having listened to their complaints both about the Slavs and about the entity of the taxes imposed, held to be too onerous, welcomed the instances of the Istrians, suggesting to distance the Slavs who had provoked devastations, as it turns out from the decree of Risano, which takes its name from a river in the territory of Capodistria. This is the most ancient document which attests to the political situation of Istria in the upper Middle Ages.

Each one of the Slav peoples of the south, that is, the Slovenians, Croatians, Serbs and Bulgarians, had a different history. One group climbed up the Danube all the way to Vienna and in the 7th century founded the Principality of Carantania, later on absorbed by the Bavarians and by the Franks, while the Slovenians after the dissolution of the brief kingdom of the tribal leader Samo accepted starting from 745 the dominion of the

German lords of Bavaria and converted to Christianity. In Croatia, an independent kingdom was constituted around the year 924 which was, however, annexed in 1102 to Hungary, to which it remained united, though maintaining an autonomous local government, up until 1918, except for the brief periods of French (1809-1813) and Austrian (1849-1868) occupation. In the area which will later on become Bulgaria, the Slav tribes were instead subjected by the Bulgarians, invaders of Finno-Ugric origin, numerically inferior, who with time were absorbed by the Slavs, not before, however, that they themselves lose their name and take on the name of Bulgarians. Serbia, instead, clashed with the Turks suffering in June of 1389 the terrible defeat of Kosovo Polje, close to Pristina, where the Turks captured and massacred ten thousand zupans, practically the entire Serbian aristocracy, scattering the population along the western borders.

The Patriarchate of Aquileia

In the meantime, the Church of Aquileia acquired an evermore important role, so much so that at the end of the 3rd century the city became one of the most active centres in the Catholic world, in particular when it would be a question of imposing the decisions of the council held at Nicea in 325 AD with regards to the Arian heresy, which held that Christ was not of the same substance as the Father. A few years later, in 381, another council was convoked right at Aquileia in order to counter Arianism, in which even Saint Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, participated. Aquileia became the second Church of Italy, by importance, after the one of Rome, under the leadership of famous bishops like Valerian, Chromatius and Chrysogonus, who founded a theological school attended by various exponents of the time, amongst whom Saint Jerome, author of the translation into Latin of the Bible, the so-called “Vulgata”.

With the decline of the Roman Empire, the Church even in these regions was the continuer of civilization and of Roman culture. Upon the arrival of the Lombards, the bishops of Aquileia, who assumed the title of patriarchs going back to the tradition of the preaching in the city of the evangelist Mark, moved to Grado, castrum (fortified place) already existent at the time of the Romans, born as a maritime stopover of Aquileia (gradus means in fact stopover), which had taken upon a great importance and saw at the end of the sixth century with the bishop Elijah – to whom the cathedral of Saint Euphemia is owed – the years of its greatest splendour, under the protection of the Byzantines.

Immediately after, due to political and religious reasons, there was a division of the Patriarchate into two antagonistic headquarters. The one of Grado, under the Byzantines, returned to communion with Rome, while the other one, the one of Aquileia, under Lombard control, defended its own autonomy from Byzantium. The Lombards, initially pagans and then Arians, had converted to Catholicism and had favoured the election of another patriarch for Aquileia, who remained more at length on schismatic positions. From this moment onwards, the elected patriarch of Aquileia will be protected by the Lombards and then by the Franks, entering within the orbit of the Germanic empire, while the Patriarch of Grado will at first be supported by the Byzantines and by Venice but later on, in 1451, it will be suppressed and incorporated into the newly constituted patriarchate of Venice. This division was the cause of disputes and clashes which concretized themselves even in the ransacking of Grado on the part of the

Lombard dukes, the armed hand of the rival Patriarchs. The patriarchate of Aquileia, having passed into the political sphere of the Holy Roman Empire, had a longer life: it transferred its headquarters from 630 to about 730 to Cormons, then to Cividale until the earthquake of 1222 and finally to Udine, until when as we will see it ceased to exist in 1751 in order to create the two archdioceses of Gorizia and Udine.

When Charlemagne defeated the Lombards in 774, he constituted the marchland of Friuli, which was made up of Friuli, Carniola and Istria, for the defence of the eastern borders of his empire from the Byzantines, Avars and Slavs. In 792, he confirmed all of the patriarchate of Aquileia's possessions received from the Lombards, thus beginning the temporal power of the patriarchs which would have only ceased in 1420, when the patriarchate would have been conquered by the Republic of Venice. The emperor with a diploma of the 14th June, 811, moreover established the borders of the diocese, which extended itself from Friuli to Cadore, from southern Carinzia and to almost all of Slovenia and which was for almost a millennium the second diocese of Europe in terms of size, after the one of Milan.

The Christianization of the territory of Gorizia probably took place between the 6th and 7th centuries, the time in which a parish church goes back dedicated to Saint Stephen close the castrum Syliganum, modern day Salcano-Solkan, today in Slovenian territory, which for centuries remained the main religious centre in the area, up until the constitution of the parish of Gorizia, in 1460.

Later on, it was the family lineage of Saxony which annexed these lands, and many emperors made important donations to the patriarchs in order to assure themselves of control over Friuli amongst the most authoritative and faithful vassals. Emperor Otto I detached the region of Trent and of Friuli from the Italic Kingdom, subjecting them to direct imperial control in order to guarantee a sure connection between Germany and Italy. He continued in his work of administratively reordering the empire by entrusting the various villas, that is, villages, to faithful vassals who had to respect his dispositions by erecting fortifications in order to defend the territories entrusted to them; thus began the phase of the so-called castling of Friuli.

It is precisely in this context that Gorizia, at the time only a village situated on a hill, enters into the history of the region next to the patriarchate of Aquileia.

The first official document which bears the name of Gorizia, emanated in Ravenna on the 28th April, 1001, by Emperor Otto III, is the donation of half of the castle of Silyganum (Salcano) and of the villa called Goritia in the language of the Slavs, of the territories placed between the Isonzo River, Vipacco and the Alps and of all of the villas built or rebuilt by the patriarchs between the Livenza and Timavo Rivers after the incursions of the Hungarians against the patriarch of Aquileia John IV, while the other half was given to the count of Friuli Werner or Guariento.

The Church of Aquileia was in this way compensated for having played a role of enormous importance in Friuli, because it had started the reconstruction work in the villages devastated and depopulated by the Hungarians, calling Slovenian colonists in order to reconstruct the destroyed towns and in order to build the new ones. With time these colonists, detached from their countries of origin, assimilated the local culture and Friulianized themselves and the testimony of their origins only remained in the place-names of the towns built by them, like Belgrade, Lestizza, Glaunicco, Gonars.

In the meantime in the rest of Europe...

In order to better understand what was happening in the area being studied by us, let us now widen our horizons for a moment, and let us verify what was taking place in these centuries throughout the rest of Italy and Europe.

With the end of the invasions, the European population was able to enjoy an economic and demographic recovery even owed to the consolidation of the feudal system which guaranteed security of life and of work. New territories were colonized, uncultivated lands were tilled, marshes were reclaimed, new farming techniques and tools were distributed which allowed for a noticeable development of agricultural production. Economic and social life, which in the Upper Middle Ages had moved itself into the countryside around the lordly courts, the monasteries and the castles, began to pour into the urban centres.

After the year 1000, the development of agriculture and the increase in the population above all favoured the growth of cities in western and central Europe. In central-northern Italy, where the power of the sovereigns or of the big feudal lords was weak, urban centres managed to become politically autonomous, almost city-states, in which the citizens would band together in order to govern the city: thus the municipalities were born. In southern Italy, the Norman family of the Altavilla instead created a kingdom which unified southern Italy and Sicily. The Church and the Empire clashed in the struggle for the investiture of the bishops (1075-1122), while in France the Capetian dynasty reigned and in Great Britain first the Norman William the Conqueror managed to prevail over the Saxons (1066) and then the Plantagenets climbed to the throne. Amongst them, Richard the Lion Heart, one of the protagonists of the third crusade (1189-1199), and his brother John the Landless, who was forced to sign the Magna Charta (1215) distinguished themselves.

In the 12th century, the tendency of the Italian municipalities to make themselves evermore autonomous and independent provoked a long conflict with the German emperors, in particular with Frederick I of Swabia called Red Beard. His successor, his son Henry VI, joining in marriage with Constance of Altavilla joined the crowns of the empire and of Sicily but dying at a young age he left them to his son Frederick II (1196-1250), who was still a child, destined to become the last great emperor of the Middle Ages. He even had great importance in the sphere of culture, because the lyrics of the "Sicilian school" worked at his court. Upon his death, the heirs lost both the imperial crown and the one of the Norman kingdom and so after alternate vicissitudes Sicily was handed over to the Aragonese and the region of Naples to the Angevins.

In 1077, at the time of the struggle for the investitures, the emperor Henry IV who had obtained in Canossa the revocation of the excommunication on the part of Pope Gregory VII, with the passage through the Brenner passage being blocked to him in order to go back to his native land, actually passed through Friuli, through the lands of the faithful patriarch of Aquileia Sigardo, and he rewarded him by giving to him all of the benefits of the deposed count of Friuli. Thus the Friulian patriarchal principality was born, which lasted until the conquest on the part of Venice. The fidelity of the patriarchs to the German emperors continued even in the successive centuries: the successor of Sigardo, Henry, followed Henry IV even when he went down to Rome in order to besiege Pope Gregory VII, while the patriarch Pellegrino a few years later cooperated with the emperor Frederick the Red Beard by participating with his troops in the assaults of Crema and Milan. In 1186, it was actually a patriarch of Aquileia, Godfrey of Hohenstaufen, an intimate friend of Red Beard, who crowned his son Henry VI King of Italy in the basilica of Saint Ambrose in Milan. His successor, his son Frederick II of Swabia, forged a friendship with patriarch Bertoldo, who on the occasion of a visit of his



The Holy Germanic Roman Empire around the year 1250, at the time of Frederick II of Swabia.

accommodated him in the patriarchal palace of Cividale and then for a few days in the castle of Udine, from where he went to Pordenone in order to preside over a Diet before going back to the Puglie region. Bertoldo decided to reside in Udine after the earthquake of 1222, which had caused serious damage to the palace of Cividale, and starting from this date he looked after the city, by granting in 1248 the weekly market and by contributing towards its urban and demographic increase, so much so as to be considered the real founder of the city of Udine.

The patriarchs even had possessions in western Istria, but many Istrian cities, like Capodistria, Isola, Pirano, Umago, Cittanova, Montona, Parenzo, Rovigno, Valle, Dignano, Albona, Fianona, Pola and even Trieste and Muggia between 1150 and 1331 were forced to swear fidelity to Venice, or they spontaneously asked for its protection, by signing their submission to the Republic of the Doges.

The Istrian cities even before the constitution of the patriarchal Principality had forms of self-government equal to the ones of the Italian free municipalities and from the second half of the 12th century they elected their own mayors. Even Trieste, a free municipality since 1100, during that period was tied to Venice by a treaty of fidelity, signed in 1202 by the Doge Henry Dandolo, but in 1289 he allied himself to the patriarch of Aquileia Raymond della Torre and with the count of Gorizia in order to oppose the Venetian Republic, a choice which cost it, after the defeat, the knocking down of its walls and of the defensive works along the shores, the handing over of many ships and the payment of an annual tribute. From then on, the city was continually involved in clashes with Venice, which ransacked it many times between the 14th and 16th centuries, always imposing very harsh conditions upon it with the aim of limiting its competition.

In the fourteenth century, the patriarchate went through a period of serious crises, threatened by the counts of Gorizia and by the powerful lords of Treviso.

A period followed of bitter struggles, conspiracies, vendettas, retaliations and betrayals which lead at the end of the fourteenth century to the killing of Frederick Savorgnan in the church of Saint Stephen of Udine, which were followed out of retaliation by the ones of the bishop of Concordia and patriarch John of Moravia. In the meantime the rivalry had broken out between Venice, which wanted to have direct control over the ways of communication with the German countries, and Hungary, which hoped to annex Friuli in order to have an outlet to the sea. The armies of Venetians and of the Hungarians destroyed, burnt and killed. At the end of a terrible decade, the Venetian troops had the better part and in 1420 occupied Udine, the Karst region, the Cadore region and the coastal area, sanctioning the end of the patriarchal Principality after three and a half centuries of history.

A few years later, an accord was reached: the patriarch definitively recognized Venice's civil dominion over the Friulian nation and kept its spiritual jurisdiction over the diocese of Aquileia. At the end of the fifteenth century, there was one of the most dramatic periods, with the raids of the Turks who attacked built-up centres, ransacked them and burnt them, deporting their inhabitants as slaves. Venice reinforced her fortifications on the Isonzo River, by building the fortress of Gradisca and by sending new troops. Notwithstanding this, it is calculated that the Turkish invasions provoked the death or the deportation of about twenty-five thousand inhabitants.

Gorizia: the origins of the name

The place-name according to the majority of scholars derives from the Slav “gora”, hill, even if others advance doubts by making it known how localities with similar names exist in the middle of the Friulian plain, far from hills or reliefs, like Gorizza and Goricizza, and there is even a Gorizia in the area of the salt works of Dalmatia, Goriano in the Abruzzi region, and Goritz in far distant Prussia. Remembering the geological disasters and the floods which took place in our area, like the famous one of 585 AD described by Paolo Diacono, some hypothesize that a marsh existed in the upper Middle Ages, caused by a different course for example of the Vipacco and of the Corno, then rich in un-utilized water upstream and swelled on the occasion of some flooding. It has been ascertained that in the past in these areas there were hydrological conditions that were different from the present ones: the Isonzo had a different course, like moreover the Natisone which at the time of the Romans almost descended in a straight line from the mountains to the plain and up until the great flood of the 6th century was the main river of the region in terms of flow of water. At that time some lakes existed, one behind Mount Matajur, the other in the area between Gradisca and Mount Calvario, but the embankments that contained them were swept away and the water wound up in the riverbed of the Isonzo.

If the presence of waters even in some areas at the feet of the hill of Gorizia therefore appears to be likely, it is possible to propose a derivation from the medieval Latin *gaurus-gurgus* from which the Dantesque *gora*, used in verse 31 of the eighth song of the *Inferno*, when Dante meets the irascibles in the Stigia marsh, which he indicates with the expression “the dead *gora*”, using the substantive in the sense of a conch in which water is collected made to deviate from the main course (*Di Salvo*). We even remember the Friulian *gorc*, in order to indicate lands covered in stagnant waters like the ones which perhaps were found at the feet of the hills.

Some historians (Giovan Candido, the Viennese Wolfgang Latius, Monsignor Gian Iacopo of Ischia in 1648, Hercules Partenopeo in 1604 and the noble from Gorizia Giuseppe Lorenzo Cipriani in 1779), rather supported the thesis that Gorizia was the ancient *Noreia* quoted in antiquity by Strabone, a city founded by the Noricians, which was located at a distance of two hundred stadiums from Aquileia.

The counts of Gorizia (12th-16th centuries)

As we have seen, the first official document which bears the name of Gorizia, emanated in Ravenna on the 28th April, 1001, by Emperor Otto III, is the donation of half of the castle of Salcano and of the villa called Goritia to the patriarch of Aquileia John IV and of the other half to the count of Friuli Werener or Guariento. The development of Gorizia will be from then on indissolubly tied to the fates of the counts, who initially settled in the castle of Salcano, of Roman foundation, until the castle of Gorizia had not been built, where the counts, however, did not live stably, given that this was only one of the castles of their possessions. Later on, the family of Guariento married into the Eppenstain and towards the end of the 11th century the Palatine counts of Bavaria entered in the counts of Gorizia became the most powerful feudal lords of the Friulian region and from the 11th to the 15th centuries they had an important role in a vast area, in territories which today belong to Italy, Austria, Slovenia and Croatia, constituting a point of contact

between the Mediterranean world and the Central European one. During the course of the 13th and 15th centuries, the counts, thanks to wars, sudden changes in alliances and marriages with illustrious European family names like the emperors of Austria themselves, the sovereigns of Hungary, the Carraras, the Gonzagas, the Caminese, the counts of Frankopani of Veglia, the counts of Ortenburg, managed to become owners of fiefdoms in Tyrol, in Stiria, in Silesia, in Carinzia, in Carniola, in Friuli, in the area of Padua and of Treviso and in Istria.

The history of our region saw Mainardo as a protagonist, mentioned in 1117 with the title of count of Gorizia, who was appointed as the lawyer of the Church of Aquileia, with the task of substituting the Patriarch in secular functions which are incompatible with his ecclesiastical office, something which did not hamper abuses and violenze in the relations between the Patriarchate and the counts. They during the course of the years emancipated themselves from Aquileia, managing to have guaranteed the hereditary position of the Isontine and Friulian fiefdoms in 1202, to have their own flag, to issue money, to have an army of their own, to obtain the weekly market for the city.



Many dominions of reduced dimensions were constituted in northern Italy during the course of the fourteenth century. We note the extension of the territories of the Republic of Venice and of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, recalling that the ones of the Counts of Gorizia were made up of areas of Tyrol, Stiria, Silesia, Carinzia, Carniola and Istria.

Amongst the numerous counts who distinguished themselves for their enterprises we recall Engelbert II (1150-1187), a crusader, who followed emperor Frederick the Red Beard when he descended into Italy in 1154, and his son Mainardo II who had the recognition of the emperor Henry VI of Swabia, the son of Red Beard, for having denied help in 1192 to king Richard the Lion Heart, the English sovereign, who upon returning from the crusades had shipwrecked close to Aquileia.

Another count tied in some way to European history was Mainardo IV, who married the widow of Emperor Conrad, son of the already mentioned emperor Frederick II of Swabia, thus becoming the stepfather of Corradine – the last heir of the Swabians – and receiving the title of prince of the Holy Roman Empire. His daughter Elizabeth married Albert I (1248-1308), the son of the Emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg, against whom Dante hurled the very famous invective in the 6th song of the Purgatory, accusing him of having neglected Italy and of having allowed disorder and corruption to spread throughout it.

In the meantime, probably at the beginning of the thirteenth century, at the feet of the hill of Gorizia arose a chapel, successively incorporated into the Cathedral, dedicated to the patron saints of the city, the bishop of Aquileia Hillary and his deacon Tazianus, martyred in 283 AD. Actually close to the chapel, in what is today Saint Anthony's Square, the Franciscan friars founded a convent of Minor Friars. We have various sources starting from the 16th century which refer that it was Saint Anthony of Padua himself who erected a chapel from which the convent began in 1225-1230. Next to the church, the nobility of Gorizia buried its dead, as was moreover the custom at that time, up until 1781, when the civic cemetery on Cappella Street was blessed.

The city began to develop itself around the castle, in what represents the historical centre of the city: the castle hamlet and the area in the immediate vicinities, along those streets which are presently D'Annunzio Avenue, Cocevia Street, Rabatta Street, Rastello Street – at whose end there was a main door which marked the limit of the lower city -, Monache Street and Cavour and Saint Anthony Squares.

The oldest building in these squares is surely the Schonhaus (Beautiful house) Palace, where the counts would accommodate their guests. After the death of Leonard, the last count of Gorizia, it was purchased by the Lantieri, a noble family originally from Brescia, still living there.

Throughout the entire Middle Ages, the local aristocracy, to a wide degree German or Germanized, unlike the farmers, predominantly Friulians and Slovenians, were strongly influenced at the cultural and artistic level on the part of the Danubian area, although traces of Po Valley influences were not missing. The advance of Venice progressively attracted the region unto itself, by favouring its orientation towards Italy during the centuries of the Renaissance, when there was a flow of merchants, artisans and Venetian and Friulian entrepreneurs who settled in the city, attracted by the possibility of good business. They constituted the backbone of a small and middle Italian bourgeois class of a city society which will substantially remain unaltered until the nineteenth century. Already starting from the thirteenth century, there was a constant immigration of families coming from Tuscany and Lombardy, like the ones that came to Friuli in 1273 following the patriarch Raymond della Torre, bishop of Como, whose family name had the seignory of Milan but has been won by the Viscounts. In the following century, the clashes and political events which troubled Lombardy and Veneto pushed other groups of Lombards and Venetians to find refuge in Friuli: thus the Coronini, natives of Bergamo,

arrived in the city acquiring ever greater importance in the life of the County and of the Empire, obtaining important offices and honorific titles. In the thirteenth century, exiled from Florence, arrived the Rabatta, who had the little church of the Holy Spirit erected in the castle hamlet.

The extension and the placing of the possessions of the counts of Gorizia, even very far between them, comprised a series of exhausting clashes and constituted an obstacle for an efficient political and military action, so much so that in 1272 count Albert decided to divide the possessions with his brother Mainardo, keeping the county of Gorizia for himself. Albert even managed to take possession of the Istrian cities of Albona, Fianona, Pinguente and Tolmino, taking them from the patriarch Raymond della Torre. In the meantime in the same years Parenzo, Umago, Cittanova and Capodistria opened up as we have seen their ports to Venice. The Mainardo branch fizzled out towards the middle of the thirteenth century, while the one from Gorizia reached its maximum splendour in 1300, with Henry II, son of Albert, who after having allied himself to Cangrande della Scala took possession in 1319 of the city of Treviso, in view of the conquest of the della Scala family's territory and of the creation of a unitary State from the Adige to the Arsa, from the Alps to the sea. With a lot of astuteness he maintained good relations with Venice, to the point that he obtained Venetian citizenship, and he even had the merit of granting in 1307 municipal freedoms to Gorizia, that is, the right to hold meetings, to elect a steward and to levy some taxes. He even became the general captain for life of the patriarchate of Aquileia and imperial vicar in Italy. His sudden death, on the 23rd April, 1323, at the age of 57, and the fact that his heir, the son of Princess Beatrice of Bavaria, his second wife, was still a boy, hampered his plans from being brought to fulfilment and caused the loss of Padua and Treviso and the passage of the inheritance of the possessions of the extinct Tyrolese branch to the Hapsburg. Taking advantage of the difficult moment for the natives of Gorizia, the Patriarch of Aquileia Bertrand of San Genesio (1334-1350) in 1340 took Venzone away from the counts and on Christmas Eve attacked the castle of Gorizia. The counts never forgot the affront and turned out amongst the suspected instigators of the prelate's assassination.

In 1374, another step in the gradual but irreversible decline was the handing over by inheritance of inner Istria and Carniola to the Hapsburg.

In the meantime the built-up area continued to extend itself: between 1398 and 1414 the already mentioned little church of the Holy Spirit was erected in the castle hamlet by the Rabatta nobles, while the palace of the Strassoldo nobles was built in 1481 in Saint Anthony Square, which nowadays hosts an elegant hotel. Many noble families, which had chosen to reside in the city stably or to at least spend some periods of the year in it like the Formentini, the Tasso – who for almost three centuries maintained the monopoly over the postal services throughout the entire empire -, the Dornberg, the Strassoldo, built their palaces in the area of the castle hamlet. When there was no more space, the area beneath the hill, beyond the “grapa” (from the German Graben, it was an eight metre ditch which collected the waters at the feet of the hill) began to be used. The city extended itself beyond the “rake”, where already since the fourteenth century houses of nobles and of simple citizens arose, in areas still partially covered by meadows. A big square was created, called in fact Big Square, Traunig or Travnik, the present Victory Square. Always in the 1400s, the Piuma bridge, whose presence was documented since 1210, was fortified with a big tower of defence, thus from then on it even took on the name of Big Tower bridge.

The first certain testimony of the presence of Jews in the city goes back to the fourteenth century, even if already in centuries past, starting from the Roman era, a Jewish presence had been registered in Venetia Julia. From a document of 1316, we find out that a certain Bonissachus Judeus lived in one of the houses in the Inferior Square, today Cavour Square, while in the cemeteries of Gorizia Jewish plaques appear dating back to the end of the century. Initially the Jews lived on the slopes of the castle and on Cocevia Street, in one of the healthiest areas of the city, but towards the end of the seventeenth century they will be transferred, as we will see, into what which become the Jewish neighbourhood.

The last decades of the dynasty were characterized by a confused policy of alliances, in the attempt to defend itself from the pressures exerted on the one hand by the Republic of Venice and on the other by the Hapsburg of Austria. Added to these problems were the ones represented by the Turks who repeatedly arrived with their incursions in Friuli. In 1478, they encamped on a plain between Salcano and Gorizia and engaged in clashes with the Venetians at Lucinico, even faced by the rough count Leonardo. The Turks even came back in 1499 and penetrated into Friuli arriving all the way to the area of Pordenone, destroying well over 132 towns. In the meantime with the pretext of setting up a defensive outpost against the Turks, Venice had erected a fortress at Gradisca.

The count decided to marry into the family of the Gonzaga, lords of Mantua, who had turned their court into one of the most refined centres of Italian culture by surrounding itself with scholarly people and artists. Thus at the age of thirty-seven he married sixteen year old Paola Gonzaga, a young noble and cultured woman but of weak health. A girl who died at a tender age was only born of this union, and therefore after the death of Leonardo which took place in April of 1500, the family became extinct. The count was buried in Lienz, where he had died, remembered by a sepulchral monument wanted by Emperor Maximilian I, while countess Paola, who died three years before, is found according to the most credible hypothesis in the former chapel of Saint Anne, in the cathedral of Gorizia. On the basis of hereditary pacts, the county was handed over to the Hapsburg. From then on, the territory of Gorizia remained a part of the Austrian State for four centuries, up until the First World War, which ended in 1918.

The Hapsburg dominion: the sixteenth century

At this point the Empire and Venice found themselves having common borders and they clashed. In 1508, the Venetians after a massive artillery attack occupied Gorizia and ransacked it, but they were forced to hand it back to the Hapsburg after only 13 months.

The disaccords between Austria and the Venetian Republic continued, until Emperor Charles V, having passed by Gorizia after an expedition against the Turks, signed in 1521 the Treaty of Worms, which put an end to the conflict between the Hapsburg and Venice. There were no other occasions of clashes, if not the Gradiscan War, and the political situation remained unchanged until the descent of Napoleon and the handing over of the territories of the Republic of Venice to Austria, with the Treaty of Campoformido. Such a treaty was signed for Austria in 1797 by the last actual exponent of one of the most important and authoritative noble families of Gorizia, the plenipotentiary minister Ludwig Cobenzl. With it, it was even established that Istria and Dalmatia would be handed over to Austria.

Nothing changed in appearance within the span of these three centuries on the institutional and political level, because the House of Austria approved and confirmed the old rights. With the handing over to Austria, the city lost its old independence but obtained a political and economic consolidation and gained a vast hinterland. The County got bigger both in terms of territorial extension and number of inhabitants, given that Aquileia, Gradisca, Tolmezzo and Plezzo were included in its jurisdiction and given that a great number of Venetians, Friulians and Slovenians were attracted to this area.

During the course of the sixteenth century, the city quadrupled the number of its inhabitants, which went from a little more than a thousand to about four thousand, according to the data provided by the historian Carlo Morelli of Schonfeld in his “Istoria della Contea di Gorizia”, published in 1855. The nobles who lived in the city were of a numerous percentage, because from a survey conducted in 1566 the presence turned out of 300 people between men, women and children. Many of these families were in parentage relations with important members of the German aristocracy. Starting from the sixteenth century, numerous nobles of Gorizia (the Della Torre, the Dornberg, the Cobenzl, the Lantieri, the Edling, the Attems, the Orzoni, the Rabatta) were at the service of the Empire, and they held offices of great importance in the civil and ecclesiastical fields receiving recognitions and honours, committing themselves in the meantime to continuous disputes with the various noble families due to contrasting interests.

Reliable news on the ethnic composition of the city’s population begins to be found starting from this era, which indicates the prevalence of the Italian component and culture though in the peaceful simultaneous presence of the different cultures, which actually gave a unique peculiarity to Gorizia. If at the beginning of the century the population was mainly made up of Friulians and Slovenians, these last ones above all dedicated to rural activities, but with a strong presence of German nobles and functionaries, thanks to a considerable immigration from the nearby Veneto region a rapid affirmation was determined of the Italian character of the city. As we had anticipated, merchants, artisans and Venetian and Friulian entrepreneurs were attracted by the possibilities of doing business in the Isontine centre and they moved there, thus constituting the nucleus of a small and middle Italian bourgeois class. All of this brought considerable changes at the cultural and social level so much so that, for example, significant modifications can even be noted in the dialects during the course of a single century. The Italian language and the Friulian one quite soon became the language of judges, lawyers and notaries in the county. The government of Vienna, contrary to what was going on in the city, reached the point of forbidding the firing of a worker originally from the place in order to put a Venetian in his place, to impose that cases be dealt with by German lawyers and that all of the documentation be in the German language. While the upper valley of the Isonzo experienced a consistent Slovenian pressure in the second half of the sixteenth century, in the area of Gorizia senior officials were sent belonging to the German nobility, which lead the big local families into entering into the sphere of German culture, by adopting its language and customs. Like in every region of the Empire, the use of German was imposed in all State offices, where starting from 1556 documents drafted in Latin were refused in order to reassert the prominence of the German language.

On the margins of the Big Square at the feet of the castle – today Victory Square – the palace of the della Torre counts, today Government Palace (Prefecture) was built in 1540, which during the course of the centuries hosted the representatives of the emperor, the Captains of Gorizia, but even Giacomo Casanova and the emperor Francis Joseph,

the palace of the Cobenzl family, built shortly after, at the end of the square, became in 1779 the headquarters of the Archdiocese. Always at the feet of the castle, but in the modern day Cavour Square, the house where the steward carried out his functions was knocked down and in its place the Provincial States palace, which is today the police headquarters, was built.

In 1593, what we today call the Coronini villa, from the name of the famous family which was its last owner and of which we will often have an opportunity to talk about in the following pages, was even built. The palace was initially the property of Charles Zingraf, an imperial commissioner for the collection of taxes in the county, belonging to one of the most powerful families in the city. When the family was extinct, the villa and the lands went over to the Strassoldo counts, who restored the palace and towards the middle of the seventeenth century built the chapel of Saint Anne, in which the members of the Strassoldo and Coronini families are buried today. The villa once again changed ownership in 1820, when the Strassoldos auctioned it off to count Michele Coronini Cronberg, baron of Dornberg and Gradiscutta, a philanthropist, an intelligent and powerful political man. Particular moments of the history of Gorizia are tied to the villa: it seems that Radetzky got to know Countess Francesca Strassoldo, who became his wife, here and the king of France in exile Charles X, of whom we will speak later on, was hosted here in 1836. A splendid 46,000 square metre park according to the criteria of the romantic parks was then made in a span of many decades thanks to Alfredo Coronini and his descendants. In 1990, the famous family became extinct with educated and refined William, who after having collected furniture, ceramics, old coins, jewellery, manuscripts and very precious paintings gave the villa, its furnishings and the park that surrounds it to the citizens of Gorizia, entrusting its care to a Foundation, so that all of the citizens can enjoy it.

The sixteenth century even represented in Europe the century of the spreading of Luther's thought, which in the county found numerous proselytes both amongst the Slovenian rural population and amongst the nobility, supported by some noble families like the Lantieri, the Eck, the Attimis and the della Torre. In 1563, Primož Trubar arrived in the city. He was a Slovenian priest who had been excommunicated and considered to be a rebel with regards to the Emperor Charles V, but under the reign of his brother Ferdinand, more tolerant towards his subjects of the Lutheran religion, he was even able to preach in Gorizia, though giving rise to worry and protests.

Thanks to Trubar, who spread his thought by even using the press, the Slovenian language acquired greater dignity. Slovenian, in fact, in those days, though having been spoken by a great number of people in the county, was still not a written language. Written testimonies, in fact, are not known in this territorial area until 1551, the year in which some brief Slovenian texts go back for ecclesiastical use. In these same years the first book in Slovenian, the "catechismus", was published printed in 1550 in Germany, followed by prayer books, religious texts – amongst which in fact the writings of Trubar – and a Grammar book. For the next two following centuries still, however, almost all of the Slovenian writers continued to use German, Latin or Italian in order to compose their works because the Slovenian language had still not reached the necessary stability and uniformity in order to be used in literature and therefore did not have a written tradition. In those days the population which spoke Slovenian was mainly rural and did not have access to education, which however was always imparted in German, Latin and Italian. It will be necessary to have to wait until the beginning of the nineteenth century in order to see the first books of poems and of writing in prose published in Slovenian.

The seventeenth century

In the seventeenth century, the territories of the county of Gorizia extended themselves from the valleys of the Isonzo and of Vipacco to the Collio and to Karst, and comprised of the plain between Rubbia and Medea and between Cormons and Aquileia. Austria, lead in those days by Ferdinand II, bore between 1615 and 1618 a series of very bloody clashes with the Venetians (War of Gradisca) which after having conquered Cormons and Aquileia aimed at Gorizia, but Count Richard di Strassoldo actually stopped them at Gradisca. A few years later, in 1647, the Hapsburg in order to get the necessary money in order to fill up the imperial coffers after the exorbitant expenses sustained during the thirty year war decided to sell Gradisca to the Eggenberg family, naturally giving rise to a lot of controversy because the territory of Grdisca was the granary of the city. The detachment of the county of Gradisca lasted until 1754, when the family was extinct.

The end of the thirty year war (1648) allowed the Hapsburg dynasty to concentrate its strength on the problem of religious unity, which was re-established with the persecution of the Protestants and thanks to the capillary work of the Jesuits. This reinforced the cohesion between the many ethnic groups subjected to the Hapsburg and allowed to face the Ottoman pressure with success.

During the course of the sixteenth century and during the first decades of the seventeenth century, in fact, the Turks had conquered Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and a part of Hungary, placing under a constant threat the eastern borders of the Hapsburg Empire, which had remained the only Christian State, next to Venice, in a position of opposing their advance. The Ottomans directly pointed upon Vienna but, notwithstanding any European prince except for the king of Poland having brought any help to the Hapsburg, they were defeated and in 1683 they took away the siege upon the capital.

A government existed in our County at that time made up of provincial States, composed of nobles and ecclesiastics and by representatives of the cities of Gorizia and, initially, even of Aquileia, who continued to be convoked right up until the reforms carried out in 1783 by Maria Teresa. Since the nineteenth century, the County of Gorizia and Gradisca constituted, together with Margraviato d'Istria and Trieste, Kustenland, that is, the Coast, an autonomous regional administrative circumscription run by a lieutenant who had his headquarters in Trieste. An exceptional case in the Austrian territory, each one of the three realities that made up the Coast had their own organs of government and, within certain limits, of self-government. The provincial Diet was a real local parliament, convoked by the emperor usually once a year, whose deliberations had the form of a proposal for the emperor but once approved assumed the form of laws. Amongst the jurisdictions of the Diet there were the ones of legislating in matters of rural economics, the safeguarding of the forests, hunting and fishing, reclamations, irrigations, construction of roads, bridges and other public works. It made use of the Provincial Council, presided over by the Provincial Captain, who ran the government of the County on behalf of the emperor, by administering justice, commanding the military garrisons and looking after the security of the borders and relations with Venice and the patriarchate of Aquileia. The office was initially for life, then towards the end of the seventeenth century became triennial but renewable and was always a privilege of very high level functionaries. The functions of the captain were assumed in his absence by the lieutenant, an office usually covered by a noble from Gorizia.

The seventeenth century saw the spreading of many epidemics, of which it has to be kept in mind by reading the chronicles that at the end of the century 4,800 people lived in the city while the population of the entire County reached about 58 thousand inhabitants. There was a considerable construction development: the buildings occupied further areas around the present Victory Square and Saint Anthony's Square, heading along the roads to Carinzia, to Veneto and to the valley of Vipacco. This is the case of the "Beneath the tower" suburb, which arose beyond the fortified house which constituted since the fourteenth century the south-eastern entrance into the city, chosen as their own abode and widened by the Lantieri counts, heirs of count Leonardo, starting from 1505. The farmers, who towards the end of the fifteenth century, following three epidemics of the plague in less than twenty years, had made a request to be able to erect in honour of Saints Roch and Sebastian a chapel (1497), lived in that area in poor cottages. When a new epidemic of the plague spread at the beginning of the seventeenth century from Istria, the authorities of Gorizia established some measures which managed to limit the contagion, so much so that, according to Morelli, there were only fourteen victims in the area. As a sign of thanksgiving for having escaped from the danger, the inhabitants of Gorizia widened the chapel and so the new church of Saint Roche was able to be consecrated in 1637. This, however, did not keep the entire area of the Isonzo from being shaken by the terrible epidemic of bubonic plague of 1682-1683: in order to face it communications with the nearby towns were interrupted impeding transit on the Isonzo at the height of the Mainizza and of Piedimonte-Podgora, schools were closed and the doors of churches locked and even a quarantine station was created in the area of Sant'Andrea, but in Gorizia there were five hundred victims all the same, about 10% of the population. The fact should not be surprising to us that in the seventeenth century there were "only" five thousand inhabitants, given that even in nearby Trieste, for example, about four thousand inhabitants were counted and on the Italian peninsula, harshly struck by the plague spread by Spanish soldiers, 13 million inhabitants at the beginning of the century and 11.5 million in the 1760s. Only starting from the middle of the eighteenth century, thanks to the disappearance of the plague from the European continent, to an improvement in the climate and to the consequent better crops, the mortality rate went down and the Italian population, in line with the European one, began to rapidly grow: from eleven million at the end of the seventeenth century it went on to 18 million at the end of the eighteenth century.

The small Jewish community of Gorizia, made up of about 300 people, a few years after the epidemic of the plague of 1682 was forced to move by decree of the Emperor Leopold I (1696) into a separate neighbourhood, called a ghetto. In other cities, the custom of having Jews live in another neighbourhood reserved for them already began since 1516, when the first ghetto had arisen in Venice, in the vicinities of a foundry, in the local dialect, precisely, a "geto". It was, however, after the Council of Trent that the Church recommended with insistence that the specific areas be delimited in every city, closed at night by gates. Even in Gradisca a small Jewish community was present, which lived in the ghetto (Calle del Tempio) where it had a synagogue, a school attended by about twenty students and a cemetery. The ghetto of Gorizia was instead placed in the area of present-day Ascoli Street, in a position which was then peripheral and unhealthy, insofar as bordering onto the church of San Giovanni, in whose cemetery the victims of the epidemic had been buried. The owners of the houses of the San Giovanni district were thus forced to sell their houses to the Jews, who had to live in this neighbourhood until 1781, when, at the time of the Emperor Joseph II, the obligation to

live there had been abolished. Notwithstanding many restrictions, the Jewish community enjoyed considerable freedom in the economic field and developed a flourishing textile industry. It immediately created an oratory in which to conduct religious services and, in 1756, it even opened up a Synagogue, which can still be visited today.

The sale of Gradisca to the Eggenberg family, as we have seen, had provoked ill feeling and controversy, and so Emperor Leopold I in 1660 decided to pay greater attention to the climate which had spread throughout the County and descended in order to visit the city and receive its act of homage. He too, like archduke Charles a hundred years before, was welcomed with manifestations of enthusiasm and fidelity. He appreciated the hospitality of the people of the County a lot, and jokingly confided in a letter to Count Joseph Rabatta that if he would have stayed at length he would have become “entirely Friulian”, given that he only heard the Italian language being spoken. The “Leopoldine door” was built in his honour in order to accede to the southern surrounding wall of the Castle.

In order to face the spreading of Lutheran thought, between the end of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, various religious Orders arrived in the city, joining the Franciscans present, as we know, right from the middle of the thirteenth century: the Capuchins, the Jesuits, the Carmelites, the Clarissians, the Dogoodbrothers and, finally, the Ursulines. Even the church was erected dedicated to Saint Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Order of the Jesuits, and a Seminary, in accordance with what had been established by the Council of Trent, for the education of young men who chose to become priests. It was possible to open it up in 1629, thanks to the commitment of the Jesuits and to the generosity of Count Werdenberg, the husband of the Countess Catherine Coronini, by using the palace which today is the headquarters of the Civic Library on modern-day Mameli Street, purchased and widened by the Jesuits in order to find room for 60 students between the ages of 12 and 19 who attended it in those days. The Wergenbergic foundation had a flourishing life until its suppression by the Company of Jesus, which comprised of the closure of the schools and the Seminary and a serious loss for the culture of Gorizia. In the meantime, in the hamlet of Piazzutta, thanks to Baron Vito Delmestri, a small hospital, entrusted to the Dogoodbrothers, a convent and a chapel which then became the church of Saints Vito and Modestus, were built.

Culture benefited considerably from the educative era of the religious Orders present in the city, given that the youth of Gorizia could benefit from excellent teachers who, coming from the colleges and the Roman academies, even became spreaders of Italian culture and language. In particular, the college of the Jesuits, active since 1621, thanks to the level of preparation which it offered attracted students not only from the County but even from the nearby Veneto and Friuli regions. The activity carried out by the Jesuits was of fundamental importance for the culture of the County: thanks to them, an improvement was registered not only in the education of the youth, but even in their customs of life. Throughout the entire seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cultural life had as its centre the Jesuit schools, where the activity was organized with a lot of seriousness, according to the rules dictated by the Order and the methods of educative science of the time. The four hundred students, inserted into classes of 70/80 students, attended lessons for eleven months in the year and were subjected to a severe discipline. The school was first hosted on Mameli Street and later on, in the eighteenth century, in a big new building next to the church of Saint Ignatius, dedicated to the founder of the Order. The building was demolished between the two wars, with the intention of widening Victory Square, but the INPS building was built in its place.

Another important institution for the life of the city was the one of the School of the Ursuline Mothers, still existent, which operating since 1672 had, it too, a fundamental role in the education and instruction of tens of thousands of girls. The nuns, thanks to various donations from the noblewomen of Gorizia were able to acquire some buildings which they connected into a big complex between modern day Morelli Street, Crispi Street and Victory Square, on present-day Nuns Street. Here, the free day school, the college for paying students, the convent and a church, found a place in 1672. Today, not even a trace remains of the buildings because of the destruction provoked by the First World War. In 1922, it was necessary to acquire the villa of Giacomo Ceconi, (builder of the Transalpine railway), in the area of Montesanto, today Palladio Street, where the nuns moved in 1928. The architect Max Fabiani elaborated the plan for the restoration of the already existent building and for the construction of a new monastery which was made up of boarding school for 250 internal students and a school for 500 external students. Daughters of illustrious families like the Lantieri, the Coronini, the Tacco, the Morelli, the Garzarolli, the Cobenzl, the de Grazia, the Strassoldo and the Attems, entered into the Order as well as girls coming from Trieste, Ljubljana, Graz, Salzburg... The institute was the oldest Italian female school of the city, where besides Christian doctrine, girls were taught to read, write, count, sew, knit, embroider exclusively in the Italian language up until 1775. The nuns actually excelled in embroidery, and they were famous in the city for the manufacturing of yarn, tapestries and lace with spindles, which they made for lay as well as ecclesiastical customers, for whom they embroidered very precious sacred vestments still kept today. From what has been said, the importance assumed by the educative action of the Jesuits and of the Ursuline Mothers, who as we will see later on will be joined in 1860 by the Scholastic Sisters of Our Lady, and in 1895 by the Salesians, turns out to be evident. In the second half of the eighteenth century, even an institute was moreover founded thanks to the generosity of the Spanish marquis Francesco Alvarez de Manesse for abandoned children which had a great importance for the instruction and education of the most misfortunate children, becoming the "Oddone Lenassi" College.

In the seventeenth century, the Slovenian community had esteemed ecclesiastical dignitaries, like the bishops of Ljubljana Glusic, Tavcar and Textor, the archdeacon of Gorizia Nepokoj and the ecclesiastical musician Janez Tekstor. There were then important authors like the priest columnist Ivan Marija Marussig, who wrote works in verse and in prose using Italian and Friulian, the Jesuit Martin Bavcer, who composed the "Historia rerum Noricarum et Forojuliensium" and, signing with a Latin pseudonym, an official speech of greeting for Emperor Leopold on a visit to the city, the pedagogue Gerbec and two writers like Zbogar and Krhne, who published, always in Latin, works of theology.

The eighteenth century

The eighteenth century was a decisive century in the history of the territory which we are studying, thanks to the reforming work of Maria Teresa of Austria (1740-1780) and of her son Joseph II (1779-1790), who reorganized the institutions of the State, even involving in full the most southern regions of the Empire. It was really the golden century for Gorizia: the city renewed its urban look, enriching itself with palaces and welcoming guests and people of a certain importance.

To tell the truth, at the economic level the century did not begin in the best of ways, due to the consequences of the epidemics of the second half of the seventeenth century, added to the most ruthless commercial competition with Venice, to custom duties and to the progressive increase in fiscal withdrawals owed to the continuous wars against the Turks and then to the so-called wars of succession. In 1724, moreover Trieste and Fiume were declared free ports, something which Aquileia was denied which instead suffered from the interdiction from trade.

The free port of Trieste granted by Charles VI had not equal in terms of its scale of franchises, commercial facilities and hinterland potential and constituted the base for a development which opened up the city to trade with the rest of Europe, with Africa and with the Americas. The city, which at the beginning of the eighteenth century had less than 5,000 inhabitants, mainly gathered together on the Collio, around the cathedral and at the Saint Justus Tower, in less than a century ended up numbering well over 40,862, as turns out from the census of 1804. Trieste, in fact, became a huge commercial emporium, which attracted a constant flow of Germans, Slavs, Greeks, which took it in another 150 years to 180 thousand inhabitants. Thanks to the activity of the port, which became the main transit stopover for trade between the Austrian provinces and the Mediterranean, new hamlets were born (Teresiano, Giuseppino and Franceschino), and various districts around the important industries of the Adriatic Naval establishment (1840), of the Triestine Technical Establishment (1846), of the Arsenal of the Austro-Hungarian Lloyd (1852) and of the Usina Municipal Gas (1864).

In the area of Gorizia, instead, between the end of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, there was a period of economic recession. During the course of the century, a further immigration took place of Venetians, above all of merchants and workers, who were attracted by the presence of the first factories built in the urban area, amongst which of the spinning mills and a paper mill.

In order to favour the development of the economy of the county, new projects were then studied amongst which the cultivation of mulberry trees and the construction of a spinning mill at Farra d'Isonzo, wanted by Emperor Charles VI. His work was continued by his daughter, Empress Maria Teresa, an intelligent and enlightened sovereign who, as we anticipated, carried out important reforms and did a lot for the southern regions of her Empire, and therefore for Trieste and Gorizia, with the intent of limiting the influence of Venice. In 1756, she gave back Gradisca to the County, which from that moment on became "the Princely County of Gorizia and Gradisca". Within the sphere of the plans in order to boost a gradual economic growth, the sovereign had the production of silk developed in the area, in competition with Venice, and therefore facilitated the farmers who planted the necessary mulberry trees along the roads or on the edges of the fields for the feeding of the silkworms. For this reason from 1756 to 1764 almost five thousand mulberry trees were planted in the surrounding areas of the city, which added themselves to the other already existing sixty thousand. The production was based above all upon the work carried out at home by the farmers who raised silkworms and would then sell the cocoons to merchants. In the second half of the century, the area of Gorizia moreover began to feel the benefits of the presence of the free port of Trieste and industries were created for the transformation of natural resources coming from the nearby port.

Even with regards to culture, the eighteenth century was a century of changes. The scholastic institutions at the beginning of the eighteenth century were still in the hands of the Church, entrusted to religious Orders, but the Empire placed education under the direct dependency of the State, by laicizing it and turning it into a means of affirmation of its own interests. In 1750, the Hapsburg government instituted State schools and a few years later established that they be compulsorily attended by youngsters between the ages of 6 to 13 years of age, while in Italy it will be necessary to still wait for another century and reach 1876 for the institution of mandatory education. Public schools were even an instrument in order to spread the German language and to assimilate the local components. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the doctor from Gorizia, Antonio Musnig, observed that the citizens of Gorizia already as children spoke both German and Friulian and Slovenian, adding that German was taught in public schools, that Italian was used in order to discuss cases in court and that Friulian and Slovenian were used by the people.

Other changes for the Isonzo River area came about always under the reign of Maria Teresa. In 1751, Pope Benedict XIV in order to put an end to the questions between the Hapsburg and Venice with regards to the Patriarchate of Aquileia positively responded to the requests of the House of Austria and suppressed the Patriarchate of Aquileia, instituting nine new archdioceses, the one of Gorizia for the dioceses in Austrian territory and the one of Udine for the Venetian ones. In this way, the civil and ecclesiastical circumscriptions coincided. The city, therefore, became an archbishopric see and thus saw its administrative functions grow and the widening of its span of urban attraction, insofar as the territory of the diocese extended itself over a very vast area, from Cortina to Stiria, from Aquileia to Villaco, from Lienz to Zagreb, from the Drava River to the Adriatic Sea and it almost counted a million inhabitants. The first bishop was count Charles Michael of Attems (1771-1774), son of the countess Elizabeth Coronini Cronberg, a polyglot like her fellow citizens: he spoke Friulian, Italian, German, Slovenian and French. Having committed himself deep down in the work of promotion and knowledge amongst the ranks of the diocesan clergy, he contributed towards further spreading Italian culture on the banks of the Isonzo River. He was bestowed by the emperor with the title of prince by the Holy Roman Empire, in the will to increase the prestige of the new see, which responded to the necessity of Austria to have a metropolitan see south of the Danube River.

The institution of the archdioceses had relevant effects not only on the institutional and ecclesiastical level, but even on the cultural one, like for example the development of the printing presses of Tommasini and of Valeri, from which, in the second half of the eighteenth century, a considerable editorial activity derived both in order to provide for the concrete needs of the new institutions and in order to respond to the cultural needs of the citizens and of the guests, like for example Lawrence da Ponte and James Casanova, who in 1774 had the splendid edition published by Valeri's printing press of the first tomes of the "Istoria delle turbolenze della Polonia" which was sought after in all of Europe not only for the fame of its author but even for the elegance of the edition. Thus editions of considerable commitment and of refined taste were printed in well over nine languages, in order to satisfy the learned of the times. Important was even the edition, even if for a few years because of economic difficulties, of the "Gazzetta di Gorizia", a weekly magazine of news and information not only local of which a hundred issues were printed. The cultural life of the city became more lively: various cultural circles were born like the Academy of the Filomeleti and the one of the Arcadi, the

Agricultural Society was instituted and, in 1740, a citizens' theatre was opened up, while the most well-off and learned citizens took an interest in the rapid transformations in progress beyond the borders of the County. In 1774, Gorizia was the headquarters of a surgical school, which remained open until the beginning of the nineteenth century. The need to guarantee the functioning of an orchestra, of the Civic band and of other musical ensembles were the premises for the foundation at Gorizia, in 1798, of the Philharmonic Society, which will be followed by a music school at the beginning of the nineteenth century. An important of culture at the time was the one of historiography: right in this century, in fact, appear the first works of history about the area of Gorizia, written by the historians Rodolfo Coronini, Carlo Morelli of Schonfeld, Sigismondo Attems and Antonio Codelli, which were joined by the Slovenian doctor Anton Musnig with his work on the climate of Gorizia. With regards to Friulian culture, we remember count Marzio Strassoldo (1736-1800), who was a poet and playwright, while for the Slovenian one we remember baron Sigismondo (Ziga) Zois of Edelstein, born in 1747 in Trieste of a father from Bergamo but residing in Ljubljana. After having culturally formed himself with humanistic studies at Reggio Emilia, he returned to Ljubljana in order to take care of the commercial and industrial activities of the family and became a protagonist of the city's culture, trying to spread knowledge amongst the humble classes and giving his library to his fellow citizens. He tried to translate the "Leonore" of the German romantic August Burger into Slovenian, but after various attempts he had to give up due to the lexical poverty of the Slovenian language at the time. About thirty years later, the young poet France Preseren (1800-1849) managed in the enterprise.

In 1756, on modern day Ascoli Street, arose the first nucleus of the Synagogue, in the neighbourhood inhabited by the Jews, close to Corno Square, where one of the most illustrious noble families of the city, the one of the Attems-Petzenstein counts built the majestic Baroque building, presently the headquarters of the Provincial Museums, planned by the architect Nicolo Pacassi. He came from a family of Greek origin which had moved to Gorizia, like many others, from Venice. His father, Giovanni, was called to Vienna, to work in the famous Crypt of the Capuchins. Right close to Vienna, at Wiener Neustadt, Nicolo was born (1716-1779), who became an architect of the imperial court, he managed to get qualified at the Academy of Beautiful Arts in Vienna, was appointed the first architect, superintendent of the imperial constructions, knight and then baron. He worked during his brilliant career in Austria (Schonbrunn Castle in Vienna), in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia and even in Milan, but he always kept relations with Gorizia, where he had a home in present day De Amicis Square. Still today we can admire the Attems-Santa Croce building, the present Municipality's headquarters, the Attems-Petzenstein building, the Provincial Museums' headquarters, his Neptune fountain in Victory Square and the one of Hercules, now in the Attems building courtyard.

The religious life of the County was struck by the anti-ecclesiastical policy adopted by Emperor Joseph II, who suppressed tens of convents of male and female religious Orders that were not of public utility, that is, did not work in hospitals, schools or in parishes. The archbishopric of Gorizia was even suppressed and numerous ecclesiastical goods were sold off. Upon the emperor's decree, the monasteries of the Sisters of Saint Clare (1782), of the Franciscan hermits of Saint Valentine, of the Benedictine nuns of Aquileia, of the Dominicans of Gradisca and of the nuns of Farra, depending upon them, were shut down. The archbishop of Gorizia, Rodolfo Edling, who tried to oppose, was exiled. These reforms alarmed Pope Pius VI, who decided to go to Vienna, passing on the 13th March, 1782 through Gorizia, where he stayed at the Schonhaus palace with the Lantieri family, in order to then head to Trieste and Ljubljana.

Always in the eighteenth century, as we have seen, even illustrious people like Carlo Goldoni and the already mentioned da Ponte and Casanova, who were guests in Saint Anthony's Square, in the Lantieri palace, stayed in the city. Then in March of 1797, Napoleon Bonaparte arrived, who stayed in the de Grazia house, on present day Oberdan Street, which today hosts the music Institute. He imposed upon the city the payment of a tax of 150,000 florins and instituted a provisional government which only lasted a few months because the treaty of Campoformido gave back Gorizia to Austria, with the addition of Monfalcone and Grado which had first belonged to Venice. With Napoleon's descent into Italy, an era began of upheavals which therefore even involved the region, many times struck by the French armies and for some years annexed in fact to the Napoleonic Empire. The French, in fact, returned to the County in 1805 and from 1809 to 1813. During the third occupation of the city (1809-1813), Gorizia was annexed to the new Illyrian State, separated from the Kingdom of Italy by the course of the Isonzo River: Piedimonte was in Italian territory while Gorizia was Illyrian. The Illyrian Provinces constituted a buffer State devised in order to control Austria and in order to have access to the trade routes towards the Balkans.

The French cancelled all of the restrictions imposed up until that moment on the Jews, by knocking down in 1812 the gate which locked up the ghetto, where about 200 people still lived, about half of the Jews of the city, notwithstanding the fact that the obligation to reside there had been abolished in 1781.

In the meantime, the nobility of Gorizia continued to erect or restore villas and castles in its possession which aroused the admiration of guests: we recall the ones of the Strassoldo at San Floriano, of the Attems at Santa Croce, of the Della Torre at Vipulzano, on the Collio of Gorizia and at Sagrado, of the Rabatta at Canale, of the Lantieri at Vipacco and at Rifembergo, of the Coronini at San Pietro.

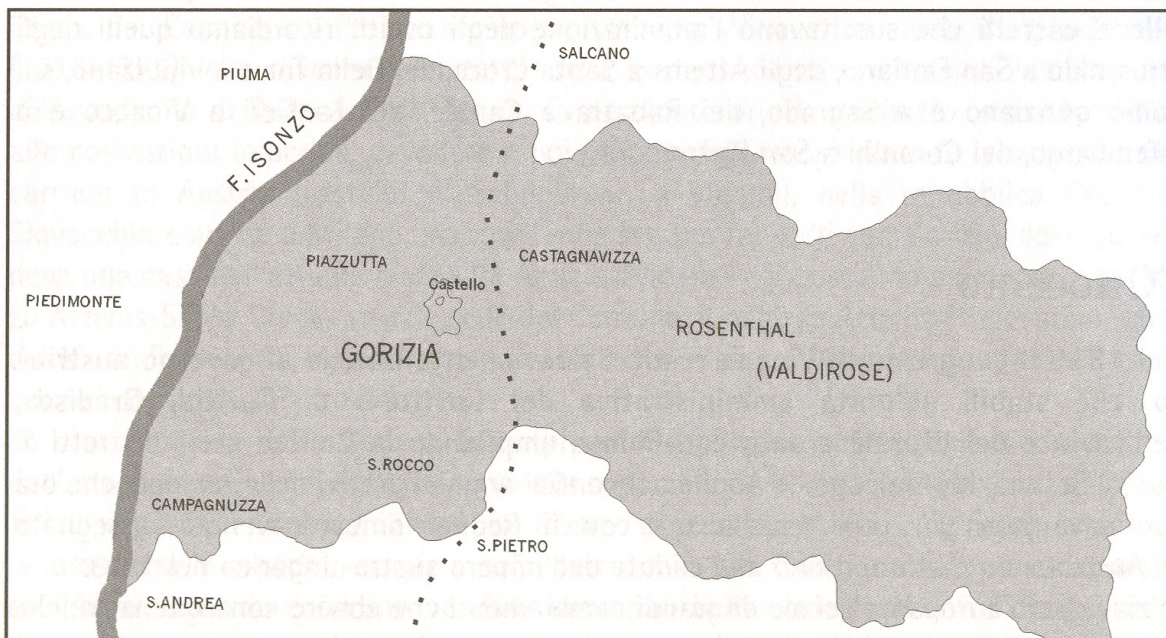
The nineteenth century

In 1815, the Congress of Vienna gave back Gorizia once again to the Austrian government, which established an administrative unity of the territory of Gorizia, Gradisca, of Istria and of the Croatian coast with Fiume, widening the County with the districts of Duino, Sesana, Monfalcone and Aquileia. The administrative borders of the region, which by this time no longer bordered onto Venice but onto the Lombard-Venetian kingdom, assigned to Austria, did not change until the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918.

A century of great changes began for Europe which had consequences even in our territory, where the last century of Hapsburg domination coincided.

In 1836, the tranquil life of Gorizia was shaken by the presence in the city of Charles X, the king of France in exile following the upheavals of 1830. After having gone to Scotland and to Prague, he decided to come to our city attracted by the meek climate and by the fact that the cholera epidemic which was mowing down lives in central Europe had left these territories almost untouched. The royal family and the suite resided in the Strassoldo palace in Saint Anthony's Square, while the king found hospitality in the Coronini villa, situated in present-day 20th September Street. Unfortunately, the king was sick with cholera and after a few days died, asking to be buried in the church of the Franciscan friars' convent of Castagnevizza, which he was able to admire from the windows of the villa.

In the second half of the century, the city, thanks to its geographical position which allowed it to have a relatively meek and temperate climate even during the winter, saw its population grow with the arrival of tourists and holiday-makers, because the Empire, having lost Veneto after the defeat suffered at the hands of Prussia (1866) and the 3rd war of independence – the border onto the Kingdom of Italy only passed 15 kilometres away from Gorizia, on the Judrio River, at the shoulders of Cormons -, saw in the territory of Gorizia a place comparable to the Cote d’Azur. Baron Carl von Czoernig, Director of the Central Statistical Office of the Hapsburg Empire, who in Gorizia was cured of a serious illness, defined the city as “the Austrian Nice” and very efficaciously spread its fame of salubrioness in an essay on the lands of the Isonzo River. Another factor which favoured the city was the realization, in 1860, of the southern railway which connected itself to the pre-existent axis of connection of Lombardy-Veneto with the capital of the Empire, from Milan to Vienna passing through Venice, Udine and Trieste. This was followed in 1906 by the Transalpine Railway, inaugurated in the presence of the heir to the throne of Austria Francis Ferdinand, who after a few years would have been assassinated in Sarajevo.



The territory of the Municipality of Gorizia from 1850 to 1927. The dotted line indicates the future border (1947) which will divide the city between Italy and the Yugoslavian Republic.

The influence upon the economy of the city was soon evident and the city opened itself up to both private and industrial and commercial and artisan initiatives, amongst which the ones of the Ritter, entrepreneurs of German origin. They had moved to Gorizia in 1819, and after having purchased a mint of copper, a mill and a sawmill on the Isonzo River they built a big industrial complex at Straccis where in 1871 houses for the workers' families, laundries, a school and a meeting hall were built upon the model of the German work colonies. The paper industry, the one of leather and of shoes and the food one were developed, but the greatest earnings remained the ones coming from silkworm breeding. The spinning mills of Piedimonte and of Aidussina even processed cotton coming from the port of Trieste, while the proximity of the Forest di Tarnova favoured the development of sawmills and carpentry shops.

The city got bigger and the side streets of Francis Joseph Avenue (today Italia Avenue) were opened up, where elegant villas began to appear. Following the construction of an embankment and of the new bridge over the small valley of the Corno, at the end of Saint Clare Street, the bridge of Piuma was joined in a much more smooth way to the city with a new street, Ponte Nuovo Street (today 20th September Avenue) which cut in two the park of the beautiful Coronini villa.

In the meantime, the building of the present 8th August bridge eased the connection with the Friulian plain, there where a ferry on a cable had to be used before. Through the only existing road then, which still today maintains the name of Boat Street, the southern station and the Avenue could be reached. Work was going on everywhere.

All of this, however, was not sufficient for a development of the city as an industrial centre. The city instead became a tourist centre, and precisely during those years, hotels, pubs, public parks like the one on Verdi Avenue, small villas and boarding houses and a civic establishment for baths, all indispensable structures for a city with a tourist vocation, which still today represent an attractive, arose.

In those days a great difference existed between the ethnic composition moreover of the County and the one of the city, in fact, the Italians and the Germans concentrated themselves in Gorizia while the Slovenians lived on the hilly strip. According to Carl von Czoernig, in 1868, out of 16,559 inhabitants in the city, 11,000 were Friulians or Italians, 3,500 were Slovenians, 1,800 were Germans and 300 were Israelites. During the last years of the century, the number of inhabitants reached a little more than 25,000 in number, thanks above all to the policy of the Austrian government which as we will see in order to face Italian irredentism called up Slav manpower from the countryside.

The years between the end of the century and the beginning of the next one coincided with an era of great flourishing of the intellectual life, which found its reference points in the Staatsgymnasium, in the diocesan seminary, in numerous Italian, Slovenian and German cultural circles and in the many newspaper headlines. The work of the architect from Gorizia Antonio Lasciac (1856-1946) goes back to these years, who after having graduated in Vienna mainly worked in Egypt, where he knew how to propose a modern architecture rooted in local Islamic traditions. The more promising young men of Gorizia would go to "rinse once again in Arno" their German academic formation, by strengthening the Italian soul of Gorizia without for this reason despising its other components. This was the case of some amongst the greatest exponents of the culture of Gorizia, like the already mentioned Graziadio Isaia Ascoli (1829-1907), of Jewish origin. A famous linguist and scholar, he taught the comparative history of the classical and neo-Latin languages in Milan, he obtained important attestations and honours and became a member of the Superior Council of Public Education and a senator

of the Kingdom of Italy. It was he, in 1863, who coined the neologism of “Venetia Julia”. In his honour in 1880, when the scholar was still alive, the district of the ghetto took the name of Ascoli Street.

Carlo Michelstaedter (1887-1910), a philosopher with a polyhedral personality, who committed suicide at the age of twenty-three, even belonged to the Jewish community. The paternal family was of German origin, while his maternal great grandfather, the eminent Isacco Samuele Reggio (1784-1885), had been a famous scholar as well as a rabbi of the Israelite community of Gorizia. Even Alberto, the father of Carlo, was a man of great culture, married to Emma Luzzatto, the sister of Carolina, director of the newspaper “Corriere friulano”. After having attended the Gymnasium in Gorizia, where he even met Biagio Marin, Carlo, given that an Italian university did not exist in the area, decided to move to Florence, where he studied philosophy and prepared a doctoral thesis entitled “La persuasione e la retorica” which, however, was never discussed precisely because of his death. During his brief life, he composed essays, tales and poems besides dedicating himself to design and painting. The family lived at 8 Grande Square, today Victory Square, until his mother and Carlo’s last sister were deported to Auschwitz in 1943.

The cultural life of the city felt the positive effects even of the presence of the civic music school, directed by maestro Frinta. The first concerts and the first compositions of Augusto Cesare Sehizzi (1873-1933) go back to the last decade of the nineteenth century. An organist, choir director and composer, he obtained great consensuses and prestigious recognitions with sacred and profane compositions, still performed today. Even his daughter Cecilia distinguished herself in the musical field: she was a violinist, music teacher, composer and choir director. Even the violinist Rodolfo Lipizer (1895-1974) began his activity in those years. First having formed himself at the Civic Music School of Gorizia, then at the conservatory of Trieste and later on in Vienna and Milan, undertook the violin career and won the competition for director of the Symphonic Orchestra of Abbazia. From 1930 to 1961, he held the office of director of the Music Institute of Gorizia, dedicating himself even with passion to teaching and didactics. He, in fact, wrote various works, amongst which “La tecnica superiore del violino”, which obtained an enormous success and such consensuses that its use was decreed in all Conservatories and Institutes of music in the Kingdom of Italy. He then founded the Symphonic Orchestra of Gorizia, which he personally directed, and was the president of the International “Seghizzi” choral song Competition and of various other competitions and city associations. Upon his death, his daughter Elena continued his educational and cultural work, by teaching and presiding over the International Violin Contests. The native of Gorizia Emil Komel (1875-1960), who studied in Vienna and Rome, where he met Lorenzo Perosi and Pietro Mascagni, was added to Seghizzi and Lipizer. In Gorizia, he was an organist, choir director and piano and organ teacher, a composer and author of didactic treatises.

Slovenian culture expressed authors like the philologist Jernej Kopitar, the poet France Preseren, Father Stephen Kociancic, Father Anton Gregorcic, Monsignor Valentin Stanig, Alojz Gradnik, Monsignor John Trinko and Ivan Cankar.

From the political point of view, the nineteenth century saw a favourable climate in all of Europe for the formation of national consciences, and this had as a result that in the territories of Venetia Julia all of the elements which up until then had managed to harmonize themselves became explosive factors and an occasion for antithetical oppositions between Italians and Slavs. Two forms of “renaissances” were born in Gorizia, one Italian and the other one Slav, given that the Slovenian component aimed at unifying itself and gaining a conscience and identity.

In order to understand the situation of the time, it even has to be remembered that during the course of the century the Austro-Hungarian Empire had lost Lombardy and Veneto, acquiring instead a growing weight in the Balkan territories. From then on, the few hundreds of thousands of Italians in the Trent region and of the Austrian Coast naturally counted even less than the millions of Polish, Slovak, Bosnian, Slovenian and Croatian Slavs. Austria transformed itself into a State where the Slav component had by then, at least at the numerical level, a considerable importance.

As we have seen, the Slavs were present in the area of Gorizia starting from the 6th-7th centuries and they had integrated themselves with the local population by living in a peaceful way under the government first of the Counts of Gorizia and then of the Hapsburg Empire. In the majority of cases they were farmers, artisans and workers, who resided in the hilly strip and in the mountainous area, and who practiced bilingualism. They, in fact, spoke the Slovenian language amongst themselves but used the Italian language or the German one when they would go to the city in order to sell the produce from their fields. In the nineteenth century, the Slovenian one was a very numerous ethnic group in the territory of the County but politically, economically and socially weak, insofar as the culture and the entire State administration were in the hands of the nobility, which was from Gorizia or was German, and the population of the city, where as we have seen the schools of higher learning were concentrated, was in its overall majority Italian and constituted the most educated and richest segment of the population. Those Slovenians who had climbed to higher social positions had had to integrate themselves into Italian or German culture, and therefore the cultural assimilation had taken place in a spontaneous and peaceful way. This process, which saw in the acquisition of Italian culture the main means of social elevation, was interrupted when the Slovenian masses which continued pouring into the city began to acquire the awareness of their own ethnic identity, claiming equal rights with the Italian one.

Up until that moment, the historians of the time, like Morelli, Della Bona and De Claricini, do not give us any news about contrasts between the Italian group and the Slovenian one, which had managed to coexist peacefully, except when in 1713 there had been a revolt for fiscal reasons of the farmers of the area of Tolmino against the tax collector Giovanni Bandeu. Having descended into Gorizia, they attacked Bandeu's house and had been the authors of various kinds of violence, first repressed by armed natives of Gorizia and then sanctioned with death sentences, confiscations and monetary fines by an imperial commission.

The facts of 1848 had just brushed the Coast, where only hopes of cautious liberal reforms had come to light, which for example found their expression in the newspaper “Giornale di Gorizia”, founded and directed by Carlo Favetti, who influenced the policy of the municipal administration and became the most representative exponent of the liberal-national movement of Gorizia. A juvenile booklet is even of these years of the then nineteen year old Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, who in his essay “Tolerant, concord, Italian Gorizia” clarified the relationship between the Slovenian county and the city of Gorizia.

Starting from 1848, the first Slovenian associations arose which looked after both political activity and the cultural one and the first periodicals were printed, which had an influence upon the strengthening of a national conscience and on the transformation of a mass still not away in a conscious group which would have fought for the “Slovenian cause”. Thus began the years of the “tabor”, that is, of the big mass rallies which presented the Slovenian national program to an evermore vast people, with the consensus of the imperial authorities which had the objective of neutralizing at least in part the manifestations of irredentism on the part of the Italians. Towards the end of the 1860s, the relations between the two communities became evermore tense, because the Slovenians did not hide their expectations with regards to the Hapsburg government which should have rewarded their fidelity, by welcoming requests which had been unheeded up until then. It can be interesting to remember that Giuseppe Mazzini, Vincenzo Gioberti, Cesare Balbo and later on Giuseppe Garibaldi, in the name of solidarity between the people who fought for freedom against the Hapsburg took an interest in the Slavs, so much so that the “Italian-Slav Alliance Society” was constituted in Turin in 1849, but the affirmation of Italian irredentism in Venetia Julia made relations deteriorate.

After 1866, ferments of irredentism spread throughout city bourgeois spheres, even following the constitution of the Kingdom of Italy, which had brought after the third war of independence its borders all the way up to the County. The Austrian government responded by suffocating Italian aspirations and cutting off the connections between the cities and the Venetian provinces: the natives of Gorizia were forbidden from attending Italian universities and every manifestation of Italian sentiments was repressed with severity. Precisely for this reason, the authors of a geography text who affirmed that Gorizia, Trieste and Istria were Italian were condemned for high treason. The empire, alarmed by the manifestations of Italian irredentism, limited immigration from the territory of the Kingdom of Italy and supported the movement of the Slovenians, by encouraging them with a favourable policy. In the meantime, the flow of Slav manpower into the city for the industrial complexes continued. The Slavs descended from the hilly strip and, with an improved economic and cultural condition, asked to actively participate in the government of the city and to obtain the institution of Slovenian schools. The citizens of the Municipality of Gorizia, in the almost totality Italians, were against it, feeling threatened, and out of reaction felt the desire grow evermore to join Italy. Thus evermore profound contrasts began during this period between the two ethnic groups which will last at length. The social ascent of the Slovenian component worsened the national contrasts which will continue up until the outbreak of the First World War.

Real and proper political wars can be spoken of since 1861, when the two groups tried to outdo themselves mutually and they clashed both through the press and in the sessions of the Provincial Diet, where the two groups were represented by three Italians and three Slovenians. In the Citizens’ Council, however, the Slovenians turned out to be excluded from it, because the statute foresaw the division of the electors into classes on the basis of income and the majority of them had a too low income. Italians and Slavs began to clash even in other areas of Venetia Julia and Dalmatia with scuffles on the occasion of elections, beatings, gerrymandering, the burning of cultural centres and theatres. The nascent Croatian and Slovenian bourgeoisies tried to make the farming masses aware in order to withdraw them from Italian influence with the support of the Austrian administration and the Croatian and Slovenian Catholic clergy.

Towards the end of the century, the birth took place of a Slovenian nationalism, facilitated by a social cohesion that was superior to the one of the Italian element thanks to the absence of an actual Slovenian feudal nobility and to the birth of a strong and educated bourgeoisie thanks to urbanization and to an improved educational level, an effect of the multitude of schools which the Slovenians opened up, not in Gorizia but in the nearby towns, facilitated by the policy of the Austrian government. In order to attract and form the youth, the farmers and workers, then proliferated cultural, recreational, sportive associations, and “reading rooms” arose instituted starting from 1862, fundamental cultural instruments for national knowledge above all in the county. Relations between Italians and Slovenians degenerated at Salcano in 1868 with a physical clash and in the following months during the course of four big rallies, the Slovenians asked the Austrian government for equality of rights for the Slovenian language and the union of all Slovenians into a single Province, where full administrative control would be up to them, with a Diet of its own, the assigning of work places in public offices to Slovenian personnel and the use of the Slovenian language in parochial offices. The hypothesis began to be faced of a Slovenian political and territorial unity in a region which would extend from the Alps to the Adriatic and from Mount Nevoso to the Tagliamento River, of which Gorizia would have had to have been the main centre.

A real and proper Slovenian national movement was constituted after the gathering of about eight thousand people at Sanbasso, 10 kilometres from Gorizia, on the 18th October, 1868, and the first Slovenian political party was founded the year after with the significant name of “Soca”, Isonzo.

In 1867, Austria reasserted for all the ethnic groups of the empire equal rights in the tutelage of their own nationality in administration, public life and education. Even education became, therefore, a problem in the city, insofar as Austrian laws granted faculties to the municipalities to decide upon the opening up of new schools, imposing the obligation to find adequate buildings. The Italians did not look favourably upon the creation of sections of Slovenian language, while the Slovenians naturally aspired to even having in the city, as had happened in the nearby municipalities, Slovenian elementary schools. The municipal administration refused to open them up until the 1890s. In a certain sense, the presence of a school of the other minority was reciprocally seen as a reality to be hampered and an instrument of oppression. Even in this case, the Austrian government penalized the Italian component, by above all providing contributions to German and Slovenian schools, so much so that at the beginning of the twentieth century allocations appear to the respective tune of 850,000 and 97,000 crowns. It is in this context that in 1891 the National League association was founded in the five Italian provinces, that is, the Trent region, Friuli, Trieste, Istria and Dalmatia. Born with the main aim of “promoting the love and study of the Italian language and, above all, the institution and maintenance of Italian schools within the borders of the Empire in places with a mixed population, especially on the linguistic border”, the National League contributed, right from its first manifestation, towards forming a democratic-liberal conscience by developing, through a strenuous safeguarding of the Italian cultural heritage and a targeted promotional propaganda of one’s own creed, the feeling for love of motherland. A defence this that was never easy nor without obstacles, but actually often opposed and hindered by the Hapsburg regime. A success of men and actions tightened under a single emblem, the tricolour one, made it possible for this association to be able to count upon the availability of well over 45,000 members distributed in 177 different sections.

The headquarters of Gorizia, inaugurated on the 21st September, 1891, managed to double in a few years the number of its members by making itself a mouthpiece of the citizenry's national sentiment under the direction of Giorgio Bombig, podesta' and future mayor of the city. Having above all distinguished itself for its initiatives in the educational field, the League of Gorizia was in a position to finance its own scholastic institutes by promoting the construction, in 1892, of the nursery schools of Piedimonte and Ponte Isonzo and by welcoming, two years later, well over 118 students in the building of Lucinico.

In 1914, the National League could thus boast of 76 institutes between popular schools, nursery schools and recreation rooms, 20 evening schools for adults, over 60 circulating libraries. At the end of the First World War, the changeable alternating of times forced the League to renounce a part of its scholastic heritage: fascism claimed the responsibility for making juvenile education uniform by absorbing the scholastic structures into the National Fascist Youth Work while nursery schools were handed over, in 1919, to the Redeemed Italy National Work.

In the meantime, since 1857 the Sisters of Our Lady had begun to work in the city, having arrived from Bavaria, initially looked after the formation of deaf-mute girls, but after three years they were invited by the countess Matilda Coronini to open up a private German school, with annexed girls' boarding school, for the daughters of the noble families. The Saint Joseph nursery school is instead constituted a few years after, for poor and abandoned little girls, which found its definitive headquarters in the hamlet of San Rocco, in the house donated by baroness Ritter, between present day Vittorio Veneto and Grabizio Streets. Even the Sisters of Charity worked within the social sphere, by cooperating in the running of an orphanage and of a female elementary school, the Contavalle, founded in 1799 by Father Giovanni Contavalle. In 1895, the Salesians were called to the city. The priests made themselves be appreciated for their educational work, and thanks to the proceeds from a will left by a benefactor and some loans managed to acquire a villa on Ponte Isonzo Street, today Don Bosco Street, surrounded by two hectares of land. The present convent was built here, which in 1904 hosted well over 150 students from 11 to 20 years of age. During the First World War, the director, suspected of espionage in favour of the Italians, was interned in an Austrian college. The building was requisitioned by the Austrian military Command and the students were dispersed. With the war over, the Salesians were able to follow almost 200 students annually from the towns of the province of Gorizia, of the area of Trieste and of Istria, who chose the Salesian boarding school due to its educational contents and in order to be able to attend town schools, given that there were neither junior high schools nor secondary schools in their areas of origin. In the city, there were even other colleges, which mainly hosted youngsters coming from the towns, like the "Dante Alighieri", and the female ones of the Sisters of Notre Dame, the Ursulines and the "Saint Gorizia". The role of these boarding schools will only change after 1960, when State secondary schools will arise throughout the entire province.

In the meantime, government policy of instituting Slovenian courses for Italians and Italian courses for Slovenians had as an effect the Italianization of a certain percentage of Slovenians, who for socio-economic reasons were more inclined to attend them, while the Italians were not all that interested in having their children learn Slovenian.

The twentieth century

Nationalism, based upon the identification between nation and race, which comprised the contempt for other peoples, flanked patriotism and the nineteenth century idea of nation, intended as an expression of the common will of a people, during the course of the 20th century. These ideologies inserted themselves into a climate of strong international tensions owed first to all of the industrial and colonial competition of the European powers, like Germany, France and Great Britain, to which were added the territorial claims over Alsace and Lorraine on the part of France and over the Balkan peninsula on the part of the Hapsburg empire and of the Tsarist empire. Added to these reasons of contrast was the assassination on the part of Serbian nationalists of the heir to the throne of Austria Francis Ferdinand, which took place on the 28th June, 1914 in Sarajevo, and thus unleashed the First World War.

Italy, which had not intervened on the side of Austria and Germany because the Triple Alliance had a defensive character, participated in the conflict on the side of the forces of the Entente. The Pact of London was, in fact, stipulated in April of 1915, which foresaw, in case of victory, the concession to Italy of the Trent region and of southern Tyrol all the way to the Brenner Pass (Alto Adige), of Trieste, of Istria and of Dalmatia except for Fiume, of the base of Valona in Albania, and the protectorate over the country and other advantages after the dismemberment of the German colonial empire.

On the 24th May, 1915, the Italian army, lead by General Luigi Cadorna, crossed the border in order to face the Austrian forces along the north-eastern border, in the Trent region, on the Isonzo River and in the Karst region.

From the end of the month of May of 1915 to the end of October of 1917, the territory of Gorizia was transformed into a battlefield and zone behind the front. Between June and November of 1915, in the first four battles on the Isonzo River, notwithstanding the scarcity of means and the army's lack of preparation for trench warfare, the Italian armed forces managed at a cost of very bloody frontal attacks to conquer a fortified line from Tolmino to the sea. In May of 1916, the Austrian forces in order to force Italy into a separate peace began the "punitive expedition" in the Trent region, but their army after the initial success was stopped by the 1st Army. In the summer and autumn of 1916, other bitter battles took place in the area of Sabotino and Podgora, which lead on the 9th August, in the 6th battle of the Isonzo River, to the conquest of Gorizia and to the consolidation of Italian positions. In the spring and summer of the following year, there was the 10th and 11th battles on the river, which lead to the conquest of Mount Cucco, Mount Santo and Bainsizza. The year of 1917 was the year of the turning-point: in the month of February, an insurrection in Saint Petersburg forced Tsar Nicholas II Romanov to abdicate, while in April the United States of America entered into the war against Germany. In October (November for us Westerners) in Russia, there was another revolution, which overwhelmed the provisional government and brought Lenin to power, who in March of 1918 obtained the Brest-Litovsk peace. At Caporetto (today Kobarid), at the end of October of 1917, the Italian lines were broken through by the great offensive of the Austrian-Germans and the Italian army, having lost 400,000 men between the dead and prisoners, retreated all the way to the Piave River, where it managed to block the enemy's advance. General Cadorna was exonerated from the command, which was entrusted to Armando Diaz. Thanks even to the consistent help from the Allies, he reorganized the army, which on the 24th October, 1918, began the battle of Vittorio Veneto, breaking through different parts of the Austrian lines. The Austro-Hungarian

empire and the German Reich began to disintegrate: Czechoslovakia declared its own independence, while in Munich the Bavarian republic was proclaimed and in Berlin the revolutionary socialists of the Spartacus League tried to conduct a proletarian revolution according to the Soviet model. The Austrians, by now weakened even by internal problems, signed the armistice of Villa Giusti. Gorizia, lost after the retreat from Caporetto, was definitively joined to Italy in November of 1918. In Trieste on the 30th October, upon the false news that a flotilla of Italian ships was approaching, a spontaneous manifestation was born notwithstanding the presence of 3,000 Austrian soldiers in the barracks and of patrols along the streets. A huge crowd headed out towards the hill of Saint Justus waving Italian flags and knocking down the symbols of the Austrian government, the imperial eagles, from public offices. The government of Vienna, impotent to face the population, declared that the city was free. In Udine, instead, it was necessary to wait for the 4th November, after a bloody battle against the Austrian troops which by now were in retreat, in order to see a team of Targeters on bicycles march through the streets of the city.

Two thousand Julian, Istrian and Dalmatian volunteers had participated in the conflict, by enlisting in the forces of the Kingdom of Italy or by organizing conspiracies or actions of espionage so that these lands could be reunited to Italy. Others instead were enlisted by force in the Austrian army, but refused to fight and chose surrender and imprisonment in Russia in order to be able to ask to move on over to the ranks of the Italian army. Amongst the three hundred Julian volunteers who died for their motherland there was the native of Capodistria Nazario Sauro, a courageous man of the sea hung at Pola on the 10th August, 1916.

With the end of the conflict, the economy was in crisis and there was a situation of great social conflicts. Workers and farmers advanced union claims turning to the weapon of the strike, while the nationalist rightwing fanned the discontent of the former combatants with the myth of the “Mutilated victory”, as Gabriele D’Annunzio had defined it, sustaining that Italy would have deserved the annexation of further territories. On the 12th September, 1919, D’Annunzio, having gathered together a nucleus of volunteers at Ronchi, headed towards Fiume and took possession of it by instituting a government and passing a constitution (regency of the Carnaro). After about a year, however, he was forced by force to leave the city and the enterprise of Fiume ended with the Rapallo Accord, on the basis of which Fiume was declared an independent State and Italy took possession of Istria and Zara, leaving the rest of Dalmatia to Yugoslavia. In 1924, Yugoslavia recognized Italian Fiume. Giolitti thought about using the fascists in an anti-socialist role, but it was the fascists who exploited the Liberals and waiting for the right moment to seize power. On the 28th October, 1922, they marched on Rome and threatening to take power by force forced King Victor Emanuel III to appoint Mussolini as the new head of government. From this moment onwards the fascist party consolidated itself, notwithstanding the reactions which followed the assassination of the Socialist Member of Parliament Giacomo Matteotti. Mussolini, having eliminated the opposition, began a work of fascistizing, with laws that modified the structures of the Italian State by transforming it into a totalitarian State.

In the meantime, in Gorizia, moments of great tension were experienced due to the claims of Slav nationalists who tried to annex the city to the new Yugoslavian State; on the 31st October, 1918, even before the publication of the victory bulletin, the first provisional government of the Province was constituted and contemporarily a Slovenian committee arose. Such a committee proposed joining to the constituting Yugoslavian State the city of Gorizia and all of the territories of the province inhabited by Slovenians.

In the meantime in the rest of the world...

The conflict had both at the international and local level serious consequences both in terms of loss of human lives (during the war nine million men, of whom 600,000 Italians, died and immediately after the conflict another six, due to a terrible epidemic of influenza, the “Spanish fever”) and at the political level. Four multinational empires (Russian, Austro-Hungarian, German and Ottoman) collapsed, causing profound territorial and political transformations and upsetting the international equilibrium. New tensions arose due to the heavy clauses of the peace treaties, which penalized the defeated nations and led to the birth of new States. The Hapsburg Empire was dismembered in order to constitute Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Romania. Social struggles, moreover, assumed the aspect of an un-resolvable conflict: the proletariat no longer fought in order to get economic improvements and in order to obtain greater democracy, but in order to conquer power. In Russia, the Bolshevik government placed factories under the control of workers, nationalized banks, limited individual freedoms and abolished the private ownership of land, persecuting and subsequently exterminating as a social class the landowner farmers. The Russian revolution represented a crucial turning-point in history and caused a whole series of events which then influenced international politics throughout the whole twentieth century. “Doing things like in Russia” became the password, in order to collectivize the means of production and to subvert the existent social, political and institutional order. Between 1919 and 1920, the crisis of the parliamentary systems accentuated itself in Europe and during the so-called “red biennial” there were revolutionary agitations and attempts which were suppressed in Germany, Austria, Hungary, while in Italy the tumults, the occupations of factories and strikes gave rise to strong reactions in public opinion which prepared the road for the Bundles of fighting. The movement (it still was not a party) was founded in Milan in March of 1919 by Benito Mussolini, an elementary school teacher and journalist expelled from the Socialist Party due to his interventionism. It will be him in 1921 who will transform the Bundles into the National Fascist Party, while even the Italian Communist Party was constituted from a schism of the Socialist Party.

Italy came out of the First World War victorious but harshly tried by the bellicose effort and saw her expectations of expansion re-dimensioned, with the concession of the Trent region, Alto-Adige and Venetia Julia. Fiume was declared a “free city” and remained contested by Italy and Yugoslavia, disappointing a conspicuous part of Italian public opinion.

The provisional government refused and the Slovenian Committee then solicited the arrival in the city of a regiment of soldiers of the by now dissolved imperial army, made up of Slav soldiers who had fought on the Italian front. With a strike of the hand therefore it settled into the headquarters of the Captaincy, by taking possession of the warehouses and depots that the Austrian army had in the city, and took on the behaviour of an occupation unit, by positioning armed men in the key points of the city. This attitude provoked bewilderment and great worry, so much so that the Provisional Government with difficulty managed to avoid armed clashes, until General Paveri di Fontana ordered the regiment to leave the city.

The recovery was very slow and difficult, even due to the changed political framework which, by inserting the city into the Italian State, interrupted the traditional economic relations with the transalpine countries. The economy felt the decline in the tourist sector and the decadence of traffic with the port of Trieste.

The problem then arose of the reconstitution both of the urban fabric and the relationships of human relation between the different ethnic groups, which had become bitter during the conflict.

The advent of fascism hampered the mediation initiatives and hindered a return to normality: the requests of the Slovenians to obtain some autonomies were rejected, their schools were closed down, their surnames and in many cases even their baptismal names were Italianized. In the 1920s, the fascists burnt various headquarters of Slovenian cultural and artistic activities: in Trieste and in Pola the Narodni dom and in Gorizia the Trgovski dom, built in 1904 upon the project of the architect Max Fabiani. The Slovenian and Croatian communities wanted to be assimilated by force by blocking the course of history, in the conviction that in order to do it dissolving all of the Slovenian or Croatian organizations, political parties, cultural circles, sportive associations, banks would have been enough. Political and intellectual militants were arrested or expelled, others were laid off and persecuted in various ways. The fascist action squad members were protagonists of various episodes of violence, like in the case of Alojz Bratuz, who was forced to drink motor oil and died from atrocious sufferings only because he had organized a Christmas choir in the Slovenian language. Due to an ensemble of political and economic causes, some tens of thousands of Slovenians and Croats thus decided to emigrate. Others tried to oppose fascism clandestinely by adhering to the TIGR – from the initials of Trieste, Istria, Gorizia and Rijeka (Fiume) – or to the Borba, “fight”, movement. They burnt Italian nursery schools, schools and recreation rooms, they organized an attack on the Victory Lighthouse in Trieste and on a headquarters of a fascist newspaper in Trieste, provoking the death of an editor. The authorities responded by arresting about sixty members of the organization and shooting four of them in 1930 close to Basovizza.

The provisions taken by fascism were in line moreover with the praxis used in that time by all of the European nations with regards to their own minorities (respect for minorities was not a value in those days), but they gave rise to a spiral of violence which had inauspicious repercussions during and after the Second World War. And yet even the Yugoslavians were behaving in the same way with regards to the minorities in their country: colonists originating from Venetia Julia were sent to the territories having belonged to Hungary and Austria, in Kosovo and in Macedonia, within the sphere of a policy of denationalization. Relations between Italy and Yugoslavia became less tense when a friendship pact and then an accord were signed, in 1937, in order to repress in their respective territories the activities of the terrorists directed against the other State.

In this way, the Italian government blocked the Croatian Ustascia terrorists trained in Italy, who, in 1934, had killed King Alexander of Yugoslavia in Marseilles, while Yugoslavia dissolved associations of emigrants from Venetia Julia and the TIGR, in the attempt to have terrorist activity ceased. Still, in 1940, another 300 Tigorists will be arrested in Trieste, five of whom will be shot.

On the 18th January, 1923, with a provision which turned out to be traumatic for the peoples of the area, the Province of Gorizia was suppressed, with the aim of reducing the weight of the Slovenian minority of the province, which was inserted into the big Province of Friuli, with its capital in Udine. Only a few years later however, in 1927, following the protests of the populations and of the difficulties encountered in the administration of areas coming from two different juridical orders, Mussolini's government was forced to restore the province depriving it however of a part of its territory: Monfalcone and Grado passed on over to Trieste, Cervignano to Udine. In the chief town, the attempt was made to erase or re-dimension the traces of the Hapsburg past and to exalt everything that in anyway could speak of Italianness".

The economy was subjected to a profound re-conversion: of the heavy industries only the cotton mill was restored, moved to Piedimonte, on the western shore of the Isonzo River, where the paper mill was found, and it was flanked by a metal mechanic establishment for the production of looms, the SAFOG, at the mouth of the Corno torrent.

The postwar reconstruction left the urban topography substantially unaltered. The population of the municipality, which in 1921 was reduced by about 10%, after the incorporation of six rural municipalities (Lucinico, Sant' Andrea, San Pietro, Salcano, Piedimonte and Vertoiba) stabilized itself around 30,000 inhabitants, remained almost unvaried until the Second World War.

The mutated political and economic conditions even had an influence upon the Jewish community, which counted almost three hundred people. Many wealthy families left the city, and after the racial laws of 1938 there was a further demographic decrease. Such laws, which had devastating effects upon the ancient Jewish communities of the entire peninsula, declared that the Jews did not belong to the Italian race, excluding them from public and social life. From one day to the next, thousands of students and teachers

In the meantime in the rest of the world...

Totalitarian regimes had set themselves up during the first postwar period in many European countries: in Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, Greece, Portugal and Spain different governments had arisen, heaped together, however, by the refusal of democracy and socialism, by a racist and anti-Semitic ideology, while in communist Russia upon the death of Lenin (1924) Stalin prevailed, who eliminated every dissent with violence. The dictatorship of the proletariat transformed itself into Stalin's personal dictatorship, who had over ten million of his own country men who dissented with his policies arrested, deported, condemned to forced labour and killed. Inspired by the clearest atheism, he even harshly struck against the Orthodox Church, by forbidding religious instruction and condemning the clergy that would have violated such a prohibition to forced labour.

Some historians have calculated that about 200 thousand priests and a few million believers were the victims of the religious repression between 1917 and 1941. Millions of intellectuals, workers and farmers were then condemned without any fault during the so-called “purges” of Stalin, on the basis of made up accusations.

In 1933, the National Socialist Party of Adolf Hitler had captured power in Germany. At the end of the 1930s, the Nazi policy of rearmament and the expansion programme towards the East had as a result first the annexation of Austria and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and then the attack on Poland. This precisely marked in September of 1939 the beginning of the Second World War, which provoked the annihilation of Germany, the defeat of fascist Italy and the beginning of a new world order, which saw the United States of America and the Soviet Union as the main protagonists.

Immediately after the end of the conflict, international tensions remained strong and the alliance between the United States of America, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, which had allowed for the defeat of Nazi-fascism, fell apart. Thus two opposite blocks were born: on the one hand the Western one, with the United States of America at its head, on the other hand the Eastern one, controlled by the USSR, separated in Europe by what British Prime Minister Churchill called the “Iron Curtain”. On the one hand there had been States which had chosen or had seen a socialist regime imposed upon them, which faced each other in what was defined as the “Cold War”, a conflict which only took place on the ideological and propagandistic level, without the use of arms.

The European countries subjected to the hegemony of the USSR, like Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Albania and Romania, between 1945 and 1955 underwent a process of forced Sovietization, while in Yugoslavia the communists of Marshall Tito, had managed to free the country without the intervention of the Soviet Union, inaugurating an autonomous policy. Thanks to the precious help provided during the war against the Nazis and fascists, Tito, in fact, at the end of the conflict had obtained a strong electoral consensus which allowed him to become the President of the Yugoslavian Federal Republic and to be able to count not only upon the help of the USSR but even of Great Britain and the United States of America. He instituted a government of popular democracy based upon the Soviet model, but starting from 1948 in order to keep his country from becoming a satellite of the USSR undertook the experiment of “a national way to communism”, maintaining itself along positions non-aligned to the Soviet ones and equidistant with respect to the two superpowers. For this reason, Tito’s communists were accused of having abandoned socialist doctrine and were expelled from COMINFORM. Tito responded with intransigence, purging his country of the pro-Soviet Stalinists, and establishing economic and diplomatic relations with the West. Notwithstanding the federal structure of Yugoslavia, the Serbs maintained a clear preponderance in all of the key positions of public administration, the army and the police and every expression of autonomy or dissent on the part of the Slovenians, Croatians or the Albanians of Kosovo was harshly repressed.

belonging to the “Jewish race” were expelled from the schools of the Kingdom of Italy, losing the opportunity to study and to work, while another thousand people were expelled from the armed forces, from commercial activities, from public and private entities. The Jews were, moreover, struck off from all associations, like sportive societies, the professional orders, recreational circles. The persecution in their regards continued by forcing them into forced labour: the men had to work at the Crocetti sawmill in Gorizia, while the women had to make military uniforms in Salcano. In 1943, the point of internment and forced labour was reached for all those belonging to the Jewish race and their successive deportation to German concentration camps. All those who had obtained Italian citizenship after January of 1919 were forced to abandon Italy. In Gorizia, that which remained of the small community, which even saw the name of Ascoli Street be changed, having become Tunisi Street because the fascist regime did not allow for streets to be named after Jews, was swept away on the 23rd November, 1943, when the 78 people who still found themselves in the city were arrested and deported to Auschwitz, amongst whom Elda, the sister of Michelstaedter, and Emma Luzzatto, her mother, who died there. Only two of those deported returned.

The second postwar period in Venetia Julia: the violence of Tito’s partisans, the foibes

After having briefly clarified the international scenario, we can return to what was happening in the Isontine area, in Trieste and in Istria.

In April of 1941, the armies of the Axis (Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and Hungary) had invaded Yugoslavia, assigning Croatia and a part of Slovenia, including Ljubljana, to Italy. The Yugoslavian Communist Party organized the fight against the occupants up until May of 1941: the Yugoslavian resistance was born, which later on had a fundamental influence for the development of the events in Friuli Venetia Julia. The formations of the Slovenian and Croatian resistance began to lead the armed struggle on the hills and in the valleys of Istria and of those which for them were the Friulian Slavia (Valleys of the Natisone) or Venetian. Groups of Italian antifascists made contact with some of these Slovenian formations in order to agree upon an eventual cooperation against Nazi-fascism, but the negotiations turned out to be difficult due to the territorial claims of the Yugoslavians. The Italian Communist Party, however, committed itself to helping the Slovenian combatants and supplying them with food, medicine, arms, ammunition and information, while the Slovenian command committed itself to gathering together the Italian combatants, scattered in different Slav formations, into a single unit, commanded by Italians. Thus the first Italian partisan formation, the “Garibaldi Detachment”, was born in March of 1943, initially made up of about twenty men, which fought in the valleys of Natisone and in the Karst region next to the Slovenians. After the armistice of the 8th September, 1943, the Italian “Garibaldi” Division was constituted in the month of December which operated from 1943 to 1945 as a unit of the Italian army in the Yugoslavian People’s Liberating Army.

Italy became a co-belligerent country, which on the side of the Allies fought against Hitler's Germany. The Italian armed forces reorganized themselves wherever possible and, at first upon the dependencies of the various American armies, and successively in a more autonomous way, they faced the Nazis in the area of Cassino, at Monte Lungo, already in December of 1943. Later on, they participated in various Allied bellicose operations with a staff of about 25,000 men of the Italian Liberation Corps, at the orders of General Umberto Utili. They were joined by well over 160,000 men of the eight auxiliary Divisions, with tasks of logistical support.

In the meantime, after the collapse of the Italian State following the armistice of the 8th September, 1943, Gorizia was occupied by German troops and Venetia Julia, denominated the Adriatic Coast in memory of the Austrian one which disappeared in 1918, was annexed to the Third Reich. In October of 1943, the Nazis transformed the complex of buildings previously turned into a rice mill in the district of San Sabba in Trieste into a prison, a place of torture and sorting of antifascist prisoners. The Risiera then became a concentration camp, the only one in Italy, where about 4,000 people were killed and cremated.

In our region, the Italian partisans, however, besides fighting against the Nazis and various formations of the Salo' Republic had to even face the expansionistic aims of Yugoslavia. Initially, the National Liberation Committee of Upper Italy, which had made direct contact with the Yugoslavian resistance since November of 1943 thanks to the Communist Party, sent in February of 1944 "warm greetings to the Slovenian, Croatian and Italian patriots who are fighting in Istria and in the area of Gorizia", asking Italian citizens to intensify the armed struggle in collaboration with the Yugoslavian formations. The question of the borders was postponed until the end of the war. Tito's partisans in the meantime took advantage of the confusion that reigned in Venetia Julia in order to take possession of arms and military means abandoned by Italian soldiers and to conquer right from September of 1943 part of Istria, sowing terror amidst the Italian population.

Very hard clashes continued in the meantime between the Resistance and the Nazis, who reacted with round-ups, ransacking, burnings, reprisals and massacres against the defenceless civilian population, the majority being old people, women and children. In the summer of 1944, the Germans had tens of thousands of Cossacks and Caucasians flow into Friuli who were promised that they would have been able to stably settle in the Karst region. It was therefore a succession of battles and reprisals which committed thousands of German soldiers, flanked in some actions by Cossacks, Ustascia, Domobranci, Chetniks and X Mas. From then on to April of 1945, a very bloody conflict took place not only between German and Republic of Salo' forces on the one hand and Italian and Yugoslavian partisan units on the other hand, but with very harsh contrasts even within the two formations. There were clashes between the communist partisan formations, having aligned themselves with Yugoslavian annexationist positions, and the democratic ones, decided upon defending the eastern border of Italy from the Tito's imperialistic national-communist pretences. In this framework, the massacre of Malga Porzus took place on the 7th February, 1945, that is, the killing of 15 partisans from the "Osoppo" brigade, made up of men and women of Catholic and liberal inspiration, on the part of those of the "Garibaldi" brigade, who received orders from the Yugoslavian communists. Amongst those shot, was even the brother of the writer Pier Paolo Pasolini.

In the spring of 1945, the German collapse allowed the Yugoslavian army to immediately occupy Istria, Trieste and Gorizia, in the hope of placing the Allies in front of the fait accompli of the annexation of cities and lands claimed as being Slav given the multi-secular presence of Slovenian and Croatian communities. During the last phases of the war, Tito concentrated his military effort on Venetia Julia, leaving Ljubljana and Zagreb in German hands so long as to reach much more advanced positions as possible, which would reach all the way to the Tagliamento River, and he managed to reach as far as Romans, in Lower Friuli. Trieste, Gorizia, Fiume and all of Istria were thus occupied by the Slav partisans, who disarmed the Triestine brigade, made up of local partisans who had fought against the common Nazi enemy, and ordered the Garibaldi brigades of Friuli not to approach the areas occupied by Tito's men.

On the 1st May, 1945, Tito's partisans managed after a difficult forced march to enter into Gorizia and Trieste before the Allied troops. Yugoslavian units demanded assuming the complete military government and began searches, requisitioning, ransacking, vandalism and above all deportations. The period of the occupation of Tito's men, from the 2nd May to the 12th June, 1945, saw the constitution in Venetia Julia of the Slovensko Primorje, that is, the Slovenian Coast, which had Trieste as its capital and was even made up of the surroundings of Gorizia, divided into sixteen districts and even made up of the municipalities of Cividale, Tarvisio and Tarcento, considered to be Slav speaking. In the optic of a real and proper work of denationalization, during the forty days of their dominion over zone A, the Yugoslavians substituted Italian elements with Slav elements in every sector of civilian life, and precisely in order to facilitate the operation, for example, both the director and the female personnel of the civil registry office of the Municipality of Gorizia were deported.

The Slav patrols arrested civilians on the streets and in houses, which according to the ordinances had to remain with their front doors open during the curfew, from 7 o'clock in the evening to 7 o'clock in the morning. Even the archbishop of Gorizia, Monsignor Margotti, was arrested who was released after a few days with the order of distancing himself from his diocese. No citizen could leave the city without a special permit, nor communicate by telephone, given that private telephones were deactivated. The National Liberation Committee was dissolved with the accusation of being a masked expression of fascism, given that a lot of its components did not approve of Tito's policies. All State, State-controlled and various public office employees were fired: they would have been able to file a request in order to be rehired in the various Slovenian administrations, which would have proceeded with verifications on their account. Confused natives of Gorizia were told that only fascist criminals would have been prosecuted – in reality those who were seriously compromised had already left for sometime – and that nothing would have happened to the citizens who were “loyal” to the new administration.

In Trieste, the OZNA (Organization for the Defence of the People, the Yugoslavian political police), which operated at the direct dependencies of the Yugoslavian Defence Ministry, and the military units of the 4th Army began, on the basis of already predisposed lists, arresting, interrogating, deporting and conducting summary executions.

At the end of the war, in all of Venetia Julia, in Istria and in the lands occupied by the Yugoslavian army, thousands of defenceless citizens were arrested, interrogated under torture, deported to concentration camps inside Yugoslavia, or killed by firing squad, drowning or infoibement. The foibes (from the Latin fovea) were Karstic cavities scattered throughout all of Istria and Venetia Julia, even a hundred metres deep, in which thousands of men and women and tens of children were thrown in, dead or still alive. No family could either before or after obtain news about its loved ones, who were never subjected to a regular trial on the part of a legitimate court. Amongst the thousands of deportations and killings we recall the tragic case of Norma Cossetto, a brilliant twenty-three year old Istrian student, who after having attended the classical secondary school of Gorizia was by then about to graduate from the University of Padua. She was arrested, tortured and raped by a dozen Slav soldiers and finally hurled alive into a foibe. In December of 2005, she was awarded posthumously a golden medal for civil merit.

The practice of hurling political adversaries and all those who could have constituted under any point of view an obstacle into the crevices became a common one of the Yugoslavian army in occupied lands. All of this took place notwithstanding the presence of the Allies, who passively looked on having received the order not to intervene.

The different modalities of the elimination explain in part the divergence between the numbers which are fixed for the victims, which vary from a minimum of 5,000-6,000 people to a maximum of 15,000. For Slav sources, it is a question instead of a number which varies between 600 to 2,000 people, but naturally a question of numbers must not be made out of it: even if there were a few tens, their homicide always constitutes a crime. 52 foibes were identified. The corpses that were recovered from them, obviously only in the territories where the Anglo-American troops arrived and not in those which remained in the hands of the Yugoslavian troops, in the majority of cases could not be identified.

What were the causes of this violence? Some uphold that they are exclusively found in the crimes which fascism had committed at the expense of the Slovenian and Croatian population between the two World Wars and then at the moment of the annexation of part of Slovenia by the Italian State, in 1941, but it is instead necessary to depart from farther away and to keep in mind what had happened in these regions since the end of the 19th century. As we had seen, at that time Venetia Julia, Istria and Dalmatia belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the population was made up of the Italian ethnic group and by the Slav one, further subdivided between Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. Notwithstanding the social and economic differences, the two communities had lived together peacefully for centuries, but from the second half of the nineteenth century with the flourishing of nationalisms, relations had begun to deteriorate. The Latin-Venetian element mainly lived in the main centres, and it was mainly made up of bourgeoisies, unlike for the Slavs, who lived more often – but not exclusively – in the countryside, practicing farming. Many Italians were of liberal ideas and did not tolerate Austrian domination all that well, auguring a reconnection to Italy, while the Slovenians were profoundly Catholic and faithful to the Hapsburg, and they cultivated the hope of obtaining greater recognitions and autonomies or to join Serbia. This, naturally, did not keep the people from continuing to be tied by bonds of parentage and friendship which overcame ethnic or cultural divisions. Whoever seeks in the persecutions carried out by fascism against the Yugoslavians the cause of the unheard of wave of violence against Italians does not keep in mind the good relations which existed for centuries in these

lands between the two civilizations and of the fact that the local population knew the real culprits of the single acts committed by the fascist militias during the war, and it knew how to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent.

Everything cannot be reduced, therefore, to a relationship of cause (fascism) and effect (the deportations and the hurling into the foibes), if not in a small number of cases. The framework was very articulated and saw the simultaneous presence of nationalism, social revenges and town feuds, of personal or class resentments, tied to conflicts of interest present in Istrian rural society, but the real cause which pushed Tito to order this systematic violence was the will to impose by force a State inspired by the Marxist-Leninist ideology through a revolutionary liberation movement which even exploited Slovenian and Croatian nationalism. Historians' research has widely demonstrated that the foibes were the results of decisions made at the upper level in order to physically eliminate all those who, having some influence in the social context, did not share the communist doctrines or, though sharing them, opposed Tito's annexationist policies. Croatian sources explain that one of the objectives of the new regime was actually the one of re-cleaning the territory of the "enemies of the people", that is, whoever did not actively cooperate with the liberation movement. The first to be captured and killed by Tito's men were the fascists, but even the exponents of the National Liberation Committee and various partisans, all obviously antifascists, followed by doctors, lawyers, municipal employees, teachers, entrepreneurs, public functionaries, priests, railway workers, policemen, finance guards and police agents who had remained in their places in order to carry out their functions. Both the arrests and the killings did not take place on the basis of personal responsibilities but of belonging to a certain category of people, considered to be potential obstacles. The victims, in their overall majority were Italians but even Croatians and Slovenians, they belonged to all social classes and were men and women of every age and of every political ideology, even if the attempt was made to declare them all fascists and criminals. Still in the 1980s on the Slav part the deportees of Gorizia, in memory of whom a plaque had been erected at the Remembrance Park, were defined as "people belonging to armed Nazi and fascist groups, fallen before the liberation and guilty of numerous crimes, aggressors and non-victims".

With the deportations and the infoibements, the attempt was made to even reach the aim of terrorizing the Italians in such a way that a certain number of them would flee from Venetia Julia, in order to change in part the ethnic proportions in view of eventual plebiscites imposed by the Western powers. The Italian national group was held in its entirety to be suspicious, when not automatically an enemy.

In the hope of obtaining the consensus of the population which it was presumed would have remained in Venetia Julia, first there was the procedure of conducting a "political cleansing" of the anticommunists, by trying to mobilize the people for the annexation to Yugoslavia. For this reason there was a propaganda in favour of socialism both amongst the Slovenian and Croatian population, and the Italian one: it wanted to be shown that under the communist regime the two nationalities would have been able to live together peacefully. Moreover, the Yugoslavian authorities were against a real and proper mass exodus, as then happened, not only due to a question of image but due to economic reasons: the disappearance of the bourgeoisie class, of the entrepreneurs, of the artisans, workers and traders would have caused serious repopulation problems of the cities with Croatians, Serbians and Bosnians who were traditionally tied to agricultural activities.

The people politically responsible noticed, however, that the violence provoked terror and a desire to flee amongst the majority of Italians, even because contemporarily the collectivization of the lands and the nationalization of the means of production (industries, banks, means of transportation, commercial services) struck the interests of the Italian element, which feared that the elimination of private property would lead to the elimination of its owners.

In many cases, in fact, “ethnic cleansing” was carried out, a term which became of dramatic actuality after the mass exterminations which took place in the former Yugoslavia at the moment of the dissolution of the Federation of the Socialist Republics of the Slavs of the South. Sadly famous remained the massacre of Srebrenica, a Muslim enclave in eastern Serbian Bosnia, where in three days of July of 1995 eight thousand Muslims were killed by the Serbians. It was only the last act of a series of rapes, kidnapping, killings, ransacking, torture, which added themselves to the siege of Sarajevo which lasted over three years, with a total balance of almost two hundred thousand dead.

In the rest of Italy and of Europe, the news of what was happening in Venetia Julia arrived late: just in the month of July of 1945, the news that the Allies had extracted 450 cubic metres of human remains from the foibe of Basovizza became of public domain. From that moment onwards, reports and photographic documentation of the atrocities committed by the Yugoslavians were sent to the Allied governments, together with the request for the restitution of the deportees on the basis of the Belgrade Accord, in the conviction that their interest and help could be counted on thanks to the co-belligerence and the resistance during the last phases of the war, after the armistice of 1943. The British, instead, hesitated to forget fascism’s responsibility. In spite of everything, however, the Italian government continued for years to forward requests and protests and to nurture hopes on the fate of the deportees, intervening even at the Holy See and the International Red Cross, but uselessly. No news ever arrived on the thousands of disappeared citizens. After sixty years, in 2005, only a list was consigned coming from Slovenian archives, with the names of a thousand people deported after the war from Gorizia.

On the 9th June, 1945, Yugoslavia signed the Belgrade Accord, following which on the 12th June its troops retreated east of the Morgan Line and the Allied Military Government moved into Gorizia and Trieste, dissolving the Yugoslavian communist administrations, the special people’s tribunals, the communist civil guard and the old fascist party. In order to trace the new borders between Italy and Yugoslavia, the United States of America, the Soviet Union, France and Great Britain, that is, the four great powers that had won the Second World War, set up a specific commission, which decided to leave Paris in order to visit our region and verify the situation. In order to try to cancel the centuries-old Italian presence, in various localities of the Istrian coast the Yugoslavian administration then had the effigies of the Lion of Saint Mark, left by the Venetian Republic, removed, had Italian surnames modified by even altering them on the gravestones of some cemeteries, distributed new identity cards and removed parochial and civil registries in such a way as to hinder the search for the truth. In Venetia Julia, the Slovenians and the Croatians, informed in advance by the Russians about the commission’s movements, prepared rallies in favour of Yugoslavia, by mobilizing thousands of Slovenians who were made to come from a distance of many kilometres, so as to convince the delegates that the population wanted annexation to Yugoslavia. On the other hand, both in Gorizia and in Trieste and in Monfalcone there were even

pro-Yugoslavian communists who were ready to accept annexation as an opportunity in order to begin a new life within a socialist State.

In this context, the National League of Gorizia was reconstituted. The burning defeat of the Second World War, the forty days of terror which Gorizia and Trieste were subjected to, the annexationist threats of Marshall Tito, the uncertain destiny which thousands of Italians faced, strengthened, in 1946, the feeling of love for the motherland leading it towards the reconstitution of the association. Under the thrust of the Italian Juvenile Association thus was reborn, on the 8th March, 1946, the historic group of Gorizia strengthened by 3,874 members and an economic patrimony which totalled, in just donations, 57,742 Italian liras. Proclaiming itself to be out of every ideology and of every political party, the League invoked the union of all Italians for the defence of their culture and their traditions. It, therefore, was a question of an apolitical party association, which had the aim of “only fighting against whatever undermines and ensnares our nationality and our culture, by always holding the sacred name of Italy high”.

At the end of the month of March of 1946, Gorizia found itself invaded by five thousand Slav demonstrators, part of whom had been brought into the city by tens of trucks. Amidst the bewilderment and the preoccupation of the natives of Gorizia, they occupied Victory Square and bedded down for various days in front of the palace which was the headquarters of the Allied Military Government. On the 27th March, even the citizens of Gorizia were informed that the Inter-Allied Commission would have spent that night in the city. The Allied military authorities authorized an Italian demonstration, which was organized in a few hours notwithstanding the fears of an armed Yugoslavian reaction. As the news spread bit by bit a huge crowd of men and women of every age and social class began to descend into the streets and to flow at around six o'clock in the evening into Remembrance Park, from where the cortege, more than a kilometre long, left at 8:30 pm, lit up by thousands of torches provided by railway executives. From the windows of the houses, hundreds of other people appeared at the windows applauding the demonstrators. The delegates of the Commission were thus able to see all of the twenty thousand natives of Gorizia who were saying “Italy” and sang the hymn of Mameli (the Italian national anthem), waving Italian flags with enthusiasm and commotion which they had had to hide for months, and understood the will of the people of Gorizia.

Great worries spread around, however, when in an article published in the newspaper “L’Unita” on the 7th November, 1946, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, affirmed that Marshall Tito had declared to him to be willing to leave Trieste to Italy as long as Italy would accept to hand over Gorizia. In reality, the Marshall intended to leave to Italy only the city, isolated in the midst of Yugoslavian territory which would comprise of all of the coastal strip of about 20 kilometres between the centre and the Italian border. Tito hoped that he would have got greater concessions, given that Stalin had expressed on many occasions his consensus with regards to Yugoslavian aspirations over Venetia Julia, even if he was perplexed with regards to the claims with regards to other nearby countries: Yugoslavia, in fact, advanced claims over territories of Austria, Hungary, Romania, Greece and Bulgaria, even aiming at annexing Albania.

On the morning of the 10th October, 1946, the long awaited news arrived from Paris: the Allies had decided to leave Gorizia to Italy. The peace treaty of the 10th February, 1947, established, however, that the majority of Venetia Julia and of Istria were to be assigned to Yugoslavia. A Free Territory of Trieste was provisionally set up, placed under the protection of the UN and divided into two zones: Zone A, the most northern,

made up of the city centre, under Allied control, and Zone B, from Capodistria to Cittanova, administered by the Yugoslavians.

Various alarming episodes took place between 1952 and 1953 in Trieste and the tension hit the sky. During a demonstration in favour of Trieste's return to Italy, the Civil Police of the Allied Military Government, commanded by British officers, killed six innocent citizens. In 1954, the Italian-Yugoslavian accords maintained the partitioning of 1946, with slight adjustments. Finally the city was able to return to Italy, but Istria remained Yugoslavian. The Osimo Treaty of 1975 would have ratified Yugoslavian sovereignty over Zone B.

After having delineated the framework of the main events which took place in the second postwar period in Venetia Julia and Istria, it is natural to ask oneself why unlike what was done in Nuremberg for the war crimes committed by the Nazis, no judiciary proceedings were carried out with regards to those responsible for the death of so many thousands of defenceless citizens.

This took place due to different factors. First of all, the Yugoslavian government for decades officially denied any deportation or killing, and the Allies were not interested in actions against Tito, a precious ally, protected by the USSR first and by the very same Western powers after 1948. In the second place, the protests of Italy, which had lost the war, remained unheeded even because on the international level the investigations on crimes committed against the peoples of Venetia Julia, Istria and Dalmatia by Yugoslavian partisans would have forced the welcoming of Yugoslavian and Greek requests with regards to the crimes committed by Italian troops in those countries between 1941 and 1943. This, however, would have had negative repercussions on public opinion and was not desired either by the Allies or by the Italians. The governments which lead Italy during the years of the so-called "centrism" (from the end of the conflict up until 1962) removed these events in the hope of leaving fascism and the sufferings provoked by the conflict behind them, thinking rather about the economic reconstruction, peace, the future in a new Europe. The Italian communists chose instead even on this occasion to remain faithful to the interests of international communism and to the Soviet leadership and therefore they did not want to hear talk of the deportations of the innocents and of the foibes, in order not to admit the connivances of the Italian communists partisans with the ones of Tito. Italy had come out of the war not only defeated but divided and telling the truth about the foibes would have run the risk of giving rise to new fights amongst Italians. In the same years, moreover, another problem had been born on the internal front: thousands of fascists and other citizens had been killed on the part of communist formations after the end of the war, without justifications of a military character. In order to put an end to the atmosphere of civil war which could have been nourished by penal proceedings, Minister Palmiro Togliatti proclaimed amnesty for these crimes.

It is understood, then, how there was at the time the will to "go beyond" the crimes committed by both sides.

Only in the spring of 2004, after over 50 years of silence, with a law approved almost unanimously, the Italian Parliament decided to institute the national solemnity of the 10th February, the "Day of the Memory", in memory of the victims of the foibes and of the exodus of the 350 thousand Istrians, Fiumians and Dalmatians.

The exodus

After the peace treaty of Paris, Venetia Julia and Istria found themselves separated from the rest of Italy, occupied by the troops of the Yugoslavian People's Army. An atmosphere of great uncertainty immediately spread.

About 500,000 people who had passed under the administration of the Yugoslavian State had to decide whether to remain to live in that area or abandon their own homes in order to move beyond the border or emigrate to some other Western country, and the majority chose to go away. On the other hand almost 70% of the population was Italian, even according to the calculations of Croatian scholars, reducing therefore the percentage of this ethnic group on the total number of residents. The exodus thus affected between 1945 to 1958 about 350,000 inhabitants of the areas handed over to the Yugoslavian government, including even the tens of thousands of people who escaped without declaring their status as refugees, for personal reasons or because they were not in need of assistance insofar as they moved into the houses of relatives or acquaintances. The "Work for the Assistance to Julian and Dalmatian Refugees" counted 201,440 refugees, of which 80,000 settled in Friuli Venetia Julia (more than 70% in Trieste alone), 70,000 abroad and the remaining in other Italian regions. The city itself of Gorizia is today made up of a population of 15% of its people originating from the territories that were handed over, if we even consider the descendants of the exiles. Even Marshall Tito in a public speech given in 1972 at Titograd recognized that over 300,000 people had left Istria and the other territories. Beyond the discussions on the exact number of exiles (engineer Vladimir Zerijavic, a Croatian historian, in an essay published in Zagreb in 1997 spoke of 191,241 indigenous people, specifying that another 44,000 between Lombards, Tuscans, Calabrians, Sicilians and others cannot be counted insofar as they arrived in Istria after 1918), it turns out that about 75% of the resident population in the annexed territories to Yugoslavia fled. Cities and towns emptied themselves: from the cities of the coast, where the Italian element was largely in the majority, 80-90% of residents went away, like for example from Fiume, Capodistria, Pola and Zara. In this city, 85% destroyed by 54 bombardments, 900 citizens were killed by the Slavs and 165 were instead deported to Germany by the Nazis. It is easy to understand why, of the 20,000 inhabitants who remained, well over 19,000 went away.

The Yugoslavian authorities adopted however measures of dissuasion from the exodus, by slowing down the bureaucratic procedures, suspending work in the offices for quite a few periods, granting permission to leave not to all of the family members but only to some of its components, counting upon the fact that parents could not leave by leaving their children behind and vice versa, and thus forcing hundreds of families to prolong even for some years the wait before being able to go away.

The exiles had to abandon their homes and their possessions under the control of the partisans and of the Slav authorities: many of them were only able to take away with themselves 5 kilograms of clothes and 5 thousand Italian liras. On a daily basis, fishing boats and boats of every size were transporting towards the Italian coasts entire families belonging to every social class and every different political creed. Besides the Italians even about 10 thousand, or according to other estimates 20 thousand Slovenians and Croatians of Italian citizenship, emigrated.

What joined them together was the fear for their personal safety: under the new regime, in fact, either a person behaved according to the communist ideology or one became the target of intimidations and abuses, when a person in fact ran the risk of being deported or winding up hurled into the crevices insofar as potential opponents of the regime. It has to be understood that to remain meant facing great changes: life under a communist regime meant a lot of considerable differences brought about on the social, political, economic, religious and cultural level overturning consolidated traditions and values. The exile, therefore, was a forced choice for those who could not live under a regime which right from the beginning hindered and criminalized religious life, confiscated possessions, denied individual's fundamental freedoms, subjecting a person to farcical trials and condemning common citizens to long periods of detention in prison accused even only on the basis of an anonymous tip off of being an enemy of the people, fascists, irredentists. Others still were subjected to trial and condemned for having tried to escape beyond the border, or were killed while they were trying to escape, as had happened to twelve Istrian youngsters in 1949, four years after the end of the war. As had already happened in the Soviet Union, even in Yugoslavia the communist propaganda repeated to the population that priests were parasites which did not produce anything if not superstition and therefore did not have rights. It had been decreed that all priests who had not accepted the communist ideology and approved of its political plans had to be sent to their death. In Istria, the order was carried out by eliminating, at times by hanging or decapitation, other times after having tortured them in an inhuman way, 36 priests.

The houses, fields and all possessions which the exiles had left were nationalized and used by the Italian government in order to pay Yugoslavia for the damages of the war. On the possibility of the restitution of such possessions, negotiations have been started with Croatia and Slovenia. It would be nice to say that Italy welcomed the exiles with manifestations of solidarity, but in many cases it was not like that at all. The exiles asked to be able to remain united, to create some small cities, but the government opposed the concentrations and decided to scatter the refugees throughout all of the regions. The State offered assistance, but in various localities their arrival was seen with hostility and suspicion on the part of some political forces. The exiles who did not have family members ready to welcome them were disseminated in over a hundred refugee camps scattered throughout all of Italy, where they lived for years while waiting to find a job and a house and where living conditions, above all during the first years, were very difficult. Daily life was characterized by serious economic restraints and by a total lack of intimacy of family life, as well as by discrimination. On the other hand, the State in those years found itself in a situation of economic crisis, and had to house the exiles in old barracks and schools. In every dormitory, where tens of people of every age were forced to live in, divided by family nucleus, in order to offer a bit of privacy some wire was initially stretched, to which some blankets were hung up, but after a few months some wooden partitions were managed to be built. The stay in the camps went on at length, so much so that some families continued to live in them right up until the end of the 1960s. All of the exiles, although with suffering and toil, rebuilt their lives and inserted themselves with success into the life of the cities which had hosted them, in the employment world as in associative life and in politics. The common experiences strengthened the bonds between the families which, at least initially, preferred to remain united amongst themselves in small communities and to reside in the "neighbourhoods of the exiles" which were built in the 1950s. Numerous (about 80 thousand) were then those who decided to emigrate abroad, both towards European countries and towards far off

destinations like America or Australia. In Gorizia, many exiles were initially hosted in the “little barracks”, in the neighbourhood of Montesanto, until in 1950, thanks to American funds, the “village of the exile” was built in Campagnuzza, which was followed by the construction of the parish of Our Lady of Mercy and the construction of the church, planned by the architect Giordano Malni.

After sixty years, the exiles still continue to keep themselves in contact by means of various associations and publications. In order to carry out charitable functions and in order to keep alive the memory of the traditions of their land and the contacts between the families scattered throughout the world, the exiles, in fact, created different associations, of which the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association is the most present on national territory, with an intense cultural and editorial activity; many, in fact, are the periodicals tied to the world of the exodus published throughout the whole world.

Not everybody, however, left the lands handed over to Yugoslavia, having to decide on the basis of the presence of elderly people in the family nucleus or the economic prospects.

Those who stayed behind had to face numerous difficulties, like for example for many the language, the interruption of contacts and of personal relations beyond the border, hampered by the Yugoslavian authorities, or marginalization owed to the prohibition of distributing newspapers, publications, books or films of Italian origin. A further problem arose when, as we have seen, in 1948 Cominform expelled Tito accusing him of deviationism: many Italian communists who remained faithful to the political lines of the Italian Communist Party and, therefore, to Stalin, who remained in Yugoslavia or who had moved to the country for ideological reasons, were declared to be dissidents and were persecuted. Amongst them we recall the two thousand people who had arrived from the Isontine area, from Trieste, from Friuli, but even from Lombardy, from Emilia Romagna and from southern Italy. Amongst them there were intellectuals and artists but above all workers from the shipyard of Monfalcone who moved with their families to Fiume and to Pola, where there was an extreme need for qualified manpower in the yards which had remained empty after the exodus of the Italians. About four hundred Italian communists, guilty of not having aligned themselves with Tito, were imprisoned, subjected to beatings and deported to concentration camps, like the sadly famous one of Goli Otok, the Bald Island, in northern Dalmatia, or forced to work in the mines, forests or on road construction. Others still were fired, removed from their homes, threatened and humiliated or deported with their families to Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is therefore comprehensible that well over 80-90% of this group of Italian communist immigrants, initially protagonists of a “counter-exodus”, although of limited proportions, returned home to the motherland.

In Istria, the advent of Tito’s communism had serious consequences even at the economic level. The interruption of traffic with Italy enormously delayed the recovery on the Istrian peninsula, where the supplies of foodstuffs and natural resources were practically finished, means of transportation were lacking and trade was almost zeroed by a lack of tradable goods. The exodus of a good part of the workforce contributed towards aggravating the situation, because trained manpower did not exist in order to substitute those who had gone away. Still in the 1950s, the situation appeared to be precarious in industry, agriculture, social services and infrastructure. Many activities were nationalized and the funds exceeding ten hectares of farmable land were expropriated without compensation for the owners, remaining at times fallow for years. The *zadrughe*, that is, the agrarian cooperatives, turned out to go bankrupt to the point that already in 1953 the

dissolution was begun to be hypothesized, in the optic of transforming them into Kombinat, of State companies with activities both in the industrial and commercial and agricultural fields, in order to improve not only the productive aspect but even the distributive one. Only small properties remained in private hands, which however had to hand over to the State the excess produce to the foreseen quotas for family needs. In various areas, pastures were re-conquered by the forest, lumber was no longer cut and vast pieces of land remained unfarmed and unutilized. The coalmines of Arsa instead were immediately reactivated and produced discreetly up until 1967, when they began to decline due to the scarce quality of the extracted material. The real recovery for the Istrian economy took place in the 1960s and 1970s, thanks to the consolidation of industrial structures, the recovery of traffic in the port of Fiume and masse tourism, a phenomenon that was unknown up until then. The coasts saw the influx of Italian, Austrian and German holiday makers who brought in hard currency thus uplifting the asphyxiated local economy.

Gorizia, a border town

With regards to Gorizia, we can say that the last conflict had disastrous consequences for the city, which found itself facing the “Iron Curtain”, in tight contact with a State governed by a communist regime and in the meantime exasperatingly nationalistic. Well over two-thirds of its territory was lost and the hamlets of Salcano, San Pietro and Vertoiba, the railway station of Montesanto, the “Transalpine”, the monastery of Castagnevizza and the shrine of Monte Santo, since always, as we have seen, places of worship and of reference for the city’s Christian community.

Beyond the border, since June of 1948, Nova Gorica was built, as a Yugoslavian socialist counter-altar to the Italian capitalist urban centre.



The Province of Gorizia from 1927 to 1945.

All of this included a series of consequences for the economic, topographic and demographic development of the city. The number of inhabitants remained stable, however, thanks to the influx of thousands of refugees and to the deployment of a numerous military garrison.

The economic sector suffered quite harshly from the separation of the city from its natural hinterland and from the closure of the borders, which lasted until 1951. The city found itself detached from the valleys of Vipacco and the Isonzo, without prospects for development.

Notwithstanding the economic problems and the objective difficulties, the city was tried to be made alive and active, by overcoming the tendency to inertia by a certain part of the city's society.

By conducting a rapid medley of the cultural life of the native of Gorizia, we can see how in the second half of the century it expressed personalities who distinguished themselves by artistic, literary or scientific qualities like the historian Camillo Medeot, the Nobel prize winning scientist for physics Carlo Rubbia, the writer and painter Roberto Joos, the art critic and historian Sergio Tavano, Luciano Spangher, the already remembered musicians Cesare Augusto Seghizzi and his daughter Cecilia, Rodolfo Lipizer, Emil Komel and the choir directors and composers Orlando Di Piazza, Father Stanko Jericijo, Giancarlo Bini, the composer Fausto Romitelli and the writer, journalist and poet Celso Macor.

Many Italian and Slovenian cultural associations were born and centres like Stella



The present Province of Gorizia

Matutina, instituted by the Jesuits and active since 1936, the Institute of International Sociology, built in 1968, the “Rodolfo Lipizer” Cultural Association, the “Rizzatti Studies Centre”, the Institute of Social and Religious History. Other significant presences are the “Friulian Philological”, the “Visitors’ Office”, the “Coronini” Foundation, “Italia nostra”, the Slovenian Cultural Union, and finally the group of Istrian exiles which kept alive, without a solution for continuity, “L’Arena di Pola”, a former newspaper in Pola and successively a weekly in Gorizia, directed for thirty years by Pasquale De Simone, a native of Pola who was even the mayor of Gorizia. Amongst the publications we even recall “Voce Isontina”, a diocesan weekly of Catholic expression, “Studi Goriziani”, a magazine of the Isontine State Library, “Iniziativa Isontina”, published by the “Rizzatti” Political, Economic and Social Studies Centre, “Primorski Dnevnik”, a Slovenian language daily, and the “Katoliskj Glas”, a Catholic weekly.

Even sportive associationism has been very lively during the course of the whole twentieth century, starting with the ultra-centenary patriotic, sportive and cultural Gorizian Gymnastic Union association and with the Gorizia Athletics, in order to arrive at the very numerous societies and sportive groups which gather together those who play soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, fencing, martial arts... Thanks to the initiatives of the various groups and associations present in the city, Gorizia has been able to boast of events of an international level: the international folklore contest and the study convention on folklore, organized by the Visitors’ Office, the choral song contest organized by the “Seghizzi” choir and the Middle European Cultural Encounters, which deepen the common roots of culture and the bonds which ran through the peoples of Central Europe in centuries past. There are then the “Lipizer” international violin contest, in which the most prominent young violinists in the world perform, the multiple initiatives tied to the International Sociological Institute of Gorizia, the “Amidei” prize for the best cinematographic screenplay, the “Castello di Gorizia” theatre festival, reserved for the best national amateur theatre companies and the activity of the “Citta’ di Gorizia” Musical Foundation and of the “Roland” music school.

Right from the postwar period, Gorizia wanted and knew how to carry out a great important role in setting off that dialogue interrupted between the East and the West, by creating opportunities of encounter and dialogue between the two cultures. Today this appears to be a fact taken for granted, almost insignificant, but in those years it represented an exceptional event.

After the disappearance of Yugoslavia, the State of Slovenia is now found along the border, with which the municipal administration of Gorizia today discusses the best way in order to integrate the two cities after Slovenia’s admission into the European Union. After the tragic events which took place in the twentieth century, the city today intends to re-propose its own Italianness as a factor of encounter, and no longer of clashing, with Central and Balkan Europe.

If the future of Europe wants to be a journey of reconciliation, of reciprocal respect, of encounter of identity and cultures, Gorizia will be the symbol of this journey if, with the open questions resolved and the old rancour overcome, it will know how to promote peace and cohabitation in an authentic European spirit.

Straddling the Millennium

by Rodolfo Ziberna

We have by now almost arrived at the actuality, which perhaps students do not know about, but which for a good majority of the natives of Gorizia is made up of known facts.

After the death of Tito, in 1980, the crisis of the nearby State of Yugoslavia rapidly deteriorated. Notwithstanding easy credits and economic aid on the part of various Western countries, amongst which even Italy, the rationing was reached of gasoline, of coffee, detergents and oil (1983), while the foreign debt was over twenty billion dollars and the devaluation of the dinar reached 250% (1988). In the meantime the repression of dissent continued by means of arrests and condemnations to various years in prison for whoever protested against the policies of the government or denounced the repression and the torture carried out by the regime. An unstoppable wave began of strikes, which led in 1988 to an amendment of the Yugoslavian constitution in order to recognize the right to strike and freedom of the press. Slovenia and Croatia in June of 1991 proclaimed independence and for this reason they had to face the Yugoslavian federal army, but after brief clashes they obtained the full recognition of their autonomy. On the 15th January, 1992, even the European Economic Community recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Having obtained independence, a lot of problems still remained to be resolved.

The Istrian coast continued to live off of tourism but quite diverse was the situation of the more inner areas, because after the 1991 the dissolution of Yugoslavia blocked a good part of the internal outlets for goods which were not competitive on the international market. Many companies went bankrupt, even due to the chronic lack of financing and due to scarce productivity owed to by now obsolete factories. Thousands of workers were laid off, unemployment increased right to the point of arriving in the year 2000 at 21% in Croatia and 13% in Slovenia. The situation of many families became dramatic. Slovenia rapidly directed its own exports towards the markets of the European Economic Community, which today represent about two thirds of its exports, but it reopened its trade with the Balkan countries by slowly making some big structural reforms. Industry was privatized, inflation brought down to 5%, unemployment to 10%. After a lot of resistance, only in 1997 did the new Slovenian democracy accept to repeal article 68 of the Constitution, which forbade foreigners from buying property in Slovenia, and was thus able to ratify the accord for its association to the European Union. For Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the entrance of Slovenia into the European Union was an important event, because it sanctioned the reconciliation with the past and the reacquisition of a geopolitical centrality similar to the one which it possessed in centuries past.

Towards the end of the 1980s, the fall of communism in Europe and the signs of the worsening of the economic, political and institutional crisis within Yugoslavia led to a decrease in the pressure exerted upon the Italian minority in Istria, up until then periodically the object of accusations of irredentism and of activities against the State. The census of 1991 thus registered a clear recovery of the Italian community in Istria, Fiume and Dalmatia. In Croatian Istria alone (made up of the municipalities of Pola, Rovigno, Parenzo, Pisino, Albona, Pinguente and Buie) out of 204,346 inhabitants 24.7% of the population declared itself to be Istrian, 7.5% Italian (15,306 people), 54% Croatian, 4.8% Serbian. All of the coastal cities of Istria saw the presence of Italian nuclei, in full

continuity with the historical tradition of these lands. Many Italians after having been forced for many years to keep quiet found the courage to “reappear” once again, publicly manifesting their identity. The process of the democratization of Croatian and Slovenian society has however even brought some disappointments for those who hoped that an atmosphere of greater tolerance towards the minorities would have been introduced. Notwithstanding this, in the last years an increase has been verified in the members of the Italian Union, so much so that in 1998 the number of 36,000 members was reached. Presently, for the 5,000 registered children and kids there are 28 nursery schools in Croatia (of which 6 in Pola and 6 in Fiume) and 9 in Slovenia, besides the 11 eight year elementary schools in Croatia and the 3 in Slovenia. There are 7 secondary schools in all, while in Pola there is moreover the Faculty of Pedagogy. In many areas, however, there are no Italian language schools and nursery schools, and where the structures exist they are often crumbling and the equipment is by now decrepit. With the pretext of financial difficulties, in fact, both Slovenia and Croatia seem to hamper the renewal of Italian schools. It is to be noted, moreover, that the Croatian Ministry of Education emanated in 1995 a law, turned down by parliament in 1998, which placed limits on the registrations in Italian schools, contesting the nationality of the parents and raising the minimum number of students per class.

Going back to what was happening in our city, we have seen how in the postwar period it found itself being closed in an enclave on the margins of the nation, on a border which constituted the natural prosecution of the sadly famous Iron Curtain. That same border which represented a serious limitation for the city, contextually even constituted an element of richness, above all for the commercial sphere – more generically for the tertiary – which for decades benefited from Slovenian clientele, which did not find in the commercial exercises beyond the border the products which businessmen from Gorizia offered instead. Commercial activities, import-export companies, shipping agents were able to benefit from this situation for many years.

The productive sector for quite some time was able to even benefit from a regime of a Duty-Free Area which aimed, with some shrewdness, to “compensate” the territory for its sudden marginalization in the national context. A curtailed policy (or be it in quantities predefined and authorized by the Ministry) on the excises of some products (butter, sugar, fuel, etc) substantially allowed companies set up in the Isontine to knock down the costs of production and allow the citizens to enjoy, above all, fuels for auto- traction at a largely inferior price than the one practiced in the rest of the country, whose difference in time has progressively diminished. It should be pointed out that in Slovenia the price of fuel has always been inferior and for such a reason the natives of Gorizia had the convenience of going over the border in order to fill up. A significant quota of the excises is income for the Chamber of Commerce of Gorizia, which manages the Gorizia Fund, thanks to which important interventions have been carried out in support of the territory: from works of urbanization and reclamation to support for university settlements, right to the support of economic activities with eased financing and credit, and the financing of cultural, trade fair, sportive events, etc.

The Duty-Free regime has on many occasions been harassed by communitarian initiatives, although it is previous to the Rome Treaties. Globalization even in trade and in services has done the rest: today beyond the border the same products can be found which can be purchased in Gorizia, like in Milan, Graz or Ljubljana.

The city in the meantime saw the reinforcing of its own international vocation, by creating opportunities of encounter and dialogue between the cultures beyond the Iron Curtain and the Western one. All of this was successively reinforced by the setting up of the University of Trieste with graduate courses tied to the international diplomatic sciences which had the task of reinforcing even future Italian diplomats. In brief a centre will be set up in Gorizia, at the University of Trieste on Alviano Street, destined for the big international appointments, equipped with spaces and the necessary technology for simultaneous translations and international multimedia connections.

A moment of great importance for Gorizia has actually been the start of graduate courses of the University of Trieste, followed by the ones of the University of Udine, whose campuses are respectively found on Alviano Street and Diaz Street. If it is by now a common place to sustain that the best long term investment for a person is culture, this even goes for a city. From that moment, Gorizia has been enlivened and revitalized by a presence of students (today thousands) who attend bars and restaurants, commercial exercises, etc. Even the economic aspect should, in fact, not be neglected which has caused an explosion – amongst other things – in the real estate market, considering even the need to find mini apartments.

Gorizia had already experienced an important presence of young people on its own territory when the border, then Italian-Yugoslavian, was the most advanced border between the military organizations of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Military strategy requirements imposed a significant presence of professional and conscript soldiers in the whole region, with particular reference to Gorizia and to the Isontine: had there been an aggression from the East it could not have taken place but across our border. The changed European political situation has diminished this requirement, and the military presence in Gorizia of about 5,000 soldiers has been reduced to about a few hundred units. This had even translated itself into a reduced source of income for the city. The presence for decades of thousands of professional soldiers then even determined a high percentage of soldiers today in quiescence in Gorizia like in other centres of the province. Many are even the abandoned barracks which today are cathedrals in the desert, until when new uses will not be able to be found for them.

Important for the development of the territory is the presence at a distance of a few kilometres between them of the port of Monfalcone, the auto-port of Gorizia, the airport of Ronchi dei Legionari and the railway inter-port of Cervignano, the imminent Corridor 5, which will join Barcelona to Kiev. The potential of the Merna airport is not to be neglected for our city.

The rest of the Isontine has progressively assumed a different physiognomy and vocation.

The area west of the Isonzo River, about a third of the Isontine population, markedly Friulian in terms of language and culture, has in Cormons the biggest built-up area, the moral capital of wine production of the Collio, rightly famous for its vintage white wines throughout the whole world. The production of the wine represents for the province 7% of its gross domestic product. Cormons and Capriva del Friuli are particularly sought after by German speaking tourists, who appreciate its fine cuisine, its agro-tourisms, the hilly morphology, the closeness to other tourist and cultural opportunities. Appreciable are the manifestations of the local Visitors' Office, with historical re-evocations, the wine feast and other attraction events.

Grado, the so-called Island of the Sun, is one of the biggest tourist centres of the region, providing almost 20% of the gross domestic product of the whole province. During peak summer days, the presence of about 100 thousand people can be registered. Besides the regional presence, the German speaking one is particularly relevant right from the first sun of May. Strong points are the fenced off and guarded beach, the famous sand for therapeutic aims, the mud baths, the historical centre.

Completely different is Monfalcone, the City of the Shipyards, which with its about 28 thousand inhabitants is the second city of the province and the fifth of the region. Added to this is the missing solution of continuity with some neighbouring cities in facts turns Monfalcone into a Mandment city of great range. It owes its own demographic explosion (right from the beginning of the century it was a small town with a few thousand inhabitants) to immigration of Friulian manpower first and then to Southern Italian manpower after. It even has to be pointed out that there is a significant presence of Istrian exiles. As a place only known in Italy for the historical presence of the shipyards, Monfalcone has known how to carve out a role for itself in international shipbuilding, becoming a privileged place for the production of the big princesses of the seas, or be it the transatlantic liners for tourists of more than a 100 thousand tonnes. It as well has to be pointed out that in the area of Monfalcone there are even beach areas like Marina Julia and Lido di Panzano.

Gradisca d'Isonzo is, at a distance of 10 kilometres from Gorizia, a city which due to its positioning, the big central park, the highway connection lends itself to being chosen as a place for the conducting of great events which attract a consistent public crowd.

For its future Gorizia does not have big possibilities of choice. Its university and international vocation have to be strengthened through new graduation courses and welcoming structures destined to the University and to the improvement of the students' stay. Tourism constitutes for everybody, and it will even have to be so for Gorizia, a great resource to exploit by promoting the routes of the Great War, by making sites, trenches, paths and cannon positions accessible on both sides of the border, by organizing exhibits and small markets, study conventions and magazines. But even wine and the Collio have to become an opportunity for the city. The castle with the big exhibit moments tied to the history of the county, synergies with Nova Gorica and with Grado are the last ingredients of this recipe for Gorizia, which has the merit of finding itself only thirty minutes by car from the sea and from the mountains, but even close to the tourist routes which lead to nearby Istria and an hour away from the vast and interesting basin of the German language.

The sports' card is to be played by promoting the use of the sports facilities of the Sportive Town of Campagnuzza, for retreats and events, by making use of the adequate receptive facilities.

Gorizia cannot allow itself the luxury of neglecting anything, therefore the knowledge and the use of the Transalpine railway line, the production of chicory and of the cake of Gorizia are to be promoted. Cultural production is even of merit, thanks to young operators who are promoting interesting cultural initiatives.

In this context it will be important to have a balanced relationship with nearby Nova Gorica in the overall promotion of the territory and tourist and cultural opportunities. Nearby Slovenia, in fact, offers a naturalistic heritage of great effect, with important sites of the Great War, spaces for the practicing of particular sportive disciplines tied to gliding and to the Isonzo River.

The different casinos are even of a considerable attractive capacity for a certain group of users.

Gorizia, in short, will have to be capable of redesigning its own future by investing in its peculiarities and transforming the border from an element of marginalization into opportunities for growth.

I would like to conclude this publication, edited by the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association, the biggest and representative association which gathers together the Julian-Dalmatian exiles in Italy, with the contribution made by the Head of State, Giorgio Napolitano, on the occasion of the celebrations at the residence of the President of the Italian Republic of the Day of the Memory, on the 10th February, 2007. With his words, of rare efficacy, he turns the page on behalf of the whole country on 60 years of silence and forgetfulness, an example of intellectual correctness and honesty for all those who, today, no longer in a position to deny the facts which took place would want to justify them or minimize them for censured political aims: “Last year President Ciampi wanted the first ceremony to be carried out here for the conferral of the medal of the “Day of the Memory” to family members of the victims – as the law of April of 2004 recites – “of the crevices, of the exodus and of the overall event of the eastern border”. I take the example of my predecessor in confirming the duty which the institutions of the Italian Republic feel as their own, at all levels, of a too long awaited recognition. In listening to the motivations which this morning preceded the conferring of the medals, we have all been able to go over the tragedy of thousands and thousands of families, whose loved ones were imprisoned, killed, hurled into the foibes. And the words give rise to particular impression and emotion: “from then on we never had any news about him”, “most probably” shot, or hurled into the crevices. It was the vicissitude of those who disappeared into nullity and of the dead who remained unburied.

A myriad of tragedies and horrors; and a collective tragedy, the one of the exodus from their lands of the Istrians, Fiumians and Dalmatians, the one therefore of an entire people. To you who are children of that harsh history, I still want to say, on behalf of the whole country, a word of affectionate closeness and solidarity.

For a certain number of years up until now, researches and reflections by historians have been intensified on the events to which the “Day of the Memory” is dedicated: and a treasure certainly has to be made of it in order to spread a memory which has already risked being erased, in order to hand it on down to the younger generations, in the spirit of the same law of 2004. So, it has been written, in a more detached effort of analysis, which already in the unleashing of the first wave of blind violence in those lands, in the autumn of 1943, “summary and tumultuous justicialism, nationalist paroxysm, social revenges and a design of uprooting” of the Italian presence from what had been, and ceased being, Venetia Julia was interwoven. There was, therefore, a revolt of hatred and bloody fury, and a Slav annexationist design, which above all prevailed in the Peace treaty of 1947, and which assumed the sinister contours of an “ethnic cleansing”.

What can surely be said is that it was carried out – in the most evident way with the inhuman fury of the foibes – one of the barbarities of the last century. Because in the twentieth century – I actually recalled it here on another, historical and heavy recurrence (the “Day of the Shoah”) – culture and barbarities were interwoven in Europe. And the awareness of this must never be lost in giving value to the most noble traits of our historical tradition and in consolidating the lineaments of civilization, peace, freedom, tolerance, solidarity of the new Europe which we have been building for over fifty years. It is a Europe born of the refusal of aggressive and oppressive nationalisms, by the one expressed in the fascist war to the one expressed in the wave of Yugoslavian terror in Venetia Julia, a Europe which naturally excludes even every revanchism.

The dear friend Professor Paolo Barbi – an exemplary figure of a representative of those lands, of those populations and of their sufferings – has admirably gone over his experience: especially when he spoke of the European “dream” and plan in which he and others sought in an enlightened way the compensation and ransoming beyond the nightmare of the past and the bitterness of silence. And what he said was right: the remembered unforgivable horror against humanity made up of the crevices is to be remembered, but as well the odyssey of the exodus, and of the pain and the toil which it cost the Fiumians, Istrians and Dalmatians to rebuild a life in Italy which went back to being free and independent but mutilated in her eastern region. And it is to be remembered – I go back to Professor Barbi’s words – the “conspiracy of silence”, “the less dramatic but even more bitter and demoralizing phase of the oblivion”.

We must not even keep quiet about that one, by taking up the responsibility of having denied, or tended to ignore, the truth due to prejudicial ideologies and political blindness, and of having removed it from diplomatic calculations and international conveniences.

Today that in Italy we have put an end to an unjustifiable silence, and that we are committed in Europe to recognizing in Slovenia a friendly partner and in Croatia a new candidate for entry into the European Union, we have to nevertheless repeat with strength that everywhere, in the midst of the Italian people like in relations between peoples, a part of the reconciliation, which we firmly want, is the truth. And the one of the “Day of the Memory” is specifically, dear friends, a solemn commitment of the re-establishment of the truth”. (Umberto Napolitano)

Bibliography

- A.A.V.V.** “1915-1918 Memorie per la pace Il Museo della Grande guerra” Provincia di Gorizia 1993
- A.A.V.V.**, “*Foibe Una tragedia istriana*” Unione degli Istriani – Libera Provincia dell’Istria in esilio, Trieste 1988
- A.A.V.V.** “1945-1995: cinquant’anni dall’invasione jugoslava della Venezia Giulia” Convegno sulla questione adriatica-Associazione Nazionale Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia – Comitato di Gorizia – Serimania Gorizia 1996
- A.A.V.V.** “*Il monastero di Sant’Orsola a Gorizia. Trecento anni di storia ed arte*” Silvana Editore, Milano 2001
- A.A.V.V.** “*I partigiani dell’Associazione Volontari Liberta’ di Gorizia per la liberta’ e per l’Italia*” Associazione Volontari Liberta’ di Gorizia – Gorizia 1996
- A.A.V.V.** “*L’insegnamento musicale a Gorizia e l’Istituto Comunale di Musica*” – Istituto Comunale di Musica-Tipografia Paternolli-Gorizia 1931
- ARBO**, Alessandro “Musicisti di frontiera” Comune di Gorizia – Edizioni della Laguna 1998
- BACARINI**, Luigia “*La Lega Nazionale di Gorizia*” (1891-2006)” – Lega Nazionale di Gorizia, Edizioni della Laguna 2006
- BOILEAU**, Anna Maria “*La minoranza slovena nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia: aspetti sociologici*” Iniziativa isontina n.2/61 1974 Arti Grafiche Campestrini, Gorizia 1974
- BRANCATI**, Mario “*L’organizzazione scolastica nella Contea principesca di Gorizia e di Gradisca dal 1615 al 1915*” – Associazione culturale “M. “Rodolfo Lipizer” – Gorizia, Edizioni della Laguna 2004
- CELLA**, Sergio “*Dal plebiscito negato al plebiscito dell’esodo*” Associazione Nazionale Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia – Comitato di Gorizia, Gorizia 1993
- CAVAZZA**, Silvano “*Primoz Trubar e le origini del luteranesimo nella Contea di Gorizia (1563-1565)*”, in Studi Goriziani vol. 61/1985
- CAVAZZA**, Silvano, a cura di, “*Da Ottone III a Massimiliano I. Gorizia e I Conti di Gorizia nel Medioevo*”, Edizioni della Laguna, 2004
- CAVAZZA**, Silvano “*Un’eresia di frontiera. Propaganda luterana e dissenso religioso sul confine austro-Veneto nel Cinquecento*” in Annali di storia isontina n.4 Provincia di Gorizia 1991
- CORONINI CRONBERG** Guglielmo “*L’espansione del centro storico*”, in Gorizia viva- Gorizia 1973
- CORONINI, CRONBERG** Guglielmo “*Lo sviluppo territoriale della Contea di Gorizia*” in Gorizia viva – Itraia Nostra, Gorizia 1973
- CREMONESI**, Arduino “*L’epoca patriarcale – 1077-1420*”, in Enciclopedia Monografica del Friuli Venezia Giulia, vol.III, tomo I, Arti Grafiche Friulane, Udine 1978
- CZOERNIG**, barone von, Carl “*Gorizia, la Nizza Austriaca*” – Cassa di Risparmio di Gorizia 1969
- De CASTRO** Diego “*La questione di Trieste.L’azione politica e diplomatic italiana dal 1943 al 1954*” Lint, Trieste 1981
- DE VITIS**, Maria Rosaria, **SPANGHER**, Luciano “Conosciamo Gorizia” – Gorizia 1997
- GEROMET** Giorgio “*Aquileia, la grande metropolis romana*” Centro Stampa Monfalcone, 1996
- JARC**, Daniel “*Urbanistica e identita’ della citta’ di Gorizia*” in 1001-2001 Gli Sloveni a Gorizia, Istituto Sloveno di Ricerche, Grafica Goriziana Gorizia 2002
- LEICHT**, Pier Silverio “*Sommario della storia del Goriziano*” Libreria editrice, Aquileia 1930
- LUCHITTA**, Alberto “*L’economia dell’Istria italiana 1890-1940*” Edizioni ANVGD Gorizia, 2005
- MALNI PASCOLETTI**, Maddalena “*Il Seicento e il Settecento nel Goriziano*”, in Enciclopedia monografica del Friuli-Venezia Giulia, tomo III parte III, Udine 1980
- MARINELLI**, Giovanni “*Slavi, tedeschi, italiani nel cosiddetto Litorale austriaco*”, Antonelli, Venezia 1885
- MARUSIC**, Branko “*Mille anni dalla prima menzione e dalla prima demarcazione territoriale della regione*” in Gorizia 1001-2001 Gli Sloveni a Gorizia, Istituto Sloveno di Ricerche, Grafica Goriziana Gorizia 2002
- MEDEOT** Camillo “*Le Orsoline a Gorizia 1572-1972*” Arti Grafiche Friulane, Udine 1972
- MEDEOT**, Camillo “*La struttura urbana e morfologica di Gorizia nel Medioevo*” in Studi Goriziani XLI, gennaio-giugno 1975

- MISCHOU**, Ludovico “*Gorizia com’era, com’e’*” – ED.Marketing Service, Gorizia 1997
- MOLINARI**, Fulvio “*Istria contesa. Le guerre, le foibe, l’esodo*” Mursia, Milano 1996
- MORELLI de Schonberg**, Carlo “*Istoria della Contea di Gorizia*” – Paternolli, Gorizia 1855
- NEMEC**, Gloria “*Un paese perfetto. Storia e memoria di una comunita’ in esilio. Grisignana d’Istria 1930-1960*” Leg Gorizia 1998
- OLIVA**, Gianni “*Foibe. Le stragi negate degli italiani della Venezia Giulia e dell’Istria*” Mondadori Milano 2002
- PASCHINI**, Pio “*Storia del Friuli*” – Udine 1975
- POLI**, gen. C.A. Luigi “*Le forze armate nella guerra di liberazione 1943-1945*” Stabilimento Grafico Militare, Gaeta 1995
- PUPO**, Raul “*L’eta’ contemporanea*” in “*Istria. Storia di una regione di frontiera*” a cura di Fulvio Salimbeni Morcelliana IRCI, Brescia 1994
- PUPO**, Raul – **SPAZZALI** Roberto “*Foibe*” Bruno Mondadori, Milano 2003
- ROCCHI**, padre Flaminio “*L’esodo dei 350.000 giuliani fiumani e dalmatic*” Edizioni Difesa Adriatica Roma 1998
- RUMICI**, Guido “*Fratelli d’Istria 1945-2000. Italiani divisi*” Mursia, Milano 2001
- RUMICI**, Guido “*Infoibati (1943-1945) I nomi, I testimony, I documenti*” Mursia Milano 2002
- RUMICI**, Guido “*Italiani d’Istria. Da maggioranza a minoranza: economia e storia di un popolo 1947-1999*” Edizione ANVGD Gorizia 1999
- SALIMBENI**, Fulvio (a cura di) “*Istria. Storia di una regione di frontiera*” Morcelliana, Brescia 1994
- SALIMBENI**, Fulvio “*Le foibe, un problema storico*” Unione degli Istriani Trieste 1998
- SALIMBENI**, Fulvio “*Ascoli, intellettuale del Risorgimento*” in “*Quaderni Giuliani di storia*” 4, 1983/1
- SCOTTI**, Giacomo “*Gali Otak. Ritorno all’isola calva*” Lint, Trieste 1991
- SESTAN**, Ernesto “*Venezia Giulia. Lineamenti di storia etnica e sociale*” Edizioni Del Bianco, Udine 1997
- SPANGHER**, Luciano “*Gorizia 1943-1944-1945, Seicento giorni di occupazione germanica e quarantatre’ jugoslava*” Edizione “*Fruil C’*. Gorizia 1995 Societa’ per la conservazione della basilica di Aquileia” Arti grafichFriulane, Udine 1994
- SPANGHER**, Luciano “*Gorizia e il convento e la chiesa di San Francesco dei frati minori conventuali Fondazione*” Societa’ per la conservazione della basilica di Aquileia” Arti grafichFriulane, Udine 1994
- SPAZZALI**, Roberto “*Foibe: un dibattito ancora aperto*” Lega Nazionale Trieste 1990
- STAFFUZZA**, Bruno “*Qualche cenno storico sulla comunita’ di San Rocco di Gorizia*” in Studi Goriziani, XLV, 1977
- TAVANO**, Sergio “*Gorizia, storia ed arte*” Chiandetti Udine 1991
- TAVANO**, Sergio “*Il castello ed il suo borgo*” in Gorizia viva, Italia nostra 1973
- UNGARO**, Mauro “*Sotto la torre. 1497-1997: 500 anni della chiesa di San Rocco*” Budin Gorizia 1997
- TARTICCHIO**, Piero “*Istria. Brevi cenni storici: dale sue origini alla “Giornata della memoria”* – Supplemento all’Arena di Pola, 15 settembre 2003
- TOTH**, Lucio “*Perche’ le foibe: gli eccidi in Venezia Giulia e in Dalmazia (1943-1945) I fatti e la loro interpretazione nella storiografia e nella politica*” Associazione Nazionle Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia Roma 2006
- TROHA**, Nevenka “*Fra liquidazione del passato e costruzione del futuro. Le foibe e l’occupazione jugoslava della Venezia Giulia*” in “*Foibe. Il peso del passato*”, a cura di Giampaolo Valdevit, Marsilio, Venezia 1997
- VALENCIC**, Vida “*Botta e risposta sugli sloveni in Italia*”, SLORI, Grafica Goriziana, 2003
- VALDEMARIN**, Iginò “*Sant’Antonio da Padova e il convento dei Frati minorili Gorizia*” in Studi Goriziani vol 27/1960
- VALDEVIT**, Giampaolo (a cura di) “*Foibe. Il peso del passato, Venezia Giulia 1943-45*” Marsilio, Venezia 1997
- VALUSSI**, Giorgio “*Il confine nord-orientale d’Italia*” Lint, Trieste 1972

Index

Preface by Rodolfo Ziberna	3
Contribution by Ugo Panetta	5
A proposal of regional history for secondary schools by Fulvio Salimbeni	7
Author's introduction	11
Prehistory	13
The beginning of history: the Roman conquest and the foundation of Aquileia	15
The invasions: 5th-7th centuries	18
The Patriarchate of Aquileia	21
Gorizia: the origins of the name	26
The counts of Gorizia (12th-16th centuries)	26
The Hapsburg dominion: the sixteenth century	30
The seventeenth century	33
The eighteenth century	36
The nineteenth century	40
The twentieth century	48
The second postwar period in Venezia Giulia: the violence of Tito's partisans, the foibes	54
The exodus	62
Gorizia, a border city	65
Straddling the Millennium by Rodolfo Ziberna	68
Bibliography	74



Maria Grazia Ziberna was born in Gorizia to parents exiled from the lands of Istria. A graduate of the “Dante Alighieri” Classical High School she obtains her degree in modern literature at the University of Studies of Trieste with the highest marks and praise, by discussing her graduate thesis, successively rewarded by the Province, on the linguistic and social aspects of Gorizia. In the meantime, following her multiple interests, she attends the Triennial School of Theology, dedicating herself to the formation of the youth not only through teaching but even sportive activity and catechesis. She was amongst the founding members and then for various mandates President of the provincial section of the Regional Centre for

Cooperation in Schools, of which today she is a component of the regional directive.

Married, a mother of two children, she has been teaching for almost thirty years in different Higher Learning Institutes of the city, presently at the “Nicolo’ Pacassi” Technical Institute for Surveyors of Gorizia.

IN DEPTH STUDIES AND ADDRESSES

The themes of the Exodus and other topics can be deepened through a rich publishing of different associations, amongst which:

- the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association (www.angvd.it)
- the National League (www.leganazionale.it)
- the C.D.M. – Multi-medial Documentation Centre of Istrian, Fiumian and Dalmatian culture (www.arcipelagoadriatico.it)
- the IRCI – Regional Institute for Istrian-Fiumian-Dalmatian Culture (www.irci.it)

The Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association in Gorizia is located at 6/E Oberdan Street; Tel: (0481) 533911; anvgd.gorizia@libero.it

In Rome on 32 Leopoldo Serra Street; Tel : (06) 5816852; info@anvgd.it

This publication is born from the awareness of how little the history of Gorizia, of the Isontino, of our region and of Istria, is known which in the definition coined by Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, a well-known linguist from Gorizia, constitute Venetia Julia.

The publication aspires to represent, deliberately in a few pages, with a clear language and accessible references, a synthetic instrument in order to make this history which is little or not at all known.

It is destined to everybody, but above all to young secondary school students, as an educational instrument to be added to textbooks, which as is known do not face our history. It will certainly be useful, however, even to the many university students who come from other provinces and regions of Italy, and to all those, even non-students, who would like to know something more about the land which they live and work on.

The distribution takes place freely and intends to constitute a compliment of the Venetia Julia and Dalmatia National Association to our land.