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A PICTORIAL  
 HISTORY  
OF THE  
 ITALIAN  
PEOPLE



by Massimo Salvadori

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## *To my children and their children*

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*I* WISH to record my thanks to Joyce, my wife, who spent endless hours in improving the writing, in typing and revising the text. Without her cooperation, her patience, and her understanding, the book would not have appeared.

#### Key to Special Picture-Credit Abbreviations:

ENIT	Italian Government Travel Office
EPA	Editorial Photocolor Archives, Inc.
ICI	Italian Cultural Institute
LC	Library of Congress
NIHMLI	National Institute for the History of the Movement of Liberation in Italy
NYPL	New York Public Library
NYPL PC	New York Public Library Picture Collection
TWA	Trans World Airlines

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## PREFACE

A POET—a Dante, for instance, whose *Divine Comedy* is the history of his time—can re-create the past in all its splendor and its tragedy. Historians, seldom endowed with poetic gifts, must rely on the readers' imagination to round out their narratives: to see, beyond the recital of events and the names and dates, the thoughts and feelings that make people what they are. In a pictorial history such as this illustrations help to give life to the past, but even these are not enough unless one's mind adds movement to the people portrayed and depth to the ideas and emotions directing their actions. Only when historical figures acquire the dimensions they had when living do their names become meaningful. Robert Guiscard is not merely the knight who created a kingdom, Giuseppe Garibaldi is not merely the patriot who eight hundred years later destroyed that kingdom. They are men with minds and hearts, men who think and feel. Records tell us who was fighting whom at Legnano and Vittorio Veneto, and when, maps show us where; but Legnano and Vittorio Veneto are the suffering of those who died and the triumphant rejoicing of survivors who had defeated a mighty enemy. The writer provides the facts, the reader must bring them to life with his imagination.

There is a disparity between the sheer scope and grandeur of the theme—the history of the Italian people—on the one hand, and on the other, the restrictions imposed by any author's limitations and by a book's format. The richness and variety of experiences of a people throughout hundreds of eventful years are not easily expressed and compressed. There have been seventy generations of Italians since the time when hundreds of widely different communities, in a country not yet called Italy, became one people. The written word throws only a dim and partial light on changes, on events in all fields of endeavors, on achievements and failures; on the men and women who were the living reality, the embodiment of changes, events, achievements, and failures. One thing is certain. The history of the Italian people, like most history, has been mainly tragedy.

The aim of this book's narrative and illustrations is to inform. Chapters 2 to 16 are a summary of what young Italians know of their nation's past when they have completed their liberal studies. From what Italians did, we can know the problems they faced, and the concepts and values underlying their response to them. Names are a reminder that history is human beings, that the historical process is what myriads have done, thought, and felt. Historians have singled

out those whose lot it was to lead and to take decisions that affected events; those who sometimes deservedly and sometimes undeservedly gained fame or notoriety; those who happened to be, or seemed to be, spokesmen for the many. Other names will also be found in this book, the names of humble people who, like Balilla (Giovanni Battista Perasso) and Ciceruacchio (Angelo Brunetti) in modern times survived in the national lore, became symbols meaningful for later generations, and thus contributed to the shaping of future periods. The names, however, should not obscure the overriding fact that leaders, men and women of distinction, spokesmen, symbols, are a veneer; that the people themselves, all the people, make history.

This history begins in the first chapter with data concerning Italy the country, and the community of people—the nation—inhabiting it today. The next twelve chapters summarize major developments from the time when Italians spoke Latin and called themselves Romans, to the latest era. The story of the Italians begins with the unification of the peninsula in the fourth to third centuries B.C., and the gradual transformation of many different communities into one people. It continues with the achievements of Rome-Italy, and its contributions to post-Roman Italian civilization; with the religious conversion that transformed Italians, and the political crisis that marked the passage from ancient to medieval times. Other chapters deal with centuries of decline during the Dark Ages; with the glory, then decadence, of the papacy and major kingdoms of the South during five hundred years; with the splendid achievements of city-states and regional states in the North and Center until 1500; with the agony of the Renaissance and yet another complete transformation of the Italian way of life. Then come modern times: centuries of foreign hegemony (Spanish, Austrian, French); the *Risorgimento* and Italy's second unification, a little over a hundred years ago; the troubled monarchical phase, which in the twentieth century includes two world wars and the Fascist dictatorship; the recent dynamic republican period. In Chapters 14 to 16 mention is made of writers, artists, scientists, explorers, whose achievements belong not just to the Italian nation but to mankind. The last two chapters add some further information about the role Italians have played outside their country.

The vastness of the ground covered makes some inaccuracies inevitable, however much the events, names, and dates are checked and rechecked. Some proper names are spelled in different ways (there are

several variations of Pallavicino for instance) or in different ways in different languages. Anglicized forms vary. Because one finds variations in equally valid sources, because of calendar changes, and because most events are processes going through different phases, dates are not always exact. Finally, however much the historian tries for accuracy, what has been does not look the same as when it was—and hence is distorted.

The book contains passages from some of the author's other writings: "Italy," a pamphlet in the Foreign Policy Association *Headline Series*, No. 87 (May–June 1951); *Brief History of the Patriot Movement in Italy 1943–1945* (Chicago: *La Parola del Popolo*, 1954), expanded in *Storia della Resistenza Italiana* (Venice: Neri Pozza, 1955); "Italy," chapter in Roucek et al., eds., *Contemporary Social Science*, Vol. II (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Press, 1954); *Cavour and the Unification of Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand,

1961); *La Resistenza nell' Anconetano e nel Piceno* (Rome, Italy: Opere Nuove, 1962); "The End of the Renaissance in Italy," paper contributed to *The Renaissance Reconsidered* (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College Studies in History, 1964); *Italy*, in *The Modern Nations in Historical Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965).

Quotations at the beginning of Chapter 10 are from William Thomas's *The History of Italy* (1549), George B. Parks, editor (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963).

The Glossary explains terms referring specifically to the Italian scene (*comuni*, *Risorgimento*, *duce*, etc.) and terms whose meaning changed (pontiff, Kingdom of Italy, liberal, etc.). The Chronology is mainly a summary of political events.

Capodarco, Italy

April 1972



# CHRONOLOGY

4th–1st century B.C.	Many diverse communities become one people.	4th–6th centuries	Formative phase of Catholicism, the Italian version of Christianity keyed to the Petrine principle: the supremacy of the bishops of Rome, the popes.
ca. 370–270 B.C.	Through wars with other Italic peoples (Volsci, Samnites, etc.) and with outsiders (Gauls, Epirotes, etc.), alliances (with Latini, Hernici, etc.), and the foundation of new settlements, the Italian peninsula is united under the hegemony of Rome.	330	Transfer of the capital of the Mediterranean Roman Empire to Constantinople (Byzantium); the transfer sanctions the political decline of Italy which will continue until the middle of the 11th century.
241–210	Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, and most of northern or continental Italy, come under the rule of Rome; beginning of large-scale settlements of Italians from the peninsula in northern Italy.	382	As <i>Pontifex maximus</i> , the pope replaces the emperor as supreme religious authority in Rome, and for all people accepting the Petrine principle.
206–146	First Roman acquisitions beyond Italy: until A.D. 284 Rome-Italy enjoys a dominant status in the Mediterranean Roman Empire.	390	Ambrose, bishop of Milan, compels the emperor to recognize the autonomy of the Church vis-à-vis imperial authority.
91–88	Secession of Italian allies; formation of a secessionist federation Italia (capital Corfinium or Italicum); the secession ends with the granting of equal citizenship to the Italians; Rome and Italy become one.	401–568	Era of the great barbarian invasions in Italy: Visigoths invade northern Italy (401) but are defeated at Pollentia (402); other barbarian hordes are defeated at Florence; led by Alaric, Visigoths sack Rome (410); Huns invade Italy under Attila (452); led by Gaiseric, Vandals sack Rome (455); the Suevian Ricimer de facto ruler of Italy (456–472); Odoacer, leader of Herulians, deposes Romulus Augustulus (476) and rules Italy (476–489); Ostrogoths invade Italy and establish their own kingdom (489–535); war in Italy between Ostrogoths and Imperials (535–554); Italy, as a province of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire (554–568); invasion of the Lombards (568).
49–42	Northern Italy becomes part of Roman Italy; shortly after, Augustus divides peninsular and continental Italy into eleven geographical-ethnic units, the regions.		
31 B.C.–A.D. 235	Age of the Pax Romana—Also, first century B.C. and first century A.D., Golden Age of Latin Literature; second century, age of great jurists.—Climax of ancient Mediterranean civilization.		
235–284	Civil wars and invasions; beginning of the cultural and economic decline of Italy.	440–461	Pope Leo I the Great: the pope becomes the highest political authority in Rome and its district (St. Peter's Patrimony); according to tradition, Leo I persuades Attila not to sack Rome.
End of 3rd century	Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica incorporated into Italy, one of 12 dioceses into which the Mediterranean Roman Empire was divided.		
312	Constantine's victory at Rome's Milvian Bridge opens the road to the triumph of Christianity in the Mediterranean Roman Empire and neighboring areas.	568	Partition of Italy between Lombards in most of continental Italy and in parts of the peninsula, and Byzantines, who hold the rest; Italy remains divided for 13 centuries.



568-774	Kingdom of the Lombards in Italy; continuous state of war with the Byzantines, particularly those holding Romagna and Apulia; conversion of the Lombards to Catholicism ca. middle of seventh century.		duchy of Benevento, from which secede later the principality of Salerno and the county of Capua; continuous warfare in the South between Lombard states, Byzantine garrisons in Apulia and Calabria, republican city-states, and Moslems.
590-604	The pontificate of Saint Gregory I Magnus closes the formative phase of Catholicism, centered in Italy and expanding beyond the Alps.	9th-10th centuries	Feudal institutions are introduced in the Kingdom of Italy and the Papal States; further weakening of central authority; descendants of Charlemagne, and later Italian and Burgundian nobles, become kings of an ephemeral Kingdom of Italy (814-952) in which power is exercised by feudal secular lords and, in the cities, by bishops and archbishops.
726	The iconoclastic decrees of the Byzantine emperor, considered heretical by the Catholic church, cause revolts in the Byzantine dependencies in Italy; Rome and the Patrimony become de facto independent under the popes; Byzantine coastal districts centered in Venice, Naples, and Gaeta become independent republics; Amalfi and, later, Sorrento secede from Naples.	9th-10th centuries	Other invasions: Moslem Saracens (Moors) from North Africa land in Sicily (827) which they occupy and rule until the Norman Conquest of Sicily, 1061-1091; other Moslems hold for varying periods areas of the peninsula, Sardinia, Corsica, parts of northwestern Italy; Vikings raid the coasts in the ninth century; Magyars raid northeastern Italy in the tenth century.
5th-9th centuries	Rise of Venice: inhabitants of mainland cities destroyed by barbarians in the fifth century find shelter in and near the lagoons of the upper Adriatic; formation of a league of 12 lagoon townships, governed democratically by a council of elected representatives; Paoluccio Anafesto, first elected <i>doge</i> , or duke, of the league (697); after failure of Frankish attack, the capital of the league is transferred to Rialto, now Venice (814).	847-848	Construction in Rome of the Leonine Wall to protect Saint Peter's from Moslem raiders.
728-787	Formation of the Papal States: Sutri ceded by the Lombard King Liutprand to Pope Gregory II (728), already de facto independent ruler of Rome and its district; Pepin III, king of the Franks, called by Pope Stephen II to fight the Lombards, donates to the papacy Byzantine territories occupied recently by the Lombards (Donation of Pepin, 756); other areas are donated by Charlemagne (781 and 787); the Papal States bestride Italy from the Po on the Adriatic to Gaeta on the Tyrrhenian Sea. The popes rarely controlled the whole of the Papal States until the 17th century.	867-1046	The influence and prestige of the papacy sink to their lowest level; the papacy and Rome are bones of contention between major Roman feudal families.
774	Charlemagne, king of the Franks, defeats the Lombards and takes the title of king of the Lombards; during his lifetime, his son Pepin was crowned king of Italy.	952-962	Otto of Saxony, king of Germany, claims the Italian crown (952); with Otto I's crowning as king of Italy and emperor of the resurrected (Holy) Roman Empire (962), begins the subordination of the Italian Kingdom to Germany.
800	Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne emperor: this was the symbolic revival of the Roman Empire in the West.	998	At the request of citizens of Dalmatian cities, a Venetian expedition defeats pirates and the <i>doge</i> takes the title of duke of Dalmatia.
774-1077	The Franks fail to annex the Lombard	ca. 1000-1052	Pisa and Genoa repel attacks of Saracens; Pisa, with Genoese help, liberates Sardinia and Corsica (1016-1052).
		1029-1091	Normans acquire the counties of Aversa (1029), and of Melfi (1041); led by Robert and Roger de Hauteville (Altavilla) Norman adventurers expel Byzantines and Moslems from the peninsular South and Sicily, end Lombard rule and the autonomy of coastal cities.



1041–1044	In Milan, the citizens' self-governing <i>comune</i> (commune) replaces the authority of imperial officials and of clerics; Lanzone leads the popular party; the <i>carroccio</i> is the symbol of the commune.		posed to imperial authority defeats at Legnano the Hohenstaufen emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa.
ca. 1045	The Burgundian noble Oddo (Otho, Oddone), count of Savoy, becomes through marriage lord of Piedmontese districts; his widow Adelaide (d. 1091) consolidates the Savoy domains.	1183	The Peace of Constance between the Lombard League and the emperor recognizes the de facto independence of cities of the Kingdom of Italy; the authority of the emperor-king disappears completely during the Great Interregnum (1254–1273).
1046–1303	The Age of Faith characterized by a great religious revival; the rapid recovery of the papacy at the middle of the 11th century leads to spiritual leadership, political influence, and further expansion of Catholicism.	1198–1216	With Innocent III, the papacy reaches the peak of political power in the Catholic commonwealth.
1049–1085	Hildebrand of Soana (Pope Gregory VII in 1073) reforms and strengthens the Catholic church.	1208–1250	Frederick II (emperor in 1220), grandson of Frederick I and of Roger II, rules the Kingdom of Sicily.
1054–1056	The schism between Roman Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy becomes final.	13th–15th centuries	Age of signorie; in the cities of northern and central Italy, democracy, weakened by factionalism, gives way to authoritarianism; the centralization of power in the hands of a <i>signoria</i> (as done formally in Milan in 1259) or of an oligarchy (as sanctioned by a coup d'état in Venice in 1297) seems to many the answer to internal disorders.
1059	Robert Guiscard (Altavilla) accepts the duchy of Apulia and Calabria as fief of the Holy See.	1266	At the request of the pope, Charles of Anjou, brother of the king of France, invades the Kingdom of Sicily; death in battle of King Manfred, son of Frederick II; transfer of the capital to Naples; decline accompanies the establishment of French-type feudal institutions.
11th–13th centuries	First Pisa, then Genoa, Venice, and the duchy of Apulia and Calabria (later Kingdom of Sicily) take the offensive against the Saracens in North Africa, Spain, the eastern Mediterranean; Italian participation in the Crusades; in the 13th century Venice builds a small colonial empire in the eastern Mediterranean.	1282	Sicilian Vespers: Sicilians revolt against the French and elect King Manfred's son-in-law, Peter of Aragon; cadets of the house of Aragon rule the island (1285–1409), later an Aragonese and Spanish vice-royalty until 1713; the mainland area of the Kingdom of Sicily becomes the Kingdom of Naples ruled by Angevins until 1435.
1075–1122	Main phase of the investiture struggle between emperors and popes; Gregory VII compels the emperor to do penance at Canossa (1077); republican communes are organized in city after city of the Kingdom of Italy and of the Papal States.	1305–1449	The papacy is weakened by the transfer of the papal residence to Avignon (Babylonian Captivity, 1305–1378), by the schism opposing Avignonese to Roman popes (1378–1423), and by the Conciliar movement (1409–1449) which aimed at subordinating the popes to councils of bishops and other high prelates.
1125–14th century	Political conflicts are polarized in an imperial party (the Ghibellines) and a papal party (the Guelphs).	14th century	Conflicts between the major maritime republics lead to the victory of Genoa over Pisa, and later of Venice over Genoa; the defeat of Pisa enables the king of Aragon to capture Sardinia
1130	Anacletus II, pope for some and anti-pope for most, grants to Roger II Altavilla, count of Sicily since 1105, duke of Apulia and Calabria since 1227, the title of king of Sicily.		
12th–13th centuries	Cultural revival, economic prosperity, and political influence of the Kingdom of Sicily, under the Altavilla (until 1194) and the Hohenstaufen (1194–1266).		
1176	The Lombard League of cities op-		



	(1323–1324), an Aragonese, later Spanish, vice-royalty until 1708.	1449	Majority lay and ecclesiastical support gives to Pope Nicholas V victory over the Conciliar movement. Religious indifference, political ambition, and Maecenatism characterize most Renaissance popes.
14th–16th centuries	Formation of regional states in northern and central Italy; the consolidation of the internal authoritarianism of <i>signori</i> and oligarchies facilitates the expansion of stronger city-states at the expense of weaker ones; starting in 1332, Milan under the Visconti annexes Lombardy and much beyond (maximum expansion occurs under Gian Galeazzo, 1378–1402); except for Trent, Trieste, and Gorizia, northeastern Italy falls to Venice (most acquisitions occur in 1404–1454); Genoa rules most of Liguria, Corsica, and for a few generations, dependencies in the Aegean and Black Sea areas; Florence absorbs most of Tuscany and parts of Romagna (1329–1557); the Savoyes expand their rule in Piedmont and the western Riviera of Liguria; the popes reestablish their direct rule over most of the Papal States (1499–1545).	1453	The capture of Constantinople by the Turks creates a deep impression and fear.
		1454–1494	After the Peace of Lodi, the balance of power between the five major Italian states (Milan, Venice, Florence, Naples, the papacy), maintained by the diplomacy of Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, gives Italy a period of relative peace and of prosperity, which is also the high-water mark of cultural progress.
		1494–1500	The disruptive effect of foreign invasions begins; failure of French expeditions of 1494–1495 and 1499, undertaken at the invitation of the duke of Milan and the Venetian <i>signoria</i> respectively; French conquest of Milan, and Franco-Spanish agreement for the partition of the Kingdom of Naples (1500).
14th–16th centuries	Humanism and Renaissance: freedom of thought expands in spite of growing political despotism; the earlier cultural revival acquires impetus during the second half of the 14th century, leading through humanism to the Renaissance of the 15th and early 16th centuries; centered in the Florentine commonwealth, the Renaissance was vigorous and fruitful from Naples to Venice.	1502–1559	Franco-Spanish struggle for the control of Italy: The Spaniards conquer Naples (1503), a Spanish vice-royalty until 1707; the Venetians successfully resist a coalition of the major European powers (1508–1512); the Swiss keep Alpine districts of Lombardy (1512); sack of Rome by Imperial-Spanish troops (1527); Genoa comes under the rule of a Spanish puppet (1528); Clement VII crowns emperor Charles V of Habsburg in Bologna (1530); Malta is given to the Knights of Saint John (1530); an Imperial-Spanish force captures Florence, ends the republic, and installs a Medici as a Spanish puppet (1530); Milan becomes a Spanish dependency (1535); the French occupy Piedmont (1536); end of the Republic of Siena (1557), given by Spain to the duke of Florence, and final surrender at Montalcino of Siennese republicans (1559); Spain returns Piedmont to Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy—Spanish hegemony in Italy lasts until 1706–1707.
15th century	Age of Princes: starting with Gian Galeazzo Visconti, duke of Milan in 1395, <i>signori</i> who had made their power hereditary receive titles from the emperor or the pope; republicanism remains, however, a powerful force well into the 16th century, as evidenced by the reestablishment of republics in Milan (1447–1450) and in Florence (1494–1512 and 1527–1530), by the defense of Montalcino (1557–1559), by revolts and conspiracies.		
1416	Begins the first of many wars fought for three centuries by Venice against the Ottoman Turks; Ottoman conquests in the 16th century cause Venetian territorial and economic losses.	1536–1564	The Counter-Reformation in Italy: triumph in Rome of the <i>rigoristi</i> (extremists) over the <i>conciliatoristi</i> (moderates); papal approval of the Company of Jesus (1540); reorganization of the Roman Inquisition (1542);
1435	In a war of succession, Alfonso V of Aragon conquers Naples, ruled by an illegitimate branch of the house of Aragon until 1501.		



	Council of Trent (1545–1563); index of forbidden books (1559); <i>Professio Fidei Tridentina</i> (1564); a new phase of religious fervor, monastical purity, missionary activities begins; the suppression of freedom of expression brings the Renaissance to an end.	
17th century	The contributions of a few philosophers and scientists to European advancement, a new era in music, the artistic and literary baroque are flashes in the decline of the Italian people; several small states are annexed by larger ones; failure of anti-Spanish revolts in Naples, Sicily, Sardinia; with French help, the dukes of Savoy escape Spanish tutelage and expand in Piedmont; Venice, subject to Ottoman attacks, is the only Italian state genuinely independent.	
1706–1708	During the War of Spanish Succession (1701–1714), the Austrians expel the French from Piedmont, and the Spaniards from Milan and Naples; the British navy expels the Spaniards from Sardinia—Austrian hegemony replaces the Spanish.	1768 1771 1773
1713–1720	At the peace treaty of Utrecht (1713), Victor Amadeus II of Savoy receives Sicily and the title of king; the peace treaty of Rastatt (1714) confirms Austria in possession of Milan, Naples, and Sardinia; the Spaniards reoccupy Sardinia (1717) and Sicily (1718); the Treaty of The Hague (1720) transfers Sardinia to the Savoys (kings of Sardinia until 1860) and Sicily to Austria; Naples and Sicily become officially the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1721).	1792–1795
1731–1737	On the Farnese becoming extinct, a Spanish Bourbon becomes duke of Parma (1731); at the head of a Spanish army he defeats the Austrians (1734) and becomes Charles king of the Two Sicilies (1735); on the Medici becoming extinct (1737), Francis of Lorraine becomes grand duke of Tuscany, and on his elevation to the Empire (1745), he transfers the grand duchy to his son Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine.	1796–1814
1748	The peace treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle gives Lombard districts west of the Ticino to the king of Sardinia; another Spanish Bourbon becomes duke of Parma.	
Middle of the 18th century	Progressive administrative, economic, and religious reforms are introduced	
		by Austrian rulers in Milan and Tuscany, and by Bourbon rulers in Naples and Parma; economic improvements in much of northern Italy and in Tuscany; the anticlericalism of Catholic monarchs, the Jansenist and Febronian movements, the irreligiosity of the Enlightenment weaken the papacy spiritually and politically; revival of Italian culture.
		Unable to cope with an insurgency started in 1730, the Genoese oligarchy cedes Corsica to France.
		Through marriage, an Austrian archduke of the Habsburg-Lorraine family becomes heir to the Duchy of Modena.
		Pressed by monarchs intent on strengthening their absolutism, Pope Clement XIV dissolves the Society of Jesus.
		France annexes Savoy and Nice; sympathizers of the French Revolution organize secret conspiratorial societies; led by Pasquale Paoli and helped by the British, the Corsicans fight for independence (1793), and offer the crown of Corsica to George III of Great Britain; the French reoccupy the island (1796).
		French hegemony in Italy: spectacular success of the campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte against Sardinians and Austrians (1796); formation of a Cispadane Republic (1796) which unites with Milanese and Venetian territories in Lombardy to form the Cisalpine Republic (1797); end of the Republic of Venice (1797); Genoa becomes the democratic Republic of Liguria (1797–1805); the French occupy Piedmont (1798); short-lived Roman Republic in the Papal States (1798–1799) and Parthenopean Republic in Naples (1799); the British occupy Malta (1800); anti-French forces totally defeated by Bonaparte at Marengo (1800); protected by the British navy, the Savoys keep Sardinia, and the Bourbons Sicily; as the result of many changes dictated by Napoleon Bonaparte (Emperor of the French, 1804), peninsular and continental Italy are divided between areas annexed to France (Piedmont, Liguria, Tuscany, Umbria, Latium, Corsica, Julian Venetia), the Kingdom of Italy (Lombardy, Venetia, Trent, most of Emilia-Romagna, the Marches) ruled by Na-



- poleon, and the Kingdom of Naples under Joseph Bonaparte (1806–1808) and Joachim Murat (1808–1815).
- 1814–1815 Evacuation of Italy by the French; attempts to create an autonomous constitutional Italian state fail; the Congress of Vienna gives Venetia and Lombardy to Austria, to which are returned Julian Venetia and Trentino-Alto Adige; relatives of the Austrian emperor rule in Tuscany, Modena, Parma; a Bourbon duke is installed in Lucca; the king of Sardinia adds Liguria to his state; Murat's call to arms goes unheeded, Austrian troops occupy Naples (May 1815) and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies is reestablished under the Bourbons; capture and execution of Murat (October 1815); the Papal States are reestablished in their pre-1796 boundaries.
- 1815–1870 *Risorgimento*: the struggle for the unification of Italy begins with Murat's proclamation of Rimini (March 1815), and is concluded with the Breccia di Porta Pia (September 1870) when Italian troops enter Rome.
- 1817 First attempt of secret patriotic societies to bring about a revolution; many patriots called themselves liberals and aimed at establishing an independent federation of constitutional states; other patriots were democratic republicans who aimed at establishing a unitary republic.
- 1820–1831 Insurrections in Naples (1820), Piedmont (1821), the Papal States and Modena (1831), are suppressed by Austrian troops.
- 1831 Charles Albert of Savoy-Carignan becomes king of Sardinia; an exile after a few months of imprisonment, Giuseppe Mazzini organizes the nationalistic republican secret society Young Italy; Mazzinian revolutionary attempts last several decades; they failed but were a major element in stimulating the movement for unification.
- 1846 Pope Pius IX introduces reforms in the Papal States.
- 1848–1849 First war of the *Risorgimento*: insurrection in Sicily (January 1848) and agitation in the capitals of Italian states; rulers grant constitutions (February–March); revolutions in Lombardy and Venetia (March) lead to war of Sardinia against Austria; Austrian victories induce King Charles Albert to abdicate (March 1849); his son and successor Victor Emmanuel II refuses to abolish the constitution; republics are proclaimed in Venice, Rome, and Florence under the leadership of Manin, Mazzini, and Guerrazzi; Austrians occupy Tuscany (April), French besiege Rome, defended by Giuseppe Garibaldi, and Austrians besiege Venice; Rome surrenders in July, Venice in August.
- 1849–1858 The liberal reforms of Camillo Benso di Cavour, prime minister of Sardinia in 1852, strengthen the Sardinian state and make Cavour the leader of Italian liberalism; Sardinia participates in the war of France, Great Britain, and Turkey against Russia; Italian problems are discussed at the peace conference of Paris (1856); formation of the National Society whose program is the unification of Italy under Victor Emmanuel II; Napoleon III promises Cavour French help in a war against Austria (1858).
- 1859–1861 Austria declares war on Sardinia (April 1859); the French intervene; the National Society promotes insurrections in Parma, Modena, papal Romagna, and Tuscany (May–June); battle of Solferino and San Martino (June) won by the French and the Sardinians; with the Treaty of Zürich (November) Austria cedes Lombardy to Sardinia; with the Treaty of Turin (March 1860) Napoleon III recognizes the annexation of Parma, Modena, Romagna, and Tuscany to Sardinia in exchange for Savoy and Nice; with his Thousand Redshirts (volunteers) Garibaldi sails from Genoa, lands in Sicily (May), takes Palermo, crosses the Strait of Messina (August), enters Naples (September); Sardinian troops occupy Umbria and the Marches; the first Italian Parliament proclaims Victor Emmanuel II king of Italy (March 1861); Cavour dies (June).
- 1861–1876 Evolution toward a parliamentary regime; limited suffrage makes for right-of-center parliamentary majorities; governmental policies aim at strengthening national cohesion; repression in the South of political-economic banditry financed by Bourbon exiles in Rome; in spite of sound governmental fiscal and economic measures for about a generation, the Italian economy fails



- to expand appreciably; a large-scale migratory movement begins.
- 1862 Fearful of French intervention, the Italian government stops Garibaldi's volunteers at Aspromonte (Calabria) aiming at the liberation of Rome.
- 1865 The capital of Italy is transferred from Turin to Florence.
- 1866 Third war of the *Risorgimento*: Italy, allied to Prussia, declares war against Austria; defeated by Prussia, Austria cedes Venetia to Italy; the Trentino, Julian Venetia, and Italian communities in Dalmatia remain under Austrian rule.
- 1867 Battle of Mentana between Garibaldi's volunteers and French troops sent by Napoleon III to maintain papal rule in Rome and Latium.
- 1870 Napoleon III, at war with Prussia, withdraws French troops from Rome (August); Italians enter Rome (September), thus ending the temporal power of the popes; Pius IX moves to the Vatican Palace where he considers himself a prisoner; Rome becomes the capital of Italy.
- 1876 A left-of-center coalition achieves a majority in Parliament; except for 1898–1900, Italy was governed until March 1914 by center and left-of-center coalition cabinets headed by, among others, Depretis, Crispi, Giolitti.
- 1878 On the death of Victor Emmanuel II, his son Humbert I becomes king.
- 1878 On the death of Pius IX, Leo XIII is elected pope.
- 1881 The extension of the franchise triples the electorate.
- 1882 Italy joins Germany and Austria-Hungary in a Triple Alliance which lasts until denounced by Italy in May 1915.
- 1885–1896 Two Red Sea ports are occupied by Italy (1885); attempts to establish a protectorate over Ethiopia end with the Ethiopian victory of Adowa (1896); an Italian protectorate is established over parts of Somalia (1889); Eritrea is organized as an Italian colony (1890).
- 1890–1914 Economic activities expand, at first slowly, more rapidly after 1900; formation of the first Christian Democratic groups; organization of the Socialist party (1892); labor agitation leads to repression; Victor Emmanuel III succeeds Humbert I, assassinated in Monza (1900); the realignment of political forces strengthens liberalism, under the leadership of Giolitti the majority element in Parliament.
- 1911 To satisfy the colonial aspirations of the vocal nationalist minority, Italy declares war against Turkey; occupation of Libya and the Dodecanese (Rhodes and other Aegean islands).
- 1912–1913 Parliament introduces universal male suffrage; Pope Pius X allows partial participation of Catholics in politics; socialist and Catholic representation increase at the 1913 general elections.
- 1914–1918 World War I: a majority in Parliament and in the nation opposes Italy's intervention in the war; nationalists, militant democrats, and some revolutionary groups of the left agitate for intervention; Salandra's right-of-center minority cabinet negotiates with France and her allies the secret Treaty of London (April 1915); the denunciation of the Triple Alliance is followed by Italy's declaration of war on Austria-Hungary (May); this temporarily brings back national unity; fighting is difficult, at times severe, and losses are considerable; Pope Benedict XV makes efforts to bring peace (1916); a military and psychological recovery follows the defeat of Caporetto (October 1917); the victories of the Piave (June 1918) and Vittorio Veneto (October) lead to the armistice of November 4, 1918.
- 1919–1922 A strong antiwar reaction is accompanied by a severe economic crisis, labor unrest, and leftist agitation; the pope now allowing full Catholic participation in politics, Don Luigi Sturzo forms the Popular party; the ex-revolutionary socialist Benito Mussolini organizes in Milan the militantly nationalistic Fascio di Combattimento; the three-way antagonism between liberals, socialists, and Catholics makes impossible the formation of a stable parliamentary majority; the peace treaty gives Italy less than what had been promised before and during the war; Gabriele D'Annunzio seizes Fiume, claimed by Yugoslavia (September 1919); the disruption of economic life and of public administration reaches its peak at the end of 1920; Fascists begin to use violence on a



large scale against leftist organizations and personalities; formation of the Communist party (January 1921); the destruction of parliamentary democracy is the chief goal of the Fascists; several tens of thousands of Fascists march on Rome (October 28, 1922) and Victor Emmanuel III appoints Mussolini prime minister.

October 1922–  
July 1943

The Fascist dictatorship: the partial abolition of civil liberties, freedom of the press, and the electoral process after the March on Rome, becomes total after the assassination of the socialist leader Giacomo Matteotti, and is completed by November 1926; by applying principles of corporatism, developed by Catholic thinkers at the end of the nineteenth century, economic activities are brought under governmental control (1927–1931); the Lateran Treaties (1929) end the conflict between Italy and the Holy See, and create the sovereign state of Vatican City; some Danubian and Balkan states establish close relations with Italy; aiming at imperialistic expansion in the Mediterranean and Africa, Fascist agents stir up anti-French and anti-British agitation in North Africa and the Middle East (early 1930s); the clash of Walwal (December 5, 1934) leads to the invasion and conquest of Ethiopia; Victor Emmanuel III becomes Emperor of Ethiopia (May 1936); the Rome-Berlin Axis (October 1936) is followed by Italian support for the aggressive policies of Nazi Germany, laws against Jews (August 1938), and the Steel Pact (May 1939), a political and military alliance with Nazi Germany; Italian fascism actively helps the nationalists during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939); Albania is occupied and annexed (April 1939), Victor Emmanuel III adding to his titles that of king of Albania; the Fascist government declares war against Great Britain and France (June 10, 1940), and against the United States (December 11, 1941); the British defeat the Italians in East Africa (1941) and inflict severe losses on the Italian navy in the Mediterranean; an Italian expeditionary force is nearly annihilated by Soviet troops in southern Russia; American and Commonwealth forces defeat Germans and Italians in North Africa (1942–1943), and land in Sicily (July 10, 1943); Mussolini's request for more German help is rejected by

1943–1946

Hitler; Victor Emmanuel III orders the arrest of Mussolini (July 25, 1943), abandoned by most of his close collaborators, and appoints Marshal Pietro Badoglio prime minister.

The armistice between the Allies and Italy is followed by the Allied invasion of the peninsula (September 1943); German troops occupy the North and Center while fighting a defensive battle south of Naples; rescued by the Germans, Mussolini heads a puppet government; disintegration of the Italian armed forces, except for the navy which joins the Allies; the king and most ministers abandon Rome; Badoglio's government declares war against Germany (October); fighting between the Allies and the Germans is strenuous; a spontaneous Resistance movement develops in German-occupied Italy and is given cohesion by Committees of National Liberation; a government of national liberation is organized in the liberated area of Italy (April 1944); the final Allied offensive (April 1945) leads to a general insurrection in northern Italy, Mussolini is executed by Partisans (April 28), and the German surrender becomes effective May 2; National Liberation governments are headed first by Parri (June–November 1945), then by De Gasperi; Victor Emmanuel III abdicates and his son Humbert II becomes king (May 1946); at the referendum of June 2, 1946, the majority votes for a republic; Humbert II goes into exile; a Constituent Assembly drafts a republican constitution.

1946–

Since the 1946 elections, the Catholic Christian Democratic party has had a plurality of votes, and has been the main partner in governmental coalitions supported by parliamentary majorities; a coalition with Socialists and Communists lasted only a few months; it was replaced for several years by a center coalition, and, after a short experiment with rightist parties in 1960, by left-of-center coalitions; all prime ministers were Christian Democrats; De Gasperi headed several cabinets until 1953.

1947

The peace treaty deprives Italy of most of Julian Venetia, of other small districts, and of the colonies; Italy administers former Italian Somalia as a United Nations trust territory until 1960.



1947-	Italy is a charter member of the Committee of European Economic Cooperation, created to implement the Marshall Plan; the Italian economy recovers rapidly from the ravages of World War II; economic expansion continues through the 1950s and 1960s; recovery and expansion are stimulated by American aid, sound financial policies, and direct governmental initiative; average real per capita income doubles; educational improvements and rapid increase in the number of young people attending schools of all levels.		
1947	The Constituent Assembly adopts the republican constitution (December).		
1948	After the general elections, which give an absolute majority to democratic parties, the provisional president of the Republic, De Nicola, is replaced by Luigi Einaudi, first regular president.	1962	The Christian Democrat Antonio Segni, a former prime minister, is elected president of the Republic by Parliament.
1949	Italy's foreign minister Count Sforza signs the North Atlantic Treaty; Italy joins the Council of Europe.	1963	The Socialist leader Pietro Nenni is vice-premier in the cabinet headed by the Christian Democrat Aldo Moro; Cardinal Montini succeeds John XXIII as Pope Paul VI; a major effort of the new pope, the Curia, and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, is to conciliate theological and institutional changes with tradition.
1953	At the general elections, the Communist party wins second place.	1964	Segni having been taken ill, the Democratic Socialist Giuseppe Saragat is elected president of the Republic.
1954	Trieste and part of its district, separated from Italy in 1945, rejoin the mother country; the rest of Trieste's district is annexed by Yugoslavia.	1966	The Socialist and Social Democratic parties merge; dissident so-called Maoist Communists organize their own parties which remain limited to small sectors of the intelligentsia; terroristic activities of German nationalists in Alto Adige lead to tension between Italy and Austria; Florence is severely damaged by floods.
1955	The Soviet Union having lifted its veto, Italy joins the United Nations; the Christian Democrat Giovanni Gronchi is elected president of the Republic.	1967	Papal encyclical <i>Populorum Progressio</i> .
1957	The Treaties of Rome establish the European Economic Community; during the whole post-World War II period, Italian governments, the parliamentary majorities supporting them, and a majority of the nation, strongly support policies aiming at European economic and political integration.	1968-1971	Increase in the agitation of labor demanding a more even distribution of the greater wealth produced in the country; increase in the unrest of the fast expanding university student population; western Sicily is hit by a series of earthquakes; at the general elections of 1968, Christian Democrats strengthen somewhat their position at the expense of rightist parties, and Communists at the expense of left-wing Socialists; the Christian Democrats Aldo Moro, Mariano Rumor, and Emilio Colombo alternate as prime ministers; Socialists and Social Democrats divide once more in 1969; the constitutional goal of political decentralization is fulfilled through the granting of autonomy to fifteen regions in 1970 (the other five already enjoyed self-government); partial elections in 1971 indicate a rightist backlash to labor and student agitation, but there is no weakening of the center-left and left parties on which the Italian democratic republic is based. At the end of December 1971, the Christian Democrat Giovanni Leone was elected sixth President of the Republic.
1958-1963	Papacy of John XXIII; the encyclicals <i>Mater et Magistra</i> (1961) and <i>Pacem in Terris</i> (1963) express the progressive ideas of the most popular and influential pope of the twentieth century; the pope calls for the ecumenical council Vatican II which introduces theological revisions and innovations in the institutional structure of the Catholic church.		
1961	The gulf between Socialists and Communists having widened, cooperation is established between socialist parties		



# INTRODUCTION

*"Italia! oh Italia!"—Italy's contributions—Americans discover Italy.*

*"ITALIA! OH ITALIA!"*

"NOBLE country, cherished by God": this is Italy in the words of one of her great sons, the fourteenth-century poet Francesco Petrarca. "Beautiful Italy . . . the garden of nature," sang another poet, Vincenzo Monti, centuries later. The nineteenth-century geographer Antonio Stoppani's splendid book describing Italy was entitled simply *Il Bel Paese*, the beautiful country. The beauty of fertile plains and towering mountains, of a blue sky reflected in a blue sea, of villages nestling in the countryside, has deeply moved Italian and foreign writers and the untold millions who do not set their emotions down on paper. And since the time twenty-one centuries ago when the Greek Polybius undertook to write, admiringly, the history of the Roman Republic, they have been equally moved by the achievements and adversities of Italy's people. "Mother of Arts! as once of arms . . . parent of our Religions!" Lord Byron, with Goethe and with poets and artists everywhere, felt the magic spell of a nation that had produced two noble civilizations and had also suffered the indignities of decline and long periods of foreign domination. "First in evil times as well as in good times," commented despairingly in the 1820s the greatest of modern Italian poets Giacomo Leopardi, who was a child when French invaders overran most of Italy, a young man when Austrian Germans, their mercenaries and their puppets, replaced the French. Leopardi dreamed of what many Italians had dreamed for centuries—something that seemed to be unattainable during his lifetime. It came to pass, however, a short quarter century after his death: Italians united as free citizens of a free country, Italy once again taking her place among the progressive nations of mankind.

## ITALY'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The beauty is there, for all to see. The decline has been reversed, through the hard work of all and the firm character of those who participated in the nineteenth-century *Risorgimento* and the twentieth-century *Resistenza*, two glorious periods of modern Italy. The glories of the past are not gone, because much of what the people of Italy created at one time or an-

other has become part of the common heritage of civilized man. To that heritage belong the thought of Cicero, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Machiavelli, Galileo, Croce, the poetry of Virgil, Horace, Dante, Petrarch, Leopardi, the artistic masterpieces of Giotto, Michelangelo, Bernini, Vivaldi, Verdi, the wider horizons opened by Leonardo, Columbus, Volta, Marconi, Fermi; belong also—to note just a few contributions—Roman law, founded on principles still valid today; Roman Catholicism, the faith of one-sixth of mankind, of a majority of people in more than thirty nations of Western civilization and of large minorities in another ten; the economic institutions created by Italian businessmen of the Renaissance, which have provided much of the basis for contemporary free-enterprise economies. In the context of man's advancement toward new goals, and the achievement of higher forms of civilization, Italy—like Greece, like England—is more than just the country with which this book deals.

The Italian people have contributed to the formation of many national communities for more than twenty centuries. The Romanization of much of the ancient Mediterranean world was the result of Italian migration. Six nations in Europe and twenty-two in the Americas speak languages derived from the languages spoken originally in the district of Italy called Latium, and later adopted by all Italians. There have been native Italian communities since the fifteenth century in Switzerland where Italian is one of the national languages, and since the second half of the eighteenth century in France. For the past hundred years Italians have emigrated in large numbers. All told, thirteen to fifteen million have settled abroad.

From the beginning of their large-scale immigration three generations ago, Italian Americans have been an important element in the economic life of the United States. In recent decades they have become more and more prominent in intellectual and political life. Next to the Spaniards in Argentina and the Portuguese in Brazil, citizens of Italian origin are the largest group in the white population of the two Latin American nations. In Canada, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela, important sectors of the population are descended from Italian immigrants. In the post-World War II period the presidents of five Latin American republics had names revealing an Italian origin. Italian immigrants have settled recently in large numbers in the industrial countries of continental Europe and in Australia.

## AMERICANS DISCOVER ITALY

It is not alone the presence of Italian Americans which makes for close relations between the United States and Italy. The time when Americans had only vague notions about Italy is long past. World War II made millions of Americans suddenly aware of Italy, her people, her past, and some of her present problems. The landings of American and British troops in Sicily and Salerno in the summer of 1943 were followed by twenty-two months of bitter warfare against the stubborn resistance of German troops. Hundreds of thousands of American soldiers were involved. Tens of thousands died or were badly wounded. After the war many servicemen brought back Italian brides, or returned to Italy to settle. Since 1943, the United States government and the American nation were generous in giving aid to Italians, partners in the common defense of the democratic way of life against the onslaught of totalitarianism. Millions of packages of food, clothing, and medical and school supplies were sent by Americans to relatives, friends, and strangers in Italy. In 1964 a billion dollars were made available by the Administration to the Italian government to ensure the stability of the Italian currency. During

the postwar period, billions of American dollars helped Italy to get back on her feet economically, to strengthen her newfound democratic institutions, and to achieve such progress as to amount to a revolution in the Italian way of life. American corporations have invested in Italian industries, and Italian executives and engineers have come to the United States to learn American managerial and technological techniques. From the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 to recent international crises, American officials and the communications media have acclaimed Italy as a staunch ally.

Italy has become familiar to many Americans through best-selling books, from Ignazio Silone's *Fontamara* and Carlo Levi's *Christ Stopped at Eboli* to Luigi Barzini's *The Italians*; through American fiction set in Italy; and through scholarly books by American historians, economists, political scientists who have analyzed Italy and her problems perceptively. Since the end of World War II, the American public has enjoyed a series of Italian films and has admired Italian film directors and actors. More American tourists visit Italy than any other European country, and Rome and Capri have replaced Paris and the French Riviera as paradise for American expatriates.



A PICTORIAL  
HISTORY OF THE  
ITALIAN PEOPLE

# ITALY

1: 5,000,000



# I

## LAND AND PEOPLE

*Location and subdivisions — Ten peninsular regions — Insular Italy — Continental or northern Italy — Other areas of geographical Italy — Population — The Italians — The peasantry.*

### LOCATION AND SUBDIVISIONS

CLEAR natural boundaries—mountains in the north and, for the rest, the encircling seas—separate Italy from her neighbors in Europe and the Mediterranean. The country stretches in a northwest-southeastly direction for about eight hundred miles—approximately the distance between Fort Kent in northern Maine and Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, which are respectively at about the same latitude as Italy's Vetta d'Italia in the north and island of Lampedusa in the south. The climate is more temperate than it is in most areas of America at corresponding latitudes. Although it is hot everywhere in the summer, and the winters can be very cold in the north, the country does not experience the extremes with which America is familiar.

Italy consists of a long peninsula that bisects the Mediterranean into an eastern and a western basin, two major islands—Sicily and Sardinia (three with Corsica, the French island that geographically is part of Italy)—dozens of smaller islands (eighteen of them are in the Tuscan archipelago between the Tyrrhenian and Ligurian seas, and the Aeolian and Aegades archipelagoes north and west of Sicily), and a large continental area in the north, bounded from east to west by Yugoslavia, Austria, Switzerland, and France.

Italy lies equally close to the advanced, highly industrialized, progressive democracies of northwestern Europe, the Communist states in the Balkans and the Danube Valley, and the underdeveloped Islamic dictatorships in North Africa. In area, Italy is slightly larger than Arizona, that is to say, about one-thirtieth the size of the continental United States. It ranks seventh in area among European countries west of the Soviet Union and third in population, which is about a quarter of that of the United States (27 percent in



*Val di Fassa, Trentino. EPA*

the early 1970s). In districts that are geographically but not politically Italian, there are several hundred thousand Italians.

In ancient and late medieval times and again in the twentieth century, particularly before 1915 and after World War II, the hard work and ingenuity of the people made up for Italy's lack of natural resources, providing them with a higher standard of living than that of most other Mediterranean nations. During the last two decades, Italy's gross national product from private and public sources has been (in dollars of equivalent purchasing power) a little less than one-tenth of that of the United States. With American aid, Italians soon recouped the terrific economic losses suffered during ten years of warfare from 1935 to 1945; then after fifteen more years they doubled their production.

### TEN PENINSULAR REGIONS

The peninsula accounts for over two-fifths of Italy (about 47 percent of the political area and 43 percent of the geographical area). Since early in the third century B.C., an irregular line running from the mouth of the Rubicon in the east to the mouth of the Magra in the west, along the Apennine watershed between Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, has marked the boundary between peninsular and continental Italy. Except for a few small plains—most of them along the coast or inland in the valleys of the Tiber and Arno—the peninsula is mountainous or hilly. Its backbone is the Apennine Range, which begins at the Passo di Giovi in continental Italy and continues beyond the peninsula in the mountain ranges of northern Sicily. The Apennines send their spurs toward the Adriatic Sea in the east and the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian seas in the west. The highest peak, the Gran Sasso d'Italia (the Great Rock of Italy), reaches over nine thousand feet. Much of the range has been barren since ancient times, but woods and forests can still be found from Aspromonte in the south to Abetone in the north, and a good deal of valuable reforestation has taken place in recent decades.



In the peninsula, separate, and geologically distinct from the Apennines, are: the short but high range of the Alpi Apuane in the northwest, famous for marble quarries; volcanic mountains and hills along the Tyrrhenian coast, among them Vesuvius, south of Naples, still an active and at times fiery volcano; Mounts Gargano and Conero, along the Adriatic coast. Rivers are numerous, but most have little water and many dry up completely in the summer months. Dangerous floods, like the one that damaged Florence in 1966, occur during the rainy seasons and when mountain snows melt. Lakes are few, fewer than in ancient times. The largest of all was Lake Fucino, fifty miles east of Rome in the center of mountainous Marsica. Emptied of its water in the nineteenth century by a tunnel dug through the mountains, Fucino has been transformed into fertile farmland. Seventy miles north of Rome is the shallow and beautiful Lake Trasimeno. Nearer Rome are five other lakes of various sizes, which occupy the craters of extinct volcanoes and are famous for the beauty of their settings. The minuscule Lake of Averno near Naples was in pre-Christian times credited with being the entrance to hell.

Mountains and hills divide the peninsula into separate and varied districts where, in the past, communities tended to develop along divergent lines. Although people move and mingle today as never before, customs and dialects still vary greatly from one district to another, as does the appearance of cities and villages. In the course of centuries some districts changed their names: Samnium is today's Molise, Lucania is Basilicata. Other districts lost at least part of their individuality, merging with larger ones, but their names still remain: Sabina, which is now part of Latium; Piceno, part of the Marches; Irpinia, part of Campania. The boundaries of all the districts have shifted somewhat; Apulia was once only a part of today's Puglia; Tuscany is smaller than it was a thousand years ago. The result of the agelong historical process has been the division of the peninsula into ten districts known as regions, each with its distinctive way of life.

Latium, a little smaller than Massachusetts, is the heart of the peninsula and of all Italy. Thirty centuries ago Latium was the name of a small district on the left bank of the lower Tiber, inhabited by communities of the Latin tribe. Today, Latium stretches along the Tyrrhenian Sea north and south of the Tiber, and inland as far as the Apennines. In ancient times Latium supported a considerable population, but over the years the soil became exhausted, the water, no longer drained, stagnated, and malaria killed people in the low-lying areas. One hundred years ago, much of the area surrounding Rome (Latium's one large city then as now) was a wasteland. This is no longer so. The Campagna di Roma, the Maremma to the north, and the Pontine Marshes to the south have all been reclaimed. Malaria has disappeared. Roads have

once again opened up the countryside, now dotted with villages and farmhouses. For Italians, Latium means Rome—not always Italy's political capital, as it has been again since 1870 but, since the third century B.C., Italy's chief city. Rome is more to Italy than Paris is to France or London to England: not only is it the seat of government, the political capital, and the spiritual center and headquarters of Roman Catholicism; it is an idea, a meaningful symbol of past glories and future promises. A fortified village on a hilltop thirty centuries ago, Rome grew to unify Italy and later to rule the Mediterranean world of which it was the largest metropolis. It is said to have numbered up to two million inhabitants in ancient times. Then came long, lean years. Magnificent buildings—palaces, courts of law, temples, theatres—decayed, many disappeared completely; rubble filled the streets, shepherds led their herds and flocks to pasture amid the ruins. The population at times shrank to a few tens of thousands. Nevertheless, sections of the city continued to live, and, more important, the idea of Rome never died—it scarcely weakened. Today, with nearly three million people, Rome is Italy's largest city.

Tuscany, north of Latium, is the largest region of peninsular Italy. It is a delightful country, with smooth, well-cultivated hills and many fascinating cities. The provincial quiet that had reigned for four centuries has lately been replaced by feverish activity. It was once Etruria, the land to which nearly thirty centuries ago came a people of mysterious origin, expert in crafts and active in trade by land and sea. The ancient Etrurians set up a league of several cities, some of which, like Volterra, have continued as cities ever since. Etruria became Tuscia, and later Toscana (Tuscany), the main center of an astounding civilization which reached its zenith in the last century of the Renaissance. Medieval Tuscans organized themselves into many independent city-states, some of which enjoyed a quasi-democratic form of government for centuries. Florence was one of them. Originally on a level with Pisa, Siena, Lucca, Pistoia, Arezzo, it later surpassed them all in power, wealth, and, more important, in intellectual achievement. Only Athens produced as many great figures within a comparable period.

East of Latium and separated by the Apennines are the twin regions of Umbria and the Marches—made up of mountains and hills, narrow valleys, and small plains. Umbria, home of the Umbri, has kept its ancient name. The Marches derives its name from the fact that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries it was the border district, or march, between large northern and southern Italian states. Gradually the two regions joined Latium and Romagna in forming the Papal States. Here most of the well-known hill towns can be found: Assisi, the birthplace of Saint Francis; Perugia, a center of learning; Loreto, the location of one of Catholicism's most important shrines; Urbino, which overlooks the Adriatic; Spoleto, Fermo, Gubbio,





*Lake Fondi, Latium. EPA*



*Artificial Lake, Trentino. EPA*



*Piazza San Marco, flooded. Photoworld*



*Tiberina Island, Rome. EPA*

*Rome at the beginning of the eighteenth century. ICI*





*Trevi Fountain, Rome. TWA*



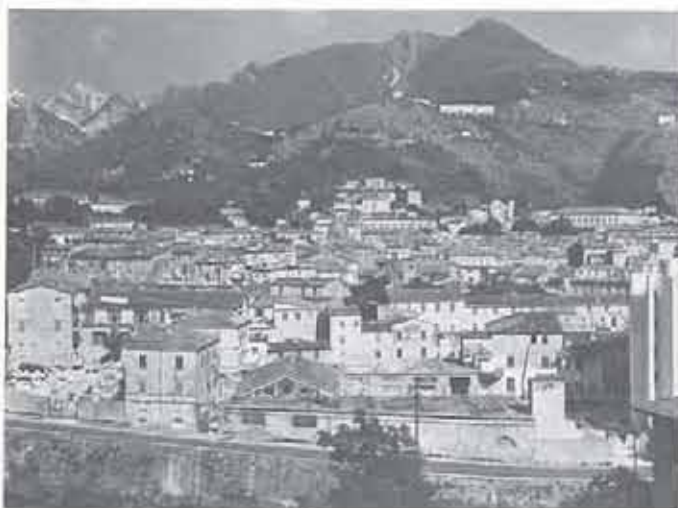
*Villa d'Este, Tivoli. EPA*



*Gaeta, Latium. EPA*



*Church of San Biagio, Montepulciano, Tuscany. EPA*



*Carrara, Tuscany. EPA*



*Typical Tuscan farmhouse. EPA*





Siena, Tuscany. Pan American



Sibillini Mountains separate the twin regions of Umbria and the Marches. EPA

Orvieto, and dozens of others. In many cities, distinctive crafts have developed, reaching a high level of excellence. During the recent economic upsurge industrial enterprises have multiplied in Terni, Foligno, and along the Adriatic coast. Wherever there is tillable soil it is cultivated intensively.

South of Umbria and the Marches is mountainous Abruzzi, for long a land of shepherds and their flocks of sheep and goats, of poor farmers, of villages and a few small towns. Place-names keep alive the names of the ancient tribes in whom the Romans found gallant opponents or valuable allies: Marsi, Vestini, Paeligni. When an Italian confederation was briefly established early in the first century B.C., its capital was Corfinium (near today's Sulmona), whose name was changed to Italicum. High mountains and inadequate roads kept the region isolated. Only in recent decades have people abandoned the barren mountains and gone abroad, found employment in Italy's large industrial cities, or settled along the coast, where Pescara, not long ago a small fishing center and summer resort, has become a fast-growing industrial and commercial city. People from Abruzzi are proud of those among them who have achieved distinction in the twentieth century: the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, the philosopher Benedetto Croce, the novelist Ignazio Silone.

South of Abruzzi is the smallest and least populous region of peninsular Italy, Molise. It is the northernmost district of what Italians call *il Mezzogiorno* (the South), which includes the rest of the peninsula and the two islands of Sicily and Sardinia. In Molise there are no large cities. The towns and villages are high on the mountains. Soil is poor, climate harsh, life hard. Tenacity and strenuous work helped people survive in the past. This region, the northern and major part of ancient Samnium, was in ancient times the land of farmer-warriors who often raided the rich lowlands to the west. Until Molise felt the impact of recent revolutionary changes elsewhere in Italy, modern civilization seemed to be passing it by.

Campania is the name the Ancients gave to the plain south of Latium along the Tyrrhenian Sea. It is



Emilia, Umbria. EPA





*Assisi, Umbria. TWA*



*La Maiella and the village of Caramanico. EPA*

still Campania today, although it has been extended to include hilly and mountainous districts. For a long time the northern part was also known as Terra di Lavoro. Terra di Lavoro and Campania, translated freely, mean the same thing—rich farmland. Four million people crowd the plain, which is no larger than Rhode Island. In ancient Campania were found Capua, then one of the wealthiest cities of Italy, Cumae and nearby Baiae where rich Romans spent their leisure, and Pompeii, which was buried under ashes when Vesuvius suddenly erupted in A.D. 79. Cumae and Baiae, like Pompeii, no longer exist, and Capua is a small provincial town. Twenty miles south of Capua, on the shore of a splendid gulf ringed by hills and mountains that extend to the islands of Ischia and Capri, is Naples, originally a small Greek settlement (Nea Polis, the New City), since the thirteenth century the metropolis of southern Italy. For nearly six hundred years Naples was the capital of the largest Italian state and the goal of greedy foreign aggressors. It still retains the dignity and majesty of a capital city. Forty miles south of Naples are the beaches where troops of the American Fifth Army landed in September 1943.

*The port of Pescara and Municipal Palace, Abruzzi. EPA*



*Naples, Campania. TWA*





Capri, Campania, EPA



Sorrento, Campania. EPA

Minori, Campania. EPA



Puglia, or Apulia, borders Campania to the east and then extends south, stretching for over two hundred miles along the Adriatic coast. Apulia is a world of its own: nowhere else in Italy are to be seen the *trulli* of Alberobello—conical whitewashed brick or stone houses, the peaceful wide open plateau of the Gargano, the baroque elegance of Lecce. The treeless flatness of huge wheat fields in the Murge reminds the American traveler of sections of the Midwest. In March one can drive for miles and miles through a white sea of flowering almond trees on the Tavoliere (or Capitanata), the plain around Foggia. Brindisi and Taranto have two of the best natural harbors of the Mediterranean. Bari, the regional capital, is an old city; it is also a fast-developing industrial and commercial giant. The Baresi's dynamism is shared by the inhabitants of many smaller coastal cities.

The scene is again totally different in the two remaining regions of peninsular Italy—Basilicata and Calabria. Basilicata, squeezed between Campania and Apulia, a complex of irregular mountain ranges, small high windswept plains, low-lying valleys, and a coastal plain that was, until recently, poisoned by malaria—is to Italy economically what Mississippi and Alabama are to the United States. The region is now changing, if slowly. The soil in the coastal district has been re-



Conical houses, Alberobello, Puglia. ICI







*Santa Croce Church, Lecce, Puglia. ICI*



*Brienza, Basilicata. EPA*



*Bari, Puglia. ICI*

*The Appian Way near Grassano, Basilicata. EPA*



claimed, agricultural techniques have been improved, industrialization is beginning, and new low-rental public and cooperative housing is replacing the dwellings dug out of the rock in which thousands lived. To the south, Calabria (about the size of Connecticut) spans the mountains and plains separating the Tyrrhenian from the Ionian Sea. It is the foot of Italy's boot. Some mountains are barren, some, like the Sila, forest covered. Wherever possible the slopes are cultivated intensively, but not always efficiently. The plains, made famous in ancient times by cities like Sybaris, Croton, Thurii, were depopulated when malarial mosquitoes bred in stagnant marshes, but have been reclaimed and are once again inhabited. Next to Apulia, Calabria is Italy's largest producer of olive oil. Citrus groves abound along sections of the coast. New highways and better railroad service have opened up the region, but people still migrate in large numbers to the industrial north and to Rome. Cosenza, in the northern section of the region, is the historical



*Low rental public and cooperative housing project, Matera, Basilicata. ICI*





Sassi (rock) dwellings, Matera, Basilicata. ICI



Gulf of Squillace, Calabria. EPA



A ferryboat in the Strait of Messina. TWA

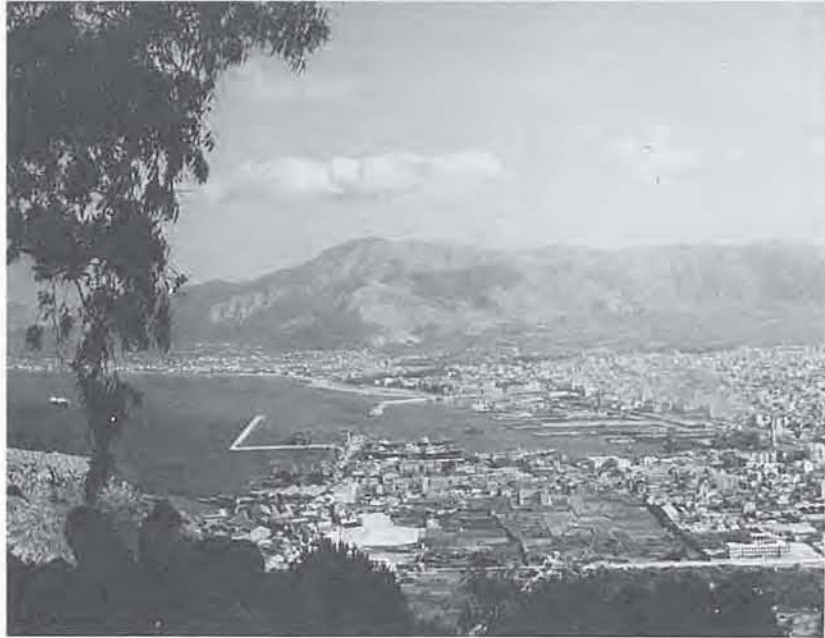
capital, Catanzaro in the center is the present regional capital, Reggio Calabria on the Strait of Messina is the largest city, beset by the problems of a fast-expanding population for which there are not enough jobs.

#### INSULAR ITALY

At its narrowest, the strait separating Calabria from Sicily is less than two miles wide—not too wide for the bridge that will replace the ferry plying incessantly between the two shores. Slightly larger than Vermont, Sicily is first in size among Italian regions and third in population. Five million people live there. In ancient and early medieval times Sicily was not considered part of Italy, even when included administratively in Diocletian's diocese of the city of Rome. It became more and more Italian when it was united politically at the end of the eleventh century with the Duchy of Apulia (forming the kingdom known in the nineteenth century as the Two Sicilies). Before that, Sicily had been ruled by Arabs for two

hundred and fifty years, by Byzantines for three hundred, and by Romans for nearly eight hundred. Before the Roman occupation, Sicily had been a bone of contention between Phoenicians from Carthage and Greeks for whom the island and parts of the Italian peninsula were a Greater Greece, the seat of a noble and flourishing civilization. Italy's most imposing volcano, Etna, nearly eleven thousand feet high, is in Sicily. Three mountain ranges occupy much of the northern area. Lower ranges and massifs cover most of the rest of the island. Some of the coastal plains—Palermo's Conca d'Oro, or Golden Bowl, and the plain of Catania—are among the most fertile and intensively cultivated areas of Italy. Over one-fifth of the island is under wheat, but the yield is only half or a third of that obtained in northern regions. Second to Apulia in wine production, Sicily is first among Italian regions in output of citrus and other fruits, and of several fresh vegetables. Modest oil fields, producing less than two million tons of oil a year, were discovered in the 1950s in the southeast. Until then sulfur had



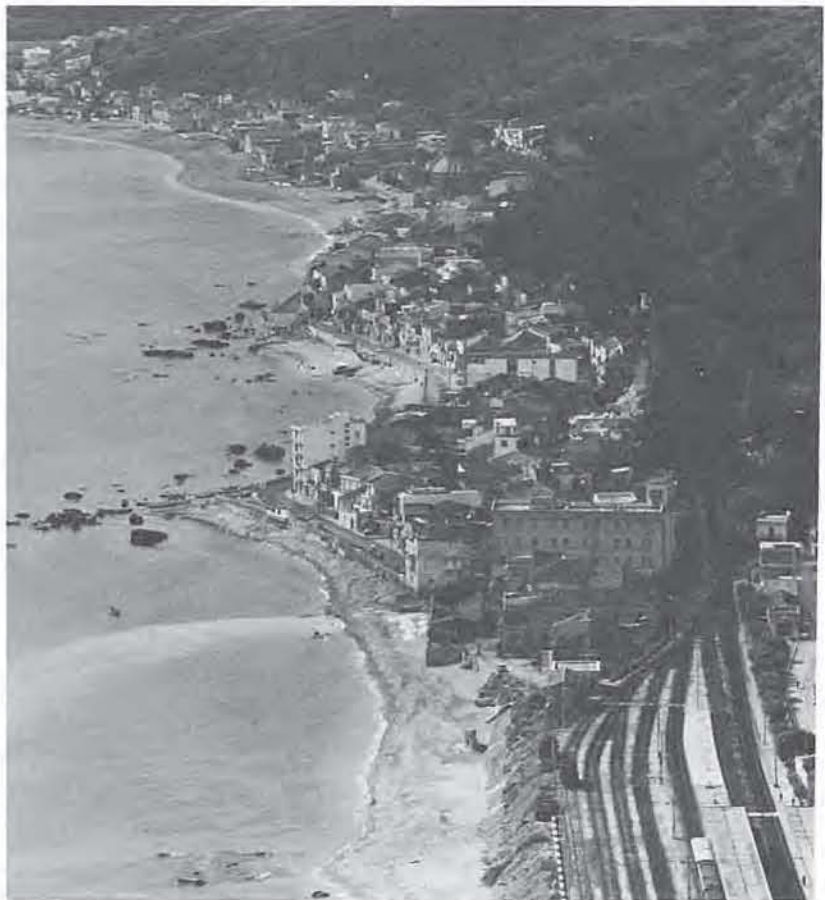


Palermo, Sicily. ICI



Catania, Sicily, with Mount Etna in the background. EPA

Taormina, Sicily. EPA



Sulfur mining near Caltanissetta, Sicily. EPA

been the chief mineral product. Industry is developing fast in and around the three major cities of Palermo (the capital), Catania, and Messina, and in the area south of Catania. There is a sharp cultural difference between the poorer western third of the island (where the Mafia has deep roots and large landed estates or fiefs are the rule) and the more advanced eastern sectors.

The sea has always meant a good deal to Sicilians, who have worked as seamen, engaged successfully in trade and fishing, and migrated easily. The sea, instead, means little to the Sardinians, whose island is only slightly smaller than Sicily and contains less than one-third the population. Mountains, high plateaus with poor soil, and plains that were until recently malarial divided Sardinia into small districts, each leading its own separate life. In remote areas are found boars, red deer, and mouffons (wild sheep). The handsome Sardinian horse and the small Sardinian donkey are sturdy breeds. On the island, unlike all other Italian regions, ranching was more important than farming. In Sardinia are the *nuraghi*, intriguing towerlike prehistoric constructions built by a people who had already achieved a high cultural level before the end of the second millennium B.C. A few of the six thousand *nuraghi* that have been identified have kept the original shape, but most are heaps of stones.





Port Ulysses, Catania, Sicily.  
EPA



Sardinia. EPA



A nuraghe (prehistoric dwelling)  
near Torralba, Sardinia. ICI

Sardinia began to be Italian in the eleventh century, when the Tuscan republic of Pisa expelled the Arab raiders who had occupied coastal towns but had never gained control of the interior. Modernization began in the nineteenth century with the exploitation of mineral resources, more abundant (or rather, less scanty) than on the mainland. Modernization is now proceeding at a faster pace with the building of more railroads and of new ports and highways; with government-stimulated investments which have made of Cagliari, the island's capital, an important industrial



Oristano, Sardinia, Tower of St. Christopher in foreground.  
EPA

center; with more frequent mainland contacts and the arrival of increasing numbers of tourists, many of them attracted by the beauty of *la costa smeralda* (the emerald coast, in the northeast).

#### CONTINENTAL, OR NORTHERN, ITALY

The peninsula and the islands account for twelve of Italy's twenty regions. The other eight are in the continental or northern section of the country. Slightly smaller than the peninsula, this section is an irregular rectangle roughly a hundred and fifty miles wide, extending about three hundred miles from west to east. Most of it is a vast, fertile, well-irrigated plain, the Po Valley and the Venetian plain to the east, both of which slope toward the Adriatic Sea, reached by rivers through wide deltas and lagoons, the best known of which is the lagoon of Venice. To the south



it is separated from the peninsula by the Apennines. It is encircled to the west, north, and part of the east by the majestic Alps. The highest peak, Monte Bianco (Mont Blanc), reaches nearly sixteen thousand feet. Rising abruptly from the plain, the Alps are spectacular. To the several railroad tunnels built two or three generations ago, road tunnels under passes snow-bound in winter have recently been added. The road tunnels considerably shorten the distance between Italian cities and those north of the Alps. Three major lakes and a number of smaller ones were formed by the melting of the glaciers that once covered much of continental Italy. Lake Garda is the largest, Como and Maggiore the most popular with tourists. The Po, the longest river in Italy, is an important waterway, as are some of its tributaries and the many canals crisscrossing the plain.

Nature gives to continental, northern, Italy greater unity than to the peninsula, and favors the development of larger homogeneous regional communities. Italians are conscious of a profound difference between the northern section of their country—on a par educationally, economically, and politically with the progressive nations of northwestern Europe—and the other sections where life is less dynamic and change is slower. It is common for people to refer to the peninsula and the islands as being—in a cultural and not merely a geographical sense—“Mediterranean,” and to continental Italy as being “European.” There is probably less difference between Turin and Zürich than between Turin and Naples, between Milan and Brussels than between Milan and Palermo. In ancient times, the *Mezzogiorno* was more advanced than the north. The shift in importance began in the fourth



*Upper Po Valley, Piedmont. EPA*



*Tunnel through the Great Saint Bernard Pass between Martigny-Ville, Switzerland, and Aosta, Piedmont. EPA*

*Mont Blanc, Val d'Aosta. EPA*



*Bay of Maderno, Lake Garda. ICI*







Lake Como, from an old, undated print. NYPL PC

sachusetts and with as many inhabitants as Michigan, leads all Italian regions in industry and agriculture. It has more cities with more industrial enterprises than any other Italian region. Lombard farms give the highest yields in crops and dairy products. Milan, the capital, is Italy's second largest city in population and prides itself on being the first in commerce, finance, and industry. To be successful in Italy, political movements need a strong base in Milan. Newspapers and magazines, publishing houses, museums, universities, and cultural societies contribute to the dynamism of intellectual life. Most of the Germanic Lombards (or Langobards) who came to Italy during the second half of the sixth century settled in Lombardy, founding a state whose capital was Pavia, twenty-five miles south of Milan. They soon merged with the local



Lake Como, Lombardy. ICI



Farm scene near Mantova, Lombardy. EPA

Sondrio, Lombardy. EPA



century A.D., when two cities of northern Italy, first Milan, then Ravenna, became the capitals of the Roman state in the West. The shift was completed centuries later when the Milanese state had a larger revenue than any state north of the Alps, when Venice was a wealthy merchant republic with a navy that could hold its own against any other Mediterranean power, when Genoese traded, explored, and battled far from their Mediterranean base.

The eight regions of continental Italy, inhabited by nearly half the Italian nation, vary widely in size and population. Lombardy, slightly larger than Mas-



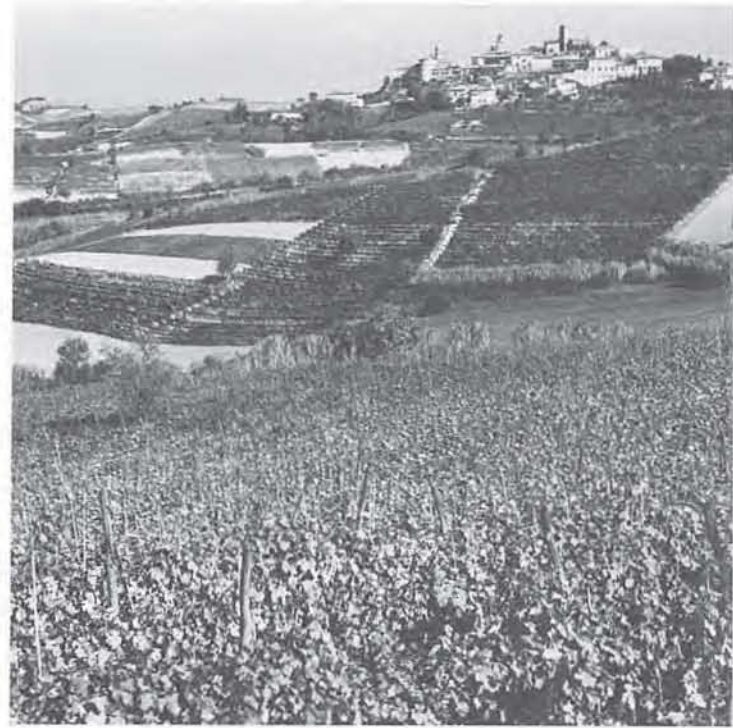
population from whom they adopted language, customs, and institutions. Only the name remained—and in folk tales the memory of some of their leaders. Six centuries later, a league of democratic and semidemocratic Lombard cities fought the Emperor, Europe's highest political authority, gaining independence for themselves and other Italian cities, ending the fiction of an Italian state linked, or rather subservient, to Germany.

In Piedmont to the west, the snowcapped mountains are more imposing, the plain is higher, smaller, and somewhat less fertile than in Lombardy, and well-cultivated hills occupy large areas. The biggest Italian industrial corporation, FIAT, which makes many products besides automobiles, is located in Turin, the capital, a well-designed modern city embellished with harmoniously proportioned buildings. Efficiently administered by the counts and dukes of Savoy (later the kings of Sardinia), Piedmont, once a less-developed area than neighboring Lombardy and Liguria, progressed considerably in modern times and played the primary role in the unification of Italy in the nineteenth century.

The so-called industrial triangle formed by Milan, Turin, and Genoa is to Italy what the Midlands is to Great Britain and the Ruhr is to Germany. Genoa, the third vertex of the triangle and the capital of Liguria,

is Italy's thriving principal port where each year more than thirty million tons of goods are loaded and unloaded. With its satellite cities, it is also a major industrial area. Liguria is a small region: the Riviera di Levante and the Riviera di Ponente, respectively

*Mount Levanna and Lakes Agnel and Serru, Piedmont. EPA*

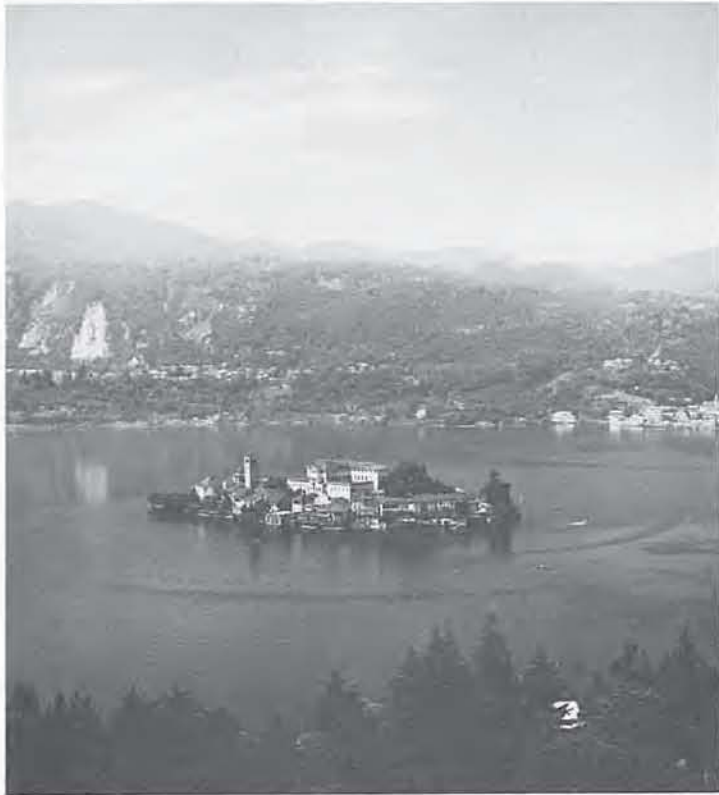


*Typical well-cultivated hills, Piedmont. EPA*



*Ivrea, Piedmont. EPA*





*Lake Orta, and the island of San Giulio, Piedmont. EPA*



*Genoa, Liguria. ICI*



*Turin, Piedmont. ICI*

east and west of Genoa, are narrow strips of land extending south of Piedmont for over a hundred and fifty miles along the coast of the Ligurian Sea. Wooded mountains and well-cultivated hills rise abruptly from a shore occupied by a nearly uninterrupted string of cities and summer and winter resorts. For a thousand years most of Liguria was included in the territory of the Republic of Genoa, many of whose enterprising, seafaring citizens shared the characteristics of another of their countrymen: Christopher Columbus.

Venetia, east of Lombardy, is the region settled by the Veneti in pre-Roman times. When in the fifth century barbarian invaders raided the countryside and looted the cities, many inhabitants fled to the small islands dotting the lagoons along the coast. They founded villages, some of which became cities. Of these, one surpassed all others in efficient government, wealth, power, and beauty: Venice, Queen of the Adriatic, whose equal exists nowhere. Venetians lived on the sea and by the sea. Trade brought them wealth. To protect their trade and to defend their wealth, Venetians learned the arts of war on sea and on land. For centuries the business community of Venice ruled all of Venetia, parts of Lombardy to the west, Friuli and Istria to the east, the coastal area of the Balkans known as Dalmatia, and islands in the eastern Mediterranean. To worship God, the Venetians built a magnificent cathedral; to house public officials, courts of law, and patricians, they built superb palaces. They created one of the most stable governments ever known: it made for internal peace and prosperity;





*Ponte San Luigi, Liguria. Menton, France, in background. EPA*



*Levanto, Liguria. EPA*

*Venice. The Quay of the Piazzetta by Canaletto. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Gift of Mrs. Barbara Hutton, 1945*







*Verona, Venetia, looking across the Adige River. EPA*

*Venetian countryside. EPA*



*Via Rizzoli, Bologna, Emilia. EPA*



later it produced stagnation and the inability to adjust to a changing European world.

The Po separates Lombardy and Venetia from Emilia-Romagna, which was for a long time a region of prosperous farms, and now, once again as in the late Middle Ages, contains a number of thriving cities. Here is the large industrial city of Bologna, the capital, whose ancient university was for centuries a foremost center of learning; Ravenna, in Romagna, for a while the capital of the Roman Empire in the West and of a short-lived Italian kingdom; also Ferrara, Modena, Parma, Rimini, all of which saw periods of intellectual flowering and of power. The somnolent provincialism that pervaded the area for four centuries after the end of the Renaissance ended abruptly with the newfound dynamism of the post-World War II period.

To three border regions of continental Italy, the republican constitution of 1947 granted (as it did to Sicily and Sardinia) a special autonomous status. In the northwest, Val d'Aosta, a large Alpine valley, is inhabited by Italians who speak a French dialect. To the north is Trentino-Alto Adige, the upper valley of the Adige (the second longest river in Italy), which was annexed to Italy in 1918. The valley includes a southern area, culturally and linguistically Italian

*Modena, Emilia. EPA*



*Lama Mocogno, Emilia. EPA*





(which from the eleventh century until early in the nineteenth formed the self-governing bishopric of Trent attached to Germany); and a northern area, in which two-thirds of the population speak German and are akin to Austrian Germans. In the northeast, the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region includes the western and central parts of historical Friuli, and the city and port of Trieste with part of its district, inhabited by Italians but coveted by Yugoslavia.

is the State of Vatican City, independent since 1929, a minuscule state covering a little over one hundred acres and containing the buildings and grounds of the Basilica of Saint Peter, Roman Catholicism's most grandiose place of worship, and the Vatican Palace with its annexes, residence of the Pontiff and headquarters of the central administration of the Roman Catholic Church. An isolated three-pronged mountain, Monte Titano, between the Marches and Emilia-Ro-

*OTHER AREAS OF GEOGRAPHICAL ITALY*

Geographical Italy includes areas covering about eight thousand square miles, which are not part of the Italian Republic. Of their one and a half million inhabitants, more than half speak Italian or closely related tongues. Within Rome on the Tiber's right bank



*Trieste. EPA*



*Vatican City, view from the roof of St. Peter's. EPA*

*Western façade of St. Peter's, Vatican City. EPA*





magna, forms San Marino, a republic whose seventeen thousand inhabitants are proud of being citizens of the oldest continuing European self-governing state. South of Sicily lie the Maltese Islands, twice the size of the District of Columbia. Semi-independent for two and a half centuries under the Knights of Malta, the islands were occupied briefly by the French in 1798 and by the British for 164 years. Since 1964 they have been an independent, sovereign member of the Commonwealth. The inhabitants, about a third of a million, have their distinctive culture and speak a language only partly related to Italian. The mountainous island of Corsica, north of Sardinia, has nearly thirty times the area of Malta but fewer inhabitants. For seven centuries an unruly dependency of the Republic of Genoa, it has been French since 1768. A large Alpine district north of Milan forms the Canton Ticino, a state of the Swiss Federation, and smaller districts to the east are part of Canton Grisons. Inhabited by Italians, they became Swiss between 1440 and 1512. As the result of World War II, Italy lost most of Julian Venetia, which had been annexed in 1918 and was formed by the eastern section of Friuli, the cities of Trieste and Fiume (now Rijeka), and the small peninsula of Istria. Slavic Croats and Slovenes were then a little over half the population. Many Italians were killed in 1945 in the area occupied by Yugoslavs. The survivors, over a quarter of a million, left the homes that had been theirs since time immemorial and took refuge in the territory of the Italian Republic.

#### POPULATION

Italy's population (over fifty-five million in 1971), now spread over a slightly larger area, is two and a half times what it was when the first census was taken after the Italian state formally came into existence in 1861. The birthrate (less than 2 percent in the 1960s) and the natural increase of the population (less than 1 percent) are moderate. In parts of continental Italy, in some of the plains of the peninsula and of Sicily, the density of the population outside the metropolitan areas is as high as two thousand per square mile. Even in hilly districts the density can be as much as five hundred persons a square mile. Density is low and declining in mountainous and some hilly areas. It is still relatively low but increasing rapidly in coastal districts that are no longer malarial, and in much of Sardinia. Since World War II, besides the movement from mountains and hills to plains, there has been considerable migration from rural districts to the cities, and away from the underdeveloped regions of the south to the industrial north and Rome. About one-fifth of the population lives in the ten largest cities, of which five have more than a million inhabitants; the rest live in several hundred medium-sized and small cities, in thousands of villages and hamlets, and, in central and northern Italy, on farms.

The common culture and traditions of the people are stronger than regional differences, and they make of all Italians one nation. However, Italians are not and never were biologically (i.e. racially) homogeneous. Anthropologists have identified numerous groups, some descended from peoples who lived in the country in prehistoric times, others descended from peoples who came from central and eastern Europe, from North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, as peaceful immigrants three or four thousand years ago, as invaders later. Generally, it may be said that in the southern third of the country the type described as Mediterranean predominates; in the other two-thirds, from the Abruzzi to the north, the Alpine type predominates. In the northeast, Dinaric and Nordic influences have diluted the Alpine characteristics.

Independent and dependent Italian states have come and gone, but there has been an Italian nation for over twenty centuries. Italy was united in ancient times, first as the Roman state, later as the dominant part of the far-flung Mediterranean state created by the Romans. Then it was broken up territorially for thirteen centuries, and it has been reunited for only a little over one hundred years. However, the Italian nation dates from the time when there was a clear-cut distinction between Roman Italy, the mother country and the ruler, and the Roman dependencies outside Italy. Deep crises affected the nation in the fifth and sixth centuries, again in the eleventh and the sixteenth centuries, but they did not destroy either the continuity or the cultural homogeneity of the nation. Since 1945, when northeastern areas annexed in 1918



*The independent republic of San Marino. EPA*



were lost to Yugoslavia, non-Italian minorities have numbered less than 1 percent of the population. One-half of these is represented by the German-speaking community; one-fourth by the French. The remaining fourth is composed mainly of Albanians and Greeks in some of the southern regions, the descendants of people who fled when the Balkans were conquered by the Turks. The small Jewish community, a few tens of thousands, is considered by all other Italians a religious minority (like the Protestants), not an ethnic one.

#### THE ITALIANS

Overall cultural homogeneity is compatible with regional differences and also with a considerable range in national character. When talking of "the Italians," foreigners have in mind a certain type, prevalent perhaps among those with whom tourists come in contact but not necessarily typical of the nation. Italians of this type are the products of the authoritarian society that emerged four centuries ago from the intellectual and political convulsions accompanying the end of the Renaissance (see Chapter 9). They share certain characteristics: they are extroverted, superficially emotional but in reality self-controlled, tendentially skeptical but not cynical, contemptuous of authority in word but in fact respectful, gregarious, persistent, at times devious, intellectually curious and alert, quick minded, considerate, and courteous. Such disagreeable traits as the selfishness and arrogance of those in positions of authority are disappearing under the impact of democratization.

There is another type, if less common, certainly more meaningful for the nation. It was represented in the past by those who died at Legnano in 1176 and at Gavinana in 1530, by men like Arnold of Brescia, Francis of Assisi, Dante, Pope Paul IV, Giordano Bruno, Paolo Sarpi. Their traits are firmness of character, commitment to ideals, moral and intellectual integrity, honesty, reliability, and a puritanism sometimes verging on asceticism. The Italians who, in the nineteenth century, joined the *Carbonari*, Young Italy, the National Society, and the Thousand—such as Santarosa, Pellico, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Gioberti, Settembrini, Pisacane, Manin, the Bandiera and Cairoli brothers: all those who made the *Risorgimento* were of this type—the antithesis of the commonplace stereotype. Those who died to keep Italians free in the twentieth-century struggle against Fascism—Matteotti, Amendola, Gobetti, Minzoni, Galimberti, Pintor, Buozzi, Montezemolo, the Rosselli and Cervi brothers—and those who like Parri, Cadorna, Longo, led the Resistance during World War II—shared the characteristics of the antistereotype.

#### THE PEASANTRY

Most Italians are hardworking; the *dolce far niente* is a myth invented by superficial observers

whose contacts were limited to dronish elements of the upper classes—a fringe section of the Italian people. There is a good deal of family solidarity, involving not only the immediate family, but the extended family in all its ramifications. Few foreigners come in contact with the industrious, reliable, sober peasant, attached to his family, ready to help those in need, concerned with his duties more than with his rights. As elsewhere in Mediterranean Europe, the peasantry, today about one-fourth of the population, is a nation within a nation. Peasants may often be illiterate, but they have their own culture, deeply rooted in the remote past. If ancient lineage makes for nobility, they are Italy's genuine aristocrats. A peasant can talk of the *Reame* (the Kingdom of Naples) and of the *Stati* (the Papal States) as though they still existed. In his tales the ancient Trojans still live, as do the Lombard leader Alboino, and Orlando (Charlemagne's knight Roland). Peasant legends, songs, fairy tales, and sayings make up a lore that, unfortunately, remains oral because peasants do not write and it is difficult for others to capture the spirit of peasant life, a lore which is being lost as the peasants move to cities and the farms become industrialized.

Ordinary Italian people tend to be hospitable and helpful. Often they are motivated by a practical humanism, genuine respect for all, and genuine willingness to help. This is no new trait, but rather centuries old. The tradition of humanism explains why the Italian nation has been spared the excesses that have been a tragic feature in the life of other major Continental nations. There have been fanaticism and violence in modern Italy, but they have never become mass phenomena. Popular opposition expressed through revolts in Naples and Rome checked the excesses of the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century. Nothing in Italy even came close to the horrors of religious and secular conflicts elsewhere in Europe. The impact of the French Revolution was felt in Italy at the end of the eighteenth century, but not its terror, nor the terror of counterrevolutionaries (except for some sporadic episodes). Two generations ago anarchists, syndicalists, and Leninists advocated violent action, but their actual use of it was minimal. Fascism was born

Fisherman. Photoworld







*Fishermen. ICI*



*Laborers breaking for lunch. EPA*



*Peasant woman carrying a basket on her head. EPA*

else, and defeat. The absence of a military spirit may be a drawback at a time when force is a major determinant in international relations; it may also be an index of civilization.



*Artisan finishing alabaster vases. EPA*

in Italy: it exalted violence but failed to recruit many violent people; it killed thousands, but not millions as fascism did elsewhere. Today's Maoists, Guevarists, and kindred groups preach the need for violent upheavals; many may join their ranks but there is little likelihood of such upheavals because there is not enough spirit of violence among the people.

Humanism, expressed through tolerance and the practice of the principle "live and let live," is also evident in the lack of Italian militarism. Exceptions—in the 1890s and during the twenty-year Fascist dictatorship—have brought ridicule more than anything

*Primitive method of threshing. Geraci Siculo, Sicily. EPA*





# UNIFICATION OF ITALY

1 : 5,000,000

Italian League ca. 270 B.C.  
 — northern boundary

{ A) Roman Territory  
 { B) Latin Territory and Territory of the Allies

C) Gallia Cisalpina (with Venetia, Histria, and Liguria) merged with Italy ca. 40s B.C.

D) Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica included in Diocese of Rome under Diocletian



# ROME UNIFIES ITALY

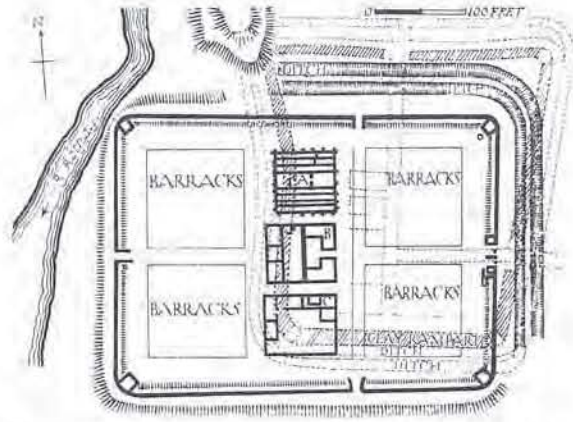
*Roman Italy – Early inhabitants – Italic – Later invaders – Etruscans – Greeks – Early Rome – The Roman community – Rome rebuilt – First round of expansionist wars – Second round of expansionist wars – The Italian League.*

## ROMAN ITALY

ITALIANS are conscious that ancient Rome and its civilization are theirs. This is not just because the city of Rome is in Italy and has been identified with Italy for centuries, but because the twelve hundred years of legendary and documented ancient Roman history, down to the disintegration of the Roman state in Italy in the fifth century, are still alive in the concepts, values, and institutions that originated then and, however revised and reinterpreted, have never entirely disappeared.

Often the past becomes completely divorced from the present, even if the physical continuity of a people is maintained. There is a chasm between Pharaonic and Arabized Egypt, between the Maya of the fifteenth century and their descendants today; there is none between Roman and post-Roman Italy. The grandiose ruins of Angkor and Borobudur, of Babylon and Baalbek, have for centuries just been historical curiosities for the peoples of southeastern Asia and the Middle East. But the abundant material evidence of the Roman past all over Italy, not only in ruins, but also in buildings, bridges, and roads still in use, has never been a mere historical curiosity for Italians.

From its origin until the middle of the fourth century B.C., Rome was one of the many self-contained, highly diversified, self-governing communities into which Italian territory was divided. The more advanced communities belonged to various civilizations: Etruscan in the northern section of the peninsula, Greek in the southern section and parts of Sicily, Phoenician in western Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. Most communities, from the Alps to the interior of Sicily, had not passed the tribal stage. There was no Italian people. Italy was the name of a small section of the peninsula. The term Italics, expanded in modern



*First century Roman earth fort (in broken lines) superseded by second-century stone fort. Ambleside, Westmorland, England. Roman Britain by R. G. Collingwood*

times to designate a group of kindred tribes from the northern Apennines to Sicily, indicated then a few southern tribes with which the Greeks were in contact. By the middle of the second century B.C., Rome had become a vast Mediterranean state. Soon it would include all of southern Europe, much of western and central Europe, North Africa, and parts of western Asia. Between the early phase and the Mediterranean one there was a period lasting several generations, when Rome and Italy became one: this fusion marked the birth of the Italian nation.

In the third and second centuries B.C., Italy meant the peninsula only. It was a confederation including nearly two hundred communities of which Rome was by far the strongest. Differences faded as time went on. The merger of the communities was completed politically in 88 B.C., when most inhabitants of the confederation formally became Roman citizens. A few decades later, Rome-Italy was extended to include the major part of continental Italy. This period, in which Rome-Italy were one, ended politically in the third century, when the distinction between Rome-Italy—the ruler and mother country—and dependent territories was obliterated in the uniformity of the authoritarian Roman Empire. It continued in the minds and the way of life of Romans living in Italy, and of Romans outside Italy.

## EARLY INHABITANTS

Anthropologists suggest that toward the end of the last Ice Age Italy was sparsely inhabited by perhaps two races. The Ibero-Ligurians, people with Mediterranean characteristics and culture, settled on the islands, most of the peninsula, and the continental north. Never numerous, they apparently led a peaceful life, practicing primitive farming and herding, developing the early crafts of pottery and weaving, learning to use copper, and dwelling in clusters of huts. From these Mediterraneans were descended peoples the Romans met in their expansionist drive; Ligurians in the



northwest, Japygians along the east coast of the peninsula, Sicani in western Sicily. At about the same time, or soon after, Dinaric immigrants came from the Balkans and settled in eastern districts of the country. They were ancestors of the Veneti in the north, of the Apulians and Messapians in the south.

#### ITALICI

Invaders from the north, belonging to the Alpine branch of Indo-Europeans, came to Italy in prehistoric times, probably in two waves. The first wave reached Italy from the Danubian basin about forty centuries ago. Acquainted with the making of bronze, they lived in rather large villages of huts built on piles—at first on the shores of lakes, rivers, and marshes; later, when population increased, also on dry land. The *terramare* (as anthropologists call the villages on dry land) of the Bronze Age were built in the regular rectangular pattern that was later characteristic of Roman military camps (the *castra* which became “chester” in many English place-names). From these early Alpine invaders were descended the Sabine, Latin, and Samnite tribes that occupied much of the central area of the peninsula, as well as the Sicels, or Siculi, of eastern Sicily. Sometime between the sixteenth and the thirteenth century B.C. a second wave of Alpine invaders, also coming from the Danubian basin, reached Italy. These knew how to use iron and were bearers of Iron Age culture. The Umbrians who settled in the Upper Tiber Valley were descended from them, as were the various tribes (Hirpini, Lucani, Bruttii) that occupied the interior of the peninsula south of the Samnites. *Italici*, or Italians, is the name anthropologists gave to the tribes descended from the two waves of Alpine invaders.

Mainly for reasons of defense, settlements were built by *Italici* on flat hilltops, a wall enclosing huts and a few larger buildings already being made partly of stone. *Oppidum* was the name of this type of fortified village. In the tenth century B.C. there were, for instance, *oppida* on the hilltops of the later cities of Auximum (Osimo) and Firmum (Fermo). Whatever one may say about the date traditionally given for the founding of Rome (April 21, 753 B.C.), it is likely that an *oppidum* existed in the eighth century at the top of a small isolated hill, later called Palatine, rising from the left bank of the lower River Tiber; that on the hill was the location of Roma Quadrata (Square Rome, from the shape of the walls). A smaller *oppidum* could be found on the nearby Mons Capitolinus, the Italians' Campidoglio and the Americans' Capitol; a third one on the Aventine.

#### LATER INVADERS

A third wave of Alpine invaders came to Italy later from the northwest—Celts who had settled in

Gaul, now France. The invaders occupied most of the Po Valley (the Romans' Gallia Cisalpina, or Gallia on this side of the Alps) in the fifth century B.C. The names of Gallic tribes survive in place-names: Bologna was the town of the Boians, and Senigallia a town the Romans founded in territory wrested from the Senonian Gauls. The Gauls crossed the Apennines and caused great havoc. Early in the fourth century they captured and held Rome briefly.

Before the coming of the Gauls, Italy had been discovered by raiders and immigrants of a different type, who came by sea. They brought civilization: a complex political organization, a sophisticated religion, the art of writing, advanced economic techniques. Of the newcomers who arrived by sea, Carthaginians were the least numerous and remained alien rulers of Italian-occupied territory; Etruscans and Greeks became native Italians and played a major role in the development of Roman civilization.

According to legend, Carthage, the Phoenicians' main settlement in North Africa, was founded in 814 B.C. Located near modern-day Tunis, it was a little over one hundred miles from Sicily. Carthaginian trading posts were soon established on western Mediterranean coasts and beyond the Pillars of Hercules (the Strait of Gibraltar). After the Persian king Cyrus conquered Phoenicia in the sixth century, Carthage, now completely independent under the rule of a capable merchant oligarchy, embarked on a policy of conquest, creating a vast empire and becoming the most powerful state in the western Mediterranean. Carthaginians sent colonists to Sicily where they founded Panormus (Palermo) and Drepanum (Trapani); to Sardinia where they founded Caralis (Cagliari); to Corsica, Spain, and the Spanish islands, to the African coast opposite Spain. To check Greek expansion, Carthage made agreements with the Etruscans, and with Rome as early as 508 B.C. For over two hundred years there was intermittent warfare between Carthaginians and Greeks in Sicily. An epic duel between Carthage and Rome began in the third century B.C. It lasted 118 years and ended with the destruction of Carthage.

#### ETRUSCANS

The origin of the Etruscans is an intriguing question mark. They may have come from Asia Minor, refugees fleeing wars and revolutions or the pressures of overpopulation. They appeared in Italy in the ninth century B.C., and founded various settlements on the 160-mile stretch of the western peninsular coast between the Serchio and Tiber rivers. Tarquinia and Cerveteri are located near Etruscan Tarquinii and Caere. Then they pushed inland, founding among other cities Volterra and Chiusi, reaching the upper Arno Valley, where they founded Fiesole and Arezzo, and the middle Tiber Valley, where they built Perugia. In the seventh century B.C. the Etruscans expanded north of the Apennines, where all traces of their pres-





*Hadrian's Wall, England. Remains of the Roman defensive wall built A.D. 120–123 from Solway Firth to the mouth of the Tyne. EPA*

*View of the walled city of Carthage, with galleys lying in harbor before it. By Il Grechetto. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Samuel H. Kress Collection*



ence were obliterated by Gallic invaders in the fifth century.

Thousands of Etruscan inscriptions have been found, particularly on tombs, but since their meaning is uncertain they shed little light on what, judging from archaeological remains and the writings of Roman authors, was an advanced civilization. Through these remains and writings it is known that the Etruscans were a ruling minority, monopolizing political power, military functions, religious activities, trade by land and sea, industry. Their subjects, who were akin to the Ligurians in the north of Etruria and to the Umbri in the south, tilled the soil and performed menial services in the households of the masters. Each major city was an independent state governed efficiently by rigid oligarchies. Religious rather than political bonds held together a vague confederation embracing twelve to fifteen city-states. Sculpture and architecture show a highly developed and original art. Objects found in tombs testify to a high level of craftsmanship. Some of the Etruscan divinities (the mother goddess, the gods of sea and fire), many religious practices, and priestly orders were adopted by the Romans together with the style of their temples.

In the sixth century, Etruscans from Tarquinii, Veii, and other cities of southern Etruria, exercised



*Statue of Apollo. Etruscan early fifth century B.C. From the Portonaccio Sanctuary at Veii. Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia, Rome*

*Mural (detail) from the Tomb of Hunting and Fishing, Tarquinia. Etruscan. The Art of Etruria and Early Rome by G. A. Mansuelli*







*Votive figure of a warrior, 450 B.C. Etruscan. Museo Archeologico, Florence*

paramount power over Rome and the Latin communities. According to legend, Romans freed themselves and helped the Latins to free themselves, through the revolt of 509 B.C. Meanwhile, Etruscans from coastal city-states had moved to Campania and were in the process of establishing a smaller Etruria there, when they were defeated in a naval battle fought in 474 B.C.

*Etruscan hypogeum. "Tagella di Pitagora," Cortona, Tuscany. EPA*



by the Greeks of Cumae allied to those of Syracuse. The Romans captured and destroyed Veii in or about 396 B.C. They established their control over much of southern Etruria a few decades later, and over the rest of the region by 282 B.C. Etruscan language and culture faded away and seem to have disappeared completely in the first century B.C.



*Etruscan temple, fifth century B.C. Tuscany. EPA*



*Entrance to an Etruscan tomb, Cerveteri, Latium. EPA*

*Interior of an Etruscan tomb, Cerveteri, Latium. EPA*





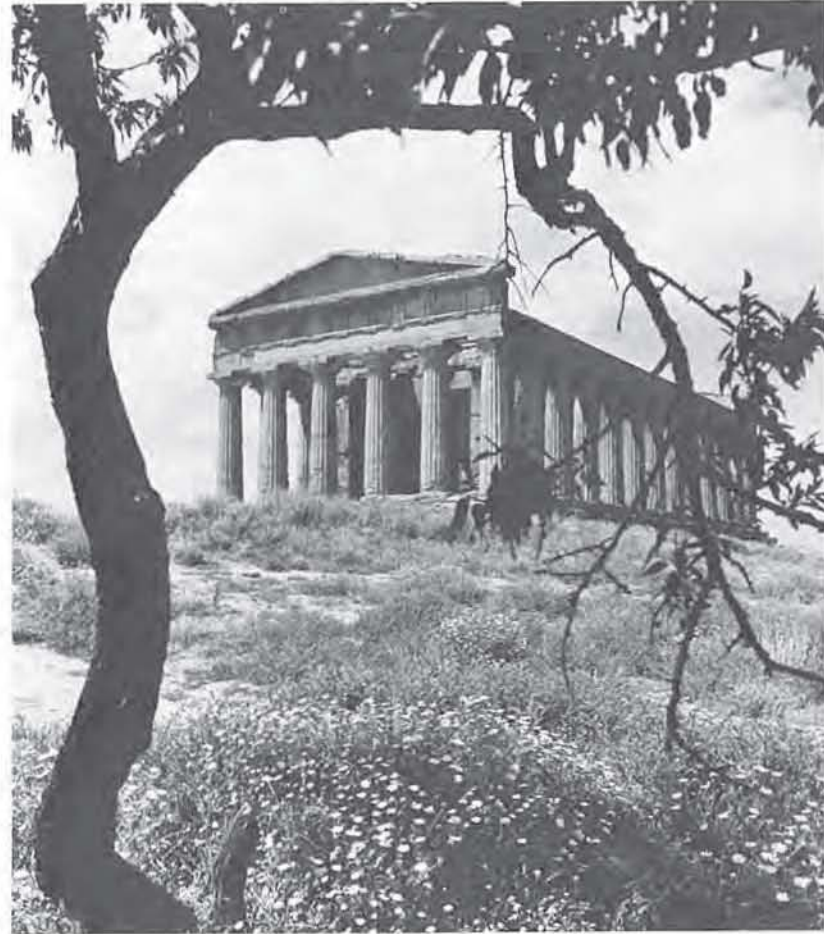
## GREEKS

Political instability at home, population pressure, spirit of adventure, all contributed to a vast migratory movement that led to the establishment of autonomous Greek communities by the Black Sea and in both the eastern and western Mediterranean. Cumae, twelve miles from Naples, seems to have been the first Greek settlement in the West—a West as meaningful to Greece as another West was meaningful to Americans twenty-six centuries later. Cumae, which remained the northernmost Greek settlement on Italy's western coast, was founded (if legend is correct) around 750 B.C. by colonists who came from Chalcis in the island of Euboea. Corinthian emigrants founded Syracuse in Sicily around 730 B.C. Thirty years later, Spartans founded Taras (now Taranto). Twenty major Greek communities flourished along the southern coast of the peninsula, on the shores of the Tyrrhenian, Ionian, and Adriatic seas, and as many along most of the coast of Sicily. Only small portions of the interior were colonized by the Greeks, but Greek influence changed the way of life of Sicani and Sicels in Sicily, of Bruttii, Lucani, Calabri, Messapians, and other tribes on the peninsula; it was felt by the Latins and their Roman offshoot farther north.

Although the Italian territory settled by the Greeks was no larger than the area of central and southern Greece, it was called *Magna Graecia*, Great Greece. Writing in the second century B.C., Polybius limited the expression *Magna Graecia* to the area occupied by Greek communities on the mainland. Writing at the time of Augustus, Livy and the geographer-historian Strabo included in *Magna Graecia* the Sicilian area also. The prestige and renown of *Magna Graecia* was based on the size of the communities, their wealth and military power, the magnificence of buildings: temples, theatres, and palaces. Also on the contributions given by Greeks in Italy to the intellectual life of Greece: by the Pythagoreans of Croton and other cities, the philosophic school established in Elea, Empedocles of Acragas, Archimedes of Syracuse.

When Roman authors began to write the history of their city, they were very much under the spell of the Greeks, and they especially felt the fascination of Athens. Chronicles and traditions were revised and interpreted in the light of Greek experiences. Not only was the founding of Rome attributed to the descendants of Trojan princes defeated by the Achean predecessors of the Greeks, but early Roman development was patterned largely on Athens'. According to tradition, there was in Rome, as there had been in Athens at first, a limited monarchy. The reforms of Servius Tullius in Rome seem a copy of those of Solon in Athens a few decades earlier. The monarchy became absolute in Rome around the time when Peisistratus and his successors ruled Athens autocratically. The absolute monarchy was overthrown in Rome by a revolution in 509, the year following the expulsion of

Hippias from Athens. The Persians were a major threat to Athens when the Etruscans were a major threat to Rome. Three hundred brave Spartans died at Thermopylae in 480, and three hundred brave Romans at Cremera in 477. Coincidence or not, there is little doubt that Greek influence contributed to the shaping of Roman institutions and Roman culture.



The best preserved of the temples at Agrigento, Sicily. TWA

Greek theatre, Syracuse. EPA





EARLY ROME

The year 753 B.C. is the legendary date of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus, descendants of Aeneas, a member of the royal family that ruled Troy in Asia Minor until its destruction by invaders from Greece in the twelfth or eleventh century. Romulus supposedly brought together people belonging to three tribal groups. The capture of Sabine women added a fourth tribal element. Romulus created the legion, thus providing Romans with an efficient military organization. His successor, Numa Pompilius, was the lawgiver. Under Numa's immediate successors Tullus Hostilius and Ancus Marcius, the Roman state became paramount in Latium, then an area of only one thousand square miles inhabited by Latins, southern neighbors of the Romans. Rome expanded to the sea with the founding of Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber. The kingship of Tarquinius

Priscus, a citizen of Tarquinii in southern Etruria, between the seventh and the sixth century, was indicative of Etruscan paramount power. Servius Tullius in the sixth century B.C. was the Roman Solon and he introduced a classification of citizens for military and electoral purposes, very similar to that attributed to Solon in Athens in 594. According to legend, he built the walls encircling Rome's seven hills. Fragments of the walls still stand. Tarquinius Superbus (the Arrogant) was a despot whose twenty-five-year reign ended when the rape of Lucretia, wife of a distinguished citizen, by the king's son Sextus caused a revolt.

Lucius Junius Brutus led the revolution that established the republic. He and Lucretia's widower Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus were the first consuls—republican chief executives elected for one year. During the 120 years between the establishment of the republic and the capture of Rome by Gauls, there was considerable internal tension and continual external pressure. After being defeated by the Gauls in or



*She-wolf nursing Romulus and Remus. Early fifth century B.C. Museo Capitolino, Rome*



*Aeneas fleeing Troy. Museo Civiltà Romana, Rome*

*Battle of the Sabines by David. Photoworld*



*The Appian Way, through the Campanian countryside, first built in 312 B.C. Rome. EPA*





about 390 B.C., the Roman state lost its small conquests and its supremacy over the Latins and was reduced to its original boundaries.

#### THE ROMAN COMMUNITY

This is the legendary period—a source of inspiration for Romans of successive generations, a heroic age of which one had to be worthy. This was the period of the exploits of the Horatii brothers, two of whom gave their lives to ensure the victory of Romans over Latins; of Horatius Cocles, Cloelia, and Mucius Scaevola, who turned back enemy Etruscans from Clusium (Chiusi); of the Fabii, one of the distinguished families of Rome, who died defending the city against the Etruscans from Veii; of gallant generals like Quinctius Cincinnatus, Mamercus Aemilius, and Furius Camillus; of wise statesmen; of the senators who waited calmly in their marble seats to be killed by barbarian Gauls.

Not all this is necessarily fiction. Sculptures tell us what Romans looked like, how they lived, and how they fought. We know about tribes constituting most of the population of peninsular Italy that were racially, linguistically, and culturally akin to the Romans. Aequi, Samnites, and Picentes of the third century B.C. were not different from the Latins and Romans at the time they built cities and abandoned the tribal way of life. It is probable that, in order to protect themselves against aggressive Etruscans, the inhabitants of *oppida* on some of the seven hills and of villages in the surrounding territory banded together and founded a city. It is also likely that government was originally in the hands of an elected king, and that he was aided by a council of elders (*seniores*, or senators) who were heads of families (*patres*, or patricians). Contacts with Etruscans first and then also with Greeks stimulated political changes and economic activities, and affected religious and intellectual interests. Because the Etruscans were closer to Rome and therefore more of a threat, Romans of the sixth and fifth centuries looked with friendly eyes on the Greeks (who were also enemies of the Etruscans) and tried to imitate them. Brutus may never have existed, but when documented history begins, Rome had undoubtedly been a republic for some time. The Athenian heresy—the society founded on freely expressed popular consent—had found disciples among unsophisticated Romans.

Rome's republic, like that of Athens during its first phase, was constitutional rather than democratic. Its structure was complex. All officials were elected, but could be drawn only from certain sections of the population; three different types of popular assemblies elected the officials and passed the laws; considerable power was in the hands of a senate to which former officials belonged and whose membership was thus entirely from the upper classes; there was division of power and a system of checks and balances; law was paramount and in all fields prevailed over arbitrary will.



The Colosseum, Rome. EPA

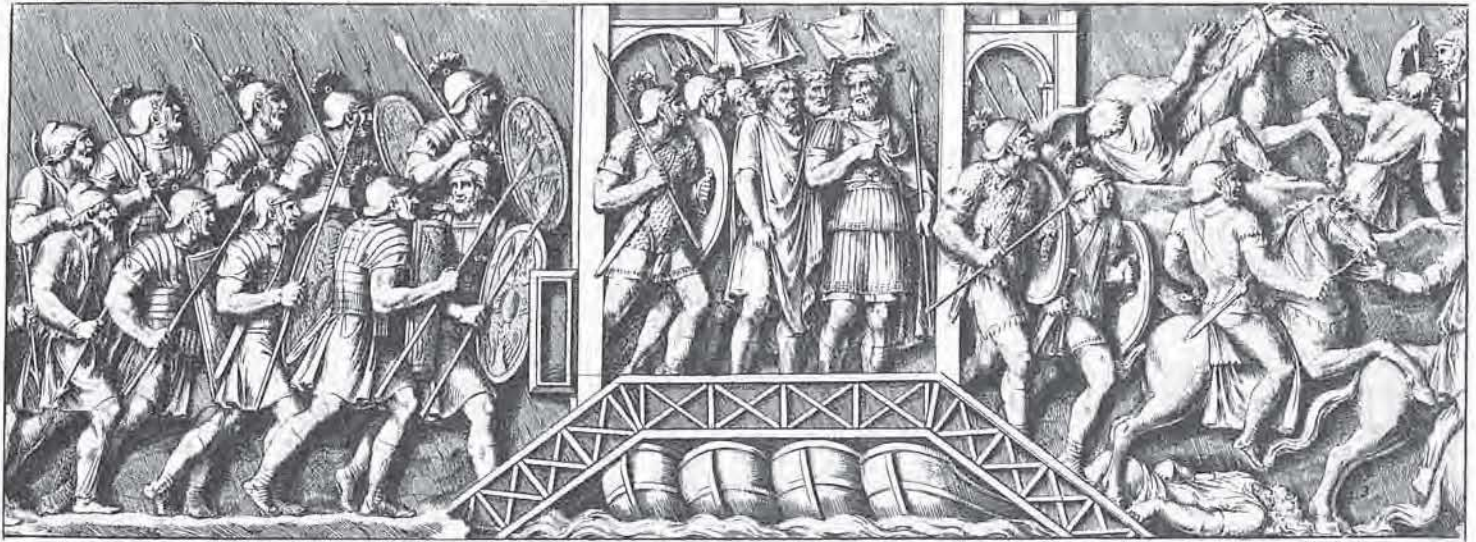


Mucius defying Porsena. NYPL

The Oath of the Horatii by David. Louvre







Engraving after a detail from a relief on the column of Marcus Aurelius showing scenes during the wars of 171 and 175. The Romans gaining ground over the Germans; Romans crossing a river; the Romans attacking their enemies, Engraving by P. S. Bartoli, early eighteenth century. NYPL

Romans were proud of their republican institutions. They lasted for several centuries and were not completely obliterated until the third century A.D., when the Principate (theoretically a constitutional monarchy) was replaced by the Dominate (an absolute monarchy). During nearly five hundred years of republican rule, and even in the early phase of the Principate, Romans and all Romanized Italians were deeply conscious of the difference between a free and a despotic form of government. They felt sincere hatred and contempt for despotism, whether monarchical as in eastern Mediterranean states, or oligarchic as in the great republic of Carthage.

According to legend, and there is no reason to suppose that it is not true, sixty years went by before republican institutions were solidly established. Once political liberty had been achieved, the problem of assuring equality arose. There was in Rome an upper class of patricians and a lower class of plebeians; it took about a century and a half of agitation, demands, and concessions before plebeians achieved equality of rights with the patricians in the middle of the fourth century. The plebeians' successful struggle strengthened free institutions and enabled the republic to last another three hundred years. Republican Romans had learned that in a free society conflicts among citizens must be solved on the basis of equality.

The same concept solved problems arising in relations with some of the Romans' neighbors. Since earliest times there had been a special relationship between Romans and their kin to the south, the Latins. According to situations, the relationship varied from close cooperation to open antagonism. During the second half of the fourth century, antagonism ceased when several Latin communities were given Roman citizenship and others maintained their separate organization but on a footing of equality with the Romans.

To withstand the pressure of powerful neighbors like the Etruscans and the Volscians, Romans had to fight: theirs was a community of farmer-soldiers. There is nothing exceptional, as history shows, in being a community of farmer-soldiers and having to fight. The exceptional thing is that Romans acquired habits through discipline and training that made them better soldiers than most. The Romans who rebuilt their city after the Gauls had departed were free members of a self-governing community, hardworking farmers and disciplined soldiers. After four hundred years of undistinguished life *ab urbe condita* (since the foundation of the city, according to legend), the stage was set for a spectacular career. The values and institutions that made Romans what they were had been four hundred years in the making. Deeply rooted and solidly established, they were to be for centuries the efficient and powerful driving force in the Roman community until it became the world-state of the West.

#### ROME REBUILT

Because of military pressure or because they were bought off, the victorious Gauls of 390 B.C. left Rome after a few months. The inhabitants returned and the city was rebuilt. The republic was reorganized. When the enemy left, the Roman state was nothing more than a fairly big township covering an area of less than four hundred square miles, as it had been under the first two kings. About twelve miles from the sea, on the left bank of the Tiber where a small island facilitated the building of a wooden bridge, a stone wall—parts of which may have been built under Servius Tullius in the sixth century—enclosed all or part of seven small hills and the plains in between. The hills are now lower than they used to be, the plains a little higher. Within



the walls there were about one thousand acres. The rest of the township was the rural area, containing the port of Ostia, small villages, and isolated farmhouses. The total population was only in the tens of thousands. For the times, the urban center was fairly large. It was probably the largest urban community north of the cities founded by Greeks in southern Italy. With every citizen a soldier, with constant training and severe discipline, Rome had an efficient army.

#### FIRST ROUND OF EXPANSIONIST WARS

The Gauls came back four times. Each time the Romans fought back. Following the commonsense principle that the best defense is offense, they transformed their counterattacks into offensive wars. They pursued the enemy in the hills and mountains of central Italy. This round of wars began in 367 B.C. The Gauls had received aid from Rome's neighbors and enemies. The hostile neighbors were defeated together with the Gauls or were attacked and defeated after the Gauls had been driven out. Peace with the Gauls was concluded in 334 B.C. By then Rome's supremacy had been reestablished among the Latins. Tribes south and east of the Latins had been brought under Roman control, and made more secure by the settlement of Roman colonies among them. Southern Etruscan cities, those closest to Rome, had lost their independence. Some, Caere for instance, were treated leniently. Others were destroyed and never reappeared on the scene of history.

Romans were now confident in their own strength. When, after over thirty years of nearly continual fighting, this round of wars ended, the small independent township centered on the seven hills had become a state embracing most of what is today's Latium and parts of Umbria. It had an area of between seven and eight thousand square miles with a population of several hundred thousand. Instead of Romulus' one legion of just over three thousand men, there was an army of many legions.

#### SECOND ROUND OF EXPANSIONIST WARS

The second round of expansionist wars lasted nearly two generations, from 328 to 270. From time to time there had been minor clashes between Romans and Samnites, the largest and best organized tribe of peninsular Italy, occupying—with allied tribes—a wider area than that of the enlarged Roman state. From the scanty sources available, it can be assumed that Samnites and Romans were fairly similar. There were dissensions between the small city-states, some Greek, others not, in the fertile plain surrounding the Gulf of Naples and extending north as far as the Roman territory. The Romans captured Naples, and the Samnites struck back. War ensued. There were defeats and victories for both sides, long hard campaigns, and armistices. Most of the smaller tribes in mountainous areas sided with the Samnites, as did many of the Greek city-states along the coast. The tribes of southern Italy, enemies of the Greeks, usually sided with Rome. In the end, the Samnites combined forces with the independent Etruscans and with the Gauls of northern Italy. By 290 the Samnites had been defeated and were compelled to recognize Roman hegemony. Then came the turn of the Etruscans, defeated in two battles, and of the Gauls.

Most Greek city-states in the peninsula were brought into the Roman state, some as subjects, others as allies. Taras, which the Romans called Tarentum, the most important, remained independent. Frightened by the growing Roman power, rich enough to subsidize allies and mercenaries but unwilling to do much fighting themselves, the Tarantines asked the aid of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus in the Balkans. Related to Alexander the Great, Pyrrhus had been a participant in the wars among Alexander's successors. He came to Italy in 280 and twice defeated the Romans. However, his losses were so heavy that he could not follow up his victories. Defeated in a third major battle in 275, he returned to Epirus. Shortly after, Tarentum surrendered; it lost its independence but the Romans

A ship in the port of Ostia (bas-relief).  
Villa Torlonia, Rome







Romans crossing the Alps, ca. 200 B.C. NYPL



Pyrrhus, king of Epirus. NYPL

allowed it to keep internal autonomy. The quick subjugation of the remaining independent communities—city-states or tribes—ensued.

#### THE ITALIAN LEAGUE

The entire Italian peninsula was now a confederation including about two hundred autonomous states, among which Rome held supreme power. Of the three to four million inhabitants of the confederation, about one-fourth lived in the city of Rome and its territory stretching southward to near Naples and eastward to the Adriatic. With or without the right to vote in the

assemblies of Rome, the inhabitants of a number of self-governing incorporated municipalities (*coloniae*), established primarily to garrison conquered districts and also to relieve population pressure, were Roman citizens. Citizens of other self-governing municipalities, called Latin, not because of their ethnic origin but because of a status identical to that granted to Latins in the fourth century, shared the obligations of Roman citizens but not all the rights. The rest of the peninsula was divided among autonomous allied communities (*socii*), each bound to Rome by a special permanent treaty.

In the confederation, the conduct of foreign and military affairs was the responsibility of the Roman senate and of the assemblies meeting in Rome. Roman and Latin self-governing municipalities, and the allies, had their own autonomous administration, largely patterned on that of Rome; they enforced their laws, managed their finances, and worshiped their gods. In each confederal state, power was exercised by a citizens' assembly which legislated and elected officials. There were no subject communities without rights, nor tributary ones. Romans, Latins, and allies shared military obligations. Troops recruited among allies had their own officers but fought under Roman generals. Ships and sailors were supplied mostly by the Greek communities.

In 270 B.C., different languages were spoken; religious practices differed; economic levels ranged from the poverty of the Casuentini to the affluence of the Capuans; the illiteracy of the Paeligni contrasted with the sophisticated literacy of the Tarentines. Within a few generations, differences faded away and a uniform Roman way of life prevailed among the inhabitants of the peninsula. Convenience and imitation played their role; there was a good deal of internal migration; there was the comradeship in wars fought for a long time in foreign countries; whatever the reasons, assimilation took place. By the time the confederation ceased to exist there was already one people.

With a disciplined, well-trained, and well-equipped citizens' army that could muster tens of thousands of men, with allied troops as numerous and as good as the Romans', with considerable naval forces, Rome was a major power in the Mediterranean world. Rome was strong enough to compete with the Phoenician authoritarian republic of Carthage in North Africa, and with the absolute kings of Macedonia, Syria, and Egypt in the eastern Mediterranean, descended from Alexander's generals. Besides these major states there was a multitude of smaller ones. Power relationships were complex; their successful handling required firmness and prudence.



### 3

# BASKING IN THE GLORY OF ROME

A FULL SIX HUNDRED YEARS (270 B.C.—A.D. 330):

*Glorious centuries — Third round of expansionist wars — The Roman Mediterranean Empire — Inequality weakens the republic — Caesar — Augustus — From Tiberius to Alexander Severus — Imperial peace — Growing despotism — Chaos (235–284) — The coming of Christianity.*

#### THE ITALIAN HERITAGE FROM ANCIENT ROME:

*Evidence in Italy of the Roman past — Continuity of the Italian nation — Lasting influence of Roman writers — Slow but steady change — Roman values — The Roman soldier — Statesmanship — An efficient administration — Roman law.*

A FULL SIX HUNDRED YEARS

#### GLORIOUS CENTURIES

Six hundred years intervened between the unification of the peninsula under the leadership of Rome and the transfer of the capital of the vast Mediterranean state created by Romans and Romanized Italians to Constantinople, formerly the Greek city of Byzantium. The period from 270 B.C. to A.D. 330 was a time of greatness for Rome-Italy. Ancient historians have dwelt on the details of political and military events, describing customs and institutions. Modern historians have added investigations of the transformation of society, of developments in the fields of mind and conscience, of economic and social affairs. There were the wars and civil wars that loom so large in historical narrative. And there were long periods of in-



*Shield commemorating the return by Scipio Africanus of a captive girl to her betrothed, Allucius, Prince of the Celtiberi. NYPL PC*

ternal quiet and peace on the borders—of Pax Romana. There was the long and difficult process of building a vast, complex, and efficient system of institutions, giving cohesion to a society larger than any until modern times. During five of the six centuries there was educational and economic advancement. There was the birth of Christianity. There were the beliefs and the philosophies that contributed to Christianity or opposed it. The sum total of events and developments was the creation of a civilization more advanced than any until then known in the West or the East. In classical Greece and in the Hellenistic period, philosophy and science respectively soared higher than they were to do in the Roman state, but taking society as a whole, the Roman Mediterranean nation was on a higher cultural level than that of Greek city-states and Hellenistic monarchies.

#### THIRD ROUND OF EXPANSIONIST WARS

Two rounds of expansionist wars had made the Italian peninsula one state combining the advantages of a strong central power with considerable autonomy at the local level. A third round lasting four generations (264–146 B.C.) made Rome the dominant Mediterranean power. Tragically, these wars later contributed to the death of the republic. Three Punic wars were fought against Carthage in 264–241, 218–201, 149–146, in Sicily, Italy, Spain, North Africa, and on the sea; two Illyrian and four Macedonian wars were fought in the Balkans, in 229–228, 221–219, 215–205, 200–197, 171–167, 149–148; one Syrian war was fought in Asia in 192–189; an invasion of transalpine barbarians was repelled in 225. In the course of the Second Punic War, Rome nearly succumbed; in 218–





*Hannibal crossing a river on his way through the Alps. NYPL*

216 Roman armies were defeated by the Carthaginian Hannibal at the battles of Ticino, Trebbia, Trasimeno, Cannae. Roman losses were enormous: much heavier in relation to the population than the losses suffered by any nation in the bloodbaths of World War I and World War II, or the twentieth-century civil wars in Russia, Spain, China, and Nigeria. The Romans did not despair, however; they persisted, and they triumphed over Carthage at Zama in 202. Later they triumphed over Macedonia at Cynoscephalae in 197, over Syria at Magnesia in 190, and over Macedonia again at Pydna in 168. The Scipio brothers, Fabius Cunctator, Marcellus, Flaminius, Metellus, Aemilius Paullus, and many others acquired reputations as generals and were influential as statesmen. In 146 Carthage was destroyed and much of its territory was transferred to Numidia, Carthage's neighbor and Rome's ally.

The wars against Carthage led to the Roman occupation of the western section of Sicily in 241 B.C., and thirty years later of the eastern section with its capital Syracuse; of Sardinia and Corsica in 238; of former Carthaginian territories in Spain in 209–206; in Africa, of the section of the Carthaginian state occupying most of present-day Tunisia that had not been ceded to Numidia, in 146. To forestall other Gallic invasions, much of continental Italy was occupied in 225–222, and immediately colonized with settlers from the peninsula. Quarrels among Greek

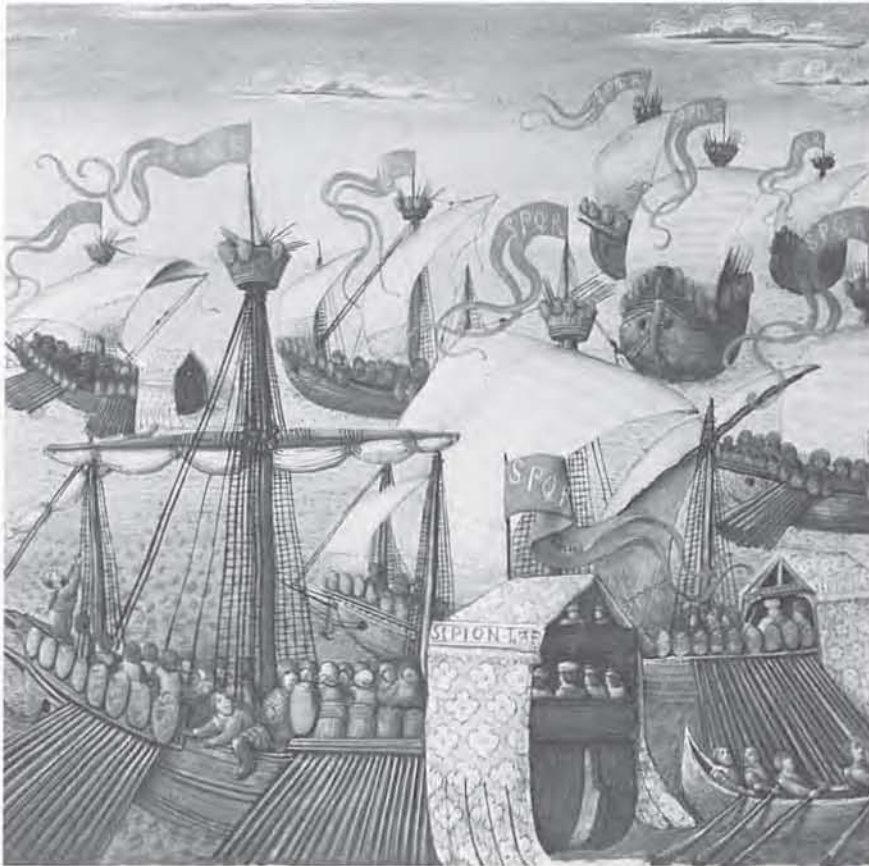
city-states, many organized since the early third century B.C. in the Aetolian and Achaean leagues, and between Greek city-states and their neighbors in the Balkans and Asia Minor, led first to Roman involvement and later to territorial expansion in areas east of Italy. To help the Greeks of Lissa, an island in the Adriatic, Romans landed in Illyria in the northwestern Balkans, in 229 B.C. To help the Aetolians against Macedonia, the Romans fought the First Macedonian War. To help Athens and other Greek Aegean states, they fought the Second Macedonian War. To help the Greek republic of Rhodes and the Greek king of Pergamum, Romans fought the Syrian war. In Corinth, in 196 B.C., following the victory of Cynoscephalae, Flaminius solemnly proclaimed the independence of Greece. Soon, however, tensions arose between Rome and first one and then the other Greek league. Corinth became the center of anti-Roman agitation, and was destroyed in 146. Many city-states, including Athens and Sparta, kept their internal autonomy for generations, but Greece did not become independent again until 1821.

The territories conquered during this third round of wars became dependencies of the Roman state. The Latin *provincia* corresponds to the twentieth-century colony. *Provinciae* were governed by Roman officials chosen at first from among elected members of the judiciary, the praetors, later among those who had



completed their term as heads of state and army commanders (the consuls, who became colonial governors or proconsuls), also former praetors and former directors of the financial administration, the questors. Roman troops were stationed in the *provinciae*, where they tilled the soil, strengthened the garrisons, built cities, and mixed with the native populations which they eventually Romanized. In 146 B.C. there were, or were being organized, ten dependencies. Seven were *provinciae*: Sicily, Sardinia with Corsica, Gallia Cisal-

pina, Hither Spain, Farther Spain, Africa, Macedonia. The three other dependencies had special status: Illyria, Epirus, and Greece. The dependencies covered an area of several hundred thousand square miles, with a population five or six times that of Italy. Several nominally independent Mediterranean states were closely associated with Rome: Numidia and Cyrene in North Africa, the Republic of Rhodes in the eastern Aegean area, the kingdoms of Pergamum and Bithynia in Asia Minor.



Scipio traveling from Sicily to Africa. B.V. Miniatures. Giraudon

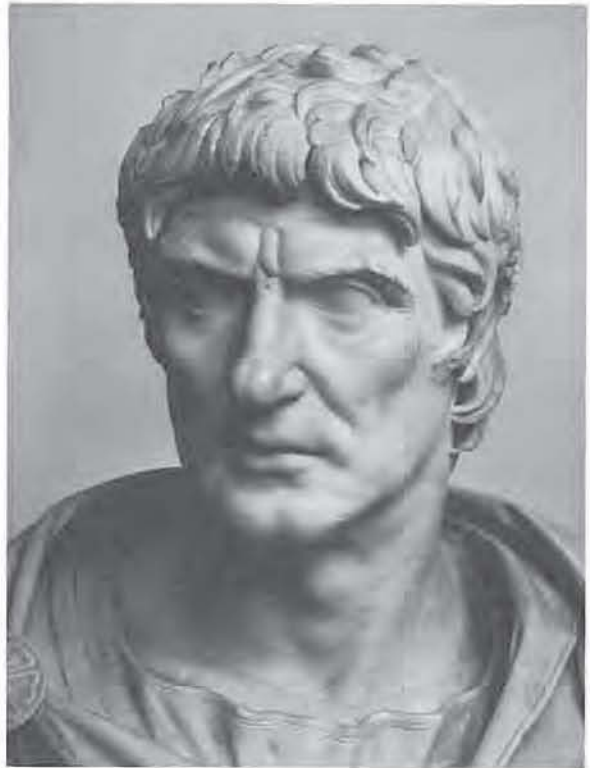
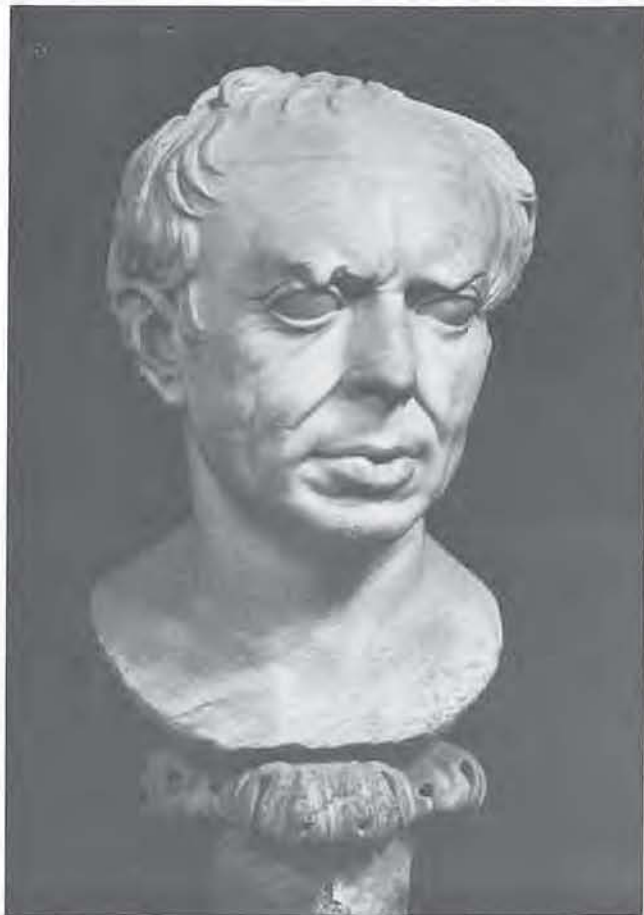
Map of Italy and the Roman dependencies, 146 B.C. Photoworld





The expansion that followed is of secondary interest. There was a lull of nearly sixty years during which the secession of Italian allies (91–88) and slave insurrections in Sicily led by Eunus and Tryphon (prelude to Spartacus' greater revolt of 73–71) were suppressed, and a dangerous invasion of Germanic tribes was repulsed in 105–101. Still with the impetus created by the expansionist rounds of the fourth to second centuries, wars of conquest started again in 88 B.C. with the First Mithridatic War, waged against the strongest military power of western Asia. Riding the expansionist wave, withstanding the strain of internal conflicts and transformations thanks to strong cohesion, the Roman state expanded for another two hundred years, until the time when satiety or exhaustion, or both, finally set in and the wars of conquest came to a halt. The conquest of Gaul by Caesar in 58–51 B.C., the most celebrated feat of the Roman armies, was one episode in a vast, continuing drama. As a military leader Caesar had his equals in Marius who defeated Numidians in North Africa and Germans in Italy and southern France; in Sulla, Lucullus, and Pompey who defeated Mithridates in Asia and his numerous and powerful allies; in the brothers Tiberius and Drusus who added to the Roman state the vast area north and east of the Alps as far as the Danube; and in Trajan who conquered Dacia in the first years of the second century and Armenia, Assyria, and Babylonia shortly after.

*Bust of Marius. Rome, Vatican Museum. Alinari*



*Bust of Sulla. Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich*

#### THE ROMAN MEDITERRANEAN EMPIRE

The conquest of Gaul had been preceded in 74–64 B.C. by the conquest of Asia Minor and Syria, where the Romans' eastward march was arrested by the defeat the Parthians inflicted on Crassus at Carrhae on the border of Mesopotamia in 53 B.C. The conquest of Gaul was followed by the annexation of Egypt in 30 B.C., of all areas south of the Danube (and even north of the river along the shore of the Black Sea) between 15 B.C. and A.D. 29, of Mauretania (today Algeria and Morocco) in the 30s, of Britannia (England) in the 40s. The eastward march of Rome in central Europe was arrested by the defeat the Germans inflicted on Varus near the Teutoburg Forest in A.D. 9. With Trajan's conquests the Roman state reached its maximum expansion in 116. Its land area of about two million square miles completely ringed the Mediterranean. It extended well over two thousand miles from east to west and from north to south. Its population has been variously estimated at between sixty and one hundred and twenty million inhabitants. Not until the sudden increase in the population of China in early modern times had there been a state as populous as that of Mediterranean Rome.

#### INEQUALITY WEAKENS THE REPUBLIC

More important than conquests were internal changes: first the transformation of the Roman-Italian





Hellenistic sculpture, depicting the god Heracles greeting King Mithridates. NYPL PC



Dacian chief asking Emperor Trajan for clemency, NYPL PC

nation and, later, the transformation of the Roman Mediterranean world. There had been remarkable stability in the Roman republican community for several hundred years. There had been problems, grave ones, and they had been solved without bloodshed and violence, in a spirit of fairness and compromise. However, serious unrest set in toward the end of the second century B.C. The source of it was the usual one in free societies: inequality. As the result of conquests, many Romans had become wealthier; at the same time, as the result of long wars and economic competition from the dependencies, many Romans had become poorer (particularly the small farmers). To the growing gap between rich and poor in the Roman state were added the differences between not less than five classes of unequal citizens in the Roman-Italian confederation, discrimination between Roman and Romanized Italians on one side and subjects in the dependencies on the other, and the presence of a large number of slaves. Liberty can stand just so much inequality, no more. The solution applied to the conflict between patricians and plebeians, between Romans and Latins in the fifth and fourth centuries—greater equality—was not applied to the conflicts between rich and poor, free men and slaves, citizens and subjects in the second and first centuries. Though there was greater political power and higher literacy, there was less collective wisdom.

At first there were riots when a conservative coalition of traditionalists (numerous in all classes of the population), patricians, and prosperous members of the rapidly expanding business community opposed the moderate reforms proposed in 133 B.C. by Tiberius Gracchus and ten years later by his brother Gaius Gracchus. The Gracchi and their followers, who later formed the party of the *populares* (democrats), were

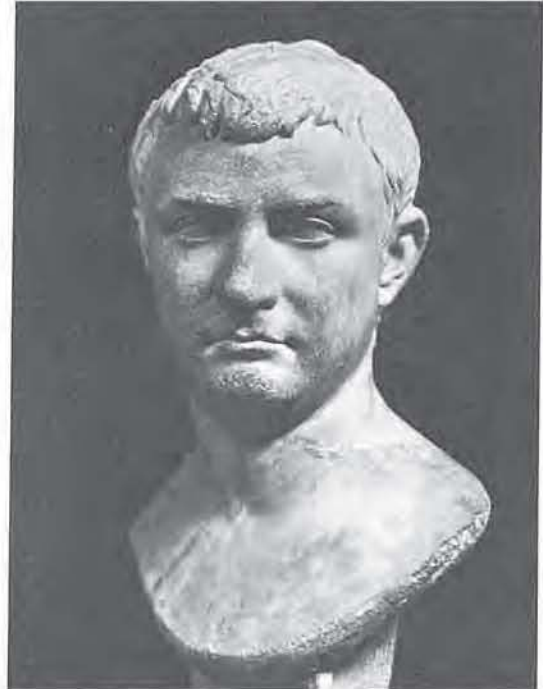
deeply attached to republican institutions. Their reforms (a law limiting the extent of landed estates, distribution of public lands in Italy and in the dependencies, state control of the price of bread, extension of the franchise) were not subversive, but, rather, of the "New Deal" variety, aimed at strengthening, not at destroying the republic. Tiberius Gracchus was killed with many of his followers in 133 B.C.; Gaius in 121. These were the first political crimes in over three hundred years. Riots were followed by uprisings of slaves, revolts of subjects, the secession of allied communities, and, in 88 B.C., the first in a series of civil wars that would last a little over half a century.

Unwilling to make changes, and especially unwilling to solve the problem of economic and juridical inequality through reforms which would have strengthened the republic, those who theoretically stood foremost for republican institutions, the *optimates*, actually stood for privilege. With Sulla, their leader in the 80s B.C., and after Sulla with Lucullus, Pompey, Metellus Scipio, Cicero, Cato Minor, and many other distinguished citizens, republicans had become conservatives. Still a majority among Roman citizens in 88, they were a minority when defeated by the *populares* led by Caesar at Pharsalus in 48, and by Antony and Octavian at Philippi in 42. Republican *optimates* no longer mattered when the battle of Actium was fought in 31 B.C. between Antony and Caesar's grandnephew Octavian, who remained sole ruler of the Roman state. For the urban proletariat, the impoverished small farmers, the veterans, republican liberty—identified in the first century B.C. with privilege—was an object of hatred. More and more the leaders of the *populares*, spokesmen for the dissatisfied sectors of the





Busts of Portia and Cato. Vatican Museum, Rome. Anderson



Bust of Pompey the Great (ancient sculpture). Museo Nazionale, Naples. Alinari

population, stood for dictatorial power. Marius, Sulla's opponent in the brief civil war of 88 B.C., had misgivings about making himself dictator. The misgivings became weaker and weaker with later leaders of the *populares*, Cinna, Sertorius, Crassus, Catalina. Caesar had none. Names vary, but the situation with which the Roman republic was faced in the fifth century of its existence did not differ essentially from situations arising in modern times in democratic nations when inequalities become too great and class lines too rigid.

#### CAESAR

Caesar fired the imagination of his contemporaries and of untold generations through modern times, in a way perhaps unequalled. Emperors have been called kaisers by the Germans and czars by the Russians, words derived from the Latin Caesar. The month of July reminds us that Caesar's family name was Julius and that he reformed the calendar. Zaragoza (Caesaraugusta) in Spain and Kaisery (Caesarea) in Turkey tell Spaniards and Turks that their countries were once provinces of the state ruled by Caesar and his successors.

Caesar was a great military leader, a successful statesman, and a great writer. As conqueror of Gaul and parts of Germany in 58-51, he became a hero of the Roman masses. He could count on the devotion of officers and soldiers under his command. As leader of the *populares* he decided to revolt against the republican government in January 49. By the time he reached Rome, opponents had fled, and a citizens' assembly voted him dictator. He defeated the republican conservatives led by Pompey, Pompey's sons, and Cato at Ilerda in 49, Pharsalus in 48, Thapsus in 46, and Munda in 45. In a short war ("*veni, vidi, vici*") Caesar



Bust of Julius Caesar. NYPL PC

also defeated (at Zela in 47) Mithridates' son, who had seen in the civil war among Romans the opportunity to reestablish his power.

Endowed with dictatorial power, supported by a majority of the citizens, sure of the loyalty of the army, Caesar put an end to internal disorder and introduced reforms. He extended the franchise, changed the composition of the Senate, founded Italian settlements in the *provinciae*. Public land was distributed to the veterans, money and food were distributed to the poor of Rome, the fiscal administration and the judiciary were reorganized. Economic privileges were checked—temporarily.

But in terms of the liberty that had been the key to the Romans' progress, the effect of these reforms was neutralized by the growth of a new political privilege: the concentration of power in the hands of the



dictator, aided by trusted friends none of whom was responsible to the citizens. Although the republic had died, attachment to republican institutions still existed among the *optimates* and large sections of the middle classes. When the rumor spread that Caesar wanted to make himself king (for the Romans a term synonymous with despot), he was assassinated on the Ides (the fifteenth) of March, 44 B.C., in a conspiracy led by Marcus Junius Brutus. Brutus claimed descent from the Brutus who, with others, had overthrown the monarchy and established a republican form of government 465 years earlier. The populace of Rome turned against the conspirators. Most of the army followed the antirepublican lead of Caesar's cavalry general, Mark Antony. Within a short time, the political leadership of the Caesarian faction was assumed by the able Octavian, who was eighteen when the murder took place.

#### AUGUSTUS

At Philippi in Macedonia the republicans, led by Brutus and Cassius, fought and lost their last battle in

42 B.C. First Cassius, then Brutus, committed suicide. Cicero, intellectually and politically the foremost of the republicans, had been assassinated a few months earlier. Playing his hand carefully among numerous conflicting forces, Octavian established his supreme rule in Italy and in the western and central *provinciae* (41-36). Mark Antony was spending most of his time in Egypt, whose queen, Cleopatra, had been his mistress since the year 41. A last short civil war broke out between Octavian and Mark Antony, who had aimed at carving for himself and his children by Cleopatra a kingdom in the eastern Roman *provinciae*. The war ended in 31 with Octavian's victory at the naval battle of Actium, off the western coast of Greece. Both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide; their children (and also Cleopatra's son by Caesar) were later murdered. In 27, Octavian established a constitution which did not break with the republican past, but tried to be a compromise between liberty and despotism, between monarchism and republicanism. That same year Octavian was given the title of Augustus and ruled the Roman state wisely and with a firm hand for another forty years, until his death in A.D. 14. In-



*Brutus, by Michelangelo. Museo Nazionale, Florence. Alinari*



*Bust of Mark Antony. Vatican Museum, Rome. Alinari*





*The Murder of Caesar. NYPL PC*

*The Battle of Actium, 31 B.C. Roman bireme with crocodile and Roman soldiers. Vatican Museum, Rome, Alinari*





ternally there was order and efficient administration; externally there was further expansion, particularly in central Europe, but also in Asia and Africa. Tensions and turmoil died down.

#### FROM TIBERIUS TO ALEXANDER SEVERUS

From Augustus on, the Roman state was called the Empire and its rulers were called Emperors. Emperor was just one of their many titles. *Imperator* was the general to whom the supreme command was entrusted. Besides *Augustus* and *Imperator*, Octavian was given the titles *Princeps*, "first citizen of Rome," and *Pater patriae*, "father of the fatherland." The consular command and the power of the tribune, inherited from the republican past, gave legal sanction to the acts of Octavian and his successors. In 12 B.C., Octavian also became *Pontifex maximus*, "first pontiff," the highest religious authority. His immediate successors belonged to Caesar's Julian family. Tiberius,

a good general and an efficient administrator, was the ablest. In all likelihood, Claudius was not as dull and inefficient as some historians made him out to be. Caligula, who was assassinated, and Nero, who fiddled while Rome burned and who committed suicide in 68 after a military revolt, were young and immature when they reached supreme power. Caligula and Nero are among the host of rulers who under excessive strain become divorced from reality and live in a world created by their own sick minds.

Victorious in a short civil war which hardly affected the civilian population, the able general and administrator Vespasian ruled Rome for ten years. His older son, Titus, who had captured and destroyed Jerusalem in 70, reigned wisely but briefly and was succeeded by Vespasian's younger son, Domitian. Incompetent and cruel, Domitian was assassinated in a palace plot in 96. Commodus, another incompetent and cruel son of a great, distinguished, and able father, was assassinated nearly one hundred years later, in



Map of the Roman Empire under Augustus. Photoworld



*Ara Pacis* (Altar of Peace), 13–9 B.C. Monument honoring Augustus. Detail of Earth, Air, and Water allegory. EPA





*Engraving of Claudius and his family.*  
NYPL PC



*Bust of Nero. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Alinari*



*Bust of Caligula. NYPL*

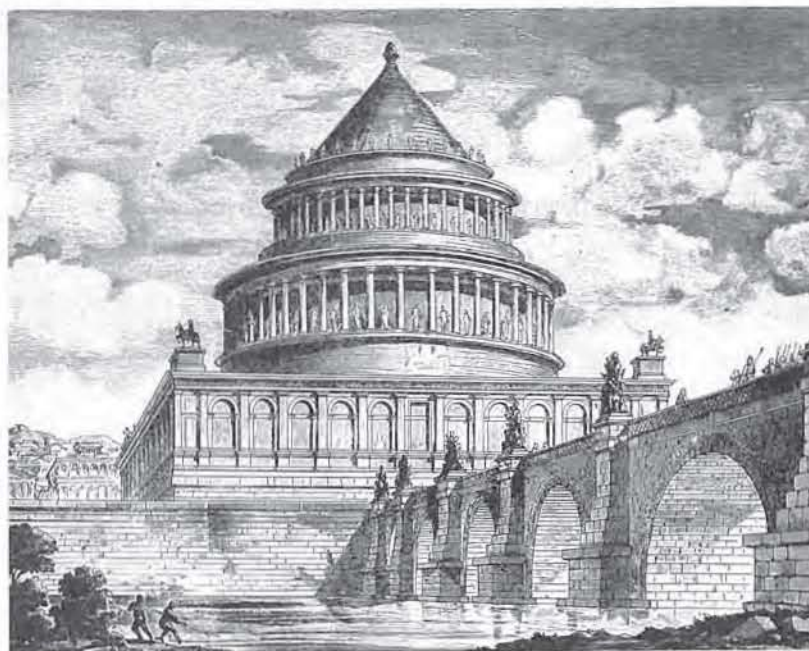
*Vespasian planning the Colosseum. NYPL PC*







Bust of Hadrian, found in Tivoli. Vatican Museum, Rome. Alinari



Restoration of the Mausoleum of Hadrian, now the Castle of Sant' Angelo, Rome. NYPL PC

192, in another palace plot. Between Domitian and Commodus is the prosperous and peaceful era when first the elderly and sound Nerva reigned; then Trajan, the first Roman from the *provinciae* to reach the top of the political pyramid, under whose rule the Roman state attained its greatest expansion. Trajan was followed by Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, able statesmen more concerned with the welfare of the people and the protection of the borders than with further expansion. Finally came Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic philosopher-emperor whose *Meditations* have been a source of inspiration for centuries. Marcus Aurelius had to take up arms against the aggressive Parthians in the Asiatic East of the Empire and later against Germanic invaders. He died at Vindobona (Vienna) while commanding the army of the Danube.

When Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius, was assassinated, a brief conflict between factions of the armed forces followed. It ended with the victory of Septimius Severus, whose family reigned until 235. Under the Severi, the Syrians, whose Romanization had been only partial, were in the ascendance in the Empire. Old and new religions spread westward from Syria, which then also included Phoenicia (the Lebanon), Palestine (Israel), and Arabia (Jordan). In 212, the political and administrative distinction between



Statue of Marcus Aurelius, Piazza del Campidoglio, Rome. NYPL PC

Italy and the rest of the Empire, inherited from republican times, was obliterated. A cultural distinction, however, remained. Italy was completely Roman; the rest of the Empire was undergoing various stages of Romanization (generally more advanced in western than in eastern areas).





*Arch of Marcus, Tripoli, Libya. EPA*



*Arch of Septimius Severus, Forum, Rome. TWA*



*Bust of Septimius Severus, Vatican Museum, Rome. Alinari*

#### IMPERIAL PEACE

Whatever the events in the capital of the Empire, whatever the palace intrigues, the plots and counterplots about which the public knew little, whatever the rivalries and jealousies of ambitious generals and of officers of the praetorian corps garrisoned in Rome, whatever the addition (until 116) of new territories and the pressure of enemies against the borders, from 31 B.C. to A.D. 235 the Roman state enjoyed quiet, order, and internal peace. The people were more prosperous than they had ever been, and, as we know by the number of schools and the widespread use of libraries, the level of literacy was higher than it had ever been anywhere in the world, except in classical Athens. This was the happy era eulogized by Italians familiar with the writings of Latin authors and their Greek contemporaries. This was the Golden Age admired by untold generations of educated Europeans who compared it with the cruelty, injustice, poverty, and suffering of their own times. This was the Rome of which poets and statesmen dreamed in the succeeding centuries, and which emerged again as a dynamic intellectual force in the Italian and then in the European Renaissance—the rebirth in Italian and European minds of ancient concepts and values.

#### GROWING DESPOTISM

At the same time, a subtle, all-important change was taking place. It was gradual at first and went



virtually unnoticed. Augustus' compromise between republicanism and monarchism ceased to exist. Liberty became more and more restricted. Irresponsible despotism, based on the military and on an efficient civilian bureaucracy and approved of by the majority of the citizens, grew. The Roman character was weakening, as shown by a growing inability to cope with difficulties: the plague of the 160s, the succession crises, the attacks by Parthians and later by Persians who overthrew the Parthians in 227, the raids by Germanic tribes. Few realized that most of what the Romans were proud of had originated in the republican period: the creation of a state covering most of the known world and giving peace to it, a society based on law and not on the whims of despots, advancement for all in all fields of endeavor. Kings had bequeathed their kingdoms (for instance those of Pergamum in 133 B.C., of Cyrene in 96 B.C., of Bithynia in 74 B.C.) and republican city-states had entrusted their fate to the Republic, not to the Empire. Few realized that if the Empire had in some cases improved on what the Republic had created, it lacked the dynamism of previous generations. The Golden Age of Latin literature also ended after the death of those whose minds and characters had been formed in the last tormented decades of the Republic. The tree that was the imperial state was still splendid in the second century, but the soil nourishing it had lost its fertility. Most people approved of the change, which seemed to guarantee greater security and stability. A few intellectuals, like Tacitus, the greatest of Roman historians, regretted the weakening of constitutionalism, in which they saw the final passing of republicanism; but the tide was against them.

#### CHAOS (235–284)

After more than two and a half centuries of what for the overwhelming majority of the people was calm, order, and internal peace, came half a century of chaos and turmoil, the result of internal unrest and external attacks. It began with a few generals fighting against each other after the assassination of young Severus Alexander in 235. It continued with other civil wars involving more and more generals and their troops; with plague and famine; with invasions by Goths (then the largest Germanic people) and other Germans who crossed the Danube, the Rhine, and even the Alps, and by Persians who reached the Mediterranean. Under Decius came, at the middle of the third century, the first large-scale persecution of Christians. Trade, agriculture, and industry declined, and there was general impoverishment.

Invaders were finally repelled, and internal order was restored under Diocletian, a general and statesman. Diocletian reorganized the Empire. All remaining traces of constitutionalism were obliterated. Totalitarianism (what ancient Romans, who once hated and



*Roman bust of a German.* NYPL



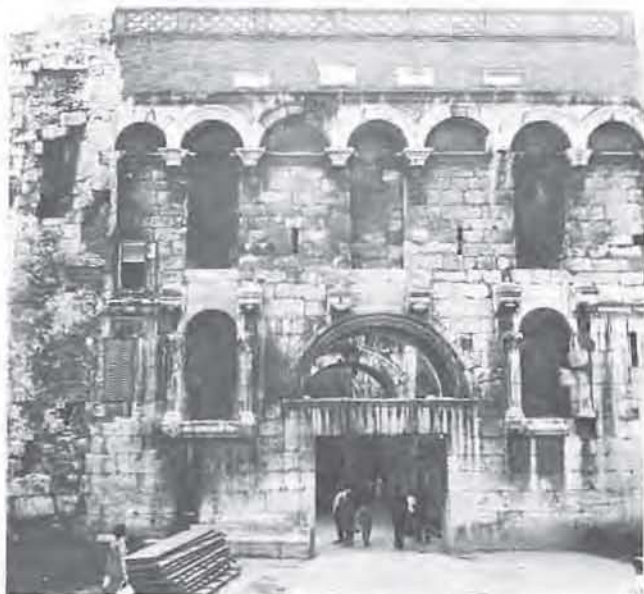
*Tacitus. Lithograph (after antique statue) by Julien. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

despised it, called oriental despotism) was supreme in the Empire. The Roman experiment in liberty, which had begun eight hundred years earlier and had partly survived during the constitutional phase of the Empire, had ended. There was more. Too much suffering during that tragic half-century, too much cruelty, led an increasing number of Romans—at first in the eastern provinces of the Empire, later also in Italy and in the western provinces—to embrace a religion stressing love and charity, promising redemption and resurrection, and in the afterlife the happiness unattainable on earth. Until it became worldly with the exercise of power, Christianity meant alienation from life, total alienation.





*Saint Lawrence before the Emperor Decius. Saint Lawrence was one of the first victims of religious persecution. He was put to death in the reign of Valerian. Museo Civico, Pavia*



*Wall and home of Diocletian at Split (Spalato) Yugoslavia. EPA*

#### THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

With the aim of increasing the efficiency of the armed forces and of strengthening the executive, Diocletian had in 293 replaced the single emperor with a collective leadership made up of two Augusti and two Caesars, thereby partitioning the 116 provinces of the

Empire into four separate states. Fifteen Italian provinces, which included the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, were divided into a northern group governed from Milan, and a southern group governed from Rome. Together with political, administrative, and military reorganization went the establishment of an integrated system of economic controls. Diocletian had aimed at strengthening the Roman state; he actually weakened it by creating a cumbersome and expensive bureaucracy. Satisfied with his achievements, Diocletian abdicated in 305. When Augustus Constantius (whose wife Helena apparently had become a convert to Christianity) died in 306, a civil war began between the political-military rulers. Constantius' son Constantine (born probably in 288) won the battle of the Milvian Bridge, on the outskirts of Rome, in 312.



*Tetrarchs. Piazza San Marco, Venice, 4th century. In the corner of the treasury, the group of Tetrarchs (commonly called Moors) represent two pairs of warriors embracing. Perhaps they are the four emperors Diocletian, Maximilian, Galerius, and Flavius Valerius Constantius. EPA*





Colossal bust of Constantine. Palazzo Capitolino, Rome. Anderson

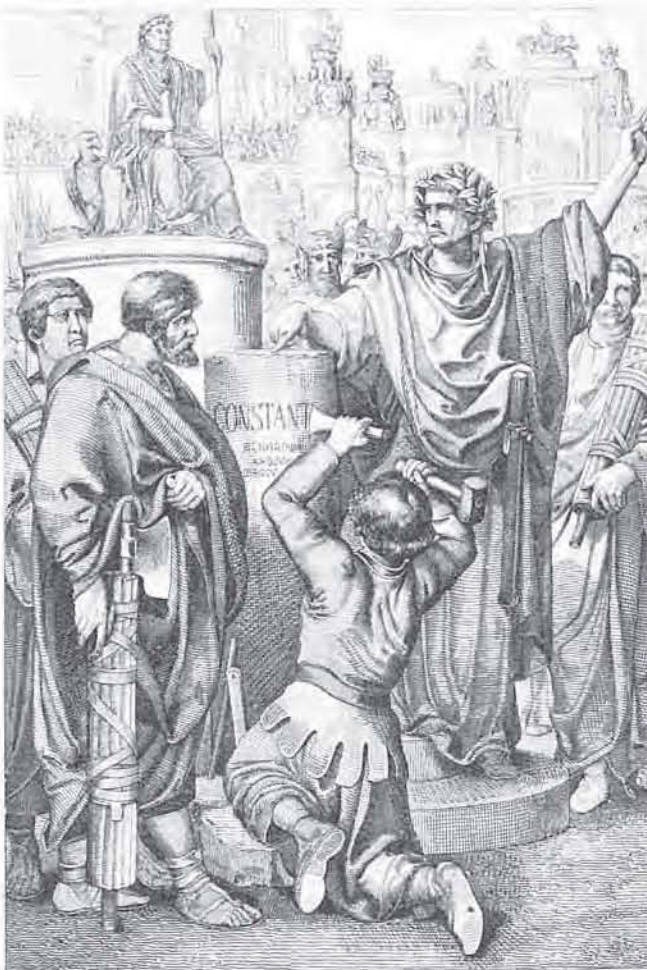
(The bridge is still in use.) The Christian minority had supported him. Equal rights for all religions were proclaimed in Milan in 313. The whole Empire was reunited in 324 after the defeat of the last opponent of Constantine, now sole ruler. In 330 Constantine transferred the capital of the Empire to Constantinople—closer than Rome to borders threatened by Germans on the lower Danube and by Persians to the east; closer too to the provinces where Christians were most numerous. A new era had begun. Politically totalitarian and religiously Christian, the Roman Mediterranean nation was separated now by a deep ideological gulf from the Roman nation born in Italy centuries earlier.

#### THE ITALIAN HERITAGE FROM ANCIENT ROME

##### EVIDENCE IN ITALY OF THE ROMAN PAST

Italians still use roads and bridges built by ancient Romans. Among their churches, cathedrals, and

basilicas are some that were Roman temples and courts of law. For the past few decades Italians—and many foreigners—have attended performances given in what used to be Roman theatres and amphitheatres. Until quite recently, some people even lived in buildings dating from Roman times. The Italian language derives from the Latin spoken by the common people of Romanized Italy. The chief executives of free self-governing city-states—the *comuni*, or communes, organized in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—were called consuls, and had status and functions similar to those of the consuls of republican Rome. The short-lived Republic, established in Rome in 1849, was headed by a triumvirate which tried to revive the collective leadership first established at the end of the sixth century B.C. as a bulwark against despotism. The heads of the autonomous administration, which governed Rome for centuries after the collapse of the Empire in the western Mediterranean, were called patricians, as were the members of the oligarchies that governed Italian republics down to the last years of the eighteenth cen-



Constantine the Great declaring Constantinople the capital of the Empire. NYPL PC



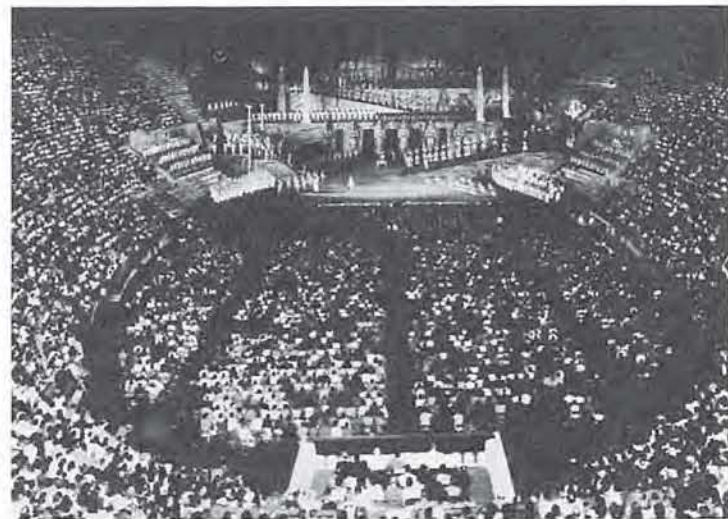
ture (Venice, Genoa, Lucca). In the fifth century B.C. as in the twentieth, a senator is a man of distinction entrusted with responsibility in public affairs. When, as happened between 800 and 1530, Frankish and Italian leaders, followed by Germanic rulers, received the imperial crown in Italy, many Italians hoped that the revived Empire, always officially styled the Roman Empire, would be centered in Italy as the ancient Empire had been. Twentieth-century Italian revolutionary nationalists, the fascists, seeking a title for their leader, called him *duce*, from the Latin *dux*. And pagan or Catholic, the head of the Roman and Italian priesthood was a pontiff (*pontifex*).

*CONTINUITY OF THE ITALIAN NATION*

But material objects, language, and titles are not enough to account for the ultimate continuity. There could be continuity because important elements of the Roman culture never disappeared completely from the minds of post-Roman Italians. There have been fifty generations or so since the Roman state ceased to exist in Italy. There was no political unity from 568



*Roman amphitheatre, Lecce, Apulia. EPA*



*Outdoor theatre, Spoleto. ICI*

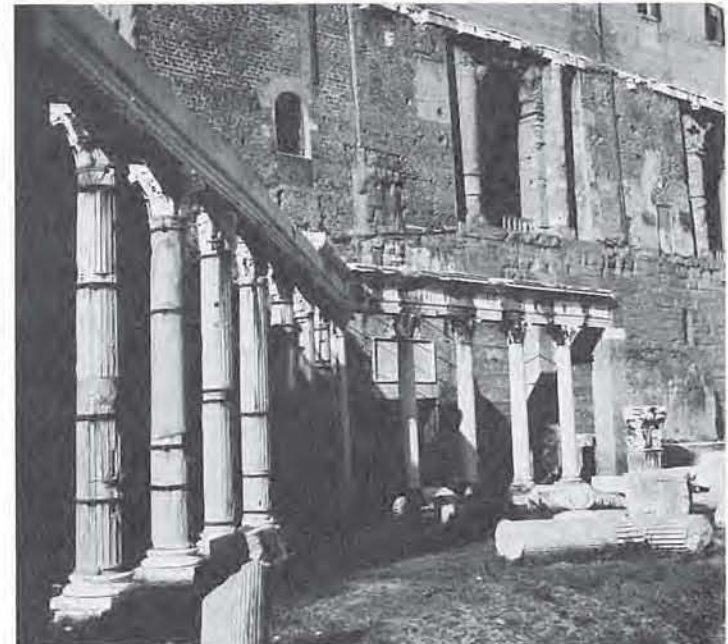


*Roman aqueduct at Villa Quintilius along the Appian Way, Rome. EPA*

*Claudian aqueduct along the Appian Way. Photoworld*



*Portico of the Senators in the Roman Forum. EPA*





*Cicero accuses Catiline of conspiracy against the state in the Roman Senate. Painting by C. Maccari. Alinari*



(when a new wave of invading Germans, the Lombards, failed to conquer the whole of Italy) until 1859–1860, when a short war and a few successful revolutions led to the second unification of Italy, and brought into being the modern united nation-state. An Italian consciousness overriding class and local loyalties does not appear until the development of Italian literature in the thirteenth century. Up to that time, and also later, Latin was the spoken and written language of the educated minorities throughout Italy and served to unify them. Until well into the nineteenth century, most of the important books through which concepts and values were transmitted from generation to generation had been written in Latin by Roman authors.

#### LASTING INFLUENCE OF ROMAN WRITERS

Until recently, there had not been a single generation of post-Roman Italians in which educated people did not read the works of Cicero. A jurist, a statesman deeply involved in the events accompanying the agony of the Republic (and leading to his own death at the hands of hired assassins in 43 B.C.), a powerful orator and a prolific writer, Cicero summarized in clear, uncomplicated language the intellectual achievements of the Roman world and its political wisdom keyed to a sense of justice as much as to an awareness of what is practicable at a given moment. It was largely because of Cicero that the idea of a society founded on liberty—a republic in the Roman sense of the word—never died among Italians. The events of 64–63 B.C. (in which Cicero, elected consul, played a major role as leader of the republicans and opponent of the radical Catiline, supported for a while by Crassus and Caesar) were brilliantly narrated with vivid detail by the historian Sallustius, who also wrote a book dealing with wars in which Marius and Sulla, later protagon-

*The historian Sallust who wrote about the Catiline conspiracy. Marble bust found at Rome near the Porta Salaria. NYPL*



nists in the first civil war, distinguished themselves. Caesar's autobiographical histories about the Roman expansion in Gaul, the first invasions of Germany and England, and the civil strife between democrats and republicans resulting in the downfall of the republican form of government in Rome, seem to belong to a recent rather than a remote past. The historians Tacitus and Suetonius, also widely read by generations of Italians, narrated in detail the events of the first century A.D. and described the gradual weakening of monarchical constitutionalism in favor of despotism.

If the writings of Cicero, Sallustius, Caesar, Tacitus, and Suetonius reflect the first century B.C. and the first century A.D., traditional authoritative writings of Christian and Catholic authors reflect the period of Roman decadence and the disintegration of the Roman



state in Italy. Saint Paul was a Roman citizen and deeply aware of it. Other early Christian writers, such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, also belonged to the Roman nation and were brought up in the Roman culture. The same is true of the most influential Church Fathers, including the two outstanding systematizers of Catholicism, Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory Magnus. Their writings are full of references to pre-Christian Rome, which they sharply condemn. However, they lived in a Roman environment and through their writings, despite their condemnation, the spirit of that period was kept alive for Italians. Catholicism, the religion of most Italians after the disappearance of the Arian version of Christianity, is impregnated with Roman concepts. Its early political

opponent, secularism, which arose in the twelfth century as the new ideology in Catholic-dominated Italy and had a major spokesman later in Dante Alighieri, took its inspiration from Roman ideas and Roman experiences. The humanism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was largely a reformulation of Roman concepts and values, and of Greek ones transmitted through the Romans. The *History of Rome* by Livy, the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder, the philosophical and ethical essays of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, the poetry of Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, and a host of other distinguished poets, and the works available in Latin by the Greek Plutarch comprised most of the syllabus of Italian liberal education in postmedieval times up until the nineteenth century.

*Representation of Virgil in mosaic. Sousse Excavations, Bardo Museum, Tunis*



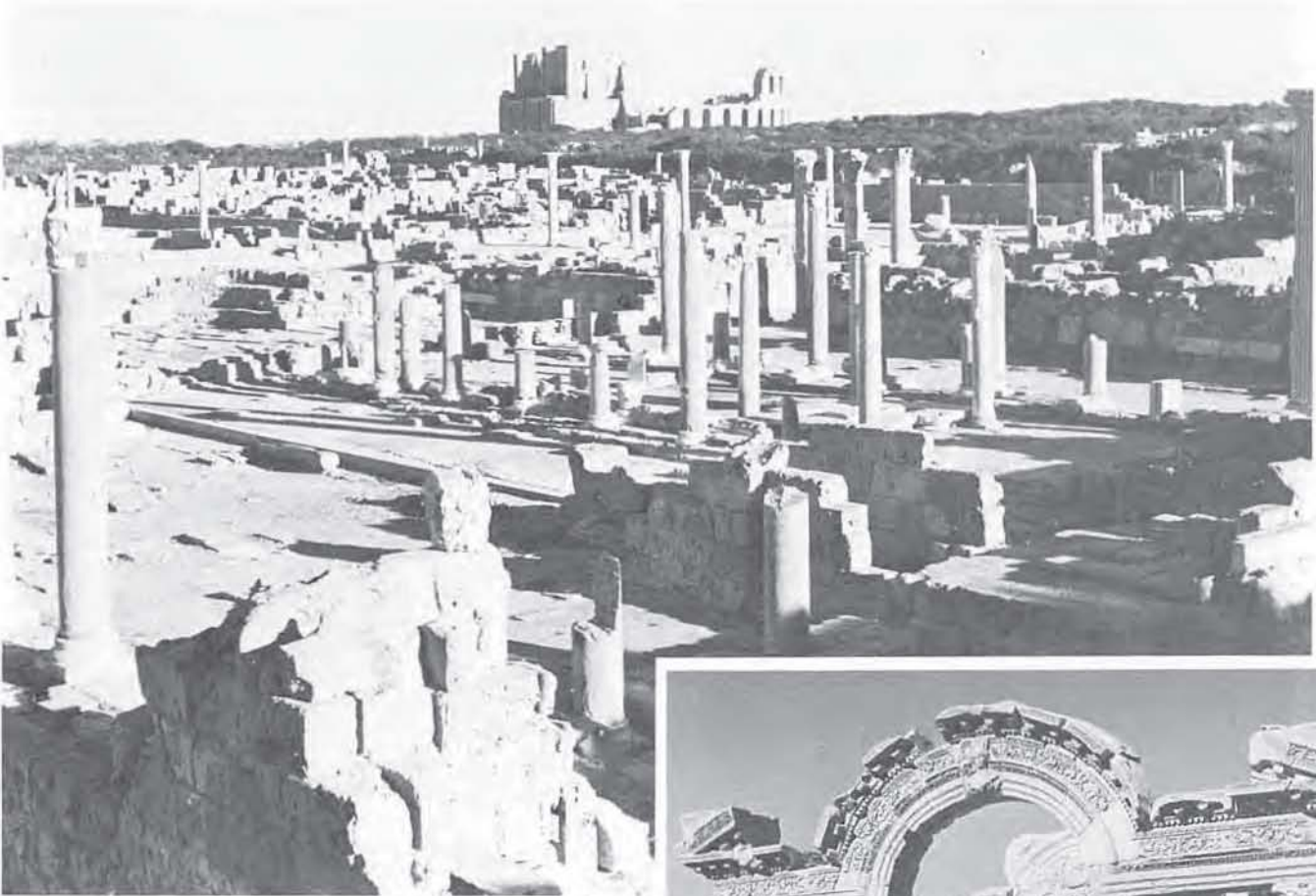


*SLOW BUT STEADY CHANGE*

Continuity there is. The mark left on the Italian nation by its Roman past is deep. The persistence of the continuity is related to the steadiness of the internal and external developments of the Roman community—the slow pace by which its institutions grew and changed, and the measured regularity with which it expanded to become first an Italian and later a

Mediterranean state. There is nothing unique in Rome's internal changes and external conquests. The uniqueness lies in the long duration of each development. What had been thought of as a natural development because it had been taken for granted by generation after generation could not easily be erased from Italian minds.

It took hundreds of years to build the way of life characteristic of the Roman community in its early



*Ruins of the ancient Roman city, Sabratha, Libya. EPA*



*The Temple of Hadrian, Ephesus (Kucuk Menderes) Turkey. EPA*



centuries of greatness. We begin to know something of this way of life with the beginning of recorded history early in the fourth century B.C. Legends have embellished and transformed the history of the earlier period, but whatever the historic reality may have been, that period did exist, and the Romans of the fourth century were the end product of a process that had already lasted many centuries. It took more centuries, as we know through documented history, to change that way of life into a new one. The change begins with the downfall of the Republic: the new way of life—politically authoritarian, intellectually dogmatic, spiritually Christian after the failure of competing religions—became dominant in the fourth century. It had taken two generations to establish the Republic on a firm basis; it took two generations to destroy it. Until bloody rioting broke out in 133 B.C., it had been over three hundred years since dissensions among the citizens had led to violence. After the capture of Rome by Gauls, eight hundred years elapsed before another enemy of the Roman state captured the city. It took nearly a hundred years of steady, sustained warfare, at first defensive but soon offensive, to unify the peninsula under Roman hegemony. It took more than a hundred years of steady sustained warfare to make Rome the dominant Mediterranean power. It took nearly another three hundred years to make the Roman state into an empire, and it took even longer to transform a multitude of peoples into the Mediterranean Roman nation. It took nearly two hundred years of continual invasions, from the early fifth century to the end of the sixth, at a time when Romans were undergoing the great spiritual crisis of conversion to Christianity, to bring about the collapse of the Roman state in Italy. Weakened and shrunken, the Roman state in the East and its Byzantine successor lasted another nine hundred years.

#### ROMAN VALUES

The factors making for this steadiness, gradualness, and slowness of development within the framework of what was for many centuries a free society of free citizens are to be found in the realm of the intangibles constituting a way of life: the values dominant in the society, setting the tone for all. Historians say that the fair and good life was the goal of ancient Greeks, or at least of that influential section of educated Greeks who patterned their lives on Athenian models. The successors of the ancient Romans, the Mediterranean Christians—Greek Orthodox in the East and Roman Catholic in the West—valued benevolence, humility, purity, together with obedience, patience, and meekness. The Greek fair and good life appealed to many Romans, particularly from the second century B.C. on; and there were Romans at all times who respected what later became Christian values. But what set the tone for the Roman community on the Tiber, then for the Roman nation in Italy, was the presence

of a large influential group that valued what the Romans called the virtues of the ancestors and tried to pattern their conduct on them.

The writings of Roman authors are full of references to these values, the cornerstone of their way of life. Examples (many of them of course mythical) were held up to the younger generation. What the lives of saints were for Italians during the centuries of Catholic ascendancy, the deeds of Brutus, Manlius Capitolinus, Torquatus, Decius, and others already mentioned were for the Romans. The collective deeds of the Horatii, Fabii, elderly senators facing Gauls, the examples set by Virginius, the fourth-century censor Appius Claudius, Regulus, and by such women as Lucretia, Cloelia, and Cornelia, were held up as models of virtue. Conversely the behavior of tyrants or would-be tyrants made them objects of contempt and hatred: in this group were Tarquinius Superbus, Spurius Cassius, the fifth-century-B.C. decemvir Appius Claudius, and the traitor Coriolanus.

It is not difficult to identify some of the more important Roman values. First came *virtus*, which simply meant manliness, what is proper of a man. In a military society, which Rome remained for over a thousand years, *virtus* meant primarily the behavior proper to a soldier: valor, indifference to death, discipline, obedience, initiative, a sense of responsibility. Particularly during the four and a half centuries of republican liberty (and even after, until military service became a career in its own right), soldiers and officers were deeply conscious of also being citizens—not just soldiers competently fulfilling their functions, but fighters for Rome and for everything Rome represented. With *virtus* went *constantia*: steadiness and endurance. Fickleness, in any field of behavior, was held in contempt. *Fides* was the obligation to keep one's word, whatever the sacrifice involved; independently from legal sanctions, private contracts were honored more than was customary elsewhere in the Mediterranean world; the Roman Republic was not loved by foreigners, but it was trusted. *Gravitas*

Bronze helmet of a Roman legionnaire. Formia, Latium. EPA





did not mean only that comportment should always be dignified; in a wider sense it meant that life should be taken seriously. *Temperantia* was moderation in all things, including things of the flesh. The gluttony of Lucullus, the greed of Crassus, the sexual intemperance of Augustus' direct and indirect descendants, the orgies in which Messalina, wife of Claudius, and Agrippina, mother of Nero, participated, became proverbial. But the comportment of a small minority, however influential, should not be confused with general behavior: if intemperance had been dominant, Romans would not have been able to overcome hardships, and the Roman state would not have lasted as long as it did. *Continentia* was more than abstinence from whatever is illicit: it was an attribute of *moderatio*, self-control, the ability not to show physical or spiritual suffering, the denial of emotional outbursts. *Aequitas* was evenness of mind and reasonableness in relation to oneself, equanimity and impartiality in relation to others. *Pietas* was respect for elders, for ancestors, for parents, for gods. Family cohesion was strong, excessively so to modern Westerners. In the family as well as in the community, the Roman woman both as spouse and mother held a higher status than women in other Mediterranean cultures. Religiousness was sincere and diffused through all classes, except

*Roman family life. Detail from "The Mother of the Gracchi." Photoworld*



*Juvenal (born A.D. 55), who wrote sixteen satires denouncing the criminal excesses, immorality, and tyranny in Rome. NYPL*

*Bust of Messalina, the wife of Claudius. From the room of the Emperors, Capitoline Museum, Rome. Alinari*



*House of the Vestal Virgins in the Roman Forum. These idealized statues illustrate the high status of women in the Roman state. EPA*







Roman family tomb of Lucius Vibius and Vecilia Hila. Vatican Museum, Rome. Alinari

from the second century B.C., among Greek-oriented intellectuals. The nation that turned to Christianity in the fourth and fifth centuries had more believers than worldlings and agnostics. Paganism weakened and then faded away, not because people did not believe, but because they needed a deeper and more spiritual faith.

Roman virtues were translated into a harsh ethical code. Duty prevailed over pleasure, self-sacrifice over personal gratification, self-control over instinctive behavior. What was good for others and for the community prevailed over what was good for oneself. With such a code there could be, and was, cruelty to oneself and to others. Contempt for one's own life meant contempt for the lives of others. Those who submitted to decimation (the execution of one out of every ten soldiers for cowardice) also approved of large-scale crucifixions and gladiatorial games. Slaves were often treated humanely, to the point of being considered members of the extended family, but instances of cruelty were numerous and were not frowned upon. In every generation there were of course Romans not strong enough to live up to the code, the cowards and liars, the frivolous and intemperate; there were also Romans who could live up to the code but did not approve of it. From the second century B.C. on, there were growing numbers who despised and hated the code. But at least until the end of the second century A.D., there were enough Romans who accepted it to give the Roman way of life its distinctive character of steadiness and regularity, efficiency and practical achievement. The traditional Roman ethical code became, minus harshness and cruelty, an integral part of Stoicism: the philosophy of life adopted by the classes from which came the officials of the administration, the judges, the officers of the armed forces, the professional people during the first two and a half centuries of the Empire.

#### THE ROMAN SOLDIER

Roman military successes—the key to the Italian and Mediterranean expansion of a community that did not excel in diplomacy or economics—were largely the result of the ethical code. Romans were no braver than Samnites, Numidians, or Gauls. Their military equipment was no better than that of Carthaginians, Macedonians, Parthians. Roman generals were often inferior to their opponents—to Pyrrhus, Hannibal, Mithridates—and had their equal in barbarians like the Gauls Brennus and Vercingetorix, and the German Arminius. But the result of nearly five hundred years of offensive wars was in favor of Rome. Romans were also successful for a considerable time in defensive wars: in the western Mediterranean for nearly two and a half centuries (from the raids of the Marcomanni in 166 to the second invasion of the Visigoths in 408), and in the eastern Mediterranean for much longer. Long-range military success was the result of endurance on the part of the Roman nation and of a responsible concept of the duties of each individual. There was good organization, the result of a process of trial and error, of imagination and of imitation. The Roman legion—just over three thousand men when Romulus reigned, six thousand men when Marius reorganized the army—was not a mere fighting force; it was a way of life. Good organization, training, and discipline created the Roman soldier: a man who, as a subordinate (from private to imperial legate), knew



Vercingetorix and his troops. NYPL PC

Gladiators' barracks, adjoining the Great Theatre. Pompeii (Campania). EPA







*Interior of the Colosseum, the hunt of the wild beast, one of the gladiatorial games. NYPL PC*

*Gladiators. Detail from a fourth century mosaic, Galleria Borghese, Rome. Anderson*







*The Praetorian Guards. Louvre, Paris. Alinari*

how to obey and, as a commander (of a squad or of an army of many legions), knew how to lead. Historians have stressed military similarities between Romans on one side and ancient Macedonians and modern Prussians on the other. But the Romans had by far the longest successful career. The Macedonians' lasted less than two hundred years, from the reign of Philip II to the reign of Perseus; the Prussians' lasted three hundred years, from the reign of the Great Elector to the dictatorship of Hitler. The successful military career of the Romans lasted eight hundred years.

#### STATESMANSHIP

To conquer is one thing, to hold territory and people is another. The creation of a solid lasting state was a major Roman achievement. There were two phases in this process, one Italian, when Rome was a republic, the other postrepublican and Mediterranean. The state that had been brought into existence by 270 B.C. was the result of a compromise between Roman hegemony and local autonomy. There had been enemies destroyed by the Romans; cities and villages razed, inhabitants enslaved, land appropriated and distributed to Roman soldier-settlers. There were also allies and former enemies whose rights were de-

finied clearly, whose possessions were respected by the Romans, and who enjoyed in their internal affairs as much self-government as the Romans themselves. There were other allies and former enemies who were granted Roman citizenship. It is not enough to say that they were considered equal to the Romans in every way: they were Romans. When many of the allies took up arms in 91 B.C., their chief goal before secession had been complete merging into the Roman nation; they stopped fighting when their request was granted. Of course there were practical advantages in being a Roman at the time, but these were not enough to explain the appeal of a simple slogan: *civis Romanus sum*, "I am a Roman citizen." The appeal can be summarized in one word, security. Not the security provided by arms, but the security provided by just laws and by the just enforcement of those laws. Romans could be trusted because their actions were not arbitrary—no mean feat in a world in which distrust and arbitrariness were the rule. There were flaws, there were errors and contradictions, but Romans had accomplished, even if only in part and temporarily, a major progressive revolution. Not only had government by law for many centuries replaced arbitrary government to a larger extent than had ever been the case previously, but a procedure had been established for modifying the laws. The procedure was based upon decisions freely taken by citizens in their assemblies, and upon decisions of judges enjoying a freedom unknown in other societies. Romans had invented, and practiced for several centuries, a procedure combining stability and flexibility, thereby making peaceful change possible. The procedure was lost in the prolonged and terrifying crisis of the third century. However, the idea and the knowledge of the institutions required to implement it survived, to live again in modern democracies.

#### AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION

With hindsight, it is evident that the achievement of the first phase of state-building was the most important for man's progress. But contemporaries and Italian intellectuals of post-Roman generations were more impressed by the achievement of the second phase: the efficient organization of a nation embracing tens of millions in an area including most of the civilized world known by Romans and Romanized Mediterraneans, a nation that was truly worldwide. For generations like ours, which take for granted bureaucratic organization, it is difficult to visualize what it meant to administer efficiently a vast, populous, highly diverse state. Previous large states—none as populous as the Roman Empire—had had rigid hierarchical structures. A small group (a caste in Egypt, a tribe organized monarchically in the Persian Empire, a city-state organized democratically in the short-lived Athenian Empire), which possessed a monopoly of



soldiers and weapons, ruled arbitrarily over all other groups. Over a long period, the Romans succeeded in building a complex, well-organized bureaucracy to take care of internal administration, security and order, protection against external attacks, financial and economic problems, religious and leisure activities, and public works. Thus the Roman Mediterranean state was "modern," a term that cannot be applied to any other state of the ancient Mediterranean, the Middle East, the states of India, or Mandarin China.

The process of building such a bureaucratic structure had begun when the Roman Republic and peninsular Italy were one, and all overseas territories were dependencies. It had not been very efficient: too many offices were elective, nowhere in the republic was there the civil servant as we understand him today, indispensable for regularly carrying out public functions. The process was extended and improved under the emperors. The bureaucratic foundation of the state, laid by Augustus, was expanded and strengthened under his successors. The institutional structure was the main element that held the Roman state together during the upheavals of the third and fourth centuries. It finally collapsed in the fifth century in the western area of the Empire, but it sustained the eastern area and its Byzantine successor much longer. A revenue of about one hundred million gold dollars (approximately that of the Roman state in its heyday) seems trifling today, but it was a colossal sum in ancient times. Its collection, management, and disbursement required a large and competent fiscal bureaucracy. A standing army of from three to five hundred thousand men posted on borders extending for thousands of miles necessitated a complex, well-integrated command. Diocletian's 116 provinces needed tens of thousands of officials and clerks. There were thousands of miles of roads, many ports, and innumerable public buildings to be maintained.

Local administration was modern also. Patterned at first on the Roman elective system, local administration of large and small cities and their rural areas became more and more complex and bureaucratic. There were executive boards, committees, consultative councils, permanent officials. When the central administration collapsed in Italy in the fifth and sixth centuries, the *municipia* (incorporated cities and townships) survived, as they did in parts of Gaul, and in North Africa and Spain until they were conquered by the Arabs in the seventh and eighth centuries. Records are scant because of illiteracy and lack of writing materials, but we know that *municipia* functioned in Italy during the "dark" five hundred years of the early Middle Ages. They survived in cities left to fend for themselves as best they could, and in the independent or semi-independent maritime republics of the eighth and ninth centuries: Amalfi, Gaeta, Venice. *Municipia*, or at least a considerable number of them, revived as the self-governing communes of Tuscany and northern Italy, and as other maritime republics (Pisa, Ragusa,

Genoa) of the second half of the Middle Ages. The territorial boundaries of many Roman *municipia*, often corresponding to present-day districts, can still be clearly traced. Cities declined but never disappeared; they were a link between ancient Roman civilization and the new civilization that developed in Italy from the eleventh century on.

#### ROMAN LAW

The Empire ceased to exist in Italy in the centuries when the institutions developed over a millennium no longer functioned; it survived only as an idea. There was, however, another Roman creation which remained an important component of the new Italian way of life. It has influenced the Italian nation and many other nations on both sides of the Atlantic ever since. Like territorial expansion and the institutions of the Roman state, it used as a guideline the values that ancient Romans had long cherished. This creation was Roman law, slowly but surely developed during the many centuries between the first unification of Italy and the crisis of the third century.

Other ancient nations shared with the Romans a deep reverence for law, but the Romans created a new kind of law. For a long time the laws of the Roman community were no different from those of other Mediterranean communities: they consisted of norms of behavior uncritically accepted and religiously sanctioned, to which the individual was totally subjected. The oldest Roman code of which we have knowledge—the fifth century B.C. laws of the Twelve Tables—was not unlike other ancient codes. The change began later and became evident in the second century B.C. The Romans were the first to divorce law from religion—a feat as difficult as the separation, as yet unachieved, of ethics from religion. No one can say why this should have happened in Rome and not elsewhere. But when it happened, it opened a new road for men to follow. Tradition sanctioned by a religious authority gave way to sanction by the citizens. If reason, as the ancient Ionian Greeks discovered, is what characterizes man, then laws—added Roman jurists from the first century B.C. on—should be created according to reason.

To offset man's fallibility, the Romans stressed the importance of government by law, the best guarantee of the citizens' security. Individual will and arbitrary action are curbed insofar as legal procedure is paramount. The Romans also went further than any other ancient people in developing the concept of the person as an individual endowed with rights and duties. The person, as jurists made clear, is the moral individual, just as the citizen is the political individual. The concept of the citizen, first developed by Romans, was basic to the enactment in modern times of the British and American Bills of Rights, and of the French Declaration of Rights. The Romans went beyond their contemporaries in defining liberty, enabling future generations to conceive the autonomy of the individual



as the foundation of self-government, of government by the people. They also went beyond others in conceiving equality. Roman jurisprudence created the *jus gentium*, which is not the law of the states (as sometimes interpreted) but the law of the peoples. Roman jurists propounded the moral and legal equality of all human beings. In view of the particular development of Western economic systems, it was important that it was the Romans who were the first to define the concept of property in precise terms. Ownership, contracts, obligations, and everything else pertaining to economic activities, were carefully scrutinized and legislated by the Romans—as was also everything pertaining to the family. Romans attached the greatest importance to the concept of justice. It was for them what charity has been for Christians, what liberty was for English-speaking revolutionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, what equality is for twentieth century socialists. Romans were feared; they were also respected because of their sense of justice. There is no problem in deciding what justice is, as long as people uncritically accept traditional positions sanctioned by religious belief. But what is justice, once the need arises to define it rationally, as was the case for the new Roman secular law? The definition of justice formulated by Roman jurists and used in Roman courts is *suum cuique tribuere*, "to give each his due." It is also the definition accepted ever since in most of the nations belonging to Western civilization. From it derives the effort to find out what rightfully belongs to each individual and to each group, what, in a democracy, belongs for instance to a

majority and what to minorities. Romans legislated general norms, allowing judges the latitude that in modern times has been a main feature of the British and American courts of law. Because of the inherent harshness in the enforcement of general rules, Romans stressed fairness, as a moderating and humanizing element.

Roman law survived in Italy. It was more than a set of legal rules. It had a philosophical foundation. It was closely associated with ethics. It had definite political and social implications. Through the centuries, down to contemporary times, when the study of law meant the study of everything concerning man in society, young Italians of the educated classes were trained in Roman law. Italian universities developed in the Middle Ages from the law schools in which Roman law was taught and interpreted. The authority of Gaius, Scaevola, Papinian, Paulus, Ulpian, Modestinus, the jurists who systematized Roman law in the second and third centuries, was quoted in legal discussions. The final synthesis of Roman legal rules and jurisprudence, compiled in the middle of the sixth century by the order of Justinian—the Eastern Roman Emperor ruling a shrunken Empire that included all of Italy for the last time—was for a long time the foundation of Italian law. In spite of the vastly different environment, Italian judges applied Roman principles of law and observed Roman legal procedures. Through principles and procedure, concepts and values survived which have influenced the Italian way of life ever since.



Statue of the jurist Gaius. Palazzo di Giustizia, Rome. Alinari

Ulpian. One of the jurists who systematized Roman law. NYPL







*The Emperor Justinian with his followers and Saint Maximian. Mosaic. Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna. Alinari*



## 4

# TRANSFORMATION AND THE BIRTH OF CATHOLICISM (FOURTH TO SIXTH CENTURY)

*Decline – The religious revolution – Barbarian invaders – Barbarian rulers – Justinian – The Middle Ages – Catholicism – Rise of the papacy – Catholicism as faith – Catholicism as thought – Catholic institutional frame – Catholic leadership in Italy.*

## DECLINE

THE transition from ancient to medieval times in Italy was no sudden break. Over three hundred years separate the last persecution of Christians, under Diocletian's immediate successor, and the triumph of Catholicism with the conversion of the Lombards—the last major Germanic tribe to invade Italy. The main characteristic of this age was the revolutionary passage from old to new beliefs and values. But there was more. Economic decline had worsened in the fourth century, and continued after. In spite of some brilliant flashes among the converts to Christianity, intellectual decline accompanied the economic decline, and political decline led to the loss of territorial unity in 568.

Not many Italian contemporaries were aware of the steady downward trend which, firmly established in those three centuries, continued for another five hundred years until the middle of the eleventh century. Instead, most people were convinced that evil times were a temporary phenomenon and that there would be a recovery, just as there had been after the disasters of the Second Punic War, after the civil wars of the first century B.C., and after the internal upheavals and the invasions of the third century. Italians continued to think that the Roman state was the only legitimate one. But even if it had revived, it would have been different—as different as the Byzantine and Charlemagne's empires were from the East Roman and West Roman empires of Constantine's sons, as



Medal depicting the Emperor Theodosius, who unified the empire in 394. NYPL PC

Christian monotheism was from pagan polytheism, and autocratic arbitrariness from the rule of law.

## THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

At first, for a couple of generations after Constantine's death, the transformation was the work of forces operating within the Roman nation. Through persuasion, imitation, and some coercion, Christians, a minority in Italy early in the fourth century, had by the end of the century become a majority. The obliteration of traditional paganism and Syria-originated Mithraism among the masses of the people, of Stoicism (partly absorbed by Christianity through the influence of Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan), and of Manichaeism among the educated classes took generations more. In the villages (*pagi*), pagan deities were worshiped for a long time.

Political conflicts were numerous in the fourth century, but they were only partly related to the religious and moral revolution, and had little effect on the masses of the people. There were quarrels among descendants of Constantine and other military leaders moved by ambition and greed, which led to armed clashes within the military stationed along the borders and in some cities. Young Julian, Constantine's last descendant to occupy the throne, briefly, failed in his attempt to replace Christianity with an idealized form of paganism. A generation later Theodosius, Augustus in the East since 379, after a short civil war briefly



united the entire Roman Empire once again and for the last time in 394. Not yet fifty, he died a few months later. One son, Arcadius, took the succession in the East, the other, Honorius, in the West. Then came the storm: a terrifying storm that inspired Saint Augustine to write his greatest work.

#### BARBARIAN INVADERS

In 401, the vanguard of a new wave of Germanic invaders reached Italy. They killed and destroyed. Soon after, others came in large numbers. Unlike the Germans of the second, third, and fourth centuries B.C., most of them remained in Italy as conquerors. Moving slowly from their original home in Scandinavia, the Goths had reached the shores of the Black Sea, north of Roman boundaries, in the third century. Increasing in number, they divided into western and eastern political units, the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths. (In Italy, an uncouth person is still labeled an "Ostrogoth.") In the fourth century, tribes of Mongolian Huns moved westward from the deserts and steppes of central Asia. In 375 they attacked the Goths who proved unable to withstand the onslaught of the raiders on horseback.

The Ostrogoths at first accepted subordination, and later escaped the Huns by moving into Roman territory in the middle valley of the Danube. In 376 the Visigoths—men, women, and children, hundreds of thousands of them—crossed the lower Danube, looking for safety under the protection of the Roman state.

Other Germans, for instance a large number of Franks in northern Gaul, at one time or another had been allowed to settle in Roman territory. The new settlers had provided good soldiers and capable officers and had been assimilated, or were in the process of being assimilated. The more numerous Visigoths acted differently. Under their leader Fritigern they kept their distinctive tribal organization and, instead of settling peacefully on the land granted to them, they raided the Balkans, killing, destroying, and looting. They defeated the Romans near Adrianople in 378. The Roman Emperor in the East, Valens, was killed in the battle. After a quarter of a century of devastation much of the Balkans was in ruins: Greece in particular did not recover until modern times. Finally, the Emperor Arcadius bribed the Visigoths to leave the Balkans. Their chief, or king, Alaric, led them into northern Italy where they ravaged cities and countryside until they were defeated by the Romans in 402 at Pollentia (Pollenza), in Piedmont. They left Italy, only to return a few years later. In 402 or 404, Emperor Honorius moved the capital from Milan, a splendid city in the fourth century, to Ravenna, protected by the marshes of the lower Po. A horde composed of miscellaneous German tribes was repelled with difficulty in 405. Still led by Alaric, the Visigoths were



Emperor Honorius. Ivory diptych, Cathedral Treasury, Cathedral d'Aosta. NYPL PC



Alaric sacking Rome in 410. Engraving. NYPL



back in Italy in 408. This time they crossed the Apennines. In 410 they occupied and looted Rome, which had not been captured by an enemy since 390 B.C., eight hundred years earlier. For their Roman contemporaries it was the greatest disaster of all time—truly the end of the world.

Enriched with loot, the Visigoths left Italy in 411. Many settled in southern Gaul, others crossed into Spain where they established their own Visigothic kingdom, which lasted until the Arab conquest early in the eighth century. After the departure of the Visigoths, Italy recovered, but not the rest of the Roman Empire in the West. To defend continental provinces, Roman troops were gradually withdrawn from Britain from 402 on. They never returned. Saxons, Angles, and Jutes landed on the British coast. Left to themselves, Roman Britons put up a gallant defense against these and other invaders symbolized in the legends of

King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table. But by the end of the fifth century, the Roman way of life had been obliterated in the island. Late in 406 Vandals and three other large Germanic tribes crossed the Rhine. After ravaging Gaul and Spain, the Vandals crossed into North Africa; in 439 they captured Carthage; Sardinia and other islands followed. Sueves and Alans stayed in western Spain. Franks, Alamanni, and Burgundians occupied northern, eastern, and central Gaul respectively. As the result of successful wars waged by the Franks between 486 and 532, Roman Gaul became France.

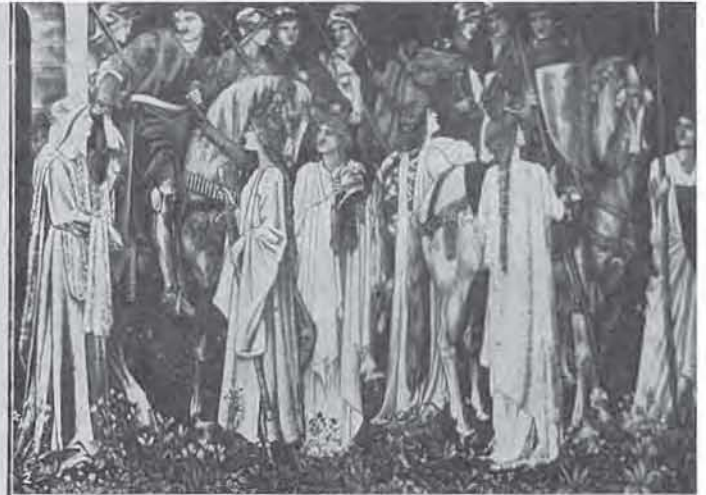
In Italy the respite following the departure of the Visigoths lasted four decades. Reorganized by Attila (the Scourge of God, as he has been known ever since), the Huns moved toward the Atlantic. The epic battle in which they slaughtered many Burgundians in 437 lives forever in the tales of the Nibelungen. In 451,

*The Knights of the Round Table.*

1. *The failure of Sir Gawaine and Sir Ector.*



2. *The arming and departure of the knights.*



3. *Attainment of the Holy Grail.* Photoworld



Roman mercenaries defeated Attila in central Gaul. Attila then crossed into northern Italy, laying waste the Po Valley and the Venetian plain in 452. According to tradition, the entreaties of a delegation, which included Pope Leo I, induced Attila to spare Rome. Early in 455, Valentinian, the emperor of a more and more ephemeral Empire in the West, was assassinated in a palace plot. His widow, Eudoxia, is supposed to have asked the Vandals from Africa to avenge him. Led by Gaiseric, in June the Vandals captured Rome, then laid waste much of the peninsula. Ever since, Hun and Vandal, in the language of Italians and other Europeans, have symbolized cruelty, massacres, wanton destruction.

This time there was no recovery for Rome, for the other cities of Italy sacked by Huns and Vandals, or for the countryside. Private and public buildings decayed; roads, bridges, aqueducts, and ports fell into disrepair. Slavery almost disappeared, not so much because of the new Christian values but because Italians could no longer afford to buy slaves and there were no longer any conquered subjects to be sold into slavery. On the other hand farmers were becoming serfs of the new landlords, the warriors of Germanic tribes. Industry declined to the point of near extinction. Trade shrank. During the four tragic years 451–455, the institutional structure holding the nation together collapsed. There were no longer any revenues to pay the mercenaries of ephemeral emperors of a phantom empire in the West. The mercenaries took over.

#### BARBARIAN RULERS

After 455, what central government remained in Italy was for eighty years in the hands of leaders of German mercenary troops or of Germanic tribes that settled in the country and lived exploiting the docile, servile, Christian Roman population. The Vandal Gaiseric remained in Italy only a short time. The Suevian Ricimer appointed and dismissed emperors of the Empire in the West for sixteen years. Another general, Orestes (possibly a Roman and not a barbarian), nominated his teen-age son, Romulus Augustus, emperor in 475. In the following year Odoacer, leader of a motley collection of mercenaries, mainly Herulians, deposed Romulus Augustus (nicknamed Augustulus) after having defeated and killed Orestes.

The year 476 is generally accepted as marking the end of the Roman state in Italy. Actually the events of that year meant little to contemporaries. Odoacer was just one of many German tribal leaders who, since the beginning of the century, had carved a state in Roman territory for themselves and their followers. What matters is that, except as a name, the Roman Empire in the West had ceased to exist. The pressure of invaders that was felt in the Roman Empire in the East on only two stretches of the frontier, the lower

Danube and the upper Euphrates, was felt by the Roman Empire in the West at every point of its long frontier, which extended from Hadrian's Wall in Britain to the middle Danube. The frontier gave way.

Invasions were only one factor in the tragedy that engulfed the Roman nation in the West in the fifth century. The combined strength of Goths, Vandals, Huns, and others who burst into Italian territory between 401 and 476 was no greater, at any given time, than the strength of Gallic hordes thrown back by the Romans of the Republic in 225 B.C., or of the Germanic Teutons, Cimbrians, and other tribes annihilated in 102/101 B.C. There were many minor factors including economic decline, incompetent leadership, factionalism among generals. There was one major factor: the changed character of the Romans. Looking back, the historian sees a pattern in what to contemporaries, and to all superficial observers, was a chaotic maze of disconnected events. In revulsion against cruelty and corruption, in revulsion also against the exhausting crisis of the third century, first a few Romans, then more and more of them in the fourth century, had embraced a religion founded on love. Humility and char-



*Gaiseric's Vandals in Italy, 455. NYPL PC*



*Odoacer, who deposed Romulus Augustus. Coin. British Museum*



ity were the cherished virtues, not military valor: Romans of the fifth century were as willing to die as their ancestors had been, but as martyrs, not as warriors. The afterlife meant more to them than life on earth. When attacked, most Romans of the fifth and sixth centuries simply did not fight back. There was no longer a citizen army as there had been from the beginning of the Roman state until the collapse of the Republic. There was no permanent army of Roman soldiers and officers, as there had been during the constitutional phase of the empire. The protection of the borders was entrusted to an army composed at first partly, then entirely, of foreign mercenaries. For a long time they fought well. Led by the Vandal Stilicho, they had defeated the Visigoths in 402 and another horde of invaders near Florence in 405; led by the Roman Aëtius, they had defeated Attila in 451. But why fight for a Roman state that its citizens were unwilling to defend? Little or no effort was required to take over outlying provinces, then Italy itself.

Odoacer governed Italy nominally as representative of the Roman emperor in the East. In reality he acted as an independent ruler, and inefficiently. In 488, the Ostrogoths, authorized since around 450 by the government in Constantinople to settle on the right bank of the middle Danube, were led into Italy by their leader, King Theodoric II. Besieged in Ravenna, Odoacer surrendered and was assassinated in 493. The Herulians were never heard of again. Under the Ostrogoths Italy was still one state, but a state in which two distinct nations lived, each with its own political organization and its own version of Christianity. During Theodoric's long Italian reign (he died in 526),



*The equestrian duel between Theodoric and Odoacer. Vatican Library*

there was some order, some peace, and some recovery. It was then that the last two great Latin writers wrote their works. Cassiodorus and Boethius (the latter executed in 524).

#### JUSTINIAN

In 535 the Roman emperor in the East, the able Justinian, bent on reestablishing the unity of the Empire, sent an expeditionary force to Italy. In his eyes, as in the eyes of all native Italians, Italy was still very much an integral part of the Roman state. Surprised initially by the attack, the Goths soon rallied behind their leaders. While most Italians looked on, a ferocious war was fought for nearly two decades between the armies of the Gothic kings and those of the legiti-

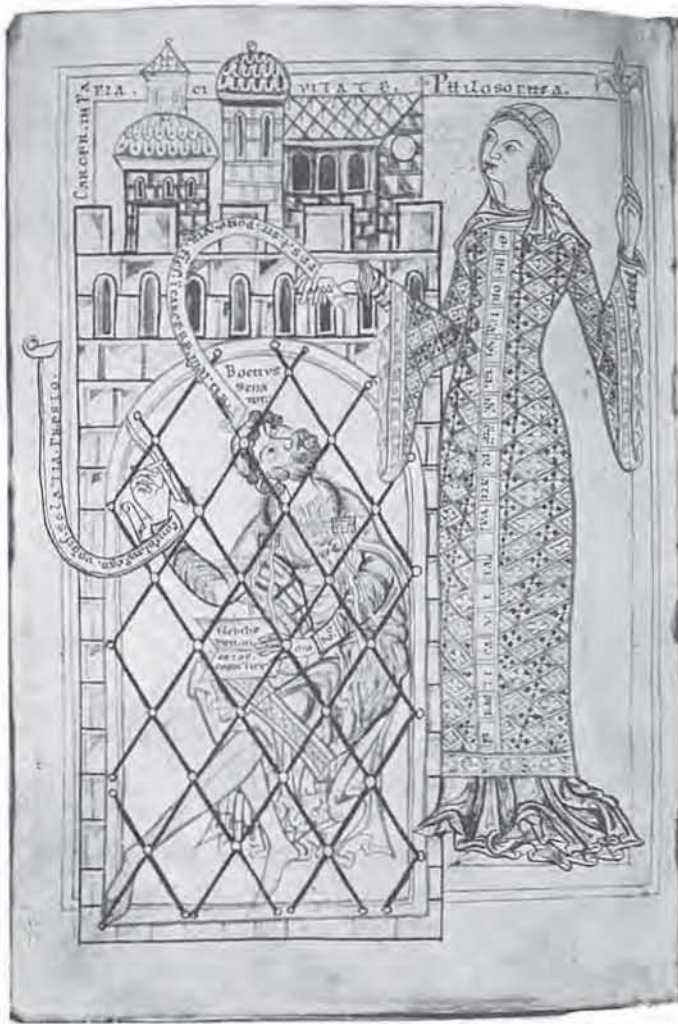


*Portion of a diptych portraying Aëtius, who defeated the Huns at the Battle of Châlons, in 451. NYPL PC*



*King Theodoric II declaring Ravenna his capital. NYPL PC*





*Boethius in prison. Early twelfth century. Bayer Staatsbibliothek, Munich*

mate ruler, the emperor. Finally defeated, the Ostrogoths disappeared from the pages of history. New ruins had been added to the ruins of the invasions of the previous century. But Justinian's success was short-lived. While his nephew and successor, Justin II, was fighting for survival in the midst of palace intrigues in Constantinople, another Germanic tribe, the Lombards, reached Italy in 568. They had originally come from northern Germany and settled for a while in the middle Danube Valley, the favorite staging post for would-be invaders of Italy. Less numerous than previous invaders (only a few tens of thousands bore arms), the Lombards, despite the weakness of the defenders, failed to occupy the whole country.

After further conquests, the Lombards, whose kings were at times called kings of the Lombards and at times kings of Italy, were able to occupy most of the northern districts and about half the peninsula. The Empire, rapidly losing the residues of pre-Constantine Roman characteristics and acquiring instead those of a Greek-speaking Byzantine civilization, held the rest: an area astride Italy, including Rome and its

district, the Tiber Valley, and the Exarchate (now Romagna), as far as the Po River; islands, and shores of the lagoons at the head of the Adriatic Sea; the coastal area around the Gulfs of Gaeta, Naples, and Salerno; the heel and foot of the peninsula (now Apulia and Calabria); and the islands. Italy was divided. It was to remain divided until 1860.

#### THE MIDDLE AGES

As the result of wars, famines, and plagues, the population of Italy declined sharply. When the Lombards arrived it was probably no more than half of what it had been at the time of Constantine. Many cities had been abandoned, and only a fraction of the previous population lived in the others. There were only a few tens of thousands of people in Rome. Milan, the second largest city in the fourth century, was a shadow of its former self. Ravenna, Italy's capital until 568 and the major center of Eastern Roman (Byzantine) authority in Italy until the middle of the eighth century, soon declined. The Lombards' capital, Pavia, was a small city. The countryside was sparsely

*The entrance of the Lombards into Italy, led by Alboin. Codex Palatine, 927, twelfth century. Vatican Library*





inhabited. Public utilities were no longer operative. Public buildings, except those used as churches, were in ruins. Technical know-how had deteriorated in agriculture as in all branches of industry. Poverty and ignorance prevailed. Gone were the numerous libraries of the second century. Books considered heretical—i.e., nearly everything written by pre-Christian authors—had been destroyed. The Middle Ages had set in.

#### CATHOLICISM

Oppressed and fragmented, unable to keep communications open between communities under different jurisdictions, Italians at the end of the sixth century could hardly be described as a nation. But there were still common bonds uniting the Italians and, at the same time, differentiating them from outsiders and also from the Lombard and Byzantine rulers in their midst. The use of Latin among the shrinking number of educated people, Roman local institutions, Roman law, and the pride that comes from a consciousness of past greatness, were one major bond. Another, and more important one, was religion, which then and for centuries to come played the major role in individual and collective Italian life. Catholicism, the version of Christianity accepted by Italians, gave unity to the people of the continental North, of the peninsula, and of the islands. Sicily became Italian largely because the Sicilians' religious allegiance was to the pope in Rome, not to one of the patriarchs of the Byzantine Empire of which the island was a province until the ninth century. Catholicism was the dominant force in Italy, more important in molding Italian life than native or foreign rulers, than force of arms or economic activities.

But the success of Christianity in the Roman state and among some non-Roman peoples had bred divisions. Triumph was accompanied by conflicts, by divergent interpretations of Christ's message and of the Scriptures, by organizational differences. The division in the fourth century between an Eastern and a Western Roman Empire, the disintegration of the latter in the fifth century, the conversion of Armenians, Ethiopians, Irish, and other non-Roman peoples, created autonomous sources of political power in the Christian world and facilitated the differentiation of Christian churches. Catholicism was originally, and remained for a considerable time, a specifically Italian movement. Even after having acquired a wider diffusion (with the conversion of the Franks in 496 and the successful missionary activities of Saint Augustine the Monk in Great Britain a century later) and some non-Italian features, Catholicism remained under paramount Italian influence. The idea of Rome as the center of a world-state was alive when the Italian clergy used the adjective catholic or universal at a time when Eastern churches, headed by the patriarchs of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, had a better claim to universality. Centered in Rome

and strongly impregnated with Roman elements, its qualification "Roman" is appropriate.

The few hundred years between the conversion of most inhabitants of Italy to Christianity in the fourth century and the time of Pope Gregory I (Saint Gregory Magnus, 590–604) constitute the formative period of Catholicism as a faith, as a system of thought, and as a set of institutions. There had been a preparatory period, when worshipers of the new religion led a clandestine and dangerous life, one which Catholics shared with all other Christians. There were important changes later, particularly in the eleventh and sixteenth centuries. But until the revolutionary steps adopted in the 1960s by Pope John XXIII and by the Council Vatican II, the changes have represented an extension of, never a departure from, what Catholicism was in the seventh century.

Italian Christianity had already begun to acquire its distinctive characteristics at the end of the second century when Victor, the bishop of Rome in 189–198, exercised spiritual authority over other bishops, particularly the Italian ones. Distinctive characteristics were strengthened when the Italian clergy sided unequivocally with Athanasius in his theological conflict with Arius. The ecumenical council held in Nicaea in 325 had condemned Arius, but Arius' theses prevailed for a while in the Roman Empire in the East. Most Germanic tribes, when they converted to Christianity in the fourth and fifth centuries, chose Arianism. The Athanasian concept of the Trinity is fundamental to Catholicism and to most of Protestantism. The Athanasian emphasis on celibacy gave the Catholic clergy its specific character and contributed to the influence it exercised among the believers. Athanasius' stress on asceticism promoted the growth of monastic orders, among which the first, and for many centuries the most important, was the order founded in the first half of the sixth century by the Italian Saint Benedict who was born in Norcia, in the central Apennine Mountains. According to tradition, the Benedictine Rule was established at the monastery of Monte Cassino, about halfway between Rome and Naples, in 529. Benedictines have given twenty-four popes and hundreds of saints to the Catholic church.

#### RISE OF THE PAPACY

The Petrine principle was also developed in Italy. It meant that the Bishop of Rome, as successor to Saint Peter, is not first among peers (as were the Patriarchs in the eastern Mediterranean) but bishop of bishops (not *episcopus inter episcopos* but *episcopus episcoporum*). The primacy of the See of Rome was accepted in a restricted sense by a council of bishops of the Roman Empire in the West, held in Arles in 314. The restrictions faded away gradually. In 382, to show his support for the bishop of Rome Damasus I, Emperor Gratian renounced in his favor the title of Pontifex Maximus which had endowed





*Early Christian martyr. Photoworld*



*Body of an early Christian martyr being carried out of a circus. Photoworld*



*Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria. NYPL*



*Saint Benedict. Painting in Prado, Madrid. Photoworld*

*First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325), under Pope Sylvester and Constantine the Great. EPA*







The monastery at Montecassino where, according to tradition, the Benedictine rule was established. NYPL PC

emperors with supreme religious authority for nearly four centuries. Through the successful conclusion of his quarrel with Emperor Theodosius in 390, Saint Ambrose, born in Gaul but bishop of Milan since 374, established the principle of the superiority of ecclesiastical over secular power—while in the Roman Empire in the East and in its successor, the Byzantine Empire, ecclesiastical authority was subordinated to that of the state. Pope Celestine I (422–432) considered the primacy of the See of Rome definite.

In Saint Augustine (bishop of Hippo, where he died in 430 while Vandals were besieging the city), as in Athanasius, all Western Christians, Catholics and Protestants, have a common spiritual ancestor. To him they owe the concept of sin and redemption, the arguments against Manichaeism outside Christianity, and those against Donatism and Pelagianism within Christianity. Saint Gregory Magnus, instead, belongs to Catholicism only. Saint Gregory, the Roman patrician elected bishop of Rome and as such pope for all Catholics, the intellectual deeply antagonistic to Graeco-Roman thought, the man of culture who wanted to eliminate what remained of pre-Christian civilization, the prolific and powerful writer, contributed perhaps more than anyone else to the theological distinctiveness of Catholicism. The ideals to which he devoted both his life and his unflagging energy were the ascendancy of the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy, the uniformity of the ritual, the absoluteness of Catholic dogmas. Roman Catholic liturgy has remained through the centuries the liturgy of Saint Gregory, though the Gregorian chant of Catholic religious services originated after his pontificate.



A Miracle of Saint Benedict. Studio of Simon Marmion. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Samuel H. Kress Collection

Saint Ambrose. Painted portrait with decorative relief. NYPL



#### CATHOLICISM AS FAITH

Saint Gregory's many works occupy a foremost place among authoritative Catholic writings. Together with the works of other Church Fathers, decisions of ecumenical councils, and, later, papal pronouncements, they are for Catholics on a level with the Scriptures.





*Saint Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius. Saint Ambrose refusing the emperor entrance to his church. Courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Gift of Richard Wheatland. 1915*

*Saint Augustine composing his book among devils vomited up from hell. Fifteenth-century woodcut. NYPL PC*



*"The Mass of Saint Gregory." Anonymous, probably Augsburg, 1480-90. Woodcut. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Rosenwald Collection*

By adjusting the Bible to the intellectual and practical requirements of his time through free allegorical interpretation, Saint Gregory in his writings clarified the distinctive Catholic position. His belief in a Christianity dedicated to the care of the souls of the departed, praying to the Virgin and the saints as intermediaries between man and God, peopling the afterlife with a hierarchical order of angels and demons, appealed to Italians whose Roman forebears had honored the souls of their ancestors, worshiped deities, and felt the fascination of Eastern mother-goddess creeds. Saint Gregory was repelled by Graeco-Roman civilization and, paradoxically, did more than anyone else to facilitate the absorption of pagan residues into Italian Christianity. Through that process of absorption, any paganism hostile to Christianity remaining in Italian rural communities faded away. A Benedictine monk himself, Saint Gregory promoted the spread of monastic life in Italy. He instigated missionary activities among the Lombards, who had previously embraced Christianity in its Arian interpretation, and among the German invaders of Britain.

#### CATHOLICISM AS THOUGHT

Less important for the masses of believers, but more important in terms of long-range cultural de-



velopments, was the formulation of Catholic philosophical thought, as distinctive as its theology. Like all other major religions, Catholicism is founded on the immediate grasping of a truth, on intuition. Beliefs are accepted through an act of faith. But whereas in other religions intuition is the whole, in Catholicism it plays a part only, although a large part. During their formative period, and ever since, Catholic thinkers have not been content to make pronouncements. They have always been concerned with explanation and justification. This preoccupation has meant the use, along with intuition, of the rational process. Through the role played by reason Catholicism was different both from previous and from contemporary religions. By using a rational process, Catholicism became a channel through which the greatest single feature of the civilization created by the Greeks and the Romans was saved: the conscious use of reason. Not all the philosophical achievements of the Ancients were saved, but enough to provide the foundation for the revival of rationalism (and thus the advancement of scientific thought) in modern times. Without Catholicism, reason might have been buried under the ruins of the Roman Empire in the West and under the political totalitarianism and intellectual conformity of the Roman Empire in the East.

#### CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONAL FRAME

Catholicism developed unique features in a third major field. If Catholicism, as a Church, as a way of thinking, and as a political movement in a number of countries, has been a major force shaping the destiny of mankind, it has owed this influence in part to the number of practicing and believing Catholics, but more to the disciplined and effective cohesiveness of the Roman Catholic church itself, a product of its organizational structure. The growth of Catholic institutions was a slow process that lasted for centuries. They were developed in Italy during the fourth and succeeding centuries. The final outcome was a centralized, hierarchical structure which, in spite of the pre-eminent position of the pope, could best be described as a closed oligarchy. The system in which no one can be admitted to any level of the hierarchy without the approval of those who are already members is the one that best guarantees continuity and stability.

The organization of early Christian communities in Italy was the same as elsewhere in the Roman state. When Christianity was mainly a clandestine and persecuted movement, each congregation was organized on a democratic basis and enjoyed a good deal of autonomy. The members of the congregation elected their pastor, who was not necessarily an ordained priest. In important cities, congregations elected the bishop. A council of elders was entrusted with administrative functions. Relations between congregations were on an equal associative basis. However, hierarchical features appeared early. They were already

implicit in the manner in which priests were ordained. They were strengthened by the exalted position priests achieved in some churches (often as the result of outstanding personal qualities) as necessary intermediaries between the faithful on earth and the heavenly host surrounding God. Moreover, pastors of congregations in important cities enjoyed greater prestige and influence than those in other localities. These two factors were particularly important in Italy. Even after the transfer of the capital to Constantinople, the myth of Rome was strong: just as no city could compare with Rome, no bishop could have as much authority as the bishop of Rome.

#### CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP IN ITALY

Most important for the institutional growth of Catholicism was the political disintegration in the fifth century. It left a void which was filled by church leaders. It would be wrong to assume that in the fifth century and those immediately following, priests, monks, bishops, and abbots looked for political power. Some perhaps did, but not many. Political power came to them because no one else exercised it or even wanted it. When in 445 Pope Leo I the Great secured an imperial decree that gave the force of laws to papal decisions, he was the only authority capable of enforcing law and order in Rome and its district. What happened when the pope approached Attila as leader of the entire population, happened in that century and the next in many other Italian communities. In the Roman Empire in the East, governmental authorities could effectively protect the people most of the time, or at least could try to do so. By the same token they could also control the ecclesiastical organization. In Italy, and in other areas of what had been the Roman Empire in the West, when people were threatened by



Pope Leo I and church leaders at the Council of Chalcedon, 451. NYPL PC





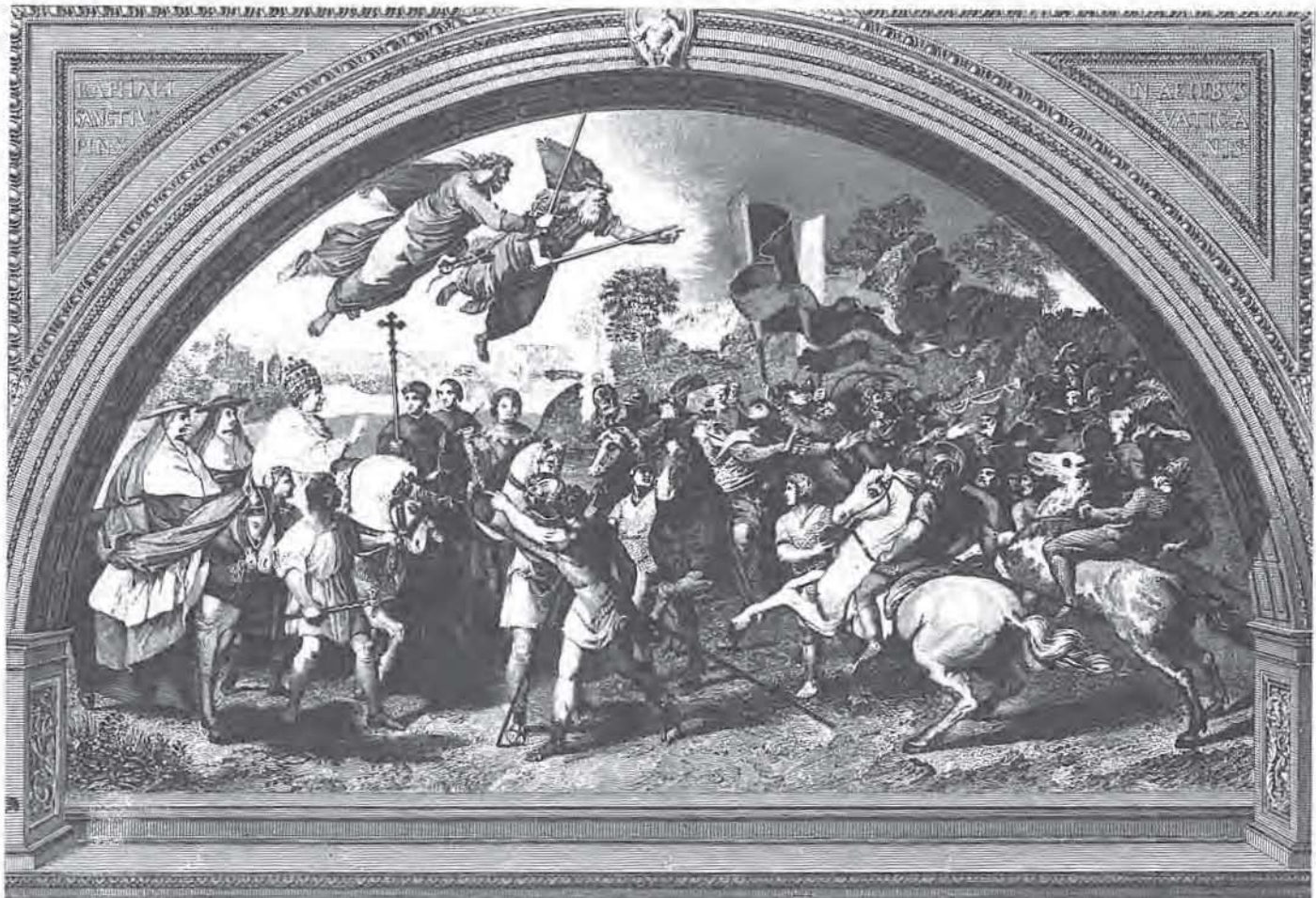
Pope Leo I. NYPL

their representatives in the northern half of the country; nor the motley collection of Byzantine governors, Italian and Lombard dukes and counts in the South. Instead of the complex and efficient bureaucracy of the Empire which existed until the end of the fourth century, there were only rudimentary, incompetent administrations. It is not surprising that under these conditions the influence of the clergy extended to fields other than faith and morals; that ecclesiastical authority became more and more associated with political power; that the authority of bishops and abbots increased; that the greatest authority of all was the bishop of Rome, the pope. It is not surprising that in order to strengthen authority, the elective principle was finally discarded: bishops, from being supervisors, became heads of clergy; the bishop of Rome became the head of bishops. The politicization of the Catholic church and the forming of a hierarchical structure were the response, in Italy, to the political chaos of the times, and to the insecurity that accompanied it. They became permanent features of Catholicism in Italy, also among the many transalpine and, later, transatlantic nations that were converted to Catholicism from the fifth century on. Before becoming permanent features, politicization and hierarchy made possible the survival of the Italian nation.

invaders or by internal disorder there was no one to whom they could turn for protection except their religious leaders.

Ricimer, Odoacer, and the Ostrogoth kings did not hold much effective authority; neither did the later Lombard, Frankish, Italian, and German kings and

Pope Leo I Confronting Attila. Raphael. Stanza d'Eliodoro, Vatican







# LOMBARD AND BYZANTINE ITALY

1 : 5,000,000

**A** Kingdom of the Lombards (maximum extension):  
**a** - Neustria, Austria and Tuscia  
**b** - duchies of Spoletum and Beneventum

**B** Byzantine territories:  
**a** - duchies of Rome and Perugia, Pentapolis, Exarchate formed the Papal States in the 8th century  
**b** - Venetian League, Gaeta, Naples, Amalfi, *de facto* independent in 8th century  
**c** - Calabria (later Apulia) and Bruttia (later Calabria)  
**d** - Sicily, Moslem 9th-11th centuries  
 Sardinia and Corsica, partially Moslem 8th-11th centuries



## 5

# THE FIRST FIVE CENTURIES OF TERRITORIAL FRAGMENTATION



Seventh-century gold leaf cross from a Lombard warrior's grave at Stabilo (Ticino). Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, Zurich

*A divided Italy – Continuing decline – The Lombard Kingdom in Italy – From East Roman to Byzantine Empire – The Crescent closes on Italy – End of Byzantine rule in central and northern Italy – Democracy in the Venetian lagoons – Franks and the creation of the Papal States – Charlemagne – The Carolingians – Otto the Great – German hegemony – The Lombard South – Moslems in Italy – Nadir of the papacy – New invaders – Feudalism.*

## A DIVIDED ITALY

FOR contemporaries, the Lombard invasion of 568 seemed a mere repetition of events that had already occurred many times in recent generations—a new barbarian invasion and the settling of an alien people as conquerors, hated by the Italian masses, despised by the educated minority, but powerful nonetheless. In actual fact it was no repetition. What had not happened with Odoacer's Herulians and with Theodoric's Ostrogoths happened then. Italy was no longer the political unit that she had been for nearly eight and a half centuries—even when merged into the larger Mediterranean Roman state. Now, life as a nation was endangered.

The brutality of the Lombard rulers and of the Byzantine military authorities intensified the sufferings of the Italian people and led to a further lowering of the cultural level. One of the great luminaries of the Renaissance, the humanist Leonardo Bruni, wrote that the Middle Ages had lasted seven hundred years. This is the period often referred to by later historians as the Dark Ages. There are seven hundred years, approximately, from the beginning of great barbarian invasions early in the fifth century to the end of the eleventh, when a new life clearly flowered in much

of the nation. The crisis of 568 hastened the process of decline begun long since, and also made it irreversible for hundreds of years.

We know now that in the long run the territorial fragmentation laid the groundwork for a variety of developments and for richness of new experiences; that tensions stimulated dynamism, and that from the turmoil came progress. Without the divisions and the tensions, it is doubtful that the second great creative period of the Italian nation—the splendid civilization of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance—could have arisen. There was to be the gradual maturing of the Venetian commonwealth; later the flowering of Sicilian culture; and, as climax, the astounding achievements of the Florentines.

## CONTINUING DECLINE

Whatever the distant future was to hold, at the end of the sixth century the present was dismal and life became ever more dismal as generations passed. Before the Lombard invasion, there had always been not only hopes of recovery, there had been periods of actual recovery: after the first sack of Rome by the Visigoths and after the second by the Vandals, after the victory of the Ostrogoths and after the victory of troops sent by the Roman emperor in the East.

Happily for mankind, hope never dies. But after 568 there was little foundation for it. Not just because the Lombards failed to conquer all Italy and the country was divided into two major Lombard areas (the kingdom in the North and the nearly independent duchy of Benevento in the South) and a number of Eastern Roman (Byzantine) dependencies (half a dozen larger ones and several smaller), but chiefly because the Lombards were different from previous invaders and because a state of war, hot or cold, had



become permanent in the country. Eastern and Western Goths, Vandals, Herulians, had been exposed to Roman civilizing influence for a considerable time before they reached Italy. Roman Italians despised them as barbarians but they were not as cruel, primitive, uncouth, and illiterate as the Lombards, who were genuine barbarians as the word is understood today; by comparison the others had been only semibarbarians. A gradual decline became a sharp fall.

Standards of living, already low, quickly sank still lower in Lombard areas. Maintenance having become impossible, the remaining public utilities deteriorated and mostly ceased to function. There were no more aqueducts to bring water to the cities; roughly dug wells replaced them. With sewers unusable, filth accumulated and disease spread. When a building became unfit for habitation it was abandoned: there was no need to construct others for the dwindling population. When a bridge collapsed, it was replaced by a ford. Some Roman-built roads held up, others became simple trails. Silt filled the harbors. In several plains, fertile fields became malarial swamps, while agricultural techniques fell to the barbarians' level. There were smiths, weavers, potters, carpenters, and other artisans, but they were fewer and less skilled than in previous centuries. Lowered production, the increasing number of borders, the high dues exacted by authorities at all levels, together with wars and threats of war, caused trade to dwindle. Monasteries provided the little schooling available. Except for seminaries which trained for the priesthood, centers for professional training were things of the past. The arts were at a standstill.

Conditions were only slightly better in the dependencies of the Eastern Roman Empire. Ravenna, headquarters of the Byzantine exarch, was a fortified camp. The surrounding area (Romania, now Romagna) was continually subjected to Lombard raids. Latium, the district immediately surrounding Rome, was relatively safe, but just beyond lay a no-man's-land ravaged by levies of Lombard dukes. The powerful dukes of Benevento were pressing the Tyrrhenian coastal cities between Gaeta and Salerno, also Calabria and Apulia. Sicily was better off until conquests by the Arabs transformed former Roman cities in North Africa into bases for piratical attacks. Sardinia and Corsica remained distant underdeveloped dependencies where the inhabitants, little aware of the claims of East Roman emperors in Constantinople, continued to lead their own autonomous lives.

Invaders subjugating a more numerous people find that a rigid hierarchical system provides the easiest way to organize the conquered land. Lombard Italy was no exception. Traditionally, Lombards had their own hierarchical structure: at the top were a few wellborn families from which came military leaders and rulers of the various districts of the Lombard territory, whether in northern Germany, as was once the case, or in Italy. If a supreme leader, a king, was

needed, he was elected from within this small group. The warriors were free men. Below them was a larger class of semifree subjects. At the bottom were serfs and slaves. Conquered Italians were made into semifree subjects, forced to work for the conquering minority, to provide food and taxes, but otherwise left pretty much to themselves (as long as they did not rebel, and there is no record of rebellions). In the dependencies of the Eastern Roman Empire, military and civilian officials sent from Constantinople were at the top of the social pyramid; below them came native notables; then a mass of free citizens burdened with all kinds of obligations and dues; and at the bottom the peasantry, now reduced to a state of serfdom.

#### THE LOMBARD KINGDOM IN ITALY

The Lombards held their independent kingdom, including most of northern Italy and Tuscany south of the Apennines, for just over two hundred years. Their rule in over half of the peninsular South lasted five hundred years. There were twelve dukes in each of the three main sections of the kingdom—eastern, western, and south of the Apennines; they were the real rulers. The dukes of Benevento in southern Italy and of Spoleto in central Italy (but beyond the districts held by the Eastern Roman Empire) were practically independent. Alboin, the king who had led the Lombards to the conquest of Italy, met a violent death in 573, as did Cleph, his successor, eighteen months later.

Having disposed of Cleph, the dukes decided that they no longer needed a king. Ten years later, however, the pressure of problems (dissensions among dukes, threat of counterattacks by East Roman garrisons, tension on religious grounds between the Arian rulers and the Catholic subjects) induced the dukes to elect Alboin's grandson, Authari, as king. His wife was the Catholic Theodolinda, daughter of the duke of the Bavarians in southern Germany. When she became a widow, the Lombard dukes asked her to marry someone also eligible to become king. Her choice fell on Agilulf, duke of Turin, who reorganized the Lombard state and maintained good relations with Pope Gregory the Great. The Lombards were interested in ruling the countryside, which supplied labor and food. They left the administration of the dwindling urban communities in the hands of bishops and other clerics.

Taking advantage of the attacks which the Persians, Arabs, and Mongol Avars launched on the East Roman Empire, the Lombard king Rothari occupied areas that had escaped Alboin's conquest. His conversion to Catholicism, and the promulgation in 643 of an edict clarifying the legal position of Lombards and Italians, helped to narrow the gulf between conquerors and conquered. Sixty years after Rothari's death, an election gave the Lombard crown to Liutprand who tried to unite all Italy under his rule. To obtain the cooperation of the papacy and the support of the Catholic clergy, Liutprand presented the town and castle of Sutri, thirty miles north of Rome, to Pope





*A panoramic view of Spoleto. ICI*



*Bas-relief sculpture from the tomb of Rothari on Mount Sant'Angelo, Apulia. EPA*

*The Wedding of Theodolinda and Duke Agilulf. Monza Cathedral, the Chapel of Santa Maria del Rosario. Alinari*







Rothari issues his edict, 643. Miniature from codex of eleventh century. Badia Archives, Cava dei Tirreni, near Naples

Sutri, the town which Liutprand presented to Pope Gregory II in 728. EPA



Gregory II in 728. However, the realization that Lombard rule could be detrimental to the Church's influence induced a new pope, Gregory III, to organize the defense of Rome and Ravenna (aided in the latter by the league established in the Venetian lagoons), and to begin negotiations with Frankish leaders aimed at anti-Lombard cooperation. These negotiations failed at the time, but led, under his successors, to the obliteration of the Lombard kingdom.

#### FROM EAST ROMAN TO BYZANTINE EMPIRE

The transformation of the East Roman Empire, the rise of Arab power in the Mediterranean, and a change of dynasty in France—all three external events deeply affected Italian developments during the latter Lombard period.

By the first half of the seventh century, the designation "East Roman Empire" for that half of the Roman state that had Constantinople as its capital was already becoming meaningless. Names and titles remained, but they were a thin veneer covering a political structure that was no longer Roman. Justinian had been a Roman emperor. Except for the introduction of Christianity, the state he ruled and the laws he en-

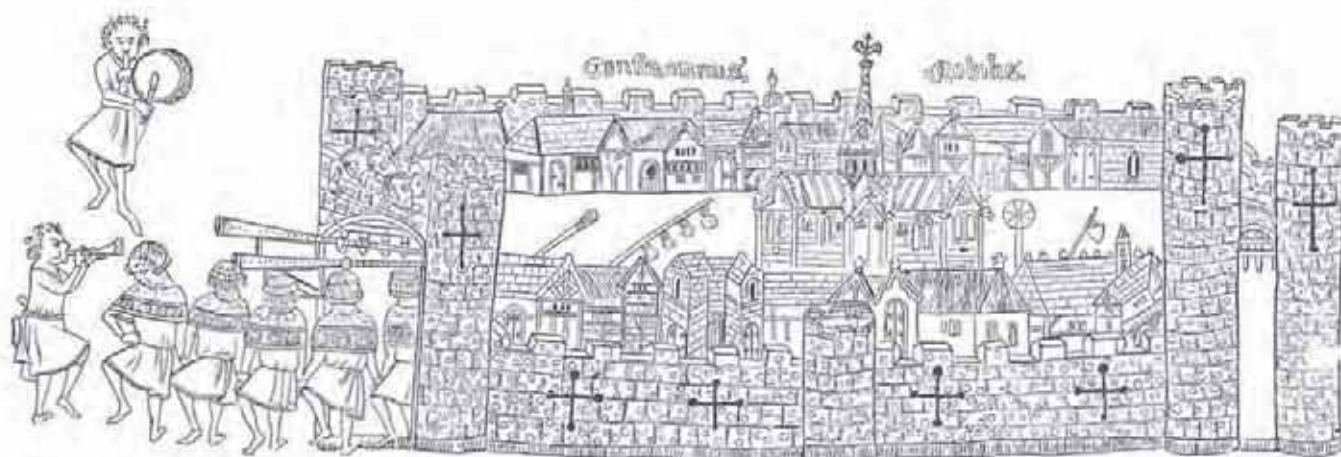
forced were those inherited from Diocletian. This was no longer the case with Heraclius I under whose rule was completed the change from the East Roman Empire to the Byzantine Empire. By the time Heraclius died, the Roman tradition had become something distant and hollow: Latin had been replaced by Greek; the memory of pre-Christian times was gone from the consciousness of rulers and subjects; autocracy and orthodoxy were the principles on which the state was founded; rigid hierarchical bureaucracies—military, religious, civilian—were its keystones.

When Heraclius seized supreme power, Avars who had migrated from their ancestral lands in the deserts of Central Asia to the Black Sea area, and had been joined there by small Slavic tribes, threatened the Byzantine Empire from the north. In 619 they reached Constantinople but failed to capture it. The Persians, advancing from the east under their last great Sassanian leader, Khusru Parviz, had conquered Syria and Egypt. Intelligent use of his power enabled Heraclius to defeat the Avars and their Slav satellites in 626, and the Persians in 627. All now seemed to be well. A repetition of Justinian's exploits in the West was in sight. Then came another storm—a worse one.

#### THE CRESCENT CLOSES ON ITALY

During the first ten years after his flight in 622 from Mecca to Medina, Mohammed—prophet of a new religion, successful statesman, and victorious warrior—united most of the Arabian peninsula. In 634, two





*Constantinople, capital of the East Roman Empire. Luttrell Psalter, ca. 1340, NYPL*

years after the death of the Prophet, Arabs began their conquest of Syria; in 639 they were in possession of Egypt and in 647 of Libya. The astounding expansion of the Arabs for one hundred years until finally stopped by defeats at the hand of Charles Martel in the West and of Nagabhata in the East, was one of the great upheavals in man's history. Similarly, one of the great progressive revolutions was the creation of a splendid civilization incorporating many Byzantine and Persian elements and given its unique character by Arab creativity under the stimulus of religious fervor.

The Mediterranean had been a Roman lake for centuries and had been a major factor in the diffusion of Roman culture. Even after the settling of Germanic peoples in what had been the Roman Empire of the West, the Mediterranean had continued to exercise a unifying role, reflected in the Christianization of all regions surrounding the inland sea, as well as in the freedom and intensity of commercial exchanges. When Heraclius died, the Byzantine navy was the supreme power ruling the waters from the Black Sea to the Strait of Gibraltar. Within one generation a barrier between Christian and Moslem areas cut across the Mediterranean: the state of war between Christians and Moslems was permanent, even if actual fighting did not go on continually on borders extending for thousands of miles.

In the 640s Arabs built their first Mediterranean fleet. They seized Cyprus, attacked Rhodes and Crete, then moved westward. Except for Carthage, captured in 698, present-day Tunisia was firmly in Arab hands by 670. The conversion of Berbers, or Moors, living in mountainous areas just beyond the borders of what had been Roman North Africa, gave Moslems the control of present-day Algeria and Morocco. A mixed force of Arabs and Moors conquered the Iberian peninsula in 711-713. Geographically as well as symbolically the Islamic crescent was closing about Italy.

#### END OF BYZANTINE RULE IN CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ITALY

As the result of Arab attacks, Byzantine officials and garrisons in Italy were left to fend for themselves. The threat of the Arab capture of Constantinople was so great that in 663 Heraclius' grandson, the Emperor Constans, moved his capital to Sicily. Only after Constans' murder in Syracuse did his son Constantine IV return to Constantinople. The city was attacked repeatedly by the Arabs from 673 to 678.

The last descendant of Heraclius was killed by mutinous troops in 711. After six years of chaos, Leo the Isaurian, a competent general who had distinguished himself in fighting the Arabs, seized the throne. Able organizer and statesman, Emperor Leo III also held deep and sincere religious principles. Sharing the views of many puritanical Christians of the time, he was strongly opposed to image worship, which appealed to a majority of the population and was encouraged by many of the clergy. Image worship



*Emperor Leo III. NYPL*



was forbidden in 726. A revolt of the inhabitants of Greece opposed to the emperor's policy was repressed with difficulty. In Rome, Pope Gregory II led the opposition against the emperor. His lead was followed by the majority of Italians in the Byzantine areas of central and northern Italy. Latium and Romagna, the nucleus of what soon would be the Papal States, were lost forever by the Byzantines. Byzantine officials were no longer able to enforce their authority over the communities inhabiting islands of the upper Adriatic lagoons along the Venetian coast. Though still acknowledging the authority of the emperors of Constantinople and relying on the Byzantine navy to protect them from the Lombards, the communities became in practice independent. The weakening of Byzantine authority also made for the greater autonomy enjoyed from that time on by the Tyrrhenian coastal cities of southern Italy which the Lombards had failed to conquer: Gaeta, Naples, Sorrento, Amalfi. Each of these was a minuscule republic, in terms of the times progressive and prosperous.

#### DEMOCRACY IN THE VENETIAN LAGOONS

The league of small communities on the Venetian coast of the upper Adriatic, which achieved *de facto* independence at that time, became in a few generations the Republic of Venice and lasted as an independent state for over a thousand years, until 1797. In later centuries it acquired wealth and power; it became a foremost cultural center; it created an astounding political system, admired for its stability. But greatness in the eighth century was only a distant promise in which the hardworking enterprising citizens of the communities established in the lagoons were not interested. Tradition has it that when the Huns ravaged northern Italy at the middle of the fifth century, people from Aquileia, Padua, Altinum, and other low-lying cities of the Venetian plain, fled for shelter to the islets dotting the lagoons of the upper Adriatic. Villages were built, some to disappear and some to grow. Among those that grew was Venice, in the sixth and seventh centuries a cluster of hamlets in a small archipelago in the middle of the largest lagoon. Riva Alta, later Rialto, was the most important of the hamlets.

At an uncertain date, perhaps even before the end of the fifth century, twelve communities in and near the lagoons, from Grado to Chioggia, formed a league. Each community was a democracy. Power was exercised by an assembly of the citizens who legislated, and freely elected their officials. The league was directed by a council of elected representatives of the twelve communities. As time went on, some of the functions of the council were transferred to a chief executive with limited powers, acting also as commanding officer in time of war—the *doge* (Venetian dialect version of duke, the title of provincial governors in the Lombard and Byzantine areas of Italy).

Anafesto, elected in 697, was, according to tradition, the first *doge*. The authority of the distant central government in Constantinople was purely nominal.

Fishing, coastal trading in the Adriatic and beyond, and the production of salt were the main sources of income for the citizens of the twelve communities. Shipbuilding was a thriving activity. The Byzantine navy saved the league from repeated Lombard attacks. In exchange, the league went to the aid of Byzantine governors of Ravenna, and later of papal representatives, when threatened by the Lombards. Franks led by Charlemagne's son Pepin attacked the communities of the lagoons early in the ninth century, forcing the league to transfer the capital to Rialto, soon known as Venice, in 814.

#### FRANKS AND THE CREATION OF THE PAPAL STATES

Passing to what had been Roman Gaul, by the middle of the sixth century the Franks were in control of the whole area, having defeated rival Germanic tribes—Alamanni, Burgundians, Visigoths. The conversion of King Clovis to Catholicism in 496 had been the major factor in the survival of Catholicism and its later triumph over Arianism. But incompetence and constant redistribution of Frankish territories among members of the Merovingian royal family (the descendants of Clovis) weakened the kingdom. Its fortunes were slowly restored by the family descended from Pepin of Landen, whose members, after 687, exercised supreme power in the two major divisions of the kingdom. Charles Martel, mayor of the palace (acting dictatorially under a chief of state reduced to a figurehead), stopped the spread of Islam in the West by defeating Arabs and Berbers coming from Spain at Poitiers in 732. Around 740, Pope Gregory III asked his aid against Liutprand, king of the Lombards. Nothing came of the request because the Franks were still too deeply involved in their struggle against the Moslems. But when one of Liutprand's successors, Aistulf, occupied areas still nominally Byzantine and which Pope Stephen II considered his own, the pope appealed to Pepin III, Charles Martel's son, who in 752 had deposed the last Merovingian king and had had himself proclaimed king instead.

In exchange for papal confirmation of the throne he had usurped, Pepin attacked the Lombards in 754 and again in 756. In both expeditions he was victorious. In 756 and 757 Pepin formally donated to the pope the lands which had remained in Byzantine hands after 568 and which the Lombards had overrun under Liutprand and Aistulf. They included the Exarchate of Ravenna and the so-called Pentapolis (five cities) from Rimini to Ancona on the Adriatic; and on the Tyrrhenian side, northern Latium (the so-called Patrimony of Saint Peter) and the Tiber Valley between Pentapolis and Latium. Pepin's son Charlemagne added to the donation Bologna and much of southern Tuscany. All of these districts plus Rome

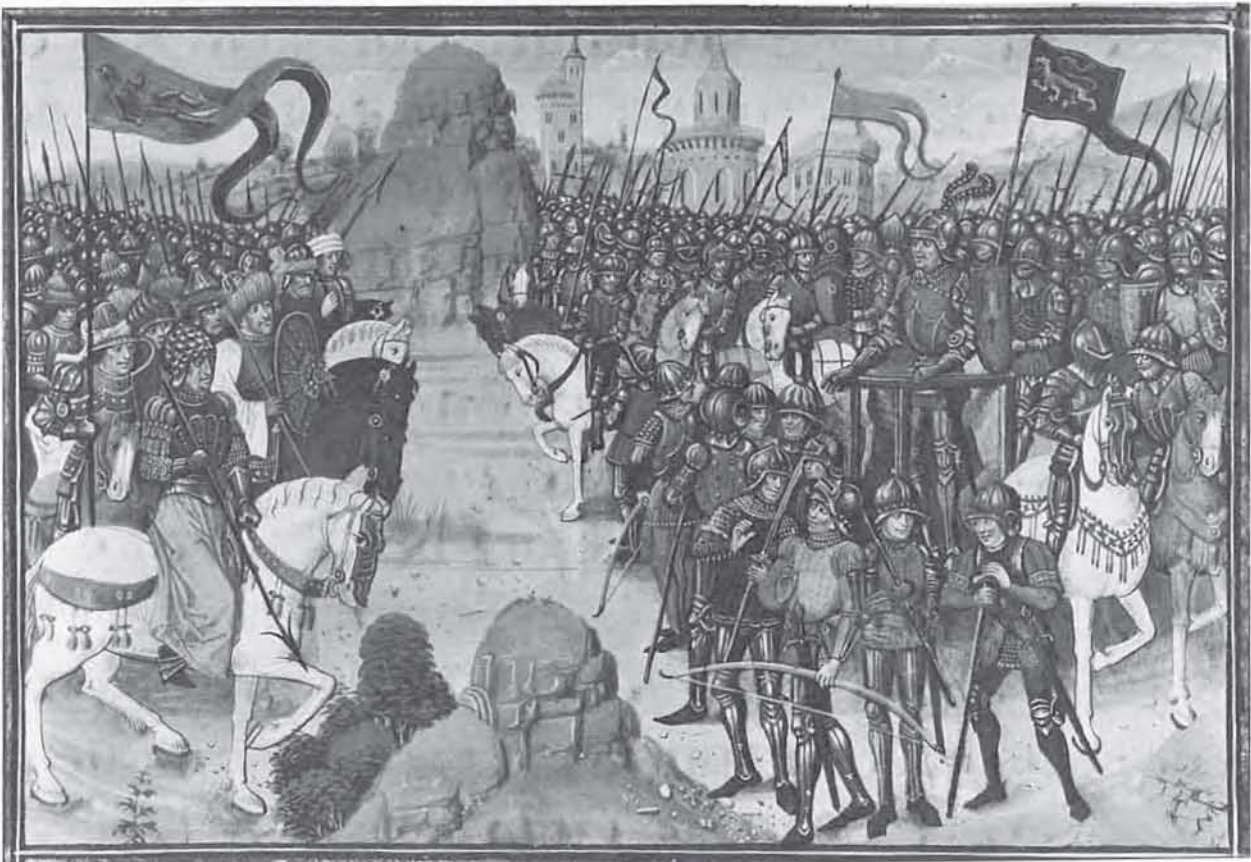


*The baptism of King Clovis. Master of Saint Giles. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*



*Pope Gregory III. Coin. British Museum*

*Charles Martel harangues his troops while Moslem invaders look on. Poitiers, 732. Flemish. Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels*







*Pepin III (The Short) recognized King of France by Pope Stephen II, 754. NYPL PC*

which the popes had governed if not ruled since the middle of the fifth century, and the Roman Campagna or southern Latium, made up the Papal States which lasted until 1860 and in Latium until 1870.

There were territorial variations through the centuries: losses on the Tyrrhenian side and acquisitions in Umbria and the Marches. In much of the states and much of the time until the sixteenth century, papal rule was nominal. Powerful families lorded it in the countryside, and cities formed independent republics or principalities (*see* Chapter 6). But territorial variations and levels of effective control by the popes mattered little. What did matter was the existence of the Papal States, a major factor determining the history of the Italian people for eleven hundred years. Astride the peninsula, reaching from the mouth of the Po River in the north to the Gulf of Gaeta in the south, the new political unit created a barrier between the north and the south of the country. It was a main cause in the failure of the many attempts to unite the Italian nation in one state during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

#### CHARLEMAGNE

The Lombard Kingdom did not long survive the defeats inflicted by the Franks. Aistulf's successor Desiderius, an able and cautious ruler who tried to survive amid the conflicting pressures exercised by

*The crowning of Charlemagne. Giulio Romano. The Vatican, Rome. Anderson*





Franks, popes, and Byzantines, was attacked in 774 by Pepin's son Charles, known to his contemporaries as Carolus Magnus (since his coronation as Roman Emperor in Rome by Pope Leo III) and as Charlemagne to later generations. He had ruled the Franks jointly with his brother Carloman for three years before becoming sole ruler in 771. Desiderius, defeated, was taken prisoner and sent north of the Alps. The Lombard capital, Pavia, was captured after a nine-month siege. Charles took the title of king of the Lombards and made his son Pepin king of Italy in 781, but the independent Lombard Kingdom, the source of Italian decline for over two hundred years, had ceased to exist. A son was later crowned king of Italy.

Both Germans and French claim Charlemagne as theirs. Actually he was neither, he was simply a semi-Romanized Frank. For Italians he was, and remained, a foreigner; to be preferred, perhaps, together with his sons and grandsons until the middle of the ninth century, to the dethroned Lombard kings, but not much. In Frankish Italy (smaller than Lombard Italy) conditions at first improved somewhat. As a result of less insecurity and better administration (entrusted to counts or provincial governors who replaced the Lombard dukes and who cooperated closely with bishops and abbots) there appeared here and there small sparks of intellectual revival and signs of economic recovery.

It is not known whether Italians of the Frankish Kingdom of Italy took pride in being subjects of a vast empire which by the end of the eighth century roughly corresponded to the Europe of the Six created by the treaties of Rome of 1957 (it lacked southern Italy and the Mediterranean islands but included a large chunk of central Europe and small districts in northeastern Spain). Charlemagne himself remained ever after a major figure of Italian lore as did, with modified names, the English monk Alcuin (Charlemagne's trusted adviser for many years) and the gallant knight Roland. All Italians certainly took pride in the revived title of Roman emperor and in the great ceremony at which Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne in the old Basilica of Saint Peter's in Rome, on Christmas Day of the year 800. There had been no emperor of the West since 476: now Italy seemed again to be the leading Western nation. Theoretically, there was a revival of the imperial pluralism created by Diocletian five centuries earlier, but actually the new Empire in the West was Frankish and barbarian, not Roman and civilized.

The crowning of Charlemagne was deeply resented in Constantinople, but no action ensued against the powerful ruler who in the eyes of the Byzantine authorities was merely a usurper. The usual palace intrigues had created chaos at the court of the last descendants of Emperor Leo III. The throne was occupied from 797 to 802 by the Empress Irene, an energetic and ruthless woman who had imprisoned and blinded her own son, the Emperor Constantine VI.

Irene and her ministers refused to acknowledge Charlemagne as Roman emperor in the West. In 812, however, he was acknowledged by Emperor Michael I in exchange for recognition by Charlemagne of Byzantine supremacy over Venice, which thereby kept its de facto independence, and over Istria and Dalmatia, which had been conquered by the Franks together with most of present-day Croatia, and areas to the east as far as the middle Danube.

#### THE CAROLINGIANS

When Charlemagne died in 814, only one son survived. But there were five grandsons and later a host of great-grandsons whose quarrels, wars, agreements, and treaties fill Frankish history from 817 (when several grandsons carved kingdoms for themselves in various parts of the empire) until 887 when Charles the Fat—the last Carolingian ruler of most of



Warriors of Carolingian times. Miniature from the *Psautier d'or de Saint-Gall*, fourteenth century. NYPL PC



Charles the Fat. NYPL PC



Charlemagne's inheritance—was deposed, and assemblies of nobles elected kings for France, Germany, Italy, and Burgundy. In the partitions made in 817, 843, and 870, one principle seemed to be clear: the eldest son held the title of emperor and also acquired the crown of the Italian kingdom. Thus there was tacit acknowledgment of a "special relationship" between Italy and the Empire.

After the deposition of Charles the Fat, two Italian nobles related to the Carolingians, Berengar, duke of Friuli in northeastern Italy, and Guido, duke of Spoleto in central Italy, contended for the imperial and royal crowns. After Berengar's assassination in 924 no one held the imperial crown until 962. The empty Italian royal title passed to rulers of Burgundy and Provence and in 950 to another Italian, Berengar II (grandson of the first Berengar), marquis of Ivrea in northwestern Italy.

#### OTTO THE GREAT

According to a legend, the widow of Lothair of Provence, who had been a claimant to the Italian throne, in 951 asked the German king Otto, later called the Great, to come to her rescue against Berengar II. He did so, Berengar was defeated, and Otto was acclaimed king of Italy (952). A revolt in Germany and the approach of a large horde of barbarian Magyars soon compelled the new king to return north. Berengar resumed the Italian crown. A few years later, Pope John XII asked Otto to come to Italy to fight again against Berengar. Victorious once more, Otto sent the prisoner Berengar to Germany and had himself crowned king of Italy in Pavia and emperor in Rome (962). Charlemagne had been Roman emperor in the West. Otto's reign inaugurates the Holy Roman Empire, founded on the principle "one pope, one emperor," which would last (in name only for several centuries) until 1806.



*Otto the Great of Germany. NYPL*



*The Holy Roman Empire. The nations pay tribute to Otto III, Holy Roman Emperor. NYPL PC*



*Berengar I. King of Italy. NYPL PC*

#### GERMAN HEGEMONY

The reign of Otto also marks the beginning of the long and bitter connection between Germany and the part of Italy comprising the kingdom. It was a source of weakness both for Italy and Germany and it con-



tributed to the territorial fragmentation of the two countries, since few emperors were strong enough to govern both. Otto's son gave German affairs priority over Italian; his grandson Otto III did the opposite: he even dreamed of reviving a Roman Empire centered in Italy. There was a short break in the connection between the German and Italian realms when, taking advantage of a succession struggle after the death of Otto III in 1002, a faction of Italian nobles elected Ardoin, marquis of Ivrea, king. In 1014, the last ruler of Otto's family, Henry II, forced Ardoin to retire to a monastery and was crowned emperor in Rome. Italy's dependence on Germany lasted until Emperor Frederick I was defeated by a league of northern Italian city-states in 1176 (*see* Chapter 8), but German interference continued whenever a German ruler had sufficient power. The Austrian presence in Italy, from the early eighteenth century until the second and third wars of the *Risorgimento* in the nineteenth, was a distant sequel to Otto's double crowning.

#### THE LOMBARD SOUTH

After 774, the Italian people were more diversified politically and culturally than they had been during the two centuries when their country had been divided into Lombard and Byzantine areas. Except for a brief period, one large Lombard area had escaped the Franks. Political autonomy accentuated cultural diversity.

South of the newly established Papal States were the two Lombard duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, which had always enjoyed greater autonomy than the other duchies of the kingdom. Spoleto, including half of today's Umbria and the Marches and most of Abruzzi, came under Frankish rule, and until its final parti-

tion in the twelfth century between the kings of Sicily and the popes, shared the ups and downs of the Kingdom of Italy. The larger duchy of Benevento owed to the long rule of its two first dukes, the able Zottone and Arechi I, its cohesion and its efficient administration. Ruled since 758 by Desiderius' son-in-law Arechi II, Benevento followed a different path from that of Spoleto. Divided into thirty-two districts in Campania, Molise, Basilicata, and Apulia, it included about two-thirds of the peninsular South.

Following the defeat of Desiderius, Arechi took the title of prince, so making clear to all that he was not a subject of the Franks. The Lombard principality of Benevento lasted three hundred years and had its share of internal convulsions and external conflicts: succession crises, revolts, wars with neighbors, victories, and defeats. The quality of life was on the whole better than in the northern kingdom and in the Papal States; even so, it was static when it did not actually deteriorate. The common people—the overwhelming majority of them peasants—were poor, and exploited by the arrogant Lombard nobility; their everyday life was hard, insecure, and depressing. Borders fluctuated according to the fortunes of war with the Franks and their successors in the north, with the Byzantines who held Calabria and parts of Apulia, with the powerful abbots of Montecassino, with the city-states on the Tyrrhenian coast. In the ninth and tenth centuries the principality had to contend with Moslems installed in Bari on the Adriatic coast and at Traetto on the Tyrrhenian.

Dynastic quarrels led to a division of the principality in the 840s and to the establishment of the independent principality of Salerno, smaller but wealthier and at times more powerful than that of Benevento. Salerno had its own brief cultural revival and prided itself on possessing the best medical school in the



Otto III. NYPL PC

Adelchi, Prince of Benevento





Catholic West during the tenth century. In the eleventh century, with the efforts of Gaimar IV and Gaimar V, the Lombard princes of Salerno came close to uniting the whole Italian South, but failed, and the principality ceased to exist in 1077 (see Chapter 7). The countship of Capua seceded from Benevento early in the tenth century and formed a third independent Lombard principality. Ruled for a while by descendants of the Norman Drengot, it lost its independence in 1128. In spite of the Italianization of the ruling Lombard minority, the continuance for centuries of the Lombard principalities contributed to the distinctiveness of the Italian South.

Like Venice in the north, the maritime city-states of Gaeta, Naples, and Amalfi acknowledged Byzantine paramountcy but were in reality independent. Economically and intellectually life was more dynamic than in the Lombard states and in the areas ruled directly by Byzantine governors. Naples achieved pre-eminence when taking the lead successfully in the fight against the Moslems ravaging the Tyrrhenian coast. Amalfi—where originated a maritime code adopted by other Mediterranean states—achieved distinction as the home of expert sailors and cartographers and enterprising merchants. Gaeta was an impregnable fortress, a haven for friends near and far. Sorrento, seceding from Naples, had its brief period of independence. During their nearly four hundred years of de facto independent status, the southern maritime city-states were ruled for short periods by despotic native or foreign princes or by oligarchies; always, however, citizens' governing themselves through assemblies and the free election of magistrates was recognized as the proper form of government.

#### MOSLEMS IN ITALY

From the second half of the seventh century on, Moslem pressure was felt along the Italian coast.

Sicily, an island at peace since its occupation by the Romans nearly a thousand years before, was now an advance post on the long Mediterranean front where Christians and Moslems fought. In the ninth century raids were replaced by conquests and attempted conquests. Arabs and Arabized Berbers (known collectively by Italians as Saracens) from North Africa landed in Sicily in 827 at Mazara and completed the conquest of the island with the capture of Taormina in 902. Their final defeat at the hands of Norman invaders took place in 1091. Under every aspect Moslem rule was an improvement over Byzantine. The people of Sicily prospered: the level of agricultural production was high, manufacturing activities expanded in the cities, trade increased with North African and Near Eastern Islamic countries. Palermo became a thriving city with perhaps a third of a million inhabitants. There were dozens of mosques in Catania. The level of literacy was high. As in Spain, Moslems remained a minority ruling the Christian majority. Also as in Spain, relations between rulers and subjects varied in the districts into which the country was divided. That difference is still meaningful today: western Sicily was the Val di Mazara where Moslems were most numerous and where the majority of Christians were serfs; southeastern Sicily was the Val di Noto where Moslems were few and Christians enjoyed considerable autonomy; northeastern Sicily was the Val di Demone where Christian communities paid tribute to Moslem overlords but were otherwise free.

For a longer period than in Sicily, until expelled by expeditions organized by the republics of Pisa and Genoa in the first half of the eleventh century, Moslems held coastal areas of Sardinia and Corsica. For over thirty years after 839, Bari in Apulia was the capital of a Moslem emirate. In 846, Saracens who had captured Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber nearly succeeded in occupying Rome; for protection against further raids, Pope Leo IV built the still extant Leonine Wall around Saint Peter's and the Vatican. From

*Amalfi, one of the maritime city-states. ENIT*



*Ancient Porta Saracena in Tricarico, Basilicata. EPA*







A Saracen tower in Scalea, Calabria. EPA

880 until 916, when they were finally defeated by the joint forces raised by the popes, neighboring maritime republics, and Byzantine governors, Saracens held the district of Traetto at the mouth of the Garigliano River, using it as a base for raids that ravaged much of central Italy as far as the Apennines. Another piratical base was established around 886 by Spanish Moors at Frassineto, or Freinet, on the coast of the Ligurian Sea, not far from the border between Italy and France. From there, for nearly one hundred years, came raids deep into Piedmont. Contrary to what happened in Sicily, the Moslem presence had a profoundly deteriorating effect in the islands of Sardinia and Corsica, and in the areas of southern, central, and northwestern Italy subjected to raids by Saracens and Moors entrenched in Bari, Traetto, and Frassineto.

#### NADIR OF THE PAPACY

Charlemagne added generously to papal holdings: he also treated the popes as little more than court chaplains. He would have liked the clergy of his empire, headed by the Roman popes, to be as subservient to the state as was the clergy headed by Eastern patriarchs in the Byzantine Empire. But events developed otherwise. Divisions among Charlemagne's descendants, soon followed by the chaos created in much of the empire by the terrifying raids of a new wave of invaders, the Vikings, weakened the imperial authority. Beginning in 756, in the larger area of the Papal States there was a recurrence of what happened when Latium and its capital Rome were nominally a province of the Eastern Roman Empire: because the distant central government was in no position to enforce its authority, the popes exercised an independent temporal power.

Independence has nothing to do with good government, in matters temporal or spiritual. Corruption and confusion reigned in Rome, especially after the death in 867 of Nicholas I, whose controversy with the Byzantine Photius irreparably strained the relations between the Western and Eastern churches. The choice of popes was determined by the predominance of one or another faction in Rome; the Crescentii and

Pope Leo IV.  
NYPL



the counts of Tuscolo led the strongest faction and for most of a century and a half they made and unmade popes. From the Crescentii family came Marozia (little Mary), mistress of one pope and mother of another; her son Alberic who exercised supreme power over Rome and the papacy for twenty years; Alberic's son, the dissolute John XII, who called Otto the Great from Germany to fight Berengar II; Crescentius, a successor of Alberic, who misruled Rome for nearly thirty years. By executing Crescentius (996), Otto III tried to reform the papacy, to which he nominated first his cousin Gregory V, the ardent reforming bishop of Toul, and later his own tutor, the scholar Sylvester II. The attempt failed and the climax of corruption was reached in 1046 when three popes, each representing a different faction, held the papacy simultaneously. The intervention of Emperor Henry III led to the elevation to the Holy See of a series of German clerics, the third of whom, Leo IX, elected in 1049, chose as his adviser the Benedictine monk Hildebrand of Soana, the future Gregory VII. Under the firm hand of Hildebrand the papacy was radically transformed, both morally and politically (*see* Chapter 6).

#### NEW INVADERS

Meanwhile, terrible new invasions followed the old ones. Late in the eighth century Vikings, or Northmen, raiders from Scandinavia, reached the British Isles; others, shortly after, moved eastward and founded the first Russian state. Before the middle of the ninth century the Vikings sailed in their long shallow ships up the rivers that flowed into the North Sea, the Channel, the Bay of Biscay, killing and looting on a scale comparable only to that of the Huns four centuries earlier. In 843 the long ships appeared in the Mediterranean. The most memorable of all the raids on the Italian coasts took place in 859, when the Vikings overran and destroyed Luni (or Luna), an ancient busy seaport between Pisa and Spezia. Viking raids continued throughout the tenth century. Early in the eleventh century, Normans (the descendants of Vikings to whom the king of France had in 910 granted the area now called Normandy) served as





Pope John XII, Miniature from "Chronica Nova Figurata," Vatican Library



Henry III returning from the Synod at Sutri, 1046. NYPL PC

mercenaries in the states of southern Italy which were continually at war with one another. Their presence is reported at Salerno in 1006 and at the battle of Cannae in 1018, when Byzantine troops quashed a Lombard uprising. One mercenary commander set up a minuscule state in 1029 at Aversa, between Naples and Capua, another captured Melfi from the Byzantines in 1041 and made it the base for conquests that within half a century radically transformed the political map of southern Italy (see Chapter 7).

From the east came the Magyars (or Hungarians), fierce, ruthless nomads whose ancestral lands lay beyond the Volga. Magyar raiders first reached northeastern Italy at the end of the ninth century. They came in several waves, killing, burning, looting, particularly in Venetia and Lombardy. The raids lasted for two generations, until the Magyars were defeated in an epic battle near Augsburg by Otto I in 955.

#### FEUDALISM

In what had been Charlemagne's Empire, against this background of internal rivalries and invasions from abroad, of cruelty, tyranny, inefficiency, poverty, and ignorance, feudalism was born. The same process of disintegration of central authority and of reconstruction and consolidation at the local level, with a degree of autonomy that approached independence, took place in the four main divisions into which the empire had been partitioned at the end of the ninth century: the kingdoms of France, Germany, Italy, and Burgundy. A system that provided people with a measure of security, feudalism was adopted, with some variations, in areas that had not belonged to the empire but were inhabited by Catholic populations: to the west the kingdoms of Great Britain; to the south the Catholic states of the Iberian peninsula and southern Italy; to the east the new states organized in the ninth and tenth centuries by Moravians, Czechs, Poles, Magyars, on becoming converts to Catholicism; to the north the Scandinavian states.

Born in the ninth century, feudalism had initially been the spontaneous response to insecurity caused by civil wars and foreign invasions. What could people do, for instance, in the valley of the Loire in central France when the Viking ships came upstream and their crews of sailor-warriors massacred those who had not fled, burned towns and farmhouses, looted and raped? The central government was incapable of giving protection. The ordinary country folk, most of them peasants, were glad to provide food and labor for any local official—count or other—who undertook to raise some troops and fight the invaders, or who built a rudimentary castle behind whose walls people and animals could find shelter. The townspeople were glad to provide money and labor for any official, lay or ecclesiastical, who could do the same.

The keystone of feudalism was formed of two main elements. On one hand, personal relations were determined by the relationship of each to the land—if not the only source of wealth, certainly by far the most important at a time when industry was practically nonexistent and trade was reduced to a minimum. On the other hand, local officials—the dukes, marquesses, and counts who had been provincial governors, their subordinates who had administered districts, bishops into whose hands had fallen by default the responsibility for maintaining law and order in urban communities, and abbots whose monasteries fulfilled the function of castles—became de facto independent rulers. They dispensed justice, raised taxes, maintained their own armed forces of knights and squires. The common people surrendered some property and personal rights in order to be protected. Through a long process, which lasted from 877 to 1037 for the Kingdom of Italy, the functions exercised by those who had been local officials, and now were lords, became hereditary. Rigidly hierarchical, the feudal system negated equality and limited the liberty of the masses, but it enabled the local rural and urban communities to survive at a time when survival often seemed hopeless.



## 6

# THE PAPACY FROM GREGORY VII TO PAUL III

*Heralds of a new era — Catholicism, the foundation of the West — Gregory VII — The schism: Roman Catholicism versus Greek Orthodoxy — The papacy against the empire — Continuity of the Roman Catholic church — The Crusades — Evangelical movements — Alexander III and Innocent III — Boniface VIII — The Babylonian Captivity — Schisms and councils — Renaissance popes.*

## HERALDS OF A NEW ERA

It had been a long night. It was a miracle that, lacking an Italian state, there still existed an Italian people in the eleventh century, a miracle that they had not met the fate of other Romanized peoples of the West—the Illyrians, the Bretons, the Numidians, the Gauls—who disappeared to be sooner or later replaced by totally different peoples: the Croats, the Saxons, the Moors, the Franks. For centuries the history of Italy had been mainly the doings and undoings of foreign conquerors and settlers: barbarians who had come before the Lombards, then the Lombards, the Franks, the Germans; the Byzantines and the Saracens; later the Magyars, the Vikings, and the Normans. Italians had survived mainly because they adopted the role of passive spectators. Here and there—in Venice, Amalfi—there had been sparks of Italian dynamism, but not many.

During the first half of the eleventh century, the scene seemed to differ from that of the preceding centuries only in the details, not in the general setting. Foreigners ruled, and they never became integrated into the Italian nation. There were conflicts of all kinds at all levels. There were oppression, corruption and abject poverty. But around the middle of that century there was some indication of a change that worked in a different direction, not a mere step for-



Pope Gregory VII. NYPL PC

ward or back along the line already followed. Three events—in Rome, Melfi, and Milan—were heralds of the change.

Leo IX was the third of the German popes nominated by Emperor Henry III and dutifully elected by the Roman clergy and people. He was a better man than most of his predecessors since Nicholas I. But that mattered little: what did matter was the presence in Rome of Hildebrand of Soana as the pope's trusted adviser. Pope himself for twelve years as Gregory VII, Hildebrand was the most influential leader of the Catholic church from 1049, when Leo IX was elected, until his own death in 1085. He reformed the church and gave it renewed strength. The second important event was in the South. William Bras-de-Fer (Iron-Arm) of Hauteville, the eldest of many brothers who left their native Normandy to seek better fortunes in Italy, took from the Byzantines in 1041 the high stronghold of Melfi, strategically placed halfway between Benevento and Bari. Count of Apulia shortly thereafter, he was the ruler of a totally new state, which under his brothers and their successors included all the peninsular South and Sicily. The third event, the establishment of popular self-government in Milan, was a small episode at the time in the chaotic situation in the Kingdom of Italy, and proved to be the most significant development in relation to Italian achievements during the next five hundred years. Gregory VII brought discipline to the clergy of the Roman church. The Normans brought order and a measure of efficient government to the South (except Sardinia). The democratic *comune*, climax of the Milanese events of 1040-1044, meant liberty, more important for progress than the discipline of a dominant élite and the order in an absolute state.



The papacy, Italian but also transcending Italy, went its own way, taking along much, but not all, of the Papal States. The new state created in the South by the Normans went its own way too. So did the Kingdom of Italy, ruled by emperors belonging to German dynasties who were more concerned with German than with Italian affairs, and communities like the Venetian one which had never belonged to the kingdom.

#### CATHOLICISM, THE FOUNDATION OF THE WEST

Centered in Italy where it had originated, the Roman Catholic church of the eleventh century was European, as was the still semibarbarian culture of which Catholicism was religiously, ethically, and politically the pivot. In spite of temporary achievements at the time of Charlemagne and later of Otto the Great, there was no political unity in the Catholic world, the West. However, even if unity was only a dream politically, the unity of all Catholic peoples was a reality, spiritually and culturally. Believers from all Catholic countries flocked to Rome and the great shrines of the time on pilgrimage. Within the Catholic

world, the psychological wall that today divides one nation from another did not exist: religious practices and beliefs and Church rules were the same in Italy as they were outside; the same corrupt Latin was used by the small educated minority from Armagh in Ireland to Salerno in Italy and Merseburg in Germany; the problems facing Catholicism in Italy were the same in other western areas; whatever the situation in Rome, papal leadership of the Church was not put in doubt.

Italian Catholicism influenced Catholics everywhere. The converse has also been true, both at the spiritual and the temporal level. What happened in Italy in the middle of the eleventh century was the culmination of a reform movement which had started early in the tenth in the great monastery of Cluny situated near the border between the duchies of Frankish Burgundy and Aquitania. French Catholics in the thirteenth century and Spanish Catholics in the sixteenth, took the initiative in suppressing evangelical movements, thus strengthening Catholicism in Italy. Political developments in Italy were deeply influenced by foreign Catholics who intervened in Italian affairs: from Pepin's invasion in 754 to aid the pope against

*The seven churches of Rome, to which many pilgrims came. Engraving for the Jubilee of 1575. Gabinetto Nazionale della Stampa, Rome*





the king of the Lombards, to the expedition sent in 1867 by the emperor of the French to aid another pope against the Italian patriot Garibaldi.

At the middle of the eleventh century the Catholic world included about one third of geographical Europe. The transalpine spread of Catholicism had been a slow but steady process. The conversion of Salian Franks in 496 had given the Roman church its first solid foothold beyond the Alps. At that time Christians of the eastern Mediterranean and of North Africa recognized the authority of various patriarchs, not of the bishop of Rome; northern barbarians tended to embrace Christianity in its Arian form, and in Ireland Saint Patrick had established a non-Roman version of Catholicism. There was a wave of conversions around the time of Saint Gregory Magnus, largely the work of missionaries who shared the pope's religious fervor: southern Germans embraced Catholicism, as did the Lombards in Italy, the Visigoths in Spain, some of the Saxons of southern England converted by Saint Augustine the Monk. In 664 the Synod of Whitby, in Anglo-Saxon Northumberland, opted for Roman Catholicism instead of the Irish Church whose missionaries had preached Christianity successfully among most of the peoples of Britain. As the result of destructive Viking raids in the ninth century, the autonomous Irish culture weakened and Roman Catholicism replaced the distinctive Irish version. Between the end of the ninth century and early in the eleventh, new converts to Catholicism and obedient followers of the Roman pope included the Scandinavians (except those who had founded the Russian state and adopted the faith of Eastern Christianity); various Slavic peoples like the Moravians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Slovenes, Croats; and the Magyars who, after the defeat suffered in 955, had settled in the middle Danube Valley. Conversion to Christianity, Western or Eastern, proved in every case to be considerably more than the abandoning of traditional paganism. It meant the acceptance of different and higher values; it meant joining a vast community of nations many of which had an advanced culture; leaving behind tribalism and creating a more complex political organization. It did not necessarily mean civilization, but in every single case it did signify the dawn of civilization. Conversion to Catholicism also meant an expansion of papal, and therefore Italian, influence.

When Gregory VII became pope, Roman Catholicism extended from the Kingdom of Leon in northwestern Spain, where pilgrims worshiped at the shrine of Santiago de Compostela, to the Kingdom of Poland where the great shrine of Czestochowa was to rise. As the monk Hildebrand, Gregory had studied and traveled beyond the Alps. He recognized that his responsibility was to the whole Catholic world and not just to the Roman or Italian part of it. He had a universal concept of the papacy, which for generations had been sadly lacking among his predecessors. He strengthened the Church, which found itself conse-

quently in a better position for further expansion. The expulsion (usually only after bitter fighting) of the Moslems from the islands of the western Mediterranean and from Spain between the eleventh and the fifteenth century, the obliteration of pagan Baltic tribes and the conversion of others, by Crusaders in the thirteenth, and the conversion of the Lithuanians occupying a vast territory between Poland and Russia in the fourteenth century—secured for Roman Catholicism the boundaries it had early in the sixteenth century, on the eve of the Reformation.

#### GREGORY VII

In the institutional field, Hildebrand of Soana was what Saint Gregory Magnus had been in the theological field. He was born of humble parentage around 1015 in southern Tuscany. He did not achieve distinction as a writer; action was the whole focus of his life. Both as a sincere believer and as a man with a mission, he found in the Cluniac reform movement the answer to the problems he faced. In 1046 he was in attendance on Gregory VI, the least reprehensible of the three popes then disputing the throne of Saint Peter; three years later he was at the side of Leo IX. Hildebrand's action was directed toward three goals: the purity of the clergy, the supremacy of the papacy in the Catholic church, and the supremacy of the church over the state. He had on his side a growing number of clerics and laymen who were convinced that reform was indispensable, that, specifically, the evils of concubinage and of simony (the purchase of ecclesiastical offices) had to be eliminated. For political reasons (in order to check the power of the emperors), many Italian notables sided with Hildebrand, as did foreign kings who needed a stronger clergy to hold their states together and to stir up feelings against Moslem and pagan enemies.

Leo IX had been frightened by the dynamic expansion in southern Italy of the Normans, led by William Iron-Arm. In 1051 he took under his protection the city of Benevento whose Lombard princes were unable to defend it against the threatening Normans. He launched an expedition against the Normans in 1053 and was taken prisoner at the battle of Civitate. The Normans, now led by two of William's brothers, Humphrey and Robert Guiscard, treated the pope with great respect. Pleasantly surprised, Leo IX gave Robert the investiture of the lands he and his brothers had won from the Byzantines and encouraged them to pursue their conquests. The expulsion of Byzantines and Moslems, and the creation of a strong state in southern Italy, subservient to the church, became a prime objective of Hildebrand's policy.

Hildebrand was in large measure responsible for the success of the Synod of Melfi (capital of the Norman state) which condemned marriage of the clergy, and of the more important Synod of the Lateran—both convoked by Pope Nicholas II in 1059. At the



Lateran Synod, the celibacy of all the clergy, not just of the monastic orders, became an absolute rule. Steps were taken to eliminate simony. Laymen were deprived of what voice they still had in church affairs. Popular election and imperial nomination were eliminated from the process of choosing popes. The electoral college was limited to the cardinals, the pastors of major churches in Rome and the suburbs, who were appointed by the pope as bishop of Rome. In 1075 Gregory VII issued the *Dictatus Papae*, which established in unequivocal terms the priority of the popes over all secular rulers including the emperors; and also maintained that the Roman church had never erred and could never err.

The reorganization of the Roman Catholic clergy and the consolidation of papal authority immediately affected the relationships between Western and Eastern Christianity. The relationships between the papacy and the empire were affected almost as quickly and no less deeply. Gregorian reforms contributed to the climate in which the revolutionary upheaval of the Crusades was born; they affected Italian intellectual and political life.

#### THE SCHISM: ROMAN CATHOLICISM VERSUS GREEK ORTHODOXY

For centuries there had been de facto separation between Eastern Christianity headed by the patriarch of Constantinople, totally subject to the Byzantine emperors, and the more independent Western Christianity headed by the popes. However, there had always been an effort to maintain the fiction of unity between the two great Christian denominations. There

were ideological differences. There were, more importantly, institutional differences. On the comparatively minor question of the support given in 1053 by Pope Leo IX to the Norman adventurers who had occupied Byzantine territory in southern Italy, the patriarch of Constantinople Michael Kerulario, disputing papal claims to jurisdiction in southern Italy, definitely and finally broke all relations with Rome. For the next nine hundred years, the many efforts to reestablish cooperation—or at least a measure of concord between Western and Eastern Christianity—failed. Negotiations begun in 1054 lasted two years, during which the schism between the Christian West and the Christian East deepened. In Italy, an important immediate consequence was the granting by Pope Nicholas II in 1059 to Robert Guiscard of the title of duke of Apulia and Calabria (hitherto Byzantine possessions and not entirely conquered for another twenty years).

#### THE PAPACY AGAINST THE EMPIRE

The clash with the Holy Roman Empire occurred as the result of the *Dictatus Papae*. The problem was a simple one: Who had precedence, emperor or pope (and at a lower level, lay or ecclesiastical dignitaries)? As long as the imperial dignity was lacking in content, as it had been under the successors of Charlemagne and the phantom emperors of the early tenth century, the answer to the question did not matter. Nor did it matter as long as the Roman church, owing to the weakness and corruption of the papacy, lacked effective central authority. But the empire had been reorganized by Otto the Great. Then, less than a cen-

A document of Gregory VII. ICI



Pope and Emperor at the feet of a divine legislator. Bolognese miniature from the codex of the *Decretum Gratiani*, a collection of canon law compiled by Gratian, a Benedictine monk. Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice





ture later, came the reorganization of the Church and the strengthening of the papacy. After that the clash became inevitable. It was fortunate for the advocates of papal supremacy that Emperor Henry III died in 1056, leaving a six-year-old heir, Henry IV. Instead of an emperor asserting his rights there were conflicts accompanying the regency. When Henry IV came of age he had to deal with large-scale revolts, not finally suppressed until 1075.

A practical question was becoming more and more acute. Since Ottonian times, many clerics in the kingdoms of Germany and Italy making up the Holy Roman Empire (to which the kingdom of Burgundy was added in 1038) held both ecclesiastical and temporal power. The cure of souls was joined to the care of bodies. A bishop was often a count as well, a pivotal figure in the complex feudal structure. But who was to appoint the count-bishop? Round this question arose the investiture struggle, a manifestation of the perennial conflict in the West between church and state. A synod called by Gregory VII in Rome passed a decree against the lay (imperial) investiture of members of the clergy. Henry IV called another synod in 1076 at Worms. This synod deposed the pope, who retaliated by excommunicating the emperor. Most of the clergy and laity in the empire having sided with the pope, Henry IV in January 1077 appeared bare-foot at the walls of the Apennine castle of Canossa (owned by Matilda, countess of Tuscany) where the pope was staying. He asked the pope's forgiveness. It was granted. Six years later the emperor took his revenge by besieging the pope in Rome. The pope was rescued by Robert Guiscard and died in exile in Salerno, a semiprisoner of the Normans.

The duel between papacy and empire was temporarily settled under Calixtus II at the Synod of Worms in 1122, where it was agreed that imperial investiture of clerics exercising temporal power would

Henry IV at Canossa kneeling before Matilda of Tuscany. NYPL PC



Scenes showing the exile and death of Gregory VII. Universitätsbibliothek, Jena

precede the ecclesiastical investiture in Germany, and that ecclesiastical would come before imperial investiture in Italy and Burgundy. The rivalry continued, nevertheless. It led to the civil war of 1125–1135 in Germany between the Welf duke of Bavaria and Saxony, supported by the papal party, and the Weiblinger duke of Swabia supported by the lay and imperial party. The rivalry had its manifestation in Italy in the generations-long conflict between Guelphs and Ghibelines, (names deriving from Welf and Weiblinger), the advocates of papal and of imperial supremacy respectively. The rivalry was a major factor in the weakening of imperial authority in Italy in the twelfth century and in Germany in the thirteenth. It was a major factor in the decline of papal prestige in all Catholic nations in the fourteenth century. All important for Italy was the fact that the weakening and decline of the two competing central authorities favored greater liberty of cities and other local communities in what was nominally the Kingdom of Italy (see Chapter 8) and in most of the Papal States.

#### CONTINUITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Whatever the ups and downs of political influence during the last nine centuries, the Roman church has enjoyed an astounding continuity and stability, the fruit of the efficient hierarchical authoritarianism existing since Roman times and consolidated by Gregory VII. The institutional structure also put a brake on potential changes caused by the pressure of internal forces. In Italy, Catholicism withstood all crises. As a creed and as an organization it remained essentially unchanged until the papacy of John XXIII. Attempts made to transform Catholicism from within ranged



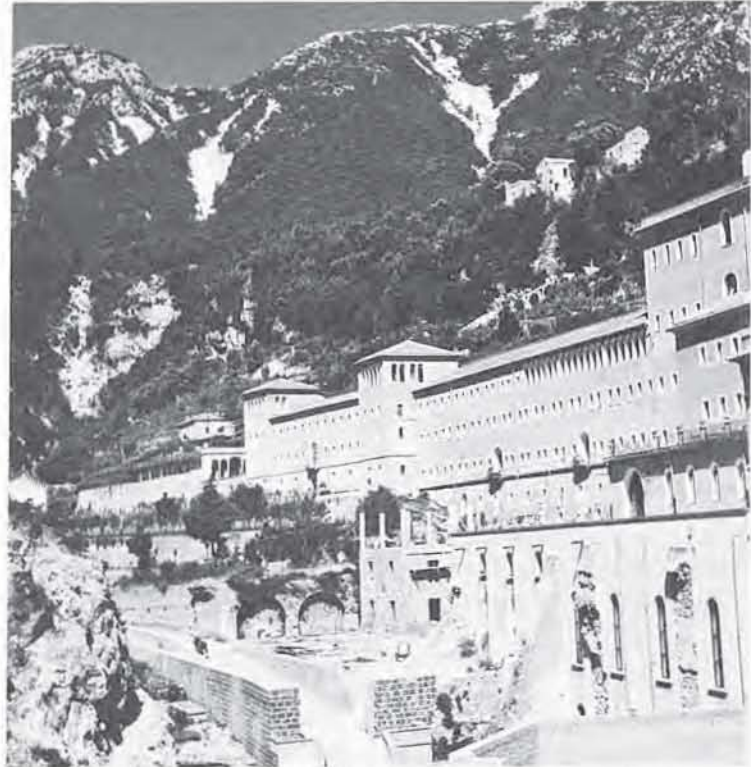
from the evangelical and Conciliar movements of the twelfth and fifteenth centuries to Jansenism in the eighteenth and modernism in the early twentieth. All the attempts failed. What changes did take place were the result of pressures from forces outside the church.

#### THE CRUSADES

The Cluniac-inspired period of Gregorian reforms was the beginning of the great Age of Faith of Western Christianity, a period that lasted for over two hundred years and faded away in the fourteenth century. It was the age of the Crusades—to the Holy Land, against pagans in northeastern Europe, against heretics in France and Italy; of attacks against the schismatic Byzantines, which led to their elimination from the Italian South in 1041 to 1080 and to the establishment of a Latin (i.e., Catholic) Empire in Constantinople in 1204; of the intensification of wars of religious liberation in the Iberian peninsula. It was the age of great Catholic saints and scholars (foremost among them Saint Francis and Saint Thomas Aquinas), of the founding of new monastic orders, of the building of magnificent cathedrals. It was the age of great political popes, of Alexander III, Innocent III, Boniface VIII.

Though its core was in France and western Germany, the crusading movement affected Italy profoundly. In 1055, while the schism between Rome and Constantinople was becoming final, Seljuk Turk—nomadic warriors from central Asia as the Huns and Avars had been—invaded the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire, rent by rivalries and corruption. In 1071 the Turks defeated the Byzantines at Manzikert and overran most of Asia Minor. The able general Alexius Comnenus seized the throne and restored order in what remained of the Byzantine Em-

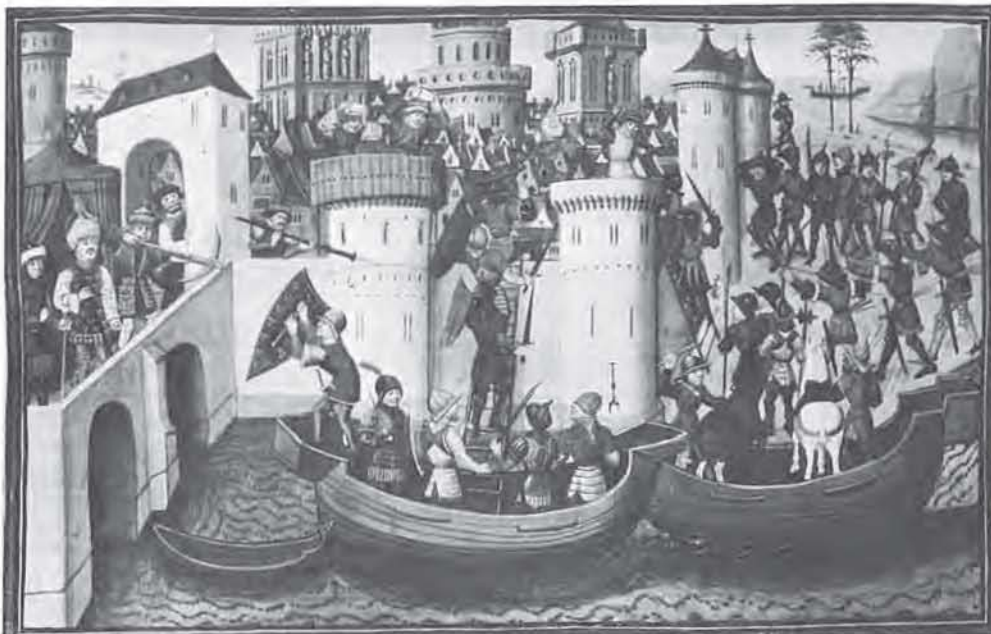
pire. In 1095, with the approval of Pope Urban II, then presiding over a synod in Piacenza in northern Italy, Alexius invoked the aid of Western princes. Urban II, a Frenchman, immediately called another, larger synod in Clermont in central France. There,



*Cava dei Tirreni (Salerno). A Benedictine abbey, founded by the Cluniac St. Alferius, built in 1011–1025 and consecrated in 1092. One of the results of Cluniac reform. EPA*

*Urban II at the Synod at Clermont. NYPL PC*

*Assault on Constantinople in 1204 by Crusaders. Miniature, fifteenth century. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris*





with enthusiastic fervor, he preached a Crusade to liberate the Holy Sepulcher and the road leading to it. Crosses were distributed. Kings were indifferent to a crusade and most nobles were lukewarm, but the popular response was immediate and overwhelming. Waves of pilgrims went to Asia Minor, to be slaughtered by the Moslems. A few notables mustered knights and foot soldiers. Two small armies led by Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse reached Constantinople, the staging area for further advances, by land. A third army, led by Bohemund of Otranto, son of the duke of Apulia and Calabria, went by sea, in ships provided mainly by the Italian republican city-states of Pisa and Genoa. Religious fervor helped them overcome a brave enemy despite an exhausting climate, difficult terrain, and the ravages of disease. Jerusalem was captured in 1099, the third year of the Crusade.

Godfrey was elected king. His most powerful vassal was Bohemund, who had become prince of Antioch. Jerusalem, lost in 1187, was briefly in Christian hands again in 1228-1244, and never again after that period until December 1917 when Allenby's Allied troops entered the city. Acre, the last stronghold of the Crusaders in Palestine, surrendered in 1291. For two hundred years the Crusaders, with their noble ideals, their heroism, and their cruelty and corruption,

had been part of European life. There were eight Crusades between 1096 and 1271. Countless knights, squires, and commoners had taken up the Cross; many never reached their destinations but died of wounds, disease, and exhaustion. Emperor Frederick I died in 1190 while crusading; so did Saint Louis, King of France, in 1270. Orders of warrior-monks were organized to defend the Holy Land and to give protection to pilgrims: the Knights of the Temple, or Templars, organized around 1120; the Knights of Saint John, militarized in 1130, known later as the Knights of Rhodes and in modern times as the Knights of Malta; the Teutonic Knights, organized around 1190, conquerors of the lands on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea from 1227 to 1287.

Italians participated as Crusaders and as the main suppliers of ships carrying armed men and pilgrims. Merchants, particularly those from Pisa, Genoa, and Venice, were granted privileges in ports of the eastern Mediterranean and of the Black Sea, where they established their trading posts. They exchanged goods at an ever faster rate, to the advantage of all. And from the East they brought back to Italy knowledge inherited from ancient Greeks and Romans, which had been lost in the West. The Fourth Crusade became a raid against Constantinople. The city was oc-

*The siege of Jerusalem, represented in a fifteenth-century illuminated manuscript. NYPL*



*Doge Enrico Dandolo proclaiming the Fourth Crusade in St. Mark's, Venice. EPA*





cupied in 1204 by the Crusaders who partitioned among themselves the lands of the Orthodox Byzantine Empire and created a feudal Catholic Latin Empire called Romania, which lasted until 1261, Venice, having transported the Crusaders (who in 1202 captured Zara in Dalmatia on behalf of the Venetians), received, in the words of the time, three-eighths of Constantinople and one quarter and a half of the Byzantine territory outside the capital. Included in that quarter and a half were the Duchy of Durazzo in Albania which controlled the entrance to the Adriatic Sea, the Cyclades lost in 1566, Crete lost in 1669 to the Turks, and Ionian islands lost to the French in 1797.

#### EVANGELICAL MOVEMENTS

There were economic motives behind the Crusades; social conditions created the climate for them; but without religious fervor the Crusades would never have happened. The same religious fervor stimulated the evangelical movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. By the middle of the eleventh century Lombardy had already seen the quick spread of the *pataria*, a religious and social reform movement that caused serious concern to both ecclesiastical and temporal authorities. France was the birthplace of Peter Waldo, whose followers are the Italian Waldensians of today. In Italy and France there were growing numbers of Catharists, against whose main stronghold, Albi in southern France, a Crusade was launched by Innocent III in 1208. Arnold of Brescia, executed in 1155 by order of Emperor Frederick I, was a scholar, an evangelical preacher, and a militant supporter of the republican Commune of Rome established in 1143. The greatest figure in the evangelical movement, however, was Francis of Assisi, who died in 1226 and was canonized two years later. In 1223 Pope Honorius III recognized the Franciscan order founded in 1209. After the death of Saint Francis a split occurred between two Franciscan groups, one of which, the *Spirituali*, deeply influenced by Saint Francis' contemporary, Giovacchino da Fiore, was close to heresy.

Heresy was a major concern in the Catholic world of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A Spanish cleric, Dominic de Guzmán, canonized in 1234 and



Monument to Arnold of Brescia. Alinari



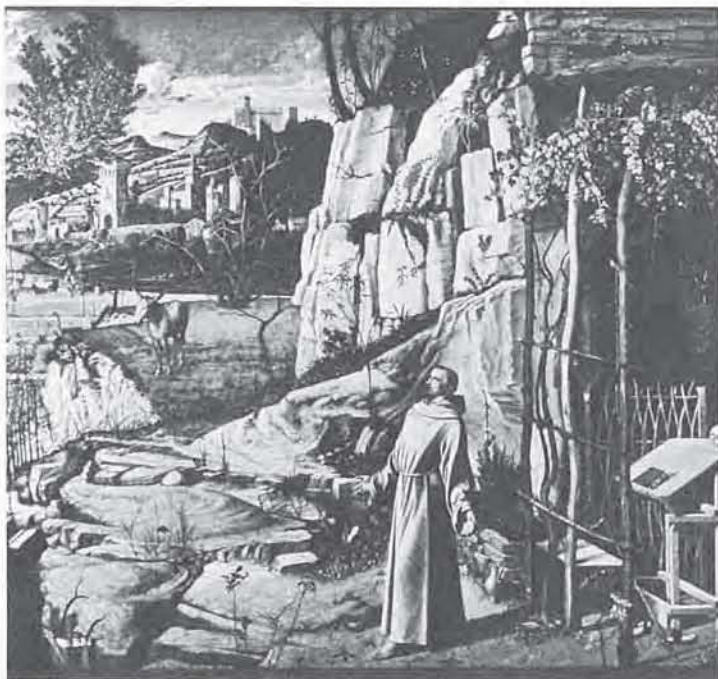
Meeting of Saint Francis and Saint Dominic. Andrea della Robbia. Photoworld

Peter Waldo appealing to the Bible. NYPL PC



known ever since as Saint Dominic, was in southern France when Crusaders attacked the Catharists. He knew that arms were not enough, that ideas must be fought with ideas. The order he founded, the Dominicans, aimed at preaching and teaching. In 1233, after a short experiment with the Franciscans, the Dominicans were entrusted with carrying out the Inquisition.





Saint Francis of Assisi. NYPL PC

Pope Honorius III recognizing the Franciscan order. Giotto. Alinari



A nobleman, Thomas Aquinas, born at Roccasecca about halfway between Naples and Rome, was a member of the Dominican order. Saint Thomas—the *doctor angelicus*, canonized in 1298—was the greatest and most influential Catholic philosopher. He was a major influence in the long process of integrating rationalism into Catholicism. From scholars in Moslem Spain, Italian scholars had acquired knowledge of Aristotle. Through Saint Thomas' *Summae*, Aristotelian rationalism was incorporated into Catholic thought. This happened in the thirteenth century; in the nineteenth century, the intellectual offensive of Catholicism against agnosticism, atheism, and materialism began with the revival of Thomism, the philosophy of Saint Thomas, and in 1879 Pope Leo XIII declared that Thomism was the foundation of Catholic philosophy.

ALEXANDER III AND INNOCENT III

On the political front, the compromise of 1122 (actually a victory for the papacy) was followed by a brief papal schism and by difficulties in Rome where a democratic *comune* was organized in 1143. The late

Saint Thomas Aquinas. Fra Angelico. Chapel of Nicholas V, the Vatican. Anderson



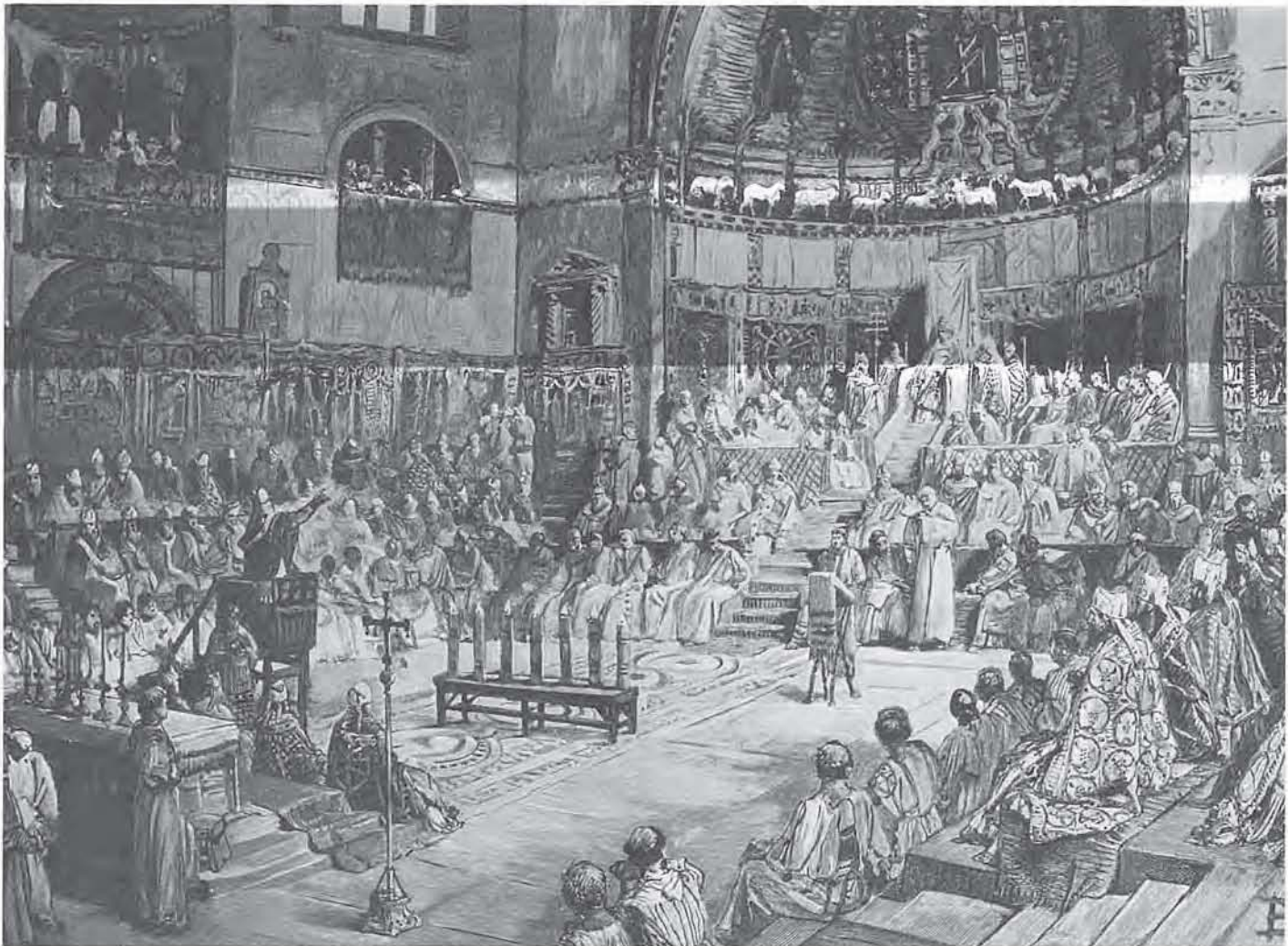


1140s were filled with the enthusiasm accompanying the Second Crusade. The refusal of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa ("Redbeard") to perform a ceremonial service for the pope once more raised the question of precedence. In 1157, at an assembly called by the emperor, the papal envoy Bandinelli (a Florentine) caused an uproar by firmly stressing the principle of papal supremacy over the emperors. As Pope Alexander III, Bandinelli spent his long reign asserting papal authority and organizing resistance in Italy and Germany against the emperor. His support of the League of Lombard Cities, which defeated Frederick I in 1176 (*see* Chapter 8), contributed to the disintegration of German power in Italy. (The Piedmontese city of Alessandria, founded in 1168, was named after the pope.) Under Innocent III, the Roman Lothair Conti, count of Segni, elected pope in 1198, the papacy reached the zenith of its political influence. Innocent III exercised effective authority over most of the Papal States, ruled until then by rioting nobles and imperial vicars or governors. During the minority of Frederick II (who did not begin to rule effectively until after the pope's death), he governed the Kingdom of Sicily and was a major influence in the internal



*Pope Innocent III and Frederick II*

*Fourth Lateran Council  
presided over by Pope In-  
nocent III. EPA*





affairs of Germany. Nearly all European kings, from Portugal to Denmark to Bulgaria, paid homage to him. He called the Fourth Lateran Council, attended by 1,200 bishops and abbots, recognized the Dominican order (1215), and gave cautious support to the Franciscans. He organized the Papal Inquisition, launched the Crusades that captured Constantinople and destroyed the Catharists, stimulated the Catholic kings of Spain to renewed attacks against the Moslems (who

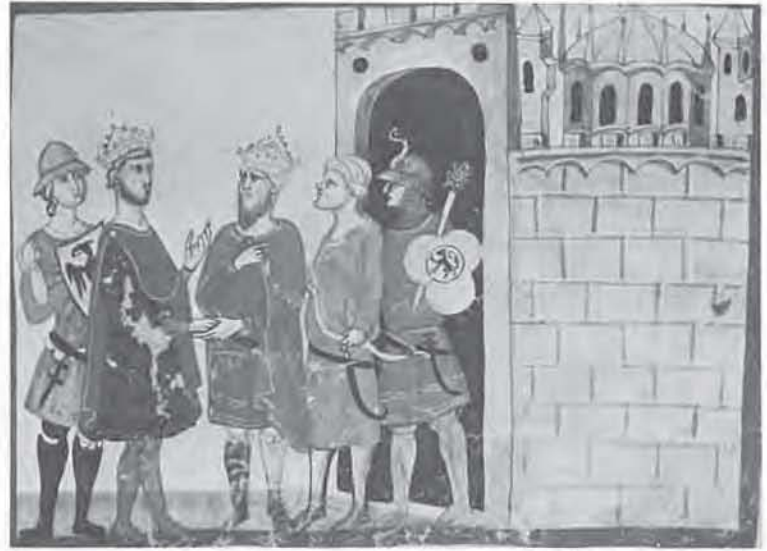


*An inquisitor reports to the Pope. Painting by Jean Paul Laurens. NYPL PC*

never recovered from their defeat at the great battle of Las Navas in 1212), and supported the Teutonic Order which, in alliance with the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, was to conquer a vast area in the still pagan northeast of Europe.

#### BONIFACE VIII

To remain at the peak is difficult. There were worthy successors of Innocent III in the thirteenth century, but conditions were becoming less and less favorable to papal supremacy. Everywhere the laity was in revolt against ecclesiastical power. The post-Gregorian phase of papal ascendancy in Italian and European affairs ended dramatically in 1303 when an officer sent by the king of France arrested Pope Boniface VIII in Anagni, forty miles southeast of Rome. Of the Roman Caetani family, Boniface VIII claimed the universal authority asserted by Gregory VII and Innocent III. The magnificent jubilee of 1300 stressed papal prestige and power. But already in 1302 Boniface had been compelled to recognize a prince who rejected papal claims, as king of the island of Sicily, over which the pope claimed supremacy. In the same year, Philip IV of France answered the papal bull *Unam Sanctam* by calling a council to judge the pope. When Boniface refused to appear, soldiers under the



*The assault on Pope Boniface VIII at Anagni. Miniature from the Villani MS. Vatican Library*

command of the French Nogaret and the Roman Sciarra Colonna arrested him. Public reaction led to the prisoner's immediate release, but a deadly blow had been inflicted on an authority founded on prestige and not on force of arms.

#### THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

The years 1303 to 1549 were sad and dark ones for the papacy. At times it was still important politically, but not spiritually. Gone was the moral leadership so brilliantly and forcefully exercised since the time of Gregory VII. With the Borgia Alexander VI, the papacy sank as low as it had been in the tenth century. No longer a positive element in Italian life contributing to progress in Italy and to Italian influence in the Catholic world, the papacy became a detrimental, negative factor.

With the French Clement V, elected in 1305, the papal court was transferred to Avignon in southern France, a city then ruled by the kings of Naples as counts of Provence. Formally transferred to papal sovereignty in 1348, Avignon and its district were an overseas province of the Papal States until 1791. For a while the papacy seemed to be a French royal chaplaincy. The Avignon period, known by the biblical term, the Babylonian Captivity, lasted until 1378. The Papal States in Italy existed in name only. A few powerful feudatories were in control of Latium: the Colonna, Orsini, Conti, Caetani, Savelli, Farnese, etc. The people of Rome found in Cola (Nicola) di Rienzo an inspiring but ultimately ineffectual leader who tried to reorganize the twelfth century *comune* and dreamed of reestablishing the ancient Roman Republic, giving it authority over kings and emperors. Cola governed





*The Synod of Vienna (1312) under Pope Clement V. EPA*



*Papal Palace at Avignon, fourteenth century. EPA*

the city twice, from 1347 to 1348 and from 1352 until 1354, when he was slain by hired assassins. The cities of Umbria, the Marches, and Romagna, were de facto independent states (not less than fifteen in Umbria alone). Some cities, like Ancona, had republican institutions. Others were lordships under despots sometimes benevolent, but more often malevolent. Some of the despots were known as leaders of mercenary troops or as munificent patrons of the arts, others—more numerous—were known for their treachery and cruelty. Titles granted by the popes legitimized the rule of the Este in Ferrara, the Montefeltro in Urbino, and Da Varano in Camerino. Other well-known and influential ruling families were the Pepoli and Bentivoglio in Bologna, Polenta in Ravenna, Malatesta in Rimini and Pesaro, Fogliani in Fermo, Baglioni in Perugia, Vitelli in Città di Castello, Trinci in Foligno.

#### SCHISMS AND COUNCILS

The unruly feudatories of Latium having been temporarily curbed by the ruthless Spanish Cardinal Albornoz, warrior and statesman, Pope Urban V decided to return to Rome. The cardinals, most of them French, persuaded him, however, that Avignon was a better residence. Finally, in 1378, an Italian was elected pope: Urban VI Prignano settled firmly in Rome. This move, opposed by many cardinals who were backed for political reasons by transalpine kings, caused a series of schisms which lasted until 1449. In that year the anti-Pope Felix V (formerly Amadeus VIII, duke of Savoy) abdicated and recognized the legitimacy of Nicholas V Parentucelli, a Tuscan hu-

*Cardinal Albornoz receiving the homage of the submissive cities of the Pentapolis (Rimini, Ancona, Fano, Pesaro, and Senigallia). Miniature, fourteenth century. Vatican Library*



*Pope Urban VI. NYPL*





manist and scholar. During these seventy years, as sad for the Catholic church as those of the "Babylonian Captivity," there was again a time when three popes claimed legitimacy! The schisms weakened what little prestige and authority the popes still had. To restore unity, concerned clerics and lay rulers called councils which met in Pisa, Constance, Basel, Ferrara, Florence. The councils failed to bring unity but provided the opportunity to develop the conciliar movement of 1409-1449 which aimed at replacing the popes with councils dominated by bishops, as supreme authority in the Catholic church (an idea revived in the twentieth century). Lack of determination more than anything else led to the collapse of the movement. Because of the spiritual and temporal weakness of the papacy, the papal victory over the Conciliar movement was hollow, but a magnificent jubilee was held by Nicholas V in 1450 to celebrate it. The schisms also favored the development of heretical movements like those of the Lollards in England and the Hussites in Bohemia (inspired respectively by Wyclif and Huss), forerunners of the great religious storm of the sixteenth century.

#### RENAISSANCE POPES

The name of Nicholas V is indissolubly linked to one of the greatest and most important collections of valuable documents and books, the Vatican Library. Pius II Piccolomini was a distinguished man of letters, the author of works in which breathed the spirit of Boccaccio more than that of the Church Fathers; he was a courtier who owed his successful ecclesiastical career to the anti-Pope Felix V; he struggled vainly to organize a Crusade against the Turks. Paul II Barbo, a cardinal at twenty-three for no other reason than being a pope's nephew, made life difficult for humanist men of letters who had settled in Rome. Starting in 1500 (see Chapter 9), mainly through force and deceit, most of the Papal States were brought under the control of the papal administration. Splendid and lasting monuments testify in Rome to the munificence of popes whose revenues came from all over Catholic Europe, and whose subjects suffered exploitation and hunger. There was this and more for a century after the schisms ended. But



Nicholas V. Effigy on tomb in the Vatican Basilica, Rome. Alinari



The coronation of Pope Pius II. NYPL PC



Pienza, the birthplace of Pope Pius II who had cathedral and Piccolomino Palace, designed by B. Rossellino, built here in mid-fifteenth century. EPA





*Paul I (757-767)*



*Paul II (1464-1471)*



*Paul III (1534-1549)*



*Paul IV (1555-1559)*



*Paul V (1605-1621)*



*Paul VI (1963-) Photoworld*

most of the popes who reigned between 1447 and 1549—the Renaissance popes—have come down in history for having practiced what came to be called “great nepotism.”

Renaissance popes were not satisfied, as other popes had been before and as sixteenth- and seventeenth-century popes would be later, with providing well-remunerated positions and titles of nobility for relatives: a main concern was to endow a close relative, a nephew or a son, with a sovereign state. An exception was the upright Dutchman, Adrian VI Boeyens who reigned briefly and was the last non-Italian pope. Several of the other twelve popes, besides being nepotists, were religiously indifferent, if not outright unbelievers. They failed as pastors. They failed also in the political game to which they devoted their energies and in which they squandered the resources of the Roman Church, and what little remained of papal prestige.

Pius II left his large family rich and powerful, Sixtus IV della Rovere provided his nephew, or son, Girolamo Riario, with the lordships of Forlì and Imola in Romagna. A della Rovere nephew became Pope Julius II and put a relative on the throne of the Duchy of Urbino. The Genoese Innocent VIII (Cibo or Cybo) was the first pope to recognize his children, whom he married into powerful and wealthy families; a grandson became lord of Massa. Innocent VIII also made a deal with the Turkish sultan financially rewarding, politically detrimental, and religiously reprehensible. The Spanish Borgia Alexander VI owed his successful ecclesiastical career to his uncle Calixtus III who had occupied briefly in the 1450s the See of Saint Peter. He obtained for his favorite son Caesar (born in 1475) the Duchy of Valentinois from the king of France, and shortly after created for him the duchy of Romagna. The first Medici pope, Leo X, transferred the duchy of Urbino to his nephew Lorenzo, whom he also made lord of Florence. The second Medici pope, Clement VII, fulfilled the family ambitions when he arranged that the emperor and king of Spain, Charles



V, bestow on Lorenzo's illegitimate son Alexander the title of duke of Florence. Paul III Farnese, finding the duchies first of Castro and later of Camerino too small and poor, gave his son Pierluigi in 1545 the cities of Parma and Piacenza which had been added to the Papal States in 1512. Riarios and Borgias did not enjoy their ill-gotten domains for long. The others founded dynasties that lasted for generations.

It was all sordid. Some Renaissance popes were

able statesmen, and most were munificent patrons of the arts. But statesmanship and Maecenatism were no substitute for the spiritual leadership which is the main function of the papacy. A high price was paid for the titles bestowed on popes' sons and nephews, and for the building of Saint Peter's and Palazzo Farnese in Rome: the absence of spiritual leadership was the major element in the cleavage of Western Christianity that occurred in the sixteenth century.



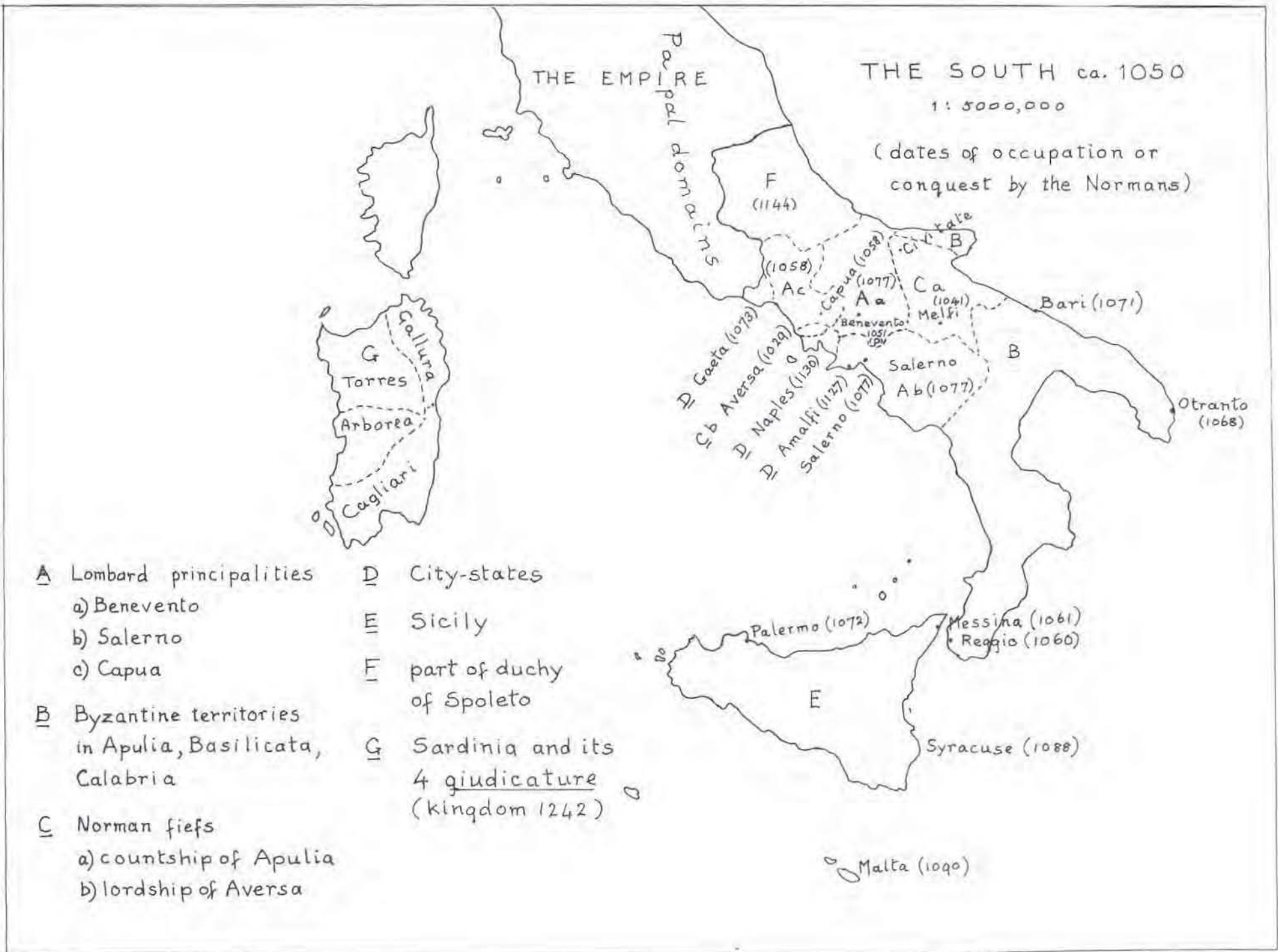
*Pope Julius II. Raphael. Uffizi, Florence. EPA*

*Pope Innocent VIII. EPA*



*Pope Alexander VI. Uffizi, Gioviana Collection. EPA*







## 7

# KINGDOMS OF THE SOUTH TO 1500

*Birth of the Two Sicilies — The South in the early eleventh century — Arrival of the Normans — Robert Guiscard — Roger I and Roger II — The later Altavilla — A fateful marriage — Frederick II — The papacy versus Frederick II — French invasion — Angevin rule — Decadence — Charles I of Anjou — Sicilian Vespers — Aragonese rulers in Sicily — Sardinia under Aragon — Angevin kings of Naples — Queen Joanna — Joanna II — Alfonso of Aragon — Later Aragonese kings of Naples — End of independence.*

## BIRTH OF THE TWO SICILIES

A FOREIGN warrior—cunning and cruel, intelligent and brave—had in 1059 been granted by Pope Nicholas II the title of duke of Apulia and Calabria, the heel and foot of the Italian boot respectively. Within less than a generation the whole of the peninsular south and Sicily had come under the sway of the warrior's kin, sons and grandsons of the Norman lord Tancred of Hauteville. Thus was born a state, which came to an end during the few months of 1860 between the landing of Garibaldi's Thousand at Marsala in Sicily and the victory of the Garibaldini at the battle fought on the banks of the Volturno, north of Naples.

The state was named the Kingdom of Sicily in 1130; in 1282 it was divided into the Kingdoms of Sicily (the island only) and of Naples (on the mainland) and was formally renamed the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in 1721 when Naples and Sicily were under Austrian rule. From its beginning as a fief of the Papal See, its existence was complicated for centuries by papal claims. Whatever the claims, the state was de facto independent for long periods of time and controlled by foreign powers for other long stretches. It was Italian, but had its own distinctive variant of Italian culture. It survived dissensions, invasions, and civil wars. Together with Sardinia, which also had



Tancred of Hauteville. Burgerbibliothek, Bern, Switzerland

developed with a distinctive character, the Two Sicilies form today's South, the home of some of Italy's thorniest problems; the home too of millions of Italians who migrated overseas at the end of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth, many of them to settle in the United States.

With its forty thousand or so square miles, the Two Sicilies (to use the name by which it was known to recent generations) was nearly as large as the Kingdom of England (about fifty thousand square miles) which was conquered at about the same time by other Norman adventurers. Then, however, it had more than twice the population of England, several times the revenue, and a higher level of civilization—a noble legacy left by ancient Greeks, Carthaginians, and Romans, and later by the Byzantines and the Arabs.

The new state was an authoritarian one: power was concentrated in the hands of a ruler, helped by a small privileged class, governing people who seldom participated actively in the events that shaped the life of all. A few rulers were efficient administrators: under them there was a measure of economic progress while letters and the arts flourished. A few were benevolent despots who tolerated some freedom of expression. Others were inept and malevolent despots whose intolerance killed any flourishing of the spirit; economic and cultural decline marked their rule. Though there was a handful of brilliant exceptions, inefficiency and malevolent despotism predominated from the middle of the thirteenth century on.

Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica had had until the eleventh century their own distinctive development, different from that of the mainland. Not until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries did the people of the three islands become definitely integrated into the Italian nation. The Norman conquest of Sicily and the formation of a state including the island and the peninsular South—like the conquest of Sardinia and Corsica shortly before by the mainland republics of Pisa and



Genoa—were crucial events in the formation of the Italian nation as we know it today.

#### THE SOUTH IN THE EARLY ELEVENTH CENTURY

Under the early emperors of the Macedonian dynasty of the ninth and tenth centuries, the Byzantines had recovered part of the peninsular territory previously conquered by Lombards and Saracens. A Lombard attempt to overthrow Byzantine rule in Apulia failed in 1018 at the battle of Cannae. After Cannae, the Byzantines were firmly in control of the southern half of the future kingdom of Naples, including Calabria, Apulia, and most of Basilicata. The shrunken Lombard principalities were limited to Molise, most of Campania, and the remaining districts of Basilicata. Along the coast of Campania were the small territories of the four maritime city-states. Around the year 1000 Sicily was one state, efficiently and progressively run by the Moslem minority. Forty years later insurgencies and revolts had destroyed unity. The island was divided between conflicting Saracen states headed by emirs whose quarrels favored the survival of the Catholic majority and invited raids and invasions from the mainland.

The coastal areas of Sardinia and Corsica were continually raided and intermittently ruled by Moslems from Spain and the Balearic Islands. In the hinterland of the two islands lived tribal communities, isolated from contacts with the outside world. Around 1016, the combined fleets of the Italian maritime city-states of Pisa and Genoa on the Ligurian Sea inflicted serious defeats on the Moslems. By 1052 the two islands had been liberated. Partitioning of the spoils of war was a major factor in the conflict between Pisans and Genoese which lasted until the fourteenth century. Changes occurred in Corsica slowly until the Genoese were finally firmly in control of the whole island. In Sardinia, while Pisans and Genoese battled for supremacy, tribal organization was gradually superseded by the authority of *giudici* (literally judges, in effect governors) who ruled the four districts into which the island was divided: Cagliari, Oristano or Arborea, Gallura, and Torres or Logudoro. Reliable information is scanty but it seems that in the eleventh century *giudici* were chosen from among members of different branches of the Sardinian Gunali family. After 1162 *giudici* belonged to mainland noble families.

#### ARRIVAL OF THE NORMANS

Of the three Lombard principalities in the peninsular section of the South, Salerno was in the lead economically and culturally. Prince Gaimar V, a competent leader, aimed at reestablishing the unity of the Lombard holdings in southern Italy and at expelling the Byzantines from Apulia and Calabria. Norman mercenaries had fought for the Lombards at Cannae. The Norman leader of a small but efficient band of

mercenaries, Reinulf Drengot, had in 1029 been granted the city of Aversa by Duke Sergio of Naples, and ten years later was given the title of count by Emperor Conrad III. It was natural for Prince Gaimar to enlist Normans to carry out his ambitious plans. It was in the middle 1030s that the first three of the twelve sons of Tancred of Hauteville came from their native Cotentin in lower Normandy to Italy. Altogether eight brothers migrated, each with his retinue of greedy squires and famished soldiers. Under the command of the able eldest brother William Iron-Arm, the Hautevilles fought and won. To reward them, Prince Gaimar recognized William in 1043 as count of Apulia. William's capital was Melfi, the stronghold in a wild district dominated by Mount Vulture, captured two years earlier from the Byzantines. From Melfi the Normans, cooperating with the others based at Aversa, raided, killed, and looted. Clad in their armor, endowed with great physical strength, impervious to any emotions that might have tempered their behavior, the Normans spread terror among the defenseless populace. Gaimar was assassinated in 1052. His three older Hauteville half-brothers having died, Robert Guiscard ("the canny one") became count of Apulia in 1057.

#### ROBERT GUISCARD

Robert, who ruled until 1085, was the real founder of the Norman state in southern Italy. In Chapter 6 mention has been made of the Hauteville brothers' success in winning Pope Leo IX to their side in 1053. The expulsion of the Byzantines from Italy for religious reasons, and the elimination of Lombard rule for political ones, were part of the program of the revitalized papacy. With the pope's blessing, Robert led the Normans first to conquer Calabria, feebly garrisoned by the Byzantines, and then the Byzantine-held areas of Apulia. Bari, the major city, was captured in 1071, and the last stronghold fell in 1080. After five and a half centuries, the era of direct interference in Italian affairs and of territorial occupation by Eastern Roman and Byzantine emperors was ended.

Terrorized by the Normans, the inhabitants of the city of Benevento had entrusted themselves to the

Mount Vulture, Basilicata. EPA







*Ruins of the Abbey of the Trinity, Venosa, Basilicata. The burial place of Robert Guiscard, it was founded by his brother Count Drago and entrusted to the Benedictines. EPA*



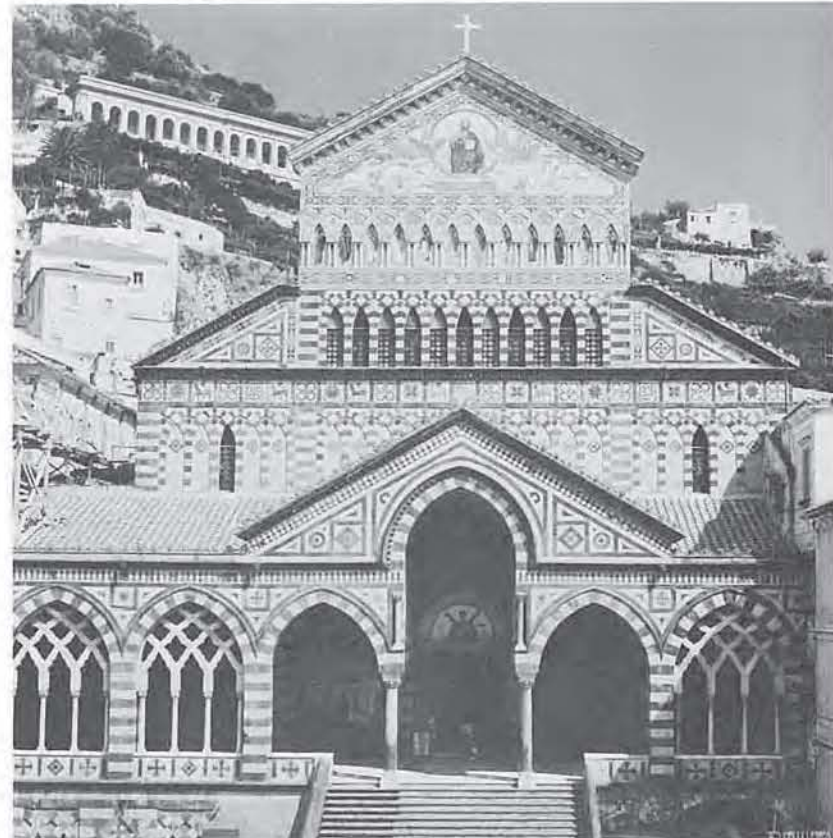
*The Norman influence on architecture in Benevento. ICI*

popes in 1051 (they were to remain, with short interruptions, under papal rule until 1860). The rest of the principality fell easy prey to the Normans. The successors of Gaimar V tried to resist Norman expansion. It was too late. In 1077 Salerno was captured by the troops of Robert, who made it his capital. Since 1058 a Norman had been prince of Capua. Gaeta, Naples, Sorrento, and Amalfi also came under Norman rule: the era of independent, progressive, and relatively prosperous city-states in southern Italy came to an end coincidentally with the ending of Byzantine and Lombard rule. It all amounted to a major revolution.

*Church of Saint Sofia, an example of the Norman influence on architecture in Benevento. ICI*



*Cathedral of Amalfi. Façade and steps in original Lombard-Norman style. EPA*





A handful of warriors had brought unity to an area politically and culturally fractioned since the Lombard invasion of 568.

#### ROGER I AND ROGER II

The Strait of Messina was no obstacle. Worthy descendants of the Vikings who had raided the Mediterranean in their long ships, the Normans of Melfi had quickly taken to the sea. In cooperation with a fleet sent by Pisa (at the time the strongest Catholic naval power in the western Mediterranean), Norman ships attacked the Saracens in Sicily in 1061. Eleven years later Roger, younger brother of William and Robert, captured Palermo. In a short time most of the island came under Norman rule. The last Saracen stronghold fell in 1091. Malta had been occupied the previous year (and shared Sicily's fate until 1530 when it became the headquarters of the Knights of St. John). Thanks to the Norman fleet, his main asset, Bohemund, son of Robert and brother of the second duke of Apulia and Calabria, acquired the principality of Antioch in Syria. After the death of Robert's sons, Roger II, count of Sicily since 1105, reunited in his hands all Norman conquests in Italy, from the Tronto River (the

northern boundary since 1144) to Malta. From Palermo, which he made the capital of the united South, he governed a vast Italian state, culturally and economically more advanced than the rest of Italy, than any in the Catholic commonwealth. In 1130 the anti-pope Anacletus II Pierleoni changed Roger's title to king of Sicily. The legitimate pope Innocent II confirmed the title in 1140.

Roger II, acclaimed the greatest Norman ruler of southern Italy, was a man vastly superior to his contemporaries in the West and in the East. When he died in 1159 he left possessions that included not only Sicily and the southern half of the Italian peninsula but also a vast stretch of the North African coast, from Tripoli to Tunis. During his reign, he had successfully resisted the joint attack against his kingdom by the emperors of the West and of the East. He had made Sicily (the realm, not just the island) the most progressive Mediterranean state—an oasis of civilization and efficient administration in a world that, in spite of a veneer of civilization in the Byzantine and Arabian Near East and in Moslem Spain, was still largely barbarian in its cruelty and fanaticism.

Roger II had chosen the unfamiliar path of tolerance and conciliation. The Sicilian kingdom was inhabited by various ethnic groups; there were communities of different cultures and different languages; there were Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and Moslems. Under Roger, each community could live its own life. This tolerance produced greater liberty for the inhabitants of the kingdom than there had been during the reigns of his immediate predecessors, or than there was to be in the centuries to come. From that liberty came the cultural and economic flowering praised by contemporaries. The Spanish Moorish

*Christ crowning Roger II. Twelfth-century mosaic. Church of Martorana, Palermo. Alinari*



*Palazzo dei Normanni, Palermo, Sicily. Built by the Saracens, enlarged by the Normans, and often altered, today it is the seat of Parlamento della Regione Siciliana. ICI*

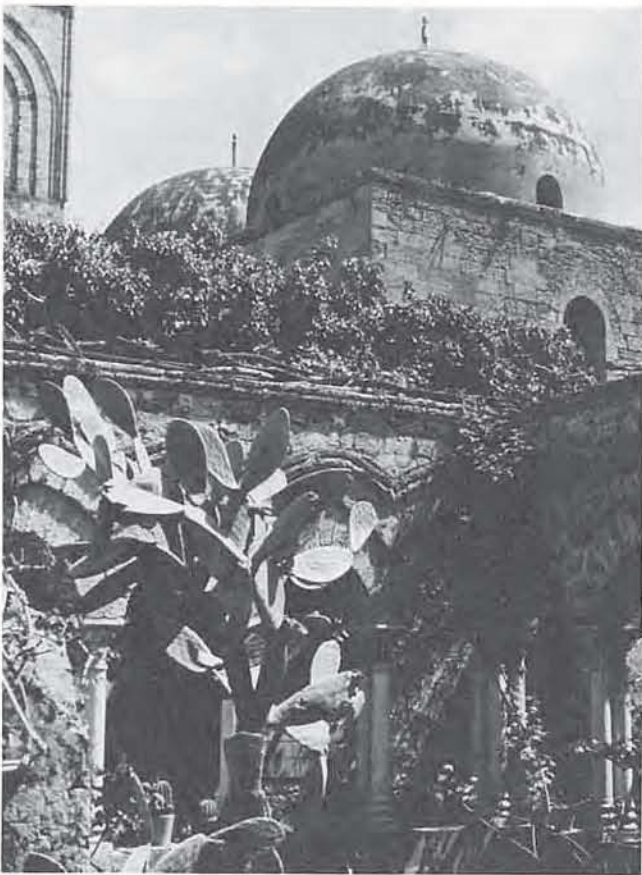




traveler Ibn Gubayr, for instance, described it with enthusiasm.

*THE LATER ALTAVILLA*

Roger's son, William I, nicknamed *Il Malo* ("the bad"), reverted to ruthlessness. He played an important role in the affairs of the rest of Italy when he supported Pope Alexander III and his allies—the republican city-states of the North—against Frederick I, emperor and king of Italy. Roger's grandson William II, *Il Buono* ("the good"), resumed the path of



*San Giovanni degli Eremiti. One of the most characteristic Norman buildings in Palermo. Built by Roger II in 1132. ICI*

*Capella Palatina. An example of Norman-Saracenic art. Built by Roger II. ICI*



*Duomo dell'Assunta, Melfi. Erected in 1155 by William I (Il Malo). EPA*

*La Zisa Begun by William I. ICI*





enlightened benevolence. By William II's reign, the Hautevilles, whose name had been Italianized as Altavilla, considered themselves Italians. The kingdom continued to prosper. However, William II was responsible for a change that was to affect his kingdom and the rest of Italy unfavorably, create a new relationship between Italians, the papacy, and the empire, and have serious repercussions in German internal affairs: he was responsible for the unification of the crowns of Sicily and of the empire.

There had been growing threats against the Norman kingdom. On the basis of the investitures of 1053, 1059, and 1140, the popes considered the kingdom a fief over which they held supreme authority and over which they wished to exercise direct control. The Byzantine emperors, at that time the Comneni, had not resigned themselves to the loss of their Italian possessions and had acquired in 1157 at Ancona, fifty miles from the northern border of the kingdom, a new foothold on the peninsula. In order to unify the chaotic Near East, Saladin, ruler of Egypt and con-

queror of Jerusalem in 1187, was organizing an empire that threatened the Mediterranean Christian states, Sicily most of all.

#### A FATEFUL MARRIAGE

The papacy seemed to be the most immediate threat. It was then close to its political zenith. The grip of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa over the Kingdom of Italy (a more important asset for the imperial crown than the kingdoms of Germany and of Burgundy) had been weakened by the defeat suffered at Legnano in 1176. The emperor, an enemy of the pope and a rival of the Comneni, committed to lead a Crusade and therefore to fight against Saladin, was anxious to strengthen his position. Weighing the pros and cons, William II decided to bring about the marriage of Constance, Roger II's daughter, to Frederick's son, the future Emperor Henry VI. The wedding was celebrated with unusual pomp in 1186. The previous year a Sicilian fleet had captured Durazzo in the Balkans from the Byzantines. It was logical then to think that close collaboration between Sicily and the empire would strengthen both against their common enemies and would make Sicily the premier Mediterranean state.

William II offers the Church of Monreale to the Virgin. Twelfth-century mosaic. Cathedral of Monreale. Alinari



#### FREDERICK II

The Swabian Hohenstaufen and the Sicilian Altavilla had become one family. In less than ninety years it vanished from the European scene. William II died in 1189 while preparing to join the Third Crusade. Constance's husband, Henry, became king of Sicily. Frederick I died the following year while marching with his Crusaders toward the Holy Land. Henry then became also the claimant to the imperial crown. A nephew of William II, Tancred, count of Lecce, claimed the Sicilian throne and was defeated in 1194. That year, in Jesi—not far from Ancona in central Italy—a son was born to Henry of Hohenstaufen and Constance of Altavilla. He was to become the emperor Frederick II, perhaps the most imposing political figure of the thirteenth century. Frederick was only three years old when his father died. A disastrous civil war ensued in Germany, but order was maintained in Sicily, which was administered by representatives of Pope Innocent III, paramount lord of the kingdom and guardian of young Frederick. Supported by the pope, Frederick was crowned king of Germany in 1215, became the effective ruler of Sicily after the pope's death in 1216, and was crowned emperor in Rome by Pope Honorius III in 1220.

A man of high intelligence, remarkable physical endurance and great charm, Frederick II was known by his contemporaries as *stupor mundi*, the world's marvel. He was widely read, a good writer, and he surrounded himself with remarkable men, paying no heed to their nationality or religion. He was a great



statesman and a munificent patron of the arts. Born and brought up in Italy, he felt more Italian than German. At his court Italian, not Latin, was used as a literary language. Under the emperor and king the whole realm, reorganized in 1231 through the Constitution of Melfi, prospered. Sicilians relived the glorious and happy times of Frederick's grandfather, Roger II. The University of Naples was founded in 1224, and under Frederick's stimulus the old and prestigious medical school of Salerno was revived.

#### THE PAPACY VERSUS FREDERICK II

Tragically, problems were mounting outside Sicily. Unable to maintain the dominant position in Italian and European affairs achieved under Alexander III and Innocent III, and afraid of being squeezed between a kingdom in the south and an empire in the north held by the same ruler, the popes sought to salvage their temporal power by destroying Frederick. Their animosity did not abate when the emperor's Crusade returned Jerusalem to Christian hands for a brief period. Despite concessions granted first to ecclesiastical and later to lay lords, revolts broke out in Germany. A second league of self-governing cities in northern Italy was organized to deprive the emperor of the powers he still held in the Kingdom of Italy. The rebels were defeated in Germany, and the Italian

*Frederick II. Miniature from codex De Arte Cumavibus. Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*



*Castle of Frederick II of Swabia, Apulia. EPA*



*Castello Ursino, Paternò, built for Frederick II by da Lertini. ICI*

cities at Cortenova in 1237. But the papal party continued its opposition relentlessly. Frederick suffered a defeat near Parma in 1248. In another battle, his cherished illegitimate son Enzo (married to a Sardinian heiress and on whom his father had bestowed in 1242 the title of king of Sardinia) was taken prisoner, never to regain his liberty. (He died in 1272 after twenty-three years of incarceration in Bologna.)

In 1250, in the midst of preparing to fight his many enemies, Frederick II died. His son and suc-



cessor Conrad IV, totally absorbed by conflicts in Germany, entrusted the administration of the Sicilian realm to his capable half brother Manfred, another of Frederick's several illegitimate sons. Manfred became king of Sicily after Conrad's untimely death. He had much of his father's intelligence, energy, and charm and seemed for a while to be the political arbiter of Italy. He was the ruler of the South and the leader of the imperial party against the papal forces in the rest of the country. Then history repeated itself.

#### FRENCH INVASION

Fearful of Manfred's growing power—he had defeated his enemies in the south and in the north and had a large following in Rome and elsewhere in the Papal States—two successive French popes, Urban IV and Clement IV, offered the Sicilian crown to Charles of Anjou, younger brother of the Crusader king of France Louis IX. Louis for conviction, Charles for expediency as well, were loyal supporters of the papacy. Through his marriage to the daughter of the count of Provence in the Kingdom of Burgundy, Charles had become ruler of Provence. He had also made himself lord of various cities in southern Piedmont. He was able, energetic, and ambitious. Because of conflicts and revolutions, political instability prevailed in large areas of both the western and eastern Mediterranean. Charles decided to take advantage of this situation and, independently of his brother, create a state as powerful as France, perhaps even more powerful. He reached Rome in 1265. The following year at Benevento he defeated Manfred, who was killed in the battle.

In the eighth century, at the pope's request, Pepin and Charlemagne had put an end to the Lombard Kingdom in northern Italy; five centuries later, Charles of Anjou put an end to the Norman-Swabian Kingdom in the south. In 1268 the fifteen-year-old Conradin, son of Conrad IV, came from Germany, where all central authority had disappeared, to claim the realm to which he was the legitimate heir. Treachery led to his defeat at Tagliacozzo, to his capture a few days later, and to his execution. So ended the Norman-

*Castle of Manfredonia, town found by Manfred, King of Sicily and Naples in 1256. EPA*



Swabian family of Hohenstaufen-Altavilla, whose only survivors were King Enzo, prisoner in Bologna, and Manfred's younger daughter, married to Peter, heir to the Kingdom of Aragon in northeastern Spain. Not trusting the people of Palermo and the island of Sicily, who had been deeply attached to a family which was more Italian than German, Charles of Anjou transferred the capital of the Kingdom to Naples. Large and small fiefdoms were given to Frenchmen. French garrisons were placed in strategic positions.

#### ANGEVIN RULE

In 1266 there had been more than a change in dynasty and a shift of the capital: what had been initiated was the steady deterioration of the political institutions of the kingdom, and, as a result, a gradual worsening of the conditions under which the masses of the people lived. Beginning with Robert Guiscard, eight Norman and Norman-Swabian dukes and kings had ruled the newly established state for over two hundred years. They had all been despots; but most were also benevolent and efficient rulers, and even the malevolent ones were able and successful administrators. The rigid hierarchical structure, which they had introduced and through which they governed, had not been allowed to get out of hand. Through it were carried out policies reflecting the personality of individual dukes and kings. Attention had been given to the cultural and economic needs of the population. People had been treated as citizens, not as serfs. Only during the latter part of the reign of Frederick II, who had become involved in too many distant conflicts, and during the reign of Manfred, who had been subjected to pressures deriving from and centered in the hostility of the Holy See, had there been any insubordination and consequent weakening of the governmental structure, and even then it was on a small scale.

The situation was different in the case of the seven Capetian Angevins who reigned (briefly over the whole kingdom, later over the mainland provinces only) for 169 years. They came as conquerors and they stayed as conquerors. They never became Italian in the way Hautevilles and Hohenstaufens had, but remained closely connected with France and surrounded themselves with French advisers and courtiers. More important than their allegiance was the deleterious quality of their despotism. The king or queen—two queens held the throne for a total of nearly sixty years—was supreme, but local administration was in the hands of hereditary lords, the "barons" as they were collectively called, whether their specific titles were count, marquis, duke, or prince.

#### DECADENCE

In much of Europe in the thirteenth century feudalism was becoming a thing of the past. Although



the forms—titles and certain privileges for the nobility—remained, the content—the sovereign powers of feudal lords—was disappearing. In the second half of the thirteenth century and even more so during the fourteenth, feudalism as the basic socioeconomic and political structure of society was on its way out in most of northern Italy, in Tuscany, and in transalpine areas like Switzerland, the Lowlands, and England. In France, in the Catholic states of Spain, and in the larger Germanic states, it was being replaced by more efficient bureaucratic structures. The reverse held true for the southern Italian kingdom. There, feudalism—imported by the Angevins at a time when their kin, the kings of France, were depriving lords of near-sovereign powers—was growing stronger. Moreover, this was not the feudalism of the ninth century based on an exchange of services, to make the local community safe from robbers and invaders: it was a total exploitation of peasants by barons, the owners of fiefs. The outcome was steady decline.

Since the beginning of Greek and Carthaginian colonization two thousand years earlier, the Italian South (with the exception of Sardinia) had been more advanced than the North. This was no longer true at the end of the thirteenth century. The French barons paid little heed to the central government because, as conquerors, they considered the districts they had received in fief as nothing but loot; the Italian barons did likewise because of their distaste for the foreign monarch. The government seldom had enough military strength to enforce the will of the king and his ministers over recalcitrant lords. Consequently, the latter had a free hand in exploiting their unfortunate subjects. The peasantry paid most of the taxes but received nothing in exchange. Commerce, and what little industry there was, was heavily taxed. Nothing was spent for roads. Ports deteriorated. Schools for the common people were nonexistent. The judiciary lacked independence. Order was imposed as a result of arbitrary action and not out of respect for law.

Under the Angevins there was growing poverty and ignorance among the masses; growing corruption of the privileged classes—the greedy nobility, the large and bigoted clergy; growing inefficiency at the governmental level. It was not a steady decline; there were periods of partial recovery, under Kings Robert and Ladislas for example, but the general trend was downward. People lived as subjects not as citizens, without concerning themselves about the internal and external problems of the state. As time went by they became more and more tradition-bound. Diversity in thinking and, therefore, in ways of living, which had been a chief characteristic under the previous dynasty, disappeared. Conformity triumphed. Any dissatisfaction or complaint—even rioting—concerned details, not fundamental changes. The legitimacy of despotism was not questioned even if little loyalty was felt toward individual despots. Any new ruler, whether legitimate successor, usurper, or conqueror, was

greeted enthusiastically. Civil wars between pretenders at the end of the reigns of the two queens Joanna I and Joanna II were fought amid the apathy of the masses. Alfonso of Aragon and Charles VIII of France were surprised at the ease with which they conquered the kingdom in 1435 and 1495 respectively; so were the French and Spanish generals who invaded the country in 1501 and 1502, the other invaders in the eighteenth century, and Garibaldi in 1860.

#### CHARLES I OF ANJOU

Charles of Anjou, crowned Charles I, king of Sicily, seemed firmly established on his new throne. Executions and confiscations had seemingly broken the resistance of Manfred's supporters (actually this was more true of the mainland than of the island). Few had dared to come to Conradin's side at the time of his ill-fated venture in 1268. Charles was also the leader of the papal, or Guelph, party in Tuscany and in northern Italy, to which many of the more important city-states such as Milan and Florence belonged. He held the dignity of Imperial Vicar. As senator in Rome and as governor of Bologna he exer-



*Charles of Anjou.  
Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome. Alinari*





*Castel Nuovo, built for Charles I by Pierre de Chauhnes, Naples. NYPL PC*

cised considerable power in the two most important cities of the Papal States. Motivated more by politics than religion, he planned to continue the offensive against the Moslem North African states that had been originally undertaken by his brother the king of France. The chaos accompanying the downfall of Latin rule in Constantinople in 1261 and the reestablishment of a Greek dynasty there, the Paleologi, facilitated Charles's expansion in the western Balkans. Corfu was captured in 1267 and Durazzo in 1272. The marriage of Crown Prince Charles to the king of Hungary's daughter, heiress to the throne, opened a new sphere of Angevin political influence.

#### SICILIAN VESPERS

Then the unexpected happened. The presence of the French on the island of Sicily was resented by all classes of the population. Several nobles had chosen exile in Aragon, where Peter III, son-in-law of Manfred, was king. The arrogant behavior of French soldiers led to a riot in Palermo on Easter Monday 1282 at the hour of vespers. The riot turned into a revolt which spread like lightning from Palermo to the rest

*Santo Spirito, the Norman church in front of which the riot of Easter Monday, 1282, took place, Palermo. ICI*



of the island. Within two months not a Frenchman remained. An expeditionary force sent by the king was held at bay by the people of Messina and forced to retreat. The nobles, who had been conspiring against Charles and were in touch with the exiles at Peter III's court, offered the Sicilian crown to the Aragonese king as the Hohenstaufen-Altavilla's legitimate heir. Peter accepted. Thus began a war that was to last for twenty years, known ever since as the War of the Vespers.

The combined Aragonese-Sicilian fleet was strong enough to prevent invasions of the island. King Charles and his son and successor Charles II were strong enough to prevent an invasion on the mainland. The war imposed a heavy burden on both parts of the now divided kingdom. Charles I and Peter III died in 1285. Their sons continued the war. In 1295 James II of Aragon transferred the Sicilian crown to his capable younger brother Frederick III. The Aragonese king's disengagement was motivated by his desire to conquer Sardinia and Corsica, whose overlord, the Tuscan Republic of Pisa, had in 1284 at Meloria suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Genoese from which it never recovered. Deprived for the time being of Aragonese support, Frederick III sued for peace. At Caltabellotta in 1302 it was agreed that Frederick, who was to marry a sister of Charles II, would remain ruler of Sicily with the title of king of Trinacria; after his death the island would revert to the Angevins who retained the title of king of Sicily. Supported by their Aragonese cousins, Frederick's successors failed to respect the agreement. Finally in 1373 the separation of Sicily from the mainland was formally accepted by Queen Joanna I, whose generals had several times tried to invade the island and had regularly failed. Whatever the legal niceties, contemporaries and later generations referred to the island as the Kingdom of Sicily, never Trinacria, and to the mainland as the Kingdom of Naples. The political division was for a while formally abolished in the eighteenth century and again in the nineteenth, but reciprocal feelings of antipathy continued between the inhabitants of the island, the Sicilians, and the inhabitants of the mainland, the Neapolitans. Mutual relations apart, both kingdoms followed the same downward trend.

#### ARAGONESE RULERS IN SICILY

There was turmoil in Sicily after Frederick III's death. The nobility split up into a native party and an Aragonese one. Small-scale civil wars at the middle of the fourteenth century were complicated by conflicts with Naples and by intrigues from Aragon. The posterity of Frederick III became extinct in 1402 on the death of Queen Mary and her infant son. Mary's husband, an Aragonese prince, reigned until 1409. When he died, the succession was assumed by the king of Aragon himself. From that moment on Sicily was governed as a viceroyalty of Aragon, and later, when





*Castello Aragonese. A castle built by the Aragons during their rule in Sicily. ICI*



*San Nicolò dell'Arena, Palermo. Part of the fourteenth-century fortification of the town. ICI*

Aragon and Castile united, of Spain. The connection between Sicily and Aragon, later Spain, which had begun in 1282 and had become closer in 1409, lasted until 1713. It was a major (and in many respects unfavorable) factor in the development of the distinctive modern Sicilian culture. For the first time in her long and brilliant history Sicily became a backwater. From rigid censorship, from the bonds of political absolutism and state-enforced dogmatism over bodies and minds, from poverty and ignorance, came apathy. Whatever the status of the island, Sicilians had always been a dynamic, progressive people, at the forefront of civilization. Now these achievements belonged to the past. The present was grim, and the future held little hope of betterment.

#### SARDINIA UNDER ARAGON

The other Aragonese viceroyalty, Sardinia, was less affected by an equally long connection with Aragon and Spain, lasting until 1708. The rivalry between Pisa and Genoa for the mastery of the island (and of Corsica), had enabled Sardinians to maintain a good deal of autonomy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the *giudici*. The popes had put forth claims over Sardinia and Corsica but had not been able to enforce them. In 1242, after the heiress to the two northern *giudicature* of Torres and Gallura married Frederick II's illegitimate son Enzo, his father invested him with the title of king of Sardinia. It was an empty title as Enzo's rule was not enforced. Pisa's defeat at the hands of the Genoese left the island to the quarrelsome and weak *giudici*. Claims over Sardinia and Corsica were put forth by James II of Aragon in 1296. Corsica remained under Genoese control, but a successful Aragonese expedition made good the claims of James II over Sardinia in 1323/24. Papal opposition went no further than written protests. Some of the *giudici* (foremost those of Arborea or Oristano) kept some autonomy until the end of the fourteenth century. However, direct Aragonese control was—as had also happened with Byzantines, with Arabs, and Pisa—limited to the coastal areas. Poverty and ignorance were great but the Sardinians always kept high the pride of free men.

#### ANGEVIN KINGS OF NAPLES

Naples remained independent longer than Sicily or Sardinia, but in the long run fared no better. External affairs absorbed the attention of Charles II of Anjou and his ministers: the war with Aragon and



Sicily, the responsibilities as guardian of the interests of the Guelph party in northern Italy, the guardianship over the interests of the pope, for whom the king tried to govern Rome and to whom he gave the city of Avignon in his county of Provence. Charles was also deeply involved in the intrigues for the succession in Hungary where the native dynasty died out in 1301 and where finally, in 1308, after a period of chaos, the choice of the nobility in electing a king went to his grandson Charles Robert. The king of Naples was also responsible for the safeguarding of Angevin possessions in the western Balkans. Internally, the barons had a free hand and the cultural and economic decline continued. There was a partial change for the better during the reign of Robert, Charles's second son. An erudite man of letters and accomplished writer himself, Robert made Naples for a while the cultural capital of Italy. He was much admired by the greatest Italian writers of his time, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Villani. But literary excellence and patronage of the arts are no substitute for statesmanship. Efforts to curb the arrogant arbitrariness of the great barons failed. Involvement in the affairs of northern Italy, as leader of the Guelph party, had negative results for the most part. However, Robert was able to check the territorial expansion of powerful ambitious Ghibelline families like the Visconti of Milan and the Della Scala of Verona, both bent on creating large regional monarchies on the ruins of republican city-states (see Chapter 8).

#### QUEEN JOANNA

Robert died in 1343. The nearly forty-year reign of his granddaughter Joanna I was an unmitigated disaster. Sensual and voluble, egoistically concerned with the pursuit of her own pleasures, the queen let affairs of state slide. Of course, she was only sixteen when she succeeded her grandfather, and only nineteen when her first husband, Andrew of Hungary, was assassinated. Three husbands and a series of lovers followed. For her favorites, the royal bed was the road to wealth and power. The barons had a free hand. The populace sank deeper and deeper into poverty. The Kingdom of Naples was no longer the foremost state of Italy, a position that had been maintained, in spite of the internal decline, until the death of Robert. Ambitious foreign princes began to regard the kingdom as a possible prey. Queen Joanna, who was childless, appointed as successor first a cousin, Charles, prince of Durazzo in the Balkans (also a claimant to the Hungarian throne), then another cousin, Louis of Anjou, brother of the king of France. Civil war ensued between the two pretenders, each supported by a faction of barons. The papal schism complicated the conflict; the legitimate pope and his supporters in Europe siding with one pretender, the anti-pope with the other. The Durazzo prince won in 1381. The queen was strangled to death in the spring of 1382 and

Charles became king. He had all the makings of a successful, ruthless tyrant, but was assassinated after a short reign when he went to Hungary to claim the throne. His two children, a son and a daughter, reigned during the next half century, easily the lowest point in the fortunes of the independent Kingdom of Naples.

#### JOANNA II

When Charles III died, his son Ladislas was a minor. A state of anarchy lasted until he reached his majority in 1400 and seized the reins of government. Ladislas had several good qualities, but the pursuit of pleasure was his undoing. For a while, some order was reestablished in the kingdom. Conditions in Italy were such that the formation of a united state under Ladislas' rule did not seem an idle dream; but the king paid for his revels with an untimely death at the age of thirty-six. His older sister and successor Joanna II improved, if anything, on her aunt's record. While the queen made love and feasted in the capital, disorder was rife in the provinces: each powerful baron acted as an independent sovereign, waging war on his neighbors, treating his subjects as serfs. Fearful of raids and unable to rely on the garrisons established by the central government, inhabitants of the cities stayed close to city gates and manned the walls.

Childless, like her aunt, Joanna II had to solve the succession problem. Pressured by Attendolo Sforza, the famous mercenary general, or *condottiero*, to whom command of the troops had been entrusted, Queen Joanna adopted as successor her Angevin cousin Louis, count of Provence, a close relative of the king of France. But her current favorite, who was jealous of Sforza, collaborated with the other great *condottiero* of the time Braccio da Montone (governor of Abruzzi, the northernmost province of the realm) and induced the queen to change plans and to name as heir Alfonso V, the energetic and intelligent king of Aragon, Sicily, and Sardinia. Alfonso, then at war with Aragon's maritime rival in the western Mediterranean, the republic of Genoa, was leading an expedition to Corsica, a dependency of Genoa. There was no doubt that Naples was a more appetizing prize than Corsica. So the island was left to the Genoese, and the Aragonese fleet crossed the Tyrrhenian Sea. War was fought for several years between Louis and Alfonso—actually between the mercenaries of Sforza and those of Braccio. The two *condottieri* died in 1424, one in an accident, the other of battle wounds. Helped by Sforza's capable son Francesco (the future duke of Milan), Louis of Anjou won, and a few years of respite followed for the unfortunate people of the Neapolitan Kingdom. The Angevin prince shared the government with Joanna. Louis died in 1434 while trying to subdue a baron in Calabria. When the queen died in 1435, war broke out again, this time between Alfonso and René of Anjou, son of Louis. Alfonso won. His claim to the Kingdom of Naples was legitimized by Pope Eugenius IV in 1442.



## LATER ARAGONESE KINGS OF NAPLES

Recovery under Alfonso had been only a brief interlude. The downward trend started all over again and continued under the four subsequent rulers of the illegitimate branch of the house of Aragon, who reigned for forty-four years. Ferdinand was intelligent and unscrupulous. An able man, he nevertheless failed to solve the major problem of the kingdom—the barons' insubordination. He tried force to little avail: revenue was inadequate for maintaining the efficient military establishment needed for the struggle against



Engraving of Joanna II. NYPL PC

## ALFONSO OF ARAGON

Admiring litterateurs called Alfonso "the Magnanimous." He was undoubtedly one of the best statesmen of his time. A lover of Italy, a man of the Renaissance, a patron of letters and the arts, Alfonso entrusted the government of Aragon to his brother John and settled in Naples. He improved the administration, particularly the judiciary; he was able to curb the barons to some degree; he reformed taxation; he stimulated the revival of intellectual activity. He was in the fifteenth century what Petrarch's friend, good King Robert of Anjou, had been in the fourteenth. He did his best to maintain the balance of power among the major Italian states: his own kingdom, the Republics of Venice and Florence, the Duchy of Milan, the Papal States. As he had no legitimate children, on his death in 1458 Aragon, Sicily, and Sardinia went to his brother John (the father of Ferdinand II of Aragon, whose marriage to Isabella of Castile led to the formation of the Kingdom of Spain). Alfonso's illegitimate son Ferdinand I became king of Naples.

Medal depicting Alfonso V of Aragon, Sicily, and Sardinia. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection



Medal depicting Ferdinand I, King of Naples. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection



Fleet of Alfonso in the Bay of Naples. Anonymous. Soprintendenza Gallerie, Naples





baronial lawlessness. Ferdinand cooperated with Francesco Sforza and his descendants in Milan, and with Cosimo de' Medici and his descendants in Florence, to keep Italy at peace.

His successor was unable to resist an invasion by Charles VIII of France who claimed the Kingdom of Naples as heir to the legitimate rights of the Angevins, and who had been invited to come to Italy by Ludovic Sforza, later the usurper duke of Milan. Naples fell to the French in 1495. The anti-French league formed by Pope Alexander VI, the Republic of Venice, the now frightened duke of Milan, the kings of Spain and England, and the emperor, reestablished briefly the independence of the Neapolitan Kingdom. But the end was coming.

In 1496 Ferdinand's younger son Frederick succeeded to the throne. Frederick I was a good man, unfit to rule a state in a tumultuous age when, tragically for all, brute force and the military strength of a faction or a state counted more than right. At the end of 1500, in Granada, a treaty was signed between Spain and France concerning the disposal of the Kingdom of Naples. Ferdinand II of Spain had money in the treasury and the best infantry in Europe. The defeat of the Moslems had been followed by the discovery and first colonization of the Western Hemisphere. Louis XII of France, an abler man than his predecessor Charles VIII, had early in the year conquered the Duchy of Milan, the wealthiest Italian state. It was agreed at Granada that the northern part of the King-

dom of Naples would go to the French king and the southern part to the Spanish (the dividing line approximately following the line separating Lombard and Byzantine possessions just before the Norman Conquest at the middle of the eleventh century). A French expeditionary force, led by the duke of Nemours, occupied Naples in 1501; a Spanish one, led by Gonsalvo of Córdoba (the ablest Spanish general, known to Italians as *Il Gran Capitano*), landed on the mainland from Sicily shortly after. The populace did not care one way or another and greeted the invaders, whoever they were, enthusiastically. King Frederick surrendered to the French, who treated him honorably. His son was taken prisoner by the Spaniards and spent the next fifty years of his life in enforced residence in Spain.

#### END OF INDEPENDENCE

Thieves rarely agree on the division of the spoils. The dividing line between what should have gone to the king of France and what to the king of Spain had not been clearly enough drawn. In the summer of 1502 the French and the Spaniards were already battling for possession of Foggia and its district. There were Italians fighting on each side, though preponderantly for the Spanish king; the war fought between two imperialistic foreign powers for the control of the Kingdom of Naples was also a war fought among Italians. Early in 1503 there was a duel between thirteen Italians fighting for the Spaniards besieged in Barletta, and thirteen Frenchmen. The duel was fought according to the rules of chivalry and the Italians won. The episode became famous, as demonstrating that Italians deserved better than to become subjects of foreign powers, also as showing that Italians contributed to the final defeat of the French who were then feared more than the Spaniards. Nemours



In this castle, on October 1, 1481, in the room called *Malconsiglio* (room of bad counsel), the barons of the kingdom feigned submission to Ferdinand I of Aragon while awaiting aid from the Pope. Miglionico, Basilicata. EPA

Charles VIII of France (under canopy). M. 801, f. 112v, The Pierpont Morgan Library





was killed at the bloody battle of Cerignola (not far from Foggia) in April 1503, and Gonsalvo entered Naples soon after. Defeated in December at the battle of the Garigliano River, the French abandoned the

kingdom, not to return until the eighteenth century. First Sardinia, then Sicily, now Naples, had become viceroyalties of Spanish kings. The independent kingdoms of the South had ceased to exist.



*Siege of Barletta (February 13, 1503) by Massimo D'Azeglio. Galleria Arte Moderna, Turin. EPA*



*Medals depicting Gonsalvo de Córdoba, victorious Spanish captain at the battles of Cerignola and Garigliano. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*









## 8

# NORTHERN AND CENTRAL ITALY: FROM COMMUNES TO RENAISSANCE

*The Milanese comune – Emancipation – Achievements – Liberty and tensions – Three phases – Northern and central Italy circa 1050 – Feudalism in rural areas – Savoy – Cities, the source of progress – Pisa, Genoa, and Venice – Weakening of the central power – Communes and their organization – Legnano – Independence of the communes – Factionalism weakens democracy – Podestà – Signori – Visconti – Other signori – Republicanism continues – Florence – Dissensions in Florence – Lorenzo de' Medici – Humanism – Renaissance – Fifteenth-century regional states – Condottieri – The five major Italian powers – Italy at peace – Coming of the French in 1494 – Fornovo.*

## THE MILANESE COMUNE

**A**FTER the departure of the Byzantine exarch from Ravenna and the capture of Pavia by the Franks, Milan was again, as it had been in the third and fourth centuries, the most important city in northern Italy. In spite of the archbishop of Ravenna's rival claims, the archbishop of Milan acted as ecclesiastical primate in the Kingdom of Italy. The energetic and ambitious Aribert, scion of a noble family, held the see of Milan during the reign of Conrad II, the first emperor of the Franconian dynasty. As had been customary since the reorganization of the administration of the Kingdom of Italy under Otto I and his immediate successors, the archbishop held both spiritual and temporal power. In his vast archdiocese, which included the twelve bishoprics of northwestern Italy,



*Palazzo Pretorio, Trent. Originally the seat of the bishops, then of the commune, the Podestà, the tribunal (1803–1881) and the military command. EPA*

Aribert acted as governor on behalf of the emperor.

A quarrel between the archbishop and a faction of the nobility of the archdiocese led to a conflict with Conrad II and, after the latter's death in 1039, with his son and successor Henry III. Milan being threatened by imperial troops, the archbishop appealed to the commoners and organized a citizens' militia. To this militia he gave the *carroccio*, a clumsy ox-drawn cart covered with drapery, carrying the standard of the city and an altar on which mass was to be celebrated before battle. The *carroccio* became the symbol of the citizens' power, as opposed to the nobles'. After emperor and archbishop had settled their differences, the newly formed citizens' militia did not disband, but instead took up arms against the nobles who were weakened by dissensions between their higher and lower ranks. This popular insurgency took place in 1040. It was led by Lanzone, about whom little is known except that he had legal training and was a member of the judiciary. The position of the nobles soon became untenable, and they abandoned the city in 1041, carrying on intermittent warfare from the countryside. The fight between lower and upper orders, between the landowning privileged minority and the majority of commoners who took pride in their newfound liberty, lasted three more years. It ended in 1044 with an accord on the basis of which the city of Milan (including a vast territory between the Ticino and Adda rivers) was to be governed jointly by com-



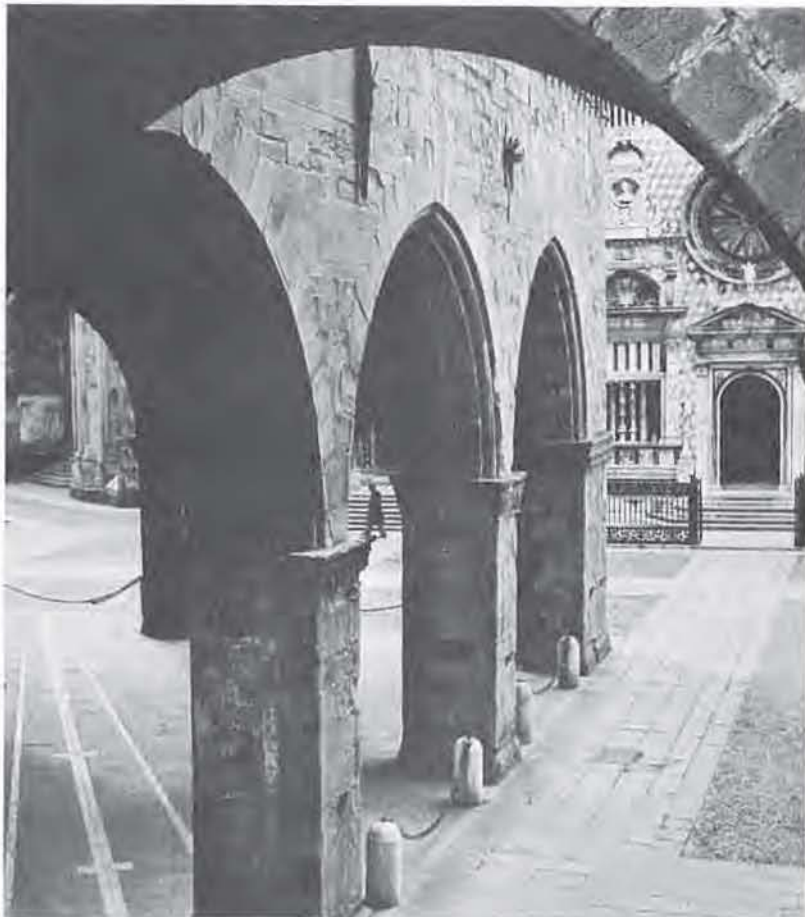
moners and nobles. Matters of public interest would be discussed freely in an assembly called parliament (from *parlare*, to speak) which would elect the city officials.

Thus in Milan was born the *comune*, the local self-governing, basically democratic community organized originally by commoners of urban centers. There may have been *comuni*, or communes, as early as the tenth century in other cities, for instance in Genoa. With the example given by Milan, the commune was to be for two hundred years typical of cities and of all settlements (even villages with only a few hundred inhabitants) that could afford to build a fortified wall, in what was then the Kingdom of Italy and in much of the Papal States. The medieval *comune*, a genuine republican commonwealth, survives today in the few square miles and few thousand inhabitants of San Marino, an independent democratic republic.

#### EMANCIPATION

Popular self-government, the essence of the commune, was not a sudden innovation. As an idea, it had lived in the minds of Italians aware of their Roman past. As a symbol, it had survived in Rome where "the people" were supposed to sanction the election of

*Palazzo della Ragione, the oldest of the Palazzi Comunali. An example of a town hall of the twelfth century. Bergamo. EPA*



popes and emperors. As a political structure, it had existed for varying periods of time in several cities of the Italian coast. But these were isolated instances. The Milanese event was important because from then on a powerful movement grew, involving most of Italy north of the state being created by the Hauteville brothers. The movement can be characterized in a single word: emancipation.

At first, for hundreds of communities of all sizes, there was emancipation from the oppressive clutches of native and foreign despotism; this meant political liberty. It was accompanied by economic liberty and led to power and wealth. Later, for hundreds of thousands of educated Italians, there was emancipation from the oppressive clutches of dogmatic authoritarian traditionalism; this meant intellectual liberty and led to a magnificent flowering of the activities of the mind. Slowly at first, gaining impetus as generations went by, in the five hundred years between the middle of the eleventh century and the middle of the sixteenth, the Italian nation produced a new civilization which had its main centers in the larger cities of the North and Tuscany and minor centers everywhere, reaching into the most remote districts. The Italian civilization of the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance stimulated intellectual innovation among peoples, and created new institutions, in states beyond the Alps. It was thus the source of the many revolutions—religious, intellectual, political, economic—that transformed European nations and continue to transform all mankind.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

The five centuries or so of this era are a fascinating period which has been described in great historical classics: the history of the Italian republics by Sismondi, the histories of the Renaissance by Burckhardt and Symonds, the history of Rome during the Middle Ages by Gregorovius, are just a few. Energy seemed to overflow in all directions. There was vigorous, albeit turbulent, progress. Instead of a few gleams in the dark there was bright daylight. Achievements were great and many. During that period the Italian nation, which had been overrun for centuries by barbarians and had itself descended to the level of the invaders, embodied the mind and conscience of an expanding Western world.

Present-day Italians who have rediscovered the meaning of liberty are proud of ancestors who met in muddy town squares to organize their own government, to elect their officials, to discuss their laws; of soldier-citizens who defied emperors, kings, and popes, were often defeated but ultimately asserted the independence of their city-states; of imaginative and venturesome businessmen who created new enterprises, developed industry, invented banking, and expanded the frontiers of Western commerce; of intellectuals who formulated new ideas and sometimes died for





A typical Italian merchant, 1500s. NYPL PC



Market of Porta Ravennana in Bologna. Register of the Drapers Guild. Bolognese MS., early fifteenth century. Galleria Cavour, Bologna

them; of artists who freed themselves from tradition-bound conformity.

It was a time when small Italian states, from the Lombard republics in 1176 and 1248 to the Venetian Republic early in the sixteenth century, exercised greater influence than the large transalpine kingdoms and were able to chastise emperors and sultans on land and sea. It was a time when peace of mind or peace among men seemed a foolish dream; when periods of intense religiousness were followed by periods of unbelief and materialism; when the Italian nation produced original and powerful thinkers, from Arnold of Brescia and Thomas Aquinas to Marsilius of Padua and Machiavelli; when Italy produced the saintly evangelical movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the humanism of the fourteenth and fifteenth, and the astounding artistic flowering of the Renaissance; when Italian cities were the leading and most stimulating centers of intellectual life. Pisa, Bologna, and Palermo in the twelfth century, then Padua, Florence, Rome, Milan, Venice, and intermittently Naples were for Western culture what Paris, London, and New York have been in recent times. They were the centuries when Italy produced workshops in which labored hundreds of thousands of craftsmen, journeymen, and apprentices organized in

efficient guilds; and when it created the large corporations of Milan, Venice, Florence, and Genoa with branches not only everywhere in the Catholic commonwealth but also in the Byzantine and Arab Near East. It is when Italy produced democratic republics and absolute dictatorships as well as the Venetian oligarchy—which has been admired ever since by all who long for stability, and is a subject of study for all who scorn democracy but fear the arbitrary power of dictators.

#### LIBERTY AND TENSIONS

Progress took place in the midst of great, seemingly unbearable, tensions. There was the political tension related to factionalism within the republican communities, to rivalries between city-states and, later, regional states, to invasions and threats of invasion. There was very often, too, the inner tension of people freed from the control of institutionalized conformity, trying to discard preconceived traditional ideas, to determine what is true and what is right according to their own consciences. The inner tension made for the greatness of writers and artists. From Dante to Michelangelo, most poets and artists were tormented men.





Fifteenth-century tailoring shop. EPA

Dynamism, progress, achievements, and also tension and suffering sprang from a larger measure of individual liberty than had been enjoyed before or would be later. Whether political, economic, or intellectual, liberty—the privilege of a few (not too few, fortunately), not the right of the many—was limited; in medieval and Renaissance Italy it was no more of a general phenomenon than it had been in the ancient world. Nevertheless, there was enough of it to make a radical difference, to give the Italian way of life its uniqueness. Liberty had not everywhere been wanted: in northern and central Italy, it was largely the outcome of the disruption of central authority caused by the clash between church and state, between papacy and empire, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But there were also cases where liberty was consciously wanted and efforts were made to establish free communities of free citizens. In some communities liberty lasted two hundred years or less, in others, even if with interruptions, four hundred or more. It was in these communities that the greatest progress was achieved.

Liberty, accompanied by lawlessness and turmoil, produced considerable suffering. From the full use of creativity came variety. Liberty nurtured an environment in which grew Florentine republicanism in Tuscany and Viscontean absolutism in Lombardy; which produced quiet mountain monasteries and the seethe of continual warfare; the sublime saintliness of Francis of Assisi and the absolute cruelty of Ezzelino da Romano; the charity of monks and nuns and the violence of faction leaders; the intolerance of bigoted

inquisitors and the tolerance of skeptical humanists. To this age belonged the Venetian Polo, who went east to China, and the Genoese Columbus who went west and failed to reach China; the Florentine Lorenzo de' Medici who treasured the good things of life and the Ferrarese Savonarola who despised them. The Italian scene of these centuries was full of contrasts. It was immensely varied and immensely rich. It was life being lived to its fullest.

### THREE PHASES

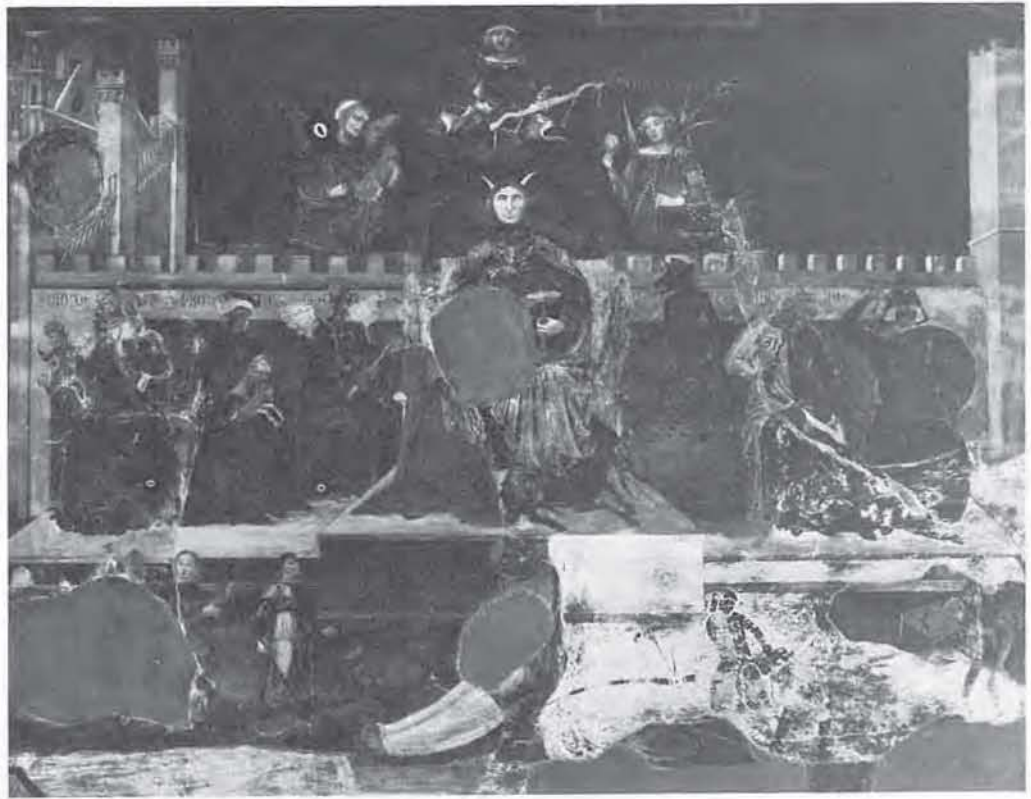
By conventional reckoning the era from the communal revolution to the peak of the Renaissance includes three phases. In the first, that of the *comuni*, the tone was set by the self-governing republican city-states which in the eleventh and twelfth centuries achieved a large measure of democracy and independence. In the second phase, starting toward the middle of the thirteenth century, democratic republicanism was replaced in most city-states by *signorie*—in a few cases authoritarian oligarchies, more often dictatorial lordships. This is when, especially from the 1330s on, the more powerful *signorie* absorbed minor ones, took advantage of dissensions in surviving democratic city-states to annex them, and brought under their control the feudatories of the countryside. In this manner were created regional states. In the third phase, starting at the end of the fourteenth century, many lordships became hereditary *principati*. Not without a struggle (one that continued well into the sixteenth century) was political liberty lost. Intellectual freedom remained, producing the humanism and Renaissance of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and first half of the sixteenth centuries.

### NORTHERN AND CENTRAL ITALY CIRCA 1050

When the people of Milan organized the citizens' *comune*, battled the nobility, and deprived the archbishop of much of his power, the Kingdom of Italy included all northern Italy except for the Venetian lagoon and Alpine districts attached in the northwest to the Kingdom of Burgundy and in the north and northeast to the Kingdom of Germany; it included Tuscany in central Italy and a greatly weakened Duchy of Spoleto whose southern half (now the Abruzzi) would soon be incorporated in the newly established Kingdom of Sicily. It was a moot question to what extent the Papal States were independent or simply entrusted to papal administration on behalf of Henry III, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Italy, second ruler of the Franconian dynasty. The authority of the popes was then effective only in Rome and parts of the surrounding territory. In the northeast, independent from empire, kingdom, and papacy, was the Venetian Republic, which in Italy did not extend much beyond the lagoon but had already acquired holdings in the Balkans. In the kingdom as in the Papal States, there



*The Bad Government fresco, by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Palazzo Comunale, Siena. Alinari*

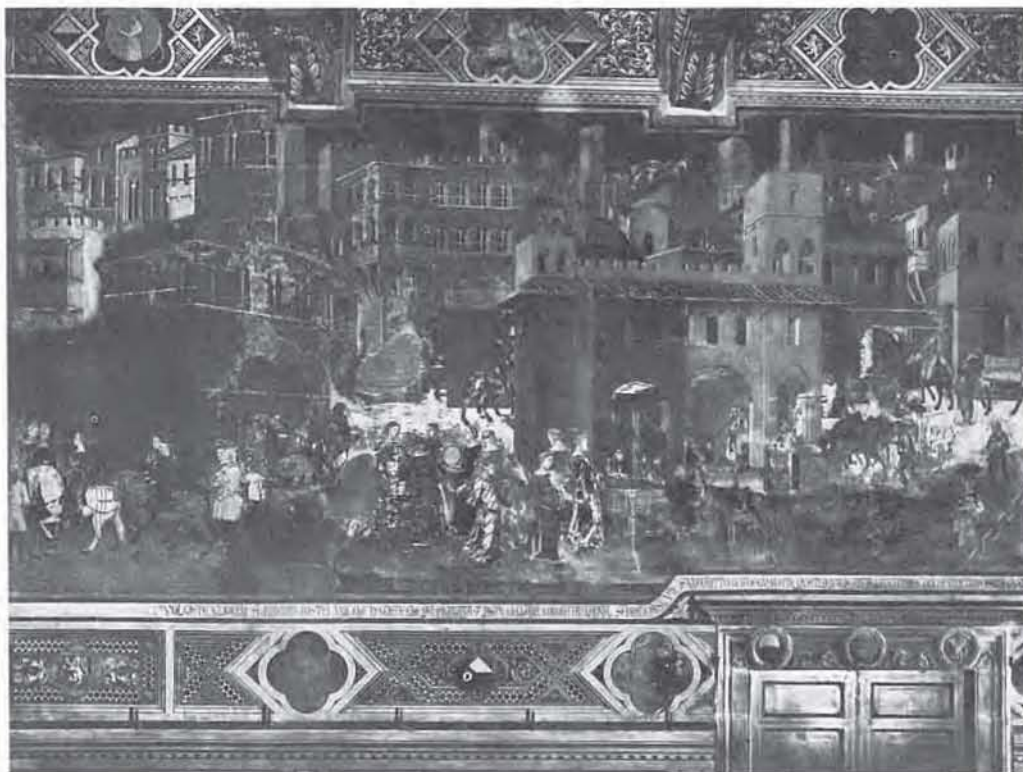


was a sharp distinction between rural communities dominated by feudal lords, and urban communities already in the throes of revolutionary changes.

#### FEUDALISM IN RURAL AREAS

Carolingian counts and marquesses of the Kingdom of Italy had been provincial governors appointed by the central government. They had a good deal of autonomy, held considerable power, and belonged to a loose and inefficient bureaucracy: still, they were

officials carrying out orders. Their successors made their functions and their titles hereditary in the tenth century, and became lords exercising sovereign powers. They owned directly, or indirectly through vassals, the rural areas in which most of the population then lived. The great lords were in practice large landowners exploiting the peasantry, legally exercising the right to levy taxes, to administer justice, to raise armed forces, and trying, more and more successfully as time went on and the power of kings and popes weakened, to exercise the remaining sovereign rights: to be the



*The Good Government fresco, by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Palazzo Comunale, Siena. Alinari*



source of all legislation, to wage war, and to control industry and trade through fees, licenses, and tariffs. Most of the great lords were lay but some were ecclesiastical: the bishops of Trent held temporal power over the Trentino (and kept it until the beginning of the nineteenth century); the patriarchs of Aquileia ruled the Friuli until 1421; the abbots of abbeys in Bobbio, Nonantola, Farfa, had vast stretches of territory within their jurisdiction.

Among the feudal families that held considerable power during the eleventh century, or gained it later, the Attoni, marquesses of Tuscany, were in the forefront. During the reigns of Henry III and Henry IV, when papacy and empire clashed, they played a dominant role on the side of the papacy. Their possessions included most of Tuscany and also districts north of the Apennines as far as Mantua. The pope's claims to the inheritance of Matilda, last of the family who died in 1115, was the source of further conflicts between papacy and empire, and gave the Tuscan cities a golden opportunity to assert their independence from imperial and papal rule. Much of the countryside in western Liguria and in southern Piedmont was ruled by the Aleramids and related families. The marquesses of Montferrat were the most powerful among them. They held splendid court in their castles. One of them, Boniface, became king of Thessalonika in the Balkans after the Fourth Crusade. When, in 1305, the family became extinct, a cadet of the Byzantine Paleologi succeeded to the marquisate. The marquesses of Saluzzo ruled a small but strategic state which fell into the hands of the king of France in the sixteenth century. The marquesses of Savona were defeated in their attempt to curb the power of the Republic of Genoa. The rural areas of western Emilia with parts of Liguria and northern Tuscany were ruled by the Obertenghi, from whom sprang four main families: the Malaspina and Massa who preyed on travelers crossing the Apennines between the Ligurian Sea and the Po Valley, the Palavicini who exploited the peasantry between Parma and Piacenza, the Este who became lords of Ferrara, Modena, and other cities, founding a dynasty that lasted until 1803.

#### SAVOYS

For several centuries less powerful than the Attoni Aleramids, and Obertenghi, the Savoys had the longest and most brilliant career, its climax the crown of the united Italian state which they held from 1861 to 1946. The Savoys were originally French-speaking Burgundian nobles. Humbert Biancamano ("of the white hands"), apparently lord of Nyon on the shores of the lake of Geneva, having come out in favor of Emperor Conrad II when he claimed the crown of the Kingdom of Burgundy, was rewarded with the title of count and the domain of a few western Alpine valleys. In 1045 his son Oddo (Oddone or Otho) married the Italian Adelaide Manfredi, heiress to the marquisate



*Lionello d'Este, by Roger van der Weyden. Collection Michael Friedman, New York. NYPL*

of Turin and Susa. Regent for several decades after her husband's death in 1060, Adelaide was the real founder of the fortunes of the house of Savoy. Loyal to the emperors whom they served repeatedly as imperial vicars in Italy, in control of important Alpine passes, the Savoys extended their possessions on both sides of the Alps (more in the direction of France than in Italy until the sixteenth century). Four who played important roles were Thomas I to whom Emperor Frederick II entrusted the government of the Kingdom of Italy when he went crusading; Peter II who ruled Geneva and Bern; Amadeus VI, *Il Conte Verde*, who was mediator in the Peace of Turin between Genoa and Venice; Amadeus VIII, who in 1416 received the title of duke of Savoy from the Emperor Sigismund and for a few years claimed the papacy as Felix V. Early in the fourteenth century a Savoy claimed the principality of Achaia in Greece. In Italy the Savoys expanded eastward as far as Vercelli, annexed in 1428, and southward as far as the Mediterranean when in 1388 the city-state of Nice, Genoa's rival, put itself under their protection. In 1500 the duchy of Savoy in Italy included more than half of today's Piedmont, and the Val d'Aosta.

In Lombardy, both the Della Torre and Visconti ruled Milan and its vast territory, the former in the thirteenth century and the latter until the family died out in 1447. Able warriors and skilled administrators,





*Amedeo VIII (the antipope Felix V). EPA*

the Gonzaga became marquesses and later dukes of Mantua. In Venetia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Da Romano, Della Scala, Comino, Carrara built their own monarchical states, later absorbed by the Republic of Venice. South of the Po, the Da Polenta are remembered chiefly because Guido Novello gave hospitality to Dante in Ravenna during his long exile; the Malatesta of Rimini are remembered for their bravery, their crimes, and their licentiousness; the Pepoli and Bentivoglio for their rule in Bologna; the Montefeltro for having made Urbino a major artistic and literary center. In Tuscany no feudal

*The Ducal Palace of the Gonzaga, Mantua, Lombardy. ICI*



*Gonzaga family. Ducal Palace, Mantua, Lombardy. ICI*







*Tomb figure of Giovanni della Scala by Bonino da Campione. Arche Scaligere, Verona. EPA*



*Medal depicting Sigismund Malatesta as Captain General of the Roman Church, 1445. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel Kress Collection*

family was able to hold its own in the long run against the republican city-states, not the Guidi, the Alberti, the Aldobrandini, the Uberti, the Tarlati, the Della Gherardesca; their castles were destroyed and their property confiscated. In Latium instead, in the eleventh and twelfth century the counts of Tuscolo and the Frangipani acted as independent or semi-independent rulers; also the Pierleoni, the Jewish family that became converted to Catholicism in the eleventh century, to which belonged the cardinal and antipope Anacletus II; later, carving their own states were the families mentioned in Chapter 6, each of which supplied the church with cardinals and, in some cases, one or more popes.

#### CITIES, THE SOURCE OF PROGRESS

Already during the second half of the eleventh century, not feudal lords but the cities set the pace in the Kingdom of Italy and the Papal States. They were small (usually with only a few thousand inhabitants, here and there a few tens of thousands), containing only a minority of the population. However, they were numerous, more so than in any other European or Near Eastern country. Feudalism was incapable of dealing with them. The most important lords took their titles from cities, but preferred to live in their castles in the country where they could act as absolute despots with the peasantry totally at their mercy. In the cities lived bishops and archbishops, whose prestige was great and who took precedence over city officials. The emperors and kings of the Saxon dynasty tried to fuse spiritual and temporal power, entrusting to bishops and archbishops the functions of counts, marquesses, and dukes. It was a temporary expedient which gave poor results. Prestige is one thing, power another: the temporal authority of prelates, negligible in the countryside, remained weak even within city walls.

Most Italian cities were of Roman or even pre-Roman origin. They had declined steadily for centuries. Many had been abandoned, and their ruins are now buried under the dust of centuries. The others always retained something of the administrative structure created by the Romans. When left on their own, as happened more and more often after the collapse of Carolingian rule, it was natural for the more responsible citizens to take the conduct of city affairs in their hands. With a relatively large and dynamic business community engaged in maritime trade, coastal cities were in the forefront of the movement toward self-government, not only as emancipation from outside control but also as internal liberty. As noted in Chapter 5, Venice, Amalfi, Naples, and other coastal cities in areas ruled by the emperors of Constantinople achieved self-government at the time of the religious-political crisis that shook the Byzantine Empire early in the eighth century. There were similar developments in some of the few coastal cities of the Kingdom of Italy when the Carolingian Empire collapsed at the end of the ninth century. Of these, Pisa and Genoa were the most important, but there were others: Nice, Ancona, Savona.

#### PISA, GENOA, AND VENICE

After the destruction of Luni by the Vikings at the middle of the ninth century, Pisa was the leading coastal city of Tuscany. Whoever walks the streets of Pisa today and admires the lovely cathedral built in the eleventh century finds it difficult to imagine what Pisa was like then, when its population was considerably larger (possibly reaching 200,000 late in the twelfth century), and when it possessed a busy harbor,





*La Cittadella, Pisa. ICI*

For nearly three hundred years, from the time when Pisa took the offensive against the Saracens early in the eleventh century, until its defeat by the Genoese at Meloria in 1284, it was the main maritime power in the western Mediterranean. Tradition has it that self-government was already established in 888. Counts and bishops, deprived of the support of a central authority which no longer functioned, being unable to control the city, Pisa became de facto an independent republic. Pisans helped the Genoese to withstand the attacks of Saracens who had occupied part of the coast of Provence. (Tradition also attributed to a woman, Cinzica de' Sismondi, a major role in Pisa's successful defense against Moslem raiders in 1004 or 1005.) As already noted, Pisans and Genoese jointly expelled the Saracens from Sardinia and Corsica, completing the liberation of the two islands by 1052. In 1034, the Pisans had attacked the Arab stronghold of Bona in North Africa. They helped the Normans of Apulia to capture Sicily. They attacked Tunis in 1087. In 1113-1115 they freed the Catholic population of Majorca and the minor Balearic Islands from centuries-old Moslem rule, a feat celebrated in the *Liber Maiolichinus de Gestis Pisanorum*. The Pisans, who also attacked and partially destroyed Amalfi in 1133, contributed a large number of ships to the First and Second Crusades and prevented the Moslems from occupying the whole coast of the Holy Land after the fall of Jerusalem in 1187. Rivalries between Pisa and Genoa in the thirteenth century, concerning the control of Sardinia and Corsica, exhausted Pisa. While Pisa's fortunes declined steadily after the defeat of 1284, those of Genoa on sea and of Florence on land rose. Corsica became definitely Genoese and shortly afterward Sardinia

fell under the rule of the kings of Aragon. The trading posts in the eastern Mediterranean were lost. Trusting in the common fallacy that dictatorial rule solves problems, Pisans experimented in the fourteenth century with several *signorie*, whose rule only served to speed the decline. In 1409 the stronger republic of Florence deprived Pisa of the independence it had enjoyed for five centuries. A revolt brought independence again for a brief period (1496-1509).

Although protected on land by impassable mountains, Genoa was exposed to attacks from the sea. Saracen pirates captured and looted the city around 936. After that attack the Genoese relied on their ships as the main line of defense. The successful Pisan offensive against the Saracens in the eleventh century gave security to Genoa, which consolidated its control over most of the smaller communities of the Ligurian coast and curbed the feudal lords of the hinterland. The commercial expansion of Genoa reached its zenith when Genoese businessmen, seamen, and mercenaries in 1261 helped the Greek Paleologi to capture Constantinople and to restore the Byzantine Empire.



*A Genoese ship of the twelfth century. Miniature from a codex Annali Genovesi by Caffaro. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

Aegean islands and most of Crimea and the districts around the Sea of Azov became Genoese possessions. The Gattilusio, Zaccaria, dell'Orto, Giustiniani were among the families and groups of families to whom, as feudatories, was entrusted the administration of overseas dependencies. Genoese trading posts dotted the ports of the eastern Mediterranean. Genoese traders went eastward to India and China. Genoese sailors ventured on the Atlantic centuries before Columbus.



Genoese bankers financed the rulers of Catholic Iberian kingdoms. Victorious over Pisa, the Genoese tried in the fourteenth century to eliminate the competition of the Venetians. But they suffered a crushing defeat at Chioggia in 1381 when they attacked Venice in her own redoubt, the lagoon. Though reduced to second rank as a Mediterranean maritime power, Genoa did not decline as Pisa had done. In spite of internal factionalism which several times provided kings of France and dukes of Milan with the opportunity to bring the republic within their sphere of influence, Genoa flourished economically and played an important role in Italian affairs in the fifteenth century. The revolution of 1528 having put in power the pro-Spanish party led by Admiral Doria, Genoa gave Spain a strong naval force against the Turks for the rest of the sixteenth century. Independence lasted until 1805.

From the eighth century on, subject neither to Eastern nor Western emperors, neither to popes nor kings, Venice pursued its unique path. The democracy of the early Middle Ages was gradually transformed into an oligarchy by limiting political rights to members of the business community. The transformation became final in 1297 when a coup d'état formally

established a narrow closed oligarchy. Led wisely by its merchant class, Venice prospered. Its fleet and merchant navy became the largest in the Mediterranean (nearly five hundred Venetian ships transported the knights of the Fourth Crusade and their retinues to Constantinople in 1204). From the eleventh to the end of the fourteenth century, territorial expansion was mainly in the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean. After the establishment of the Latin Empire in Constantinople in 1204, Venetian business families (Dandolo, Ghisi, Foscolo, Venieri, Viari, Barozzi, and others) established lordships on islands in the Aegean Sea. One of them, the Duchy of Naxos held first by the Crispo and later by the Sanudo, lasted until 1566. Of the two larger islands in the eastern Mediterranean, Crete became Venetian in 1204, Cyprus in 1489. Except for the annexation of Treviso in 1339, not until early in the fifteenth century did the Venetian oligarchy become interested in expansion on the Italian mainland. Between 1404 and 1428 all of Venetia, most of Friuli, and one-third of Lombardy had become Venetian territory; possessions in Romagna and Apulia were added shortly after. In terms of power and wealth, the republic was a leading Italian state, strong enough to check the ambitions of Habsburg emperors and any Turkish expansion beyond the Balkans. Except for the possessions south of the Po, the republic kept its fifteenth-century borders until the loss of independence at the hands of the French in 1797.

#### WEAKENING OF THE CENTRAL POWER

Early in the eleventh century, Pisa and Genoa in the Kingdom of Italy, and Venice outside it, provided evidence that self-government brought advancement. The path followed by Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians, once it was blazed by Milan, became in the few decades after the middle of the eleventh century the path of hundreds of cities and townships. The political structure of the Kingdom of Italy and of the Papal States had been a loose one for generations. It was completely disrupted in the twelfth century. The disruption had its immediate cause in the Gregorian reform of the papacy, which led to a violent clash between church and empire. It had its original, more remote, source in the dualism between secular and ecclesiastical authority that had existed since the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West. For centuries both had been ineffectual more often than not, and because of this the frequent clashes had been fairly unimportant. Now there was a new situation: first the empire, then the church, had been reorganized and strengthened. The clashes were correspondingly more violent. In terms of the times, the conflict between empire and papacy was a civil war, in Italy as well as outside. It ended the fiction of the united European Catholic commonwealth created by Charlemagne.

*Genoese banking scenes.* British Museum

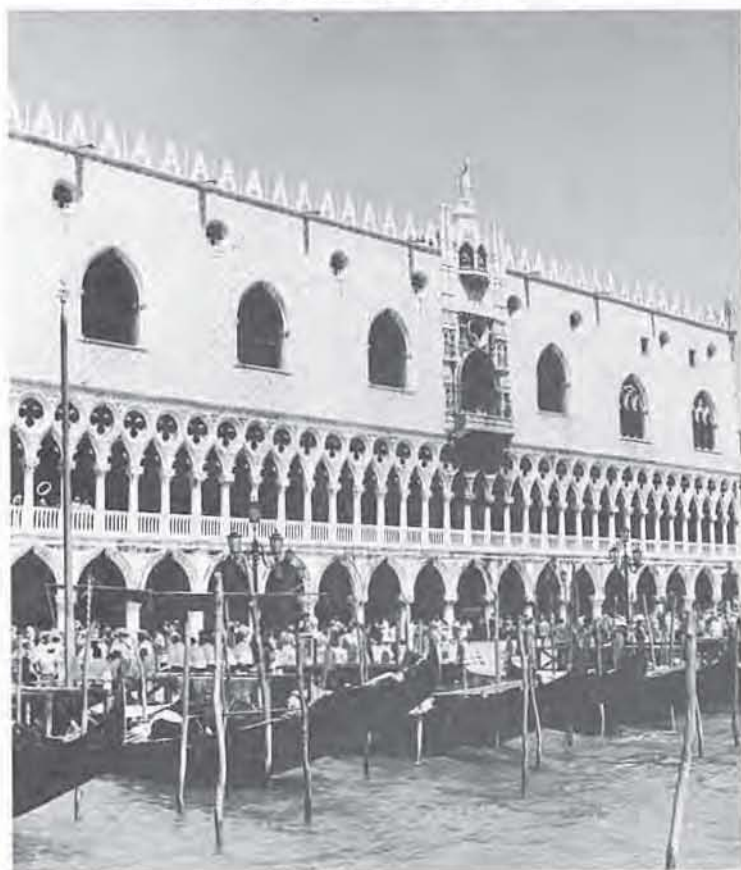






Shipbuilding in Venice from *The Voyage to the Sacred Land* by Bernardo Laragosa, 1498

Ducal palace in Venice. EPA



#### COMMUNES AND THEIR ORGANIZATION

The conflict also meant governmental paralysis in the Kingdom of Italy. There were excommunications of emperors and depositions of popes. Who would owe allegiance to an excommunicated emperor-king or to a deposed pope? As representatives of imperial and papal authority, lords and bishops saw their influence declining. If they could raise an armed force they could govern in their own right. But in the many cities over which local representatives of the central authority were unable to enforce their rule, people could act on their own: they were free! Citizens assumed responsibility for the business of government. Instead of looking for a leader or a dictator, they organized assemblies whose membership consisted of all who took the oath of loyalty to the *comune*, the embodiment of the common will aimed at the common good. The members of the executive, the *boni homines*, were elected. In time the assembly became the Grand Council; the *boni homines* formed a more restricted Minor Council which worked in close cooperation with elected consuls, heads of the executive. All this meant the establishment of republics, as the term had been understood in ancient Rome, in city after city.



From the Alps to Rome, it was the age of the *comuni*.

This development was favored not only by the continuing feud between empire and papacy, but also by wars of succession in Germany which further weakened the position of emperor-kings, and by religious schism which further weakened the position of popes. Until well into the fourteenth century, rivalries were focused on the conflict between Ghibellines and Guelphs, each a coalition embracing a variety of tendencies, interests, and aspirations. Most feudal lords were Ghibellines, but not all, not for instance Ugolino della Gherardesca, who ruled Pisa briefly and was left to die of hunger in 1288. Most, but not all, prelates were Guelphs, not for instance Archbishop Ottone Visconti, ruler of Milan from 1277 to 1295. In each republican city-state (with the notable exception of Venice) there were Ghibelline and Guelph factions. The Ghibellines had the upper hand most of the time in Pavia, Ravenna, Como, Asti, Lucca; the Guelphs in Milan before the advent of the Visconti, in Brescia, Bologna, Florence. As long as they ruled the Kingdom of Sicily, the Hohenstaufen were considered leaders of the Ghibelline party in Italy. The first three Anjous who reigned in Naples were leaders of the Guelph party.

#### LEGNANO

Germany's greatest hero in the twelfth century, the Hohenstaufen Frederick I Barbarossa, wanted more than anything else to reassert imperial authority

Frederick I Barbarossa. EPA



in the Kingdom of Italy. Six times he led powerful expeditions south of the Alps. Before an assembly of feudatories and of representatives of cities held in Roncaglia near Piacenza in 1158, Frederick issued a decree forbidding cities and feudatories to exercise sovereign rights, specifically forbidding the cities to elect their consuls. These had to be replaced as chief municipal executives by imperial *podestà*. Several cities rebelled, among them Milan and Crema. They were destroyed in 1162. Frederick also occupied Rome. His troops repeatedly attacked Ancona (on one occasion saved, according to tradition, by the bravery of a woman, Stamira). With the undeclared support of Venice, an anti-imperial league was formed in 1164, including most cities of the Venetian mainland. Stimulated by Pope Alexander III, whose election in 1159 had not been recognized by the emperor, another league was formed in 1167 in Pontida near Bergamo, including Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, Mantua, Ferrara. The Pontida League helped to rebuild Milan in 1168 and to found Alessandria, Guelph bulwark against the emperor's powerful supporters in Piedmont. The two leagues combined in the Lombard League, which soon included the majority of cities in the North, even several who during the periods of imperial ineffectiveness had usually sided with the emperors. On May 29, 1176, the soldier-citizens of the cities of the Lombard League inflicted a severe defeat on the emperor's army at Legnano, north of Milan.

#### INDEPENDENCE OF THE COMMUNES

Having reached an agreement with Pope Alexander, which ended the papal schism and abolished the *comune* established in Rome in 1143, Frederick signed the Peace of Constance with the Lombard League in 1183. The peace treaty recognized the right of the Italian cities to govern themselves, to elect their consuls, to raise troops, to levy taxes, and to form alliances. The emperor still called himself king of Italy, but the kingdom created six centuries earlier by the Lombards was not even the shadow of what it had been before Frederick's accession to the throne. It had ceased to exist.

Local republicanism had triumphed. Energies were freed, and progress, in all fields of endeavor, became increasingly rapid. Independence did not mean peace, however, either externally or within the *comune*. Boundaries were often uncertain and *comuni* were at odds with each other for the control of a few fields, a village, a bridge. There were jealousies, rivalries, and conflicting ambitions. The more powerful *comuni* tried to expand at the expense of weaker ones. Feudatories in the rural areas greedily and threateningly eyed the fast-growing wealth of communities in which—in spite of internal tensions—industrial and commercial activities expanded. Armed conflicts between cities, or between cities and feudatories, though usually on a small scale, were incessant.



## FACTIONALISM WEAKENS DEMOCRACY

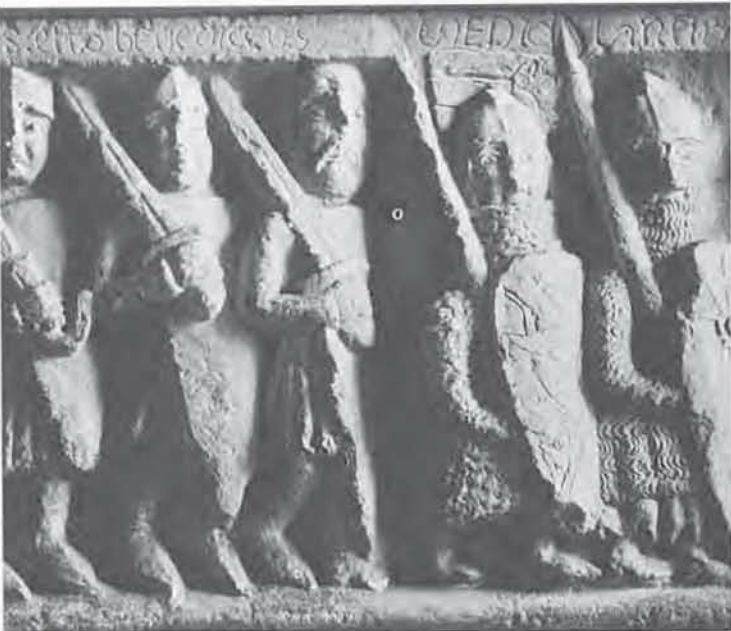
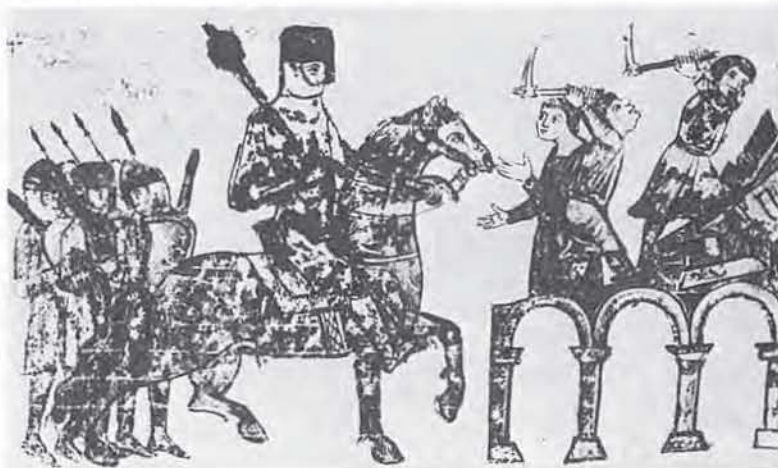
Frederick's announcement in 1158 that he, or his representative, the imperial vicar, would appoint *podestà*, had been a novelty, but the official and his position as chief executive of the city already existed. Gradually, from the middle of the twelfth century on, the consular commune was becoming the *comune podestarile*. In the wake of political liberty had come factionalism and tensions. Peaceful coexistence within the state between citizens with different interests and aspirations, with different educational and economic standards, was as difficult to achieve in a medieval Italian city-state as it is in North Atlantic democracies in the twentieth century.

The commoners had been united first against the nobles, then against the emperor and king, and, in the Papal States, against the pope. Self-government having been achieved, there arose divisions rooted in economic inequality. Industry and trade provided burghers with a living. Reviving institutions that had existed in Roman times, citizens who were engaged in the same branch of economic activity joined hands to form corporations and guilds. Instead of the twentieth-century conflict between capital and labor, there was conflict between different corporations, each including employers (the master craftsmen) and employees (journeymen and apprentices). Some corporations were wealthier than others. Weavers, for instance, had incomes considerably larger than carpenters or smiths, money changers (later bankers) were better off than druggists. Members of the wealthier corporations aimed at monopolizing political power; members of the poorer ones resisted the monopoly and even tried to establish their own.

## PODESTA

As usual in democracies, elections were a source of friction. To eliminate the friction, one faction or

*The podestà (mayor) of Genoa destroying the house of a rebellious citizen. Miniature from a codex Annali Genovesi by Caffaro. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*



*Soldiers of the Commune. From the Porta Romana, Milan. The Porta Romana was erected to celebrate the defeat of Frederick Barbarossa by the Lombard League. EPA*

*Battle of Legnano, 1176 where Emperor Frederick I was defeated by the Lombard League. EPA*





another of the citizens, sometimes the overwhelming majority, decided to replace the elected consuls with appointed *podestà*. To avoid partisanship, the *podestà* was chosen from citizens of another, possibly distant, city, or from rural nobles whose interests were agricultural and who were little concerned with the rivalries between the industrial, commercial, and professional groups into which the urban commoners were divided. To make discussions more manageable, and in view of the rapid increase in the population of many cities, Grand Councils were often limited in size or superseded by smaller councils.

#### SIGNORI

The passage from the consular to the *podestarile* commune meant a limitation of democracy at the level of the executive, but power to formulate policies and to make decisions was still in the hands of the citizens. However, the *podestarile* reform was not always effective. Tensions continued not only between wealthier and poorer corporations, but also between those who



*Giovanni Eno, podestà of Verona, 1527. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*

lived within the city walls and enjoyed political rights and the growing number of inhabitants of suburbs outside the walls who did not enjoy such rights; also between Guelphs and Ghibellines and, in several Lombard cities, Catholic and non-Catholic Christians. Often the spirit of compromise was not strong enough to prevent dissension from degenerating into violence. Temporary dictatorship seemed to be the solution to conflicts, the idea being that once order had been re-established and factionalism subsided, there could be a return to free institutions. But dictatorships tend to become permanent. In Italian medieval city-states, the dictator was called *signore*. When *signori*, particularly in the fourteenth century, became strong enough to transfer power to their sons, nephews, or to other close relatives, and their usurpation was legitimized through titles granted by the emperors or the popes, the *signoria* became the *principato*.

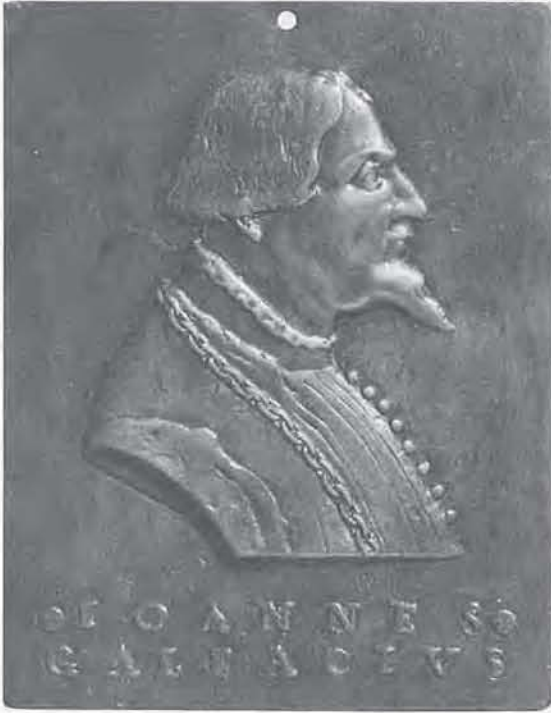
#### VISCONTI

Milan had retained throughout the period of communal liberty—consular and *podestarile*—its place as premier city in the territory included in the Kingdom of Italy and the Papal States. It was first in population, wealth, and armed forces. Its territory was relatively large and well cultivated. Until the thirteenth century, Milan possessed more industry than any other Italian (or European) city. Communal liberty lasted nearly two hundred years. In 1237 the Milanese Guelph majority, frightened by the victory Frederick II had won at Cortenova over the second Lombard League which had been reorganized in 1224, asked Pagano della Torre (a Guelph feudal lord sympathetic to the commoners) to take over the government of the city. The Della Torre, several of them able administrators, governed for forty years, during which time Milan formally kept its republican institutions. In 1277 the Ghibelline party, led by Archbishop Ottone Visconti, gained the upper hand. The archbishop was succeeded after a short interval by his nephew Matteo. Republican institutions, by now totally meaningless, were discarded. Using the economic strength of the Milanese community for the development of a large and efficient armed force, Matteo's successors—cruel and treacherous but at the same time intelligent and capable—brought all the cities of Lombardy and many beyond under their rule between 1331 and 1402. When, in 1395, Emperor Wenceslas granted the title of duke of Milan to Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the Viscontean state, then the wealthiest in Europe, included half of the Italian North and the territories of several city-states in Tuscany and Umbria. If Gian Galeazzo, ruthless, ambitious, and enterprising, had not died of the plague in 1402, he might have reunited most of the former Kingdom of Italy. This at least was the opinion of his frightened opponents, among them the Republics of Venice and Florence.

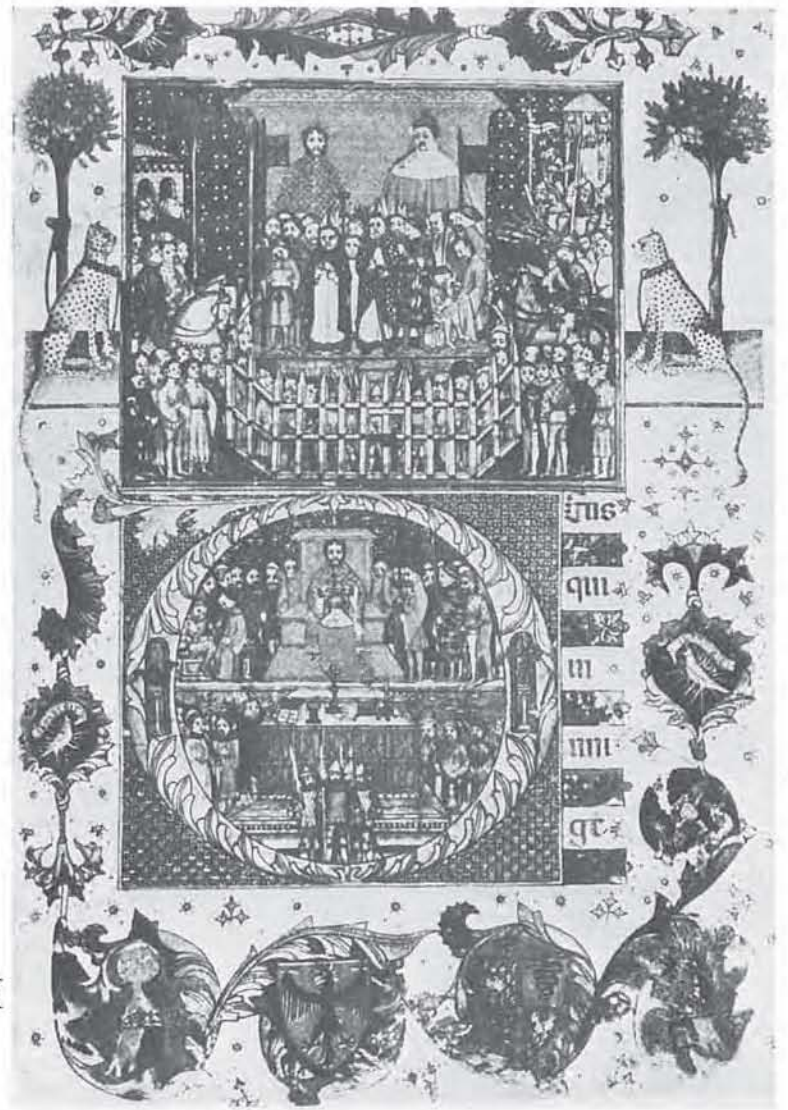
#### OTHER SIGNORI

Milan had not been the first city to surrender its liberty to a *signore*. In 1227, Ezzelino da Romano, a notoriously cruel Ghibelline leader, had expelled the Guelphs from Verona and made himself *signore*. He helped his brother Alberic to do likewise in Vicenza. During the second half of the thirteenth century the Da Romano were replaced by the Della Scala who ruled much of the Venetian mainland until they were defeated by Gian Galeazzo Visconti in 1387. The best known of the Della Scala was Cangrande, a friend of Dante and an able statesman. The Carrara made themselves *signori* of Padua. The strategically situated city of Mantua found tranquillity under the Gonzaga, who were to rule it as *signori*, marquesses, and dukes, until 1708. At the turn of the fourteenth century, when conflicts in Rome forced the popes to find shelter in Avignon, *signorie* replaced republican self-government





*Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1378–1402). Duke of Milan. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*



*The Coronation of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Miniature from Messale di Anovelo da Imbonate. Biblioteca della Basilica de Sant'Ambrogio, Milan*



*The death of Ezzelino da Romano. Alinari*





*Cangrande I della Scala. Equestrian statue. Castelvecchio Museum, Verona. Alinari*

in most cities of the Papal States. Titles of dukes legitimized the rule of the *signori* of Ferrara, of Urbino, of Camerino. Other *signori* were appointed papal vicars (or representatives) of the cities they ruled.

#### REPUBLICANISM CONTINUES

Not every city-state lost its internal liberty to a dictator. The outstanding example was Venice, whose merchant oligarchy was repressive but never went to the extremes of dictatorial absolutism. Twice, prominent citizens (a Faliero in the fourteenth century, a Foscari in the fifteenth) conspired to establish a dictatorial *signoria*, but failed (as the intrigues of foreign rulers, from the *signori* of Milan in the fourteenth century to the kings of Spain in the seventeenth, failed

to cause internal revolutions). The Genoese several times put themselves under the protection of foreign monarchs and always expelled them in the end. Siena, independent until 1555, and Lucca, independent as a republic until 1805, had only intermittent periods of rule by *signori*. In Florence, the erosion of republican liberties was a slow process that met with strong opposition. All in all, the seed of liberty planted in the eleventh century had taken root and was difficult to destroy: Romans reestablished their republic briefly in 1347–1348 and in 1352–1354 with Cola di Rienzo, and tried again with Porcari in 1447; the Milanese Republic revived in 1447–1450, the Florentine as late as 1527–1530.

Under the *signori* and powerful dukes, Milan was strong economically and militarily, but no longer occupied the exclusive leading position it had held during the communal period. There was Venice. There was also Florence, which became the leading cultural Italian community in the thirteenth century, and held that position until the final obliteration of republicanism in 1530.

#### FLORENCE

In Tuscany, early in the thirteenth century, Pisa and Siena both had larger populations, vaster territory, greater wealth, and stronger armed forces than Florence. Other important Tuscan city-states, all of them with republican institutions, were Arezzo, Cortona, Lucca, Pistoia, Volterra. There were also several minor ones. In Florence, particularly after 1215, internal tensions were accompanied by greater dynamism. Population increased. Industry and trade expanded. Clashes with Apennine feudatories and with neighboring city-states ended in victory. The defeat of Pisa at the hands of the Genoese helped Florence, as

*Piazza Grande, Arezzo. ICI*





did the defeat of King Manfred of Sicily at the hands of Charles of Anjou. In the conflict between popes and emperors, Florentines sided with the popes while their Tuscan neighbors usually supported the emperors.

For two and a half centuries, aside from expanding territorially and surpassing in sheer wealth all other Italian states with the exception of Venice and Milan, Florence was in the forefront of progress. There were magnificent artistic achievements and astounding intellectual liveliness. The Florentine community—about two hundred thousand people in the city and its district at the end of the thirteenth century, about half a million in the fifteenth—produced more remarkable men than any other national or regional community during a comparable length of time, with the exception of ancient Athens. Historians dwell at length on the internal quarrels and external conflicts that plagued Florence when she was at her height, but they were far from being the whole story. In spite of turmoil and wars there was liberty; there was suffi-

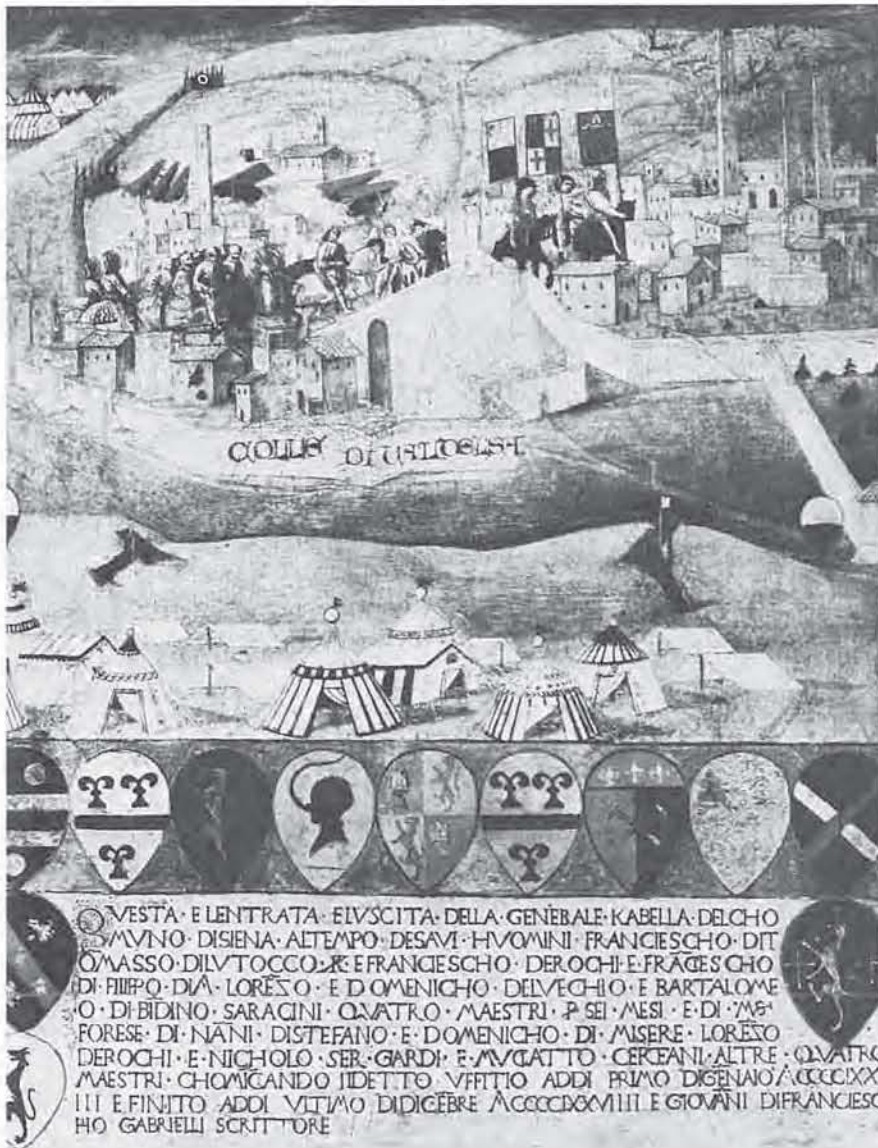
cient order to guarantee producers the fruits of their labor; there was the freedom of expression without which man's creativeness dries up. There was an element of risk, of course, in expressing a new idea: Dante spent twenty years of his life in exile; Savonarola was hanged. Even so, there was not the deadly conformity enforced in authoritarian societies.

#### DISSENSIONS IN FLORENCE

As elsewhere in the twelfth century, commoners had freed themselves from the authority of local nobles and of the central government. In 1215, when only fifteen thousand people lived within the city walls, factionalism began to acquire violent overtones. The conflict between Ghibellines and Guelphs was succeeded by conflict between Guelph factions, and, in the fourteenth century, by conflicts between economic groups organized in guilds. In the constitution of 1293, which excluded nobles from exercising political

*The Sienese and their allies lay siege to Colle di Val d'Elsa in a battle against the Florentines. State Archives, Siena*

*A column commemorating the battle of June 1289 between Arezzo, Florence, and Siena that signaled the nearly definitive rout of the Ghibellines in Tuscany. Dante fought in this battle. EPA*







*Palazzo del Comune, Pistoia, Tuscany. A massive sandstone structure built by the Guelphs in 1294, and later enlarged. EPA*

rights, power was entrusted to a council formed by the representatives of seven major and five lesser corporations or guilds. An official called *gonfaloniere* acted as head of state. An American parallel can be used for Florentine politics after 1293: The *Popolo Grasso* was the Republican party, supported mainly by the well-to-do. The *Popolo Minuto* resembled the Democratic party; its members were the underprivileged desirous of achieving equality with the *Popolo Grasso*. As in America today, there was a radical fringe. When the burden of conflicts aggravated tension between the two major parties, the Angevin kings of Naples—leaders of Italian Guelphs—were asked to take over the government of the city. This happened three times during the first half of the fourteenth century. In 1378 the radical minority agitated; political and economic concessions to the poor ended the rioting. For half a century after that episode the Republican party, ably led by the Albizzi family, dominated Florentine political life. A wave of unrest, caused by an unsuccessful war against Lucca and the threat of Viscontean advance in Tuscany, resulted in victory for the Democratic party led by the wealthy banker Cosimo de' Medici, in 1434. Cosimo governed the city and its territory firmly and wisely for thirty years. The citizens were hardly aware that their republic was becoming increasingly monarchical. When Cosimo took over, the Florentine state included all of Tuscany (except the republics of Siena and Lucca, and the two small lordships of Piombino and Massa) and parts of Romagna.

#### LORENZO DE' MEDICI

Cosimo's policies were continued by his grandson Lorenzo the Magnificent, still alive today in the minds of educated Italians and of all interested in the culture of the Renaissance. A first-rate intellectual, a superior statesman, an able businessman, and a generous patron of the arts, Lorenzo de' Medici gave his name to the age in which he lived.



*Cosimo de' Medici by Benvenuto Cellini. National Museum, Florence. Alinari*

The philosopher Marsilio Ficino, the erudite and elegant humanist Pico della Mirandola, and the poet Poliziano were three of the remarkable intellectuals befriended by Lorenzo de' Medici. Born in the Florentine commonwealth, or descended from Florentine families, were Leon Battista Alberti who died soon after Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano began governing Florence, Leonardo da Vinci who was then a young man, Michelangelo Buonarroti who was born shortly after: three geniuses whose interests were universal.

The dynamism of writers and artists who formed Lorenzo's circle in Florence stimulated intellectual activities elsewhere in Italy (and also beyond the Alps); the level they achieved became the goal at which others aimed. These were the years when Pulci and Boiardo wrote their poems; when Leto, Pontano, and Sannazaro led circles of humanist men of letters in Rome and Naples; when some of the greatest architects, sculptors, and painters of all time lived: Bramante, Sangallo, Da Maiano, Laurana; Verrocchio, Pollaiuolo, Della Robbia; Botticelli, Lippi, Ghirlandajo, Mantegna, Perugino. They were the formative years for Machiavelli and Guicciardini, political scientists and historians; for the poet Ariosto; for Bembo





*Marsilio Ficino, in the manner of Niccolò Fiorentino. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*

*Medal depicting Pico della Mirandola, in the manner of Niccolò Fiorentino. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*



and Castiglione who wrote both poetry and prose; for the artists Sansovino, Raphael, Correggio, Giorgione, Titian. The mathematician, astronomer, and geographer Toscanelli studied the stars and, probably in 1474, wrote a letter to a friend in which he stated that the shortest way to India was not along the African coasts but westward across the ocean. The first engineer to have his works published was Biringuccio, born in Siena in 1460. Impetus was given to scientific thought and research by the publication of the works of Pliny on natural history, of Varro on agriculture, of Tolomeus on geography, of Celsus on medicine, of Euclid on mathematics, of Vitruvius on architecture. Students and scholars from abroad found in Italian teachers and friends, in the universities of Padua, Bologna, Pisa, in newly established libraries, the stimulus to their intellectual activities.

#### HUMANISM

The long list of writers and artists of this astounding era is evidence of the great Italian intellectual revival centered in Florence, which reached its climax at the end of the fifteenth century and has been known ever since as the Renaissance. The revival acquired impetus in the fourteenth century and continued vigorously well into the sixteenth. It amounted to a major cultural explosion. There had been great intellectual and artistic achievements in the late Middle Ages, as attested by the writings of Thomas Aquinas and Dante and by the works of architects, sculptors, and painters. With the revival, diffusion and innovation were added. Those who exploited to the utmost their thinking powers, their imaginations, their innate creativity, were no longer isolated individuals, they were legion.

The revival began with the discovery or rediscovery of the writings of ancient Roman and Greek authors, and with the attempt of a few artists to look at man and what surrounds him in a new light. Borrowed ideas and artistic innovation were soon transcended. Increasing numbers of people became

dissatisfied with passive acceptance of what was sanctioned by tradition. Thinkers began to speculate on the nature of man and human life; the age of humanism took root. New visions guided writers and artists. Emotions were heightened and tensions increased.

The achievements—a poem, a treatise, a painting, a sculpture—belonged to the individual poet, scholar, artist who gave free rein to the creativity usually dormant under the outer coercion of society and the inner coercion of conformist thinking. The scientific inventiveness of Leonardo and the artistic splendors of Michelangelo came from their own genius. But the conditions that stimulated creativity and allowed its expression were part of the Italian scene: political liberty, expanding economies, intellectual emancipation were major features of the way of life that had developed in the urban communities of northern and central Italy.

The fourteenth century marks the beginning of the transitional period between the Middle Ages and modern times. The establishment of republican commonwealths in the twelfth century, and the growth of industrial and commercial activities in the thirteenth, had not been sufficient to produce such a change as to justify in later generations the statement that the Middle Ages were over. The Middle Ages ended when intellectual emancipation became a significant feature of Italian life, when the isolated and courageous few were replaced by many, forming a significant and influential minority in the nation.

Deviation from accepted ideas remained a dangerous practice for nearly two hundred years after the Milanese revolution of the eleventh century. Arnold of Brescia was executed by order of an emperor at the instigation of a pope; evangelical preachers were condemned by the papal inquisition under Honorius III and Gregory IX; Francesco Stabili (Cecco d'Ascoli) was burned at the stake as late as 1327. But after the Great Interregnum following the death of Emperor Conrad IV nullified what imperial authority remained in the thirteenth century, and after the Babylonian Captivity had reduced papal prestige in the fourteenth, republics and *signorie* of the no longer functioning



Kingdom of Italy and Papal States became lax in enforcing conformity.

Authoritarian rule without strict censorship is inconceivable today. This was not the case in Italy for several generations from the middle of the fourteenth century. Happily for the nation's progress—for humanism and Renaissance—*signori* and princes, including the popes, were concerned with power and wealth, not with control over minds. People were suppressed in Italy for what they did, not for what they thought and said. Accusation of sorcery still brought severe punishment, but that concerned magic practices still important for most, even among the educated classes. As a rule, political opposition was a crime but intellectual deviation was not. Savonarola was hanged and his body delivered to the flames: though heresy was the pretext, he was in fact executed for being the political enemy of the irreligious Pope Alexander VI and of the Medici. Neither cared about the Dominican monk's theological position. This indifference to intellectual deviation from orthodoxy explains the later attitude of Leo X, Clement VII, and even Paul III toward the ideas of Luther and his followers. Heresy did not bother the popes until they became aware of its political implications.

Apart from a tolerance born largely from the indifference of the despots, the large number of centers of power spread throughout the country helped to maintain a climate of freedom of expression. What Cangrande della Scala and Guido Novello da Polenta had done for Dante, later *signori* and princes did for countless writers and artists. The first three Medici were generous toward those who found life hard in Rome and Romagna. Fugitives from Florence were welcome in Siena, forty miles away. The Venetian oligarchy sheltered those whose professed views forced them to flee from other states. The Gonzaga and Este gave protection and subsidies to those whose liberty and life were threatened in lands ruled by the Sforza and Medici. Moreover, *signori* and princes gained prestige by surrounding themselves with writers and artists: even ruthless tyrants, like Sigismund Malatesta, allowed some freedom of expression in order to attract poets and painters to their courts.

#### RENAISSANCE

The Italian Renaissance was begun by the generation that heaped scorn on the Bavarian Ludwig IV and the Luxemburger Charles IV; that laughed at the hollow pretensions of emperors without empire who came to Italy to get money from wealthy merchants. More important, it was also the generation that laughed at the ministers of a church whose heads were disporting themselves in the palace provided by the cadets of the French royal family, ruling in Naples and Provence. Only a few generations had passed since the time when Hohenstaufen emperors were held in awe or since Pope Innocent III made good the

claim that all Catholic rulers were his vassals. The laughter was the index of a revolution which lasted until the middle of the sixteenth century, a revolution more important to the life of Italian people than coups d'état, usurpations, and wars. It was more important than the founding of large banking enterprises, or the merchants' cooperative ventures in the republics and *signorie* of the fourteenth century. Most Italians were shocked by the laughter. They were nostalgic. The good old times were gone: the Renaissance, which had had its forerunners in chroniclers and architects of the twelfth century, in poets at the court of Frederick II, in Florentine writers who used Italian instead of Latin, in the paintings of Cimabue, got under way with the generation that searched feverishly for the lost works of pagan writers, a generation that read Boccaccio's *Decameron* with delight.

Freedom of the mind was the essence of the Renaissance. It produced great achievements but also much tension and suffering. Conflict and violence made the history of Renaissance Italy a tragic one, no less for the passive masses than for the active and turbulent minority. With few exceptions, the masses continued to live their traditional life founded on conformity and obedience to authority. They sighed with relief when in the sixteenth century the revitalized church, foreign rulers, and native puppets stifled minds and consciences, thus ending the exhausting effervescence of the educated minority.

#### FIFTEENTH-CENTURY REGIONAL STATES

By the end of the fourteenth century, through voluntary submission motivated by fear of internal disorders or external attack, and through forcible annexations after wars, regional states were replacing the city-states of the communal and early *signorile* phase in much of the former Kingdom of Italy. The process continued during the first half of the fifteenth century. The *Serenissima*, as the Republic of Venice was called, annexed through conquest or peaceful agreement all the cities of the Venetian mainland and most Lombard cities east of the Adda River, adding also the Polesine in 1405 and most of Friuli in 1421. Lombardy west of the Adda, what are today the Swiss districts south of the Alps, and a vast territory south of the Po from Alessandria to Parma, formed the diminished but still large, populous, and wealthy Duchy of Milan. After 1409, the whole valley of the Arno and several adjacent districts belonged to the Republic of Florence. All Liguria, except for a few small townships and lordships, was ruled by the Republic of Genoa, as was Corsica. The Italian possessions of the Savoys, reunited with the transalpine ones in 1418, expanded under Amadeus VIII. The state ruled by the Este extended from the mouth of the Po to the Ligurian Apennines. De facto independence at the level of city-states and of vast feudal lordships continued, instead, during the fifteenth century in the Papal States.



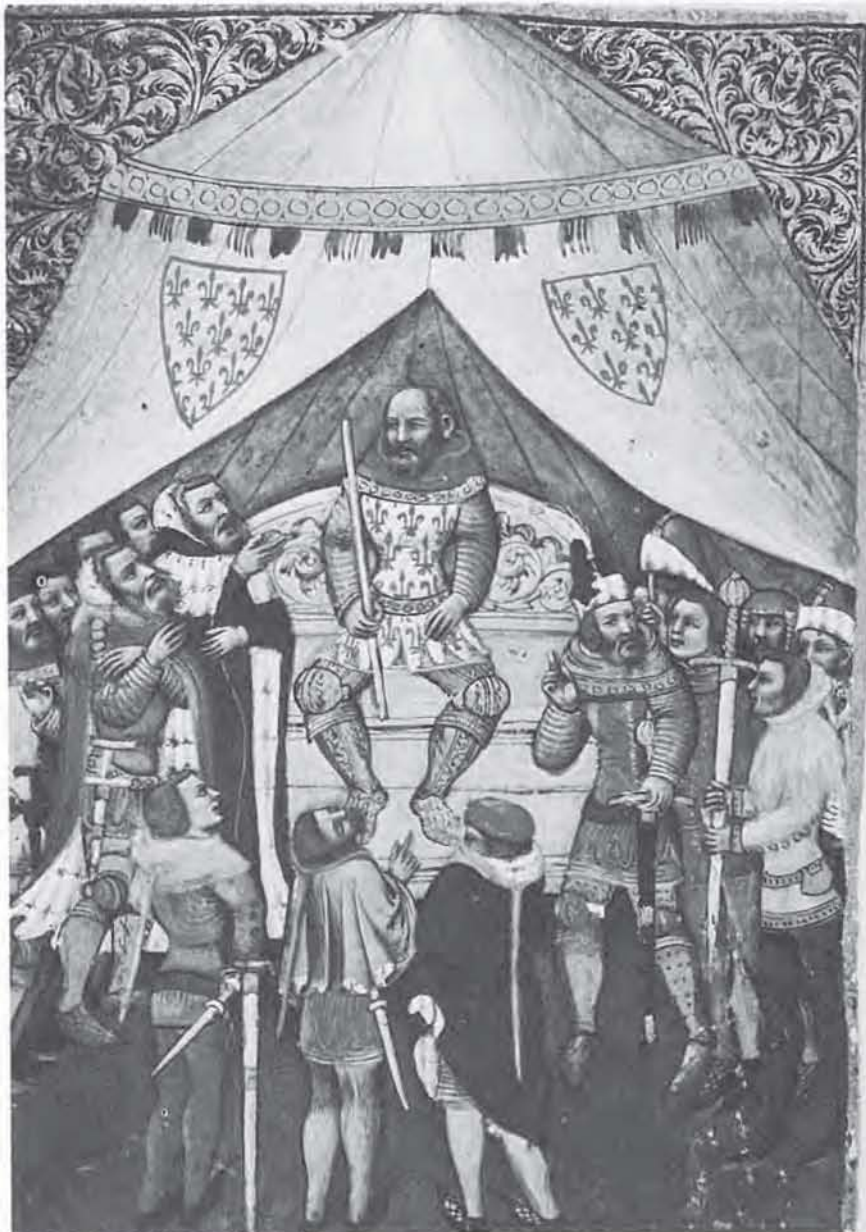
## CONDOTTIERI

The incessant warfare did not hinder economic expansion; most conflicts involved little loss of blood or money. Citizens, or their rulers, were coming more and more to the conclusion that it was cheaper and easier to pay someone else to do their fighting for them. Mercenaries replaced the citizens' militias, which had won the Italian republican cities their independence in the twelfth century. In the early fourteenth century, Catalans brought to Sicily by the Aragonese king served as mercenaries. In the 1340s a large band of mercenaries was led by Duca Guarnieri, the German Werner von Urslingen who had as his motto, "Enemy of God, piety, and mercy." Shortly after the middle of the fourteenth century, the use of mercenaries became general. Among their leaders, or *condottieri*, were an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German, known re-

spectively as Giovanni Acuto, Fra' Moriale, and Conte Lando.

Why should only foreigners serve as mercenaries? thought Alberico da Barbiano, a young nobleman from Romagna. He collected his own mercenaries, all Italians, in a small army called Compagnia di San Giorgio. In 1379 he fought successfully for Pope Urban VI against the Avignonese antipope Clement VII. Two famous *condottieri*, Braccio da Montone and Attendolo Sforza, received their training under him. Braccio tried, but failed, to build a state for himself, in Umbria first and then in Abruzzi. Attendolo Sforza's son Francesco, also an able *condottiero*, married Bianca Visconti, heiress to the Duchy of Milan, and became duke of Milan in 1450. Another *condottiero*, Francesco Bussone, a farmhand in his youth, became count of Carmagnola and was executed in 1432 by order of the Venetian authorities on suspicion of treason. Other

A condottiero in his tent. Miniature of Niccolò da Bologna from *De Bello Pharsalico* by Lucaro. Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan



Francesco Sforza by Francesco Bonsignori. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Widener Collection





famous *condottieri* were Facino Cane, Dal Verme, Piccinino, Colleoni, Frederick of Montefeltro, and in the sixteenth century Giovanni dalle Bande Nere, a cadet of the Medici family whose son Cosimo became duke of Florence in 1537, and the first grand duke of Tuscany in 1569. It was in the *condottieri's* interest to achieve results with a minimum of casualties and expenditure of money. A battle in which no one was killed was an exception, but *condottieri* fought wars in which corruption and bribery were more important than bravery on the battlefield.

#### THE FIVE MAJOR ITALIAN POWERS

The history of Italy in the fifteenth century is mainly the history of its major states: the Duchy of Milan, the Republics of Florence and Venice, the Kingdom of Naples, later the papacy—after papal authority had been reestablished in Rome and in part of the Papal States during the reigns of Popes Martin V and Eugenius IV. Florence, smaller and less populous than the others, but stable and wealthy, was in the unenviable position of holding the balance of power. As long as Gian Galeazzo Visconti lived, the efforts of the Florentine government were aimed at containing the duke of Milan, mainly with the help of Venice. The sudden death of Gian Galeazzo in 1402, when his sons were still minors, led to factional conflicts among the *condottieri* who had been hired by the duke.

Portrait of Frederick of Montefeltro by Piero della Francesca. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Alinari



Monument to General Colleoni by Verrocchio. Venice. Alinari

Taking advantage of this situation, Venice annexed Viscontean acquisitions on the Venetian mainland. Profiting from the papal schism as much as from the weakening of Viscontean control over cities of Romagna, Tuscany, and Umbria, King Ladislas of Naples tried to add parts of central Italy to his kingdom. The Florentine government cooperated with Venice but checked Ladislas. When, in the middle of the century, the Venetians (who had meanwhile annexed parts of Romagna) resumed their expansionist policies against Milan (where a republic had been established following the death of Duke Filippo Maria Visconti in 1447), Cosimo de' Medici decided that it was time for Florence to change sides. To contain Venice, he helped Francesco Sforza take over the government of Milan in 1450. However, the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453 frightened the Italian states, particularly Venice and Naples, now more exposed to Turkish attacks. Peace among the Italian states was signed at Lodi, near Milan, in 1454. Venetian territorial expansion was halted, Francesco Sforza and Alfonso of Aragon were recognized as duke of Milan and as king of Naples respectively. Working in close cooperation



with Milan and Naples, and respectful of the rights of Venice and the papacy, Cosimo, his son Piero, and his grandson Lorenzo the Magnificent kept Italy at peace for forty years.

*ITALY AT PEACE*

During those forty years, crises in the five major Italian states did not upset internal stability or external relations. The leaders of the Venetian oligarchy compelled the doge Foscari, advocate of further territorial expansion, to abdicate. Conspirators led by the Pazzi family and encouraged by Pope Sixtus IV's ambitious nephews, the Riario, killed Lorenzo's brother Giuliano in 1478, in the Cathedral of Florence, and were lynched by a populace deeply attached to the Medici. A younger son of Francesco Sforza, Ludovico, nicknamed *Il Moro* ("the swarthy one"), made himself regent of Milan in 1479 and refused to surrender the government to the legitimate duke, the young and feeble Gian Galeazzo Sforza married to the granddaughter of the king of Naples. The Neapolitan barons who conspired against King Ferdinand in 1485 failed to unseat him, and several were executed. Popes, victorious in the struggle against the Conciliar movement, were interested in promoting the fortunes of their families, not of the Catholic Church. Crises there were, but Italy was at peace—for the longest period



*Doge Foscari. Museo Correr, Venice*

*Piero de' Medici. Bust by Mino da Fiesole. Museo Nazionale, Florence. Alinari*



*Giuliano de' Medici and the Pazzi Conspiracy. Obverse: Lorenzo; reverse: Giuliano. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*







◀  
*Ludovico Sforza (Il Moro)*,  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C., Mellon  
Collection

▶  
*Medal depicting Gian Galeazzo Sforza*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew Mellon Collection



since the early days of the Roman Empire. With the cultural achievements of the Renaissance and continuing economic expansion, civilization in Italy had reached the highest level thus far known in the Western world.

#### COMING OF THE FRENCH IN 1494

The peace was interrupted in 1494 by a French invasion, which, though it ended in failure, was the prelude to the agony that the Italian nation was to endure throughout the first sixty years of the sixteenth century. The Milanese regent Ludovico Sforza, afraid that the new king of Naples might intervene on behalf of Gian Galeazzo, promised his support to the young king of France, Charles VIII, should he claim the Neapolitan throne. Charles was the legitimate heir of the Angevins. The king of France was also encouraged by exiles from Naples where the inept Alfonso II reigned; from Florence, ineffectively ruled since 1492 by Lorenzo's unworthy son Piero; and from Rome, where Alexander VI Borgia had become pope. In August 1494, Charles and his knights received an enthusiastic welcome in Asti, the Piedmontese city ruled by his cousin and heir apparent. Ludovico Sforza wined and dined the French lavishly, and shortly after, on the death of Gian Galeazzo, made himself duke. In November the king was in Florence where, following the flight of Piero de' Medici, the republic had been reestablished. The king was not enthusiastically welcomed in Florence, but neither was there strong opposition. The pope did his best in Rome to help Charles. The king of Naples fled to Sicily after abdicating in favor of his son, who took shelter in the island of Ischia. Charles entered Naples at the end of January 1495.

#### FORNOVO

Grand receptions and enthusiastic welcomes had greeted Charles almost everywhere, there had been some coolness in Florence only, there had been no fighting: it had all been very easy, too easy. The duke of Milan had not expected a walkover. He had counted

on a protracted struggle between the French and the Neapolitans. Now he, as well as the pope, was deeply concerned, as were all Italians in a position of responsibility. On March 31, an alliance was signed by the duke, the pope, Venice, the emperor, and the Spanish king of Aragon and Castile. Two months later, fearing the plague as much as the threat of being cut off from France, Charles decided to take the homeward road. On July 6, the allies failed to stop the French at the battle of Fornovo, in the Apennines. Ferdinand II left Ischia and went back to Naples. From his splendid castle in Milan, Ludovico Sforza actively played an elaborate game of international chess. The *signoria* of the *Serenissima* looked longingly at territories beyond the Venetian borders. Pope Alexander VI made plans for the advancement of his children. Only in Florence had there been a change, but the very existence of the reestablished republic was threatened, on one side by the large party supporting the Medici, on the other by the fanatical followers of the ardent puritanical preacher and reformer Savonarola.

The real problem had nothing to do with day-to-day politics: Charles VIII's raid had proved that Italian states were militarily impotent. They were also rich, several of them richer than any transalpine kingdom. To foreign rulers, wealth plus military impotence equaled booty. The lesson of 1494/95 was not lost on Charles VIII's successor, his able cousin Louis XII, who ascended the throne in 1498. Nor was it lost on the other Ferdinand II, the king of Aragon and Sicily to whom Christopher Columbus had made the gift of a new world. Louis wanted to add the Milanese duchy to his domains; Ferdinand wanted the Neapolitan kingdom.

*Charles VIII of France*  
by Niccolò Fiorentino,  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection





## 9

## AGONY

*Italy in 1500 – Foreign powers – Milan and Naples lose their independence – The coalition against Venice – Francis I and Charles V – Death of the Republic of Florence – Other Spanish successes – End of freedom of expression – The Reformation – Protestantism in Italy – The Catholic Counter-Reformation – The Council of Trent – End of the Renaissance.*

## ITALY IN 1500

IN his celebrated *History of Italy*, Francesco Guicciardini, unsuccessful statesman and competent Renaissance historian, described Italy in the early 1490s as being at peace, independent, prosperous, densely populated, rich in splendid cities and in distinguished men, governed by wise statesmen and by magnificent and generous princes. There was some exaggeration in this picture, also much that was true. Early in 1500 Italy was to Catholic Europe—extending from Sicily to the Arctic Ocean, from Ireland and Iceland in the Atlantic to the borders of the Ottoman Empire and of distant Muscovy—what industrial Europe was to the rest of the world in 1914. It was small in size, but in a position of leadership culturally, politically, and economically. Within thirty years, Italian influence and leadership had vanished (as European influence and leadership did in the years 1914–1945). Then, within a few decades, the dynamism that for five centuries had made the nation the most progressive in the West faded from the Italian scene.

In the winter of 1500 the Italian “great powers” consisted of five states. The Kingdom of Naples accounted for nearly one-fourth of the area of Italy and for about one-fifth of the country’s then eleven or twelve million inhabitants. King Frederick III was a better man than his three immediate predecessors but had little authority; actual power rested mainly in the hands of rioting, irresponsible great barons. The kingdom was living on its past reputation. Weak (as had been demonstrated by the French raid of 1495) and still comparatively rich (but less than formerly), it was a natural goal for ambitious foreign princes.

Half the size of Naples and with only two-thirds of its population, but wealthier (actually reported to be the wealthiest European state) was the Republic of Venice—the *Serenissima*—which firmly controlled Ve-



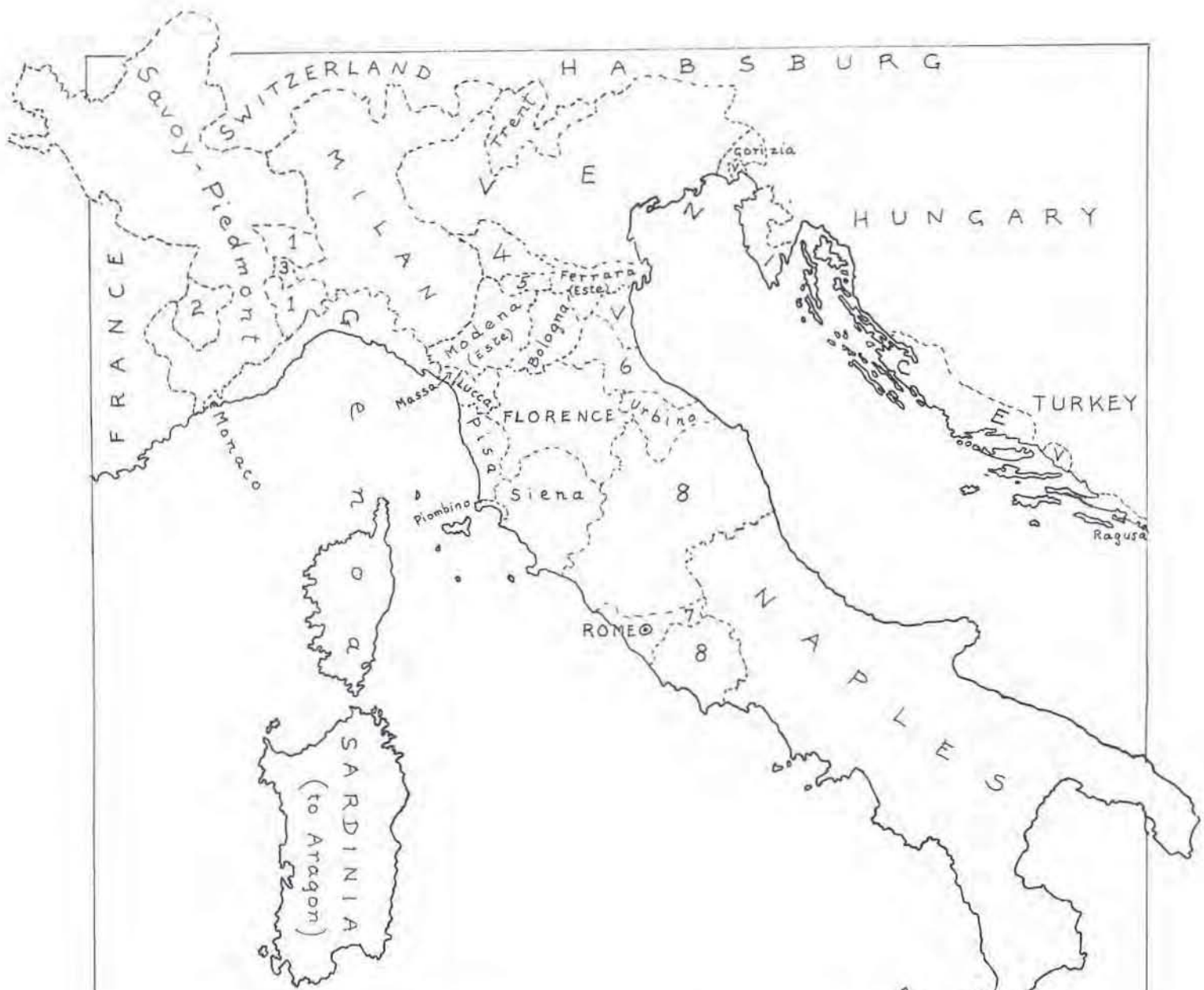
*The French seize Milan. Etching. NYPL PC*

netia, Friuli, and eastern Lombardy. Most of Istria, much of Romagna, and a string of coastal cities in Apulia were other dependencies of the *Serenissima* in Italy. The Italian area was doubled by well-administered territories in the western Balkans (Dalmatia, coastal areas of Albania and Greece) and in the eastern Mediterranean. Commerce, industry, and agriculture flourished in the Venetian state, which was strong enough to hold its own against the pressure of the fast-expanding Ottoman Empire, and at the same time to plan further expansion in Italy. Its government—a closed oligarchy—was the most stable in Europe.

The prosperous Duchy of Milan covered an area about one-third the size of the Kingdom of Naples, had a million and a half inhabitants and a vast revenue. Duke Ludovico Sforza, intelligent, ruthless, and ambitious, was also a munificent patron of the arts. He had been responsible for the havoc caused by the expedition of Charles VIII of France in 1494/95. In the fall of 1499 he was attacked by Charles’s successor, Louis XII, who claimed Milan as the grandson of Valentina, daughter of the first duke, Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Ludovico was defeated at first, and though with the aid of Swiss mercenaries he recovered the lost territories in February 1500, he had to remain on the alert as there was always the threat of a new attack.

Considerably smaller than the Duchy of Milan, the Republic of Florence was nearly as wealthy. It was once again at war with Pisa, which had regained its





## ITALY IN 1500

1 : 5,000,000

- 1) Montferrat, marquisate
- 2) Saluzzo, marquisate
- 3) Asti (to king of France)
- 4) Mantua, marquisate
- 5) Signorie in lower Po Valley

Papal States included Ferrara (Este), Bologna, Urbino, Venetian districts in Romagna (V), *signorie* in Romagna (6), Rome and its district (7), republican city-states, *signorie* and feudatories in the southern sections (8)





Louis XII of France. NYPL PC

independence in 1496 (and lost it forever in 1509). The internal situation was precarious. Not many Florentines, in 1494, had favored the reestablishment of the republican institutions, which had all but disappeared during the sixty years of the Medici's increasingly monarchical rule. The Medici party, the *Palleschi* (once the Democratic party), strong in all classes of the population, wanted the return of Piero, Lorenzo the Magnificent's son. Led by the fiery preacher Girolamo Savonarola (born in Ferrara in 1452), many anti-Medici middle-class Florentines, shocked by widespread immorality, by the pagan undertones of the Renaissance, and by the corruption of the upper classes, wanted to reform the republic along the lines of theocratic authoritarianism. They were contemptuously called the *Piagnoni* ("tearful ones"). Young people of the upper classes, the *Arrabbiati*, were the most active in opposing the republic and *Piagnoni*. The crisis reached its climax in the spring of 1498, when *Arrabbiati* and *Palleschi* managed to swing the populace against Savonarola (who was hanged, together with two of his disciples). The republic survived, but barely.

Outside Rome, only a few small cities and some rural areas of the Papal States—the last of the five major powers—were ruled by the pope's administration. Cities like Ancona and Assisi had republican institutions; but most cities, and all the rural areas, were under the thumb of local despots. However, the papal revenue was large and it gave the popes, besides great wealth, political influence in Italian and European affairs. Only a small part of the revenue came from taxation in the Papal States. Most came from gifts, offerings, tributes, and tithes from all Catholic nations, from the sale of indulgences, and from a brisk trade in



Medal depicting Savonarola. Reverse: map of Italy threatened. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection

holy relics. Corruption at the papal court was as rampant as it had been during the tenth century.

Something new was brewing in the Papal States in the winter of 1500. The election in 1492 of the second Borgia pope, the Spanish-born Alexander VI, had been the result of growing Spanish influence in European affairs. The pope was pursuing two definite goals—the advancement of his family and the consolidation of the Papal States. Of his five children, born to the beautiful Vannozza Cattanei, his favorite was Caesar, an archbishop and cardinal while still in his teens. In exchange for favors received from the pope, Louis XII of France had made Caesar (who had renounced Holy Orders in 1498) duke of the Valen-





*Burning of Savonarola. Museum of St. Mark, Florence. Ali-nari*



*Cesare Borgia. Engraving. NYPL PC*

tinois; hence his Italian nickname “Duca Valentino.” Energetic and intelligent, treacherous and cruel—a symbol ever since of the worst in Italy at the time (although he was as much a Spaniard as an Italian)—between June 1500 and January 1503 Caesar made himself master of the cities in Romagna not occupied by the Venetians; and also of Pesaro, Fermo, Città di Castello, Piombino, and other cities. To help Caesar’s territorial ambitions, the pope became an accessory to the destruction of the independent Kingdom of Naples. Caesar’s career ended with the unexpected death of his father in August 1503. Four years later he was killed fighting bravely for his brother-in-law, the king of Navarre. Caesar was a murderer, but those he assassinated were no better than he, and his subjects

loved him. The elimination of local lordships begun by Caesar Borgia was continued by the successors of Alexander VI. By the middle of the sixteenth century, except for Ferrara, Urbino, and Castro (annexed respectively in 1598, 1631, and 1649), the Papal States were for the first time effectively under papal obedience.

Some minor Italian states—because of their wealth, location, or the ability of their rulers—played a role in the tragic events of 1500–1559. Among these were the Republics of Genoa and Siena, usually torn by dissensions; the Duchy of Ferrara (including also Modena and Reggio) ably led by its Este rulers; the Principality of Piedmont (the Italian section of the Duchy of Savoy); the Marquisate of Mantua. In 1500, Emperor Maximilian, whose Habsburg family had ruled Trieste since 1392, added the Countship of Gorizia in eastern Friuli to his Austrian domain. Two years later, the small but prosperous Republic of Ragusa on the Dalmatian coast (whose population was mainly Italian), fearful of both the Turks and the Venetians, put itself under the protection of Hungary.

#### FOREIGN POWERS

In 1500, relatively few Italians realized the meaning of the revolutionary changes that were taking place in transalpine states. The centuries-old war—at times hot, at times cold—between Catholics and Moslems in the Iberian peninsula had ended early in 1492. The more numerous Catholics had won, thanks to their religious fervor and to the efficient military organization achieved in the Kingdom of Castile. In the Catholic states, parliamentary institutions dating as far back as the twelfth century were on the verge of





Maximilian I with his family. NYPL PC

disappearing, together with what was left of municipal liberties. The 1469 marriage of Isabella of Castile to Ferdinand of Aragon had united the two largest Iberian states in what was to become the Kingdom of Spain. The king and queen cared little for the distant lands on which the Genoa-born Admiral of the Ocean Sea Christopher Columbus had planted the Castilian flag, together with the Cross, in 1492. The end of the wars against the Moslems opened the road to other conquests. Large and well-trained armed forces were available; infantry regiments, in particular, were excellent. Sicily and Sardinia were governed by Aragonese (now Spanish) viceroys. Naples, united with Aragon under Alfonso the Magnanimous, was ruled by an illegitimate branch of the house of Aragon. The Neapolitan public revenue, twice as large as the Spanish one, was tempting.

France, in 1500, contained the elements that make for successful imperialistic ventures: centralized authority, competent leadership, a strong military establishment (the French took pride in their fine cavalry), a full treasury, and an absence of internal divisions. Bureaucratic efficiency gave the French nation under Louis XII the cohesion that religious zeal had given to Catholic Spaniards.

There was political fragmentation in Germanic Europe, most of whose territory (together with large non-Germanic districts) was included in the Holy Roman Empire. Maximilian I of Habsburg, elected in 1493, had little power as emperor, but he intended to make good his claims to Austria and the other vast ancestral domains in southeastern Germany, to which, through inheritance, had been added the seventeen provinces of the Lowlands in the northwest and parts of Burgundy. He would have liked to lay his hands on some of the wealthy Italian states and use their finan-

cial resources to strengthen his position in Germany. He claimed as his own, in particular, areas of Venetia and Friuli annexed by Venice. Farther away but interested in Italian affairs was the kingdom of England, which was being reorganized under the Tudor king Henry VII. The fear caused by the Turks under Mohammed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, had abated under his son Bayazid II, who was perhaps the least able of the Turkish sultans of that period.

#### MILAN AND NAPLES LOSE THEIR INDEPENDENCE

In 1499 the Venetians were at war with the Turks. Though fought on land and sea it did not seem much of a war to the *Serenissima*, more concerned with destroying the Duchy of Milan. Venetian support was promised if Louis XII made good his claims as legitimate ruler in Milan against the usurper Ludovico Sforza. Despite the cooperation of Philibert, duke of Savoy, and of the Venetians, the French expedition of 1499 ended in failure. In April 1500, a second expedition crossed the Alps. Ludovico was taken prisoner at Novara and spent the last years of his life in prison in France. The French king, already lord of Asti, became duke of Milan. As their share of the loot, the Venetians received Lombard districts east of the Adda River.

It had been an appetizing beginning. In November, at Granada, with the approval (if not at the suggestion) of Pope Alexander, a treaty between France and Spain for the partition of the Kingdom of Naples was signed. What ensued has already been told in Chapter 7. The war between the French and Spaniards, which began in 1502 on the question of how the Neapolitan kingdom was to be divided, continued intermittently on a European scale until 1559. In 1503 Spanish infantry proved more efficient than French cavalry. The French withdrew and the Kingdom of



Turkish pirate from Abiti of Cesare Vecellio. NYPL



Naples joined Sicily and Sardinia as a Spanish viceroyalty. Two-fifths of Italy was in the hands of the Spaniards or the French.

#### THE COALITION AGAINST VENICE

In 1508 another round of wars began, and lasted until the Peace of Noyon in 1516. Battles were now real battles, not fought like games of chess between *condottieri* concerned with saving money and lives. Thousands had died at Cerignola in 1503; thousands more died at the battles of Agnadello (1509), where the Venetians were totally defeated, Ravenna (1512), and Marignano (1515), where the French won stunning victories. There was looting, burning, raping. It was real war, to be continued in the four long conflicts fought between Francis I, king of France, and Charles V, king of Spain and emperor, and between their sons Henry II and Philip II. War was no longer the diplomatic-military confrontation to which Italians had become accustomed since the end of the fourteenth century.

The second round of wars started with the aim of doing to Venice what had been done to Milan and Naples in 1500. In December 1508, at Cambrai, it was decided that the king of France would annex Venetian

districts in Lombardy, the king of Spain those in Apulia, Pope Julius II those in Romagna, Maximilian of Habsburg Venetia (as emperor) and Friuli (as archduke of Austria). Venetian troops were defeated at Agnadello in an epic battle, but the Venetian government refused to surrender or to sue for peace. The people of most mainland cities in Venetia, Lombardy, and Friuli decided that they preferred Venice to the French or Germans and put up, on their own, strong resistance.

Pope Julius, now fearful of the French, in 1510 organized an anti-French league, joined not only by Venice but also by the king of Spain, the emperor, and later the king of England. The pope coined the slogan "*Fuori i Barbari!*"—"Out with the Barbarians!"—and personally led his troops. Victorious at Ravenna in 1512, the French were defeated at Novara in 1513. This time the winner was the king of Spain. He kept the Venetian territories in Apulia, helped the pope to annex the cities of Romagna held by Venice, and helped Maximilian to annex a few townships on the northern and eastern Venetian borders. He also re-established Maximilian Sforza, son of Ludovico, in Milan, and—at the request of the new pope, Leo X, a younger son of Lorenzo the Magnificent—the Medici in Florence. The Duchy of Milan lost Alpine districts

French victory at the battle of Ravenna, 1512. NYPL PC







*Pope Julius II. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. EPA*

*Leo X with Cardinal Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Photoworld*



◀ *Maximilian Sforza with Emperor Maximilian. Codex triv. n. 2163, f.6 Libro del Iesus. Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan*

(now included in the Canton Ticino) to the Swiss, the Valtellina, or province of Sondrio, to the Grisons, and the cities of Parma and Piacenza to the Papal States.

*FRANCIS I AND CHARLES V*

This time the Spanish triumph was short lived. In 1515, Louis XII's cousin and successor Francis I won a battle at Marignano, which eliminated Spanish influence in northern Italy for several years. Maximilian Sforza was taken to France. The Peace of Noyon (1516) sanctioned the division of Italy, for the time being, into a Spanish sphere of influence in the South and Center and a French one in the North.

The Italians licked their wounds. The lull was brief. The French king was satisfied, not so the Span-





*Francis I. Louvre. EPA*

ish. Ferdinand II of Spain died in 1516; Emperor Maximilian in 1519. Both had as successor their grandson, the young Flemish-speaking Charles V. Throughout his long reign (he abdicated in 1556), he was a key figure in the events that transformed Italy and Europe. A revolt against monarchical despotism (the last for three hundred years) was suppressed in Spain in the spring of 1521. After that, Charles V, still unaware of the hurricanes that would follow Luther's protest of 1517 and the accession in 1520 of Suleiman the Magnificent to the throne in Istanbul, took over where his two grandfathers had left off a few years earlier. The French, defeated at La Bicocca near Milan in 1522, were on the defensive. In 1524, Francis collected a large army and the following year he was soundly beaten and captured by the Spaniards at Pavia. Direct French rule ended. Relying on the support of all Italians who disliked the Spaniards—and there were many—the French king did not give up. Wars to take control of the country continued for another third of a century.

The younger son of Ludovico Sforza, Francesco, had returned to Milan as duke in 1522, but he was only a Spanish puppet. The second Medici pope, Clement VII, a first cousin of Leo X, joined the League of Cognac organized by the king of France in 1526. Charles V sent an army against Rome. The sack of Rome, captured on May 6, 1527, was the worst destruction since the devastations of the Visigoths and Vandals in the fifth century. (The population fell to

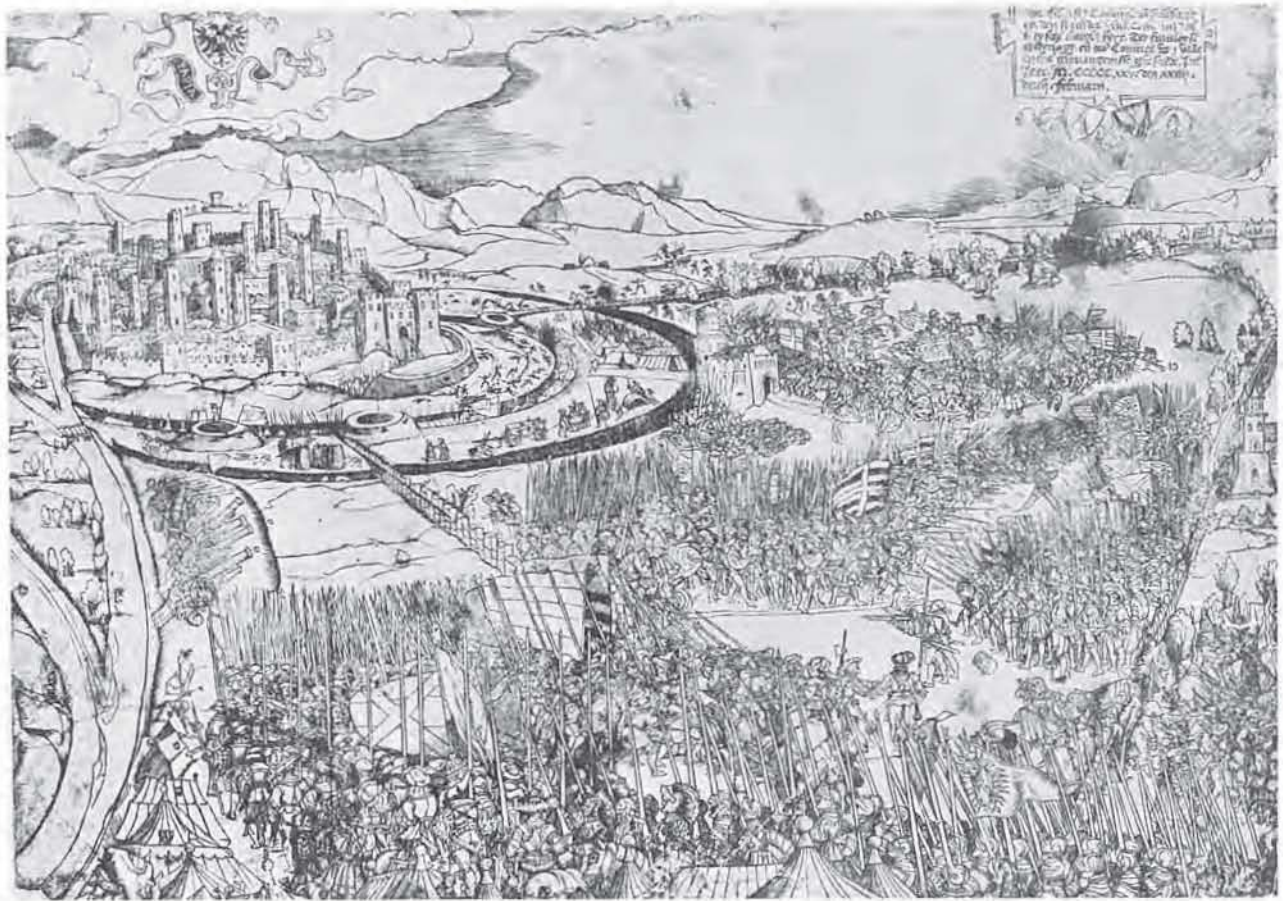


*Charles V by Anthony Van Dyck. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. EPA*

*Suleiman the Magnificent. NYPL PC*







The Battle of Pavia, February 24, 1525. NYPL PC



Clement VII surrounded by his cardinals. Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, Paris. Giraudon

an all-time low: under 20,000.) A few days later, the Florentines expelled the Medici for the second time and reestablished the republic under the leadership of Niccolò Capponi. In 1528, the Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria, commander of Charles V's naval forces, captured his native city with Spanish support. While his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain and Emperor and the Most Christian King of France were fighting in Italy, in Germany, and the Pyrenees, the young and able Turkish sultan Suleiman the Magnificent—who had already captured Belgrade in 1521 and Rhodes in 1522—defeated the Kingdom of Hungary in 1526, besieged Vienna in 1529, and raided Venetian territory.

#### DEATH OF THE REPUBLIC OF FLORENCE

Having made peace with Charles V, Pope Clement crowned him emperor and king of Italy in Bologna's splendid cathedral early in 1530. In exchange, the pope, treading the path of Leo X, requested the reestablishment of his family's rule in Florence. A Spanish imperial army entered Florentine territory and besieged the city. An able military leader, Francesco Ferrucci, rose from the people, but he was killed at the battle of Gavinana early in August. A





Medal depicting Andrea Doria. L. Leoni. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection



Charles V and Clement VII entering Bologna. Engraving from a design by G. Bernini. Biblioteca Reale, Turin



Alexander de' Medici. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection



Francesco Ferrucci by Romanelli. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Alinari

treacherous *condottiero*, appointed commander of the Florentine troops, opened the gates of Florence to the enemy a few days later. The illegitimate Alexander de' Medici, supposedly a great-grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, a nephew of the two Medici popes and a half brother of the famous Queen Catherine of France, was appointed duke of Florence by Charles V.

August 1530 represented a turning point in Italian history. The fall of the Republic of Florence was the end of the five centuries of turbulent but progressive citizens' self-government in cities of the North and Center. It was the end of the era that had begun with a popular insurrection in Milan when the Middle Ages were still dark. What happened to Italy after that was the outcome of three more long and bloody wars between France and Spain.

#### OTHER SPANISH SUCCESSES

The Duchy of Milan became Spanish on the death of Francesco Sforza in 1535. Federigo Gonzaga, ruling Mantua as a Spanish puppet, was presented, in 1536, with the marquisate of Montferrat by Charles V after the death of the last Paleologus. In 1530 Charles V gave to the Knights of Saint John, expelled from Rhodes by the Turks, the island of Malta, which they kept until 1798. In 1536 the French occupied the Duchy of Savoy-Piedmont and held it for twenty-three years. Nice was captured by a combined French-Turkish fleet in 1543. The marquisate of Saluzzo came under French rule in 1548. Pope Paul III Farnese was





*Clement VII makes Alexander de' Medici duke of Florence. Florentine tapestry, sixteenth century. Civic Museum, Pisa. Alinari*

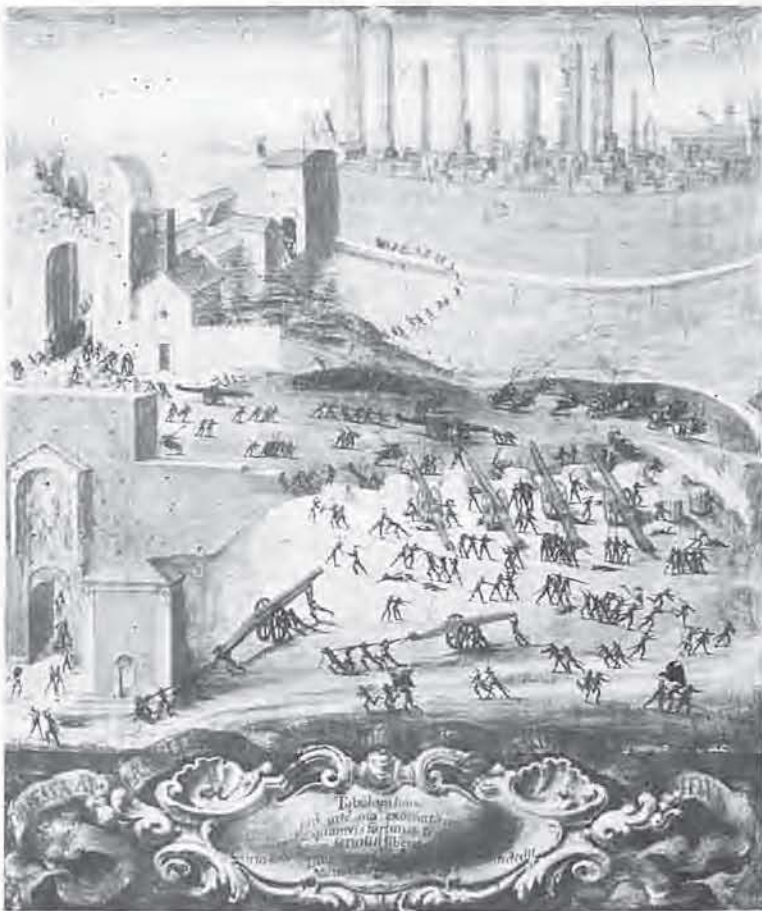
helped by the Spaniards in establishing his rule over the city-state of Perugia and the duchy of Camerino. In 1545, with the approval of the emperor, he made his son Pierluigi duke of Parma and Piacenza. In 1554, Cosimo de' Medici, duke of Florence, with Spanish aid attacked the Republic of Siena, which was friendly to France. Siena was captured in 1555, and about two hundreds Siennese families withdrew to the hill town of Montalcino, hoping for French aid. It never came, and they finally surrendered in 1559. Siennese coastal districts were annexed by Spain in 1557, forming the *Stato dei Presidi*. The rest of the Siennese territory was annexed to Florence whose duke was made grand duke of Tuscany by Pope Pius V in 1569.

There were conspiracies aimed at overthrowing Spanish puppets or reestablishing free institutions, or both. The revolt planned in 1523 by the Imperatore brothers in Sicily did not materialize. In 1537, Duke Alexander was assassinated in Florence. As had happened sixty years earlier at the assassination of Giuliano de' Medici, the conspirators' hope that the people would rise in revolt against Medici rule proved illusory. Alexander's young cousin Cosimo took the throne. A small republican army, raised by Florentine exiles

*The Fortress at Montalcino. ICI*







The victorious Sienese army defending the city against the Florentine and Papal armies 1526. By 1559 Cosimo I de' Medici had conquered Siena and become its ruler. State Archives, Siena

and led by Filippo Strozzi, was defeated at Montemurlo. In 1546, Francesco Burlamacchi, a high official of the Republic of Lucca, planned to help republicans in Florence and Pisa to overthrow Duke Cosimo. Burlamacchi dreamed of a federation of Tuscan republics, the nucleus of a future Italian federation. Cosimo had him arrested and executed. In 1547, an anti-Spanish conspiracy in Genoa against Andrea Doria failed. Conspirators assassinated Pierluigi Farnese, the duke of Parma, but were unable to prevent his son Ottavio, who was married to an illegitimate daughter of Charles V, from taking over the succession and consolidating his rule. The able leadership of Sampiero di Bastelica and French help to Corsican insurgents in the 1550s were not enough to free the island. The antipapal revolt in Perugia failed. To protest the establishment of the Inquisition there was anti-Spanish rioting in Naples and antipapal in Rome—to no avail.

In 1557, the Spaniards won the brilliant victory of Saint Quentin, in northern France. Their commander was the young duke of Savoy, Emmanuel Philibert, whose duchy had been in French hands for over twenty years. France was disturbed by internal dissensions caused by religious tensions, and Henry II decided it was time to give up dynastic ambitions in Italy. He kept there, however, the small but stra-

tegic marquisate of Saluzzo and a few fortresses in Piedmont. North of the Alps he kept Calais and several cities in Lorraine. By 1559, when France and Spain signed the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, the wars in Italy were over.

With their viceroys and governors in Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, Milan, and the *Stato dei Presidi*, Spain ruled two-fifths of the Italian nation directly. The rulers of some Italian states were Spanish puppets, like the dukes of Mantua and Parma; others owed their position to Spain—Cosimo de' Medici in Tuscany, Emmanuel Philibert in Piedmont, Andrea Doria in Genoa, the Knights of Saint John in Malta; still others had to beware of Spanish power—the popes, and the dukes of Ferrara. Only the Republic of Venice, sandwiched between the Italian possessions of Charles's son, the Spanish Habsburg Philip II, and the Alpine possessions of Charles's brother the Austrian Habsburg Ferdinand I, remained truly independent. Since the Peace of Cambrai, the *Serenissima* had stayed neutral in the Franco-Spanish duel for supremacy in Italy. Her energies were absorbed in defending herself against the Turks, whose armies were dangerously close to Venice's eastern borders in Friuli, Istria, and Dalmatia, and whose fleet, led by great admirals, threatened all Mediterranean coasts.

#### END OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

With the exception of Florence in her republican phases, Genoa until 1528, and the smaller Republics of Lucca, Ragusa, and San Marino, internal liberties had disappeared from Italy since the time when kings ruled the South and *signori* the cities of the North and Center. As the result of sixty years of invasion and Franco-Spanish wars, independence had been lost everywhere but in Venice. But more grievous still for Italian civilization was the loss of freedom of expression, which had fostered cultural progress, had heightened political and economic dynamism, and had survived in much of Italy in spite of the political absolutism of *signori* and princes. This loss was the chief event in the lives of the generation that reached maturity when the Republic of Florence died, and reached old age when invasions and foreign wars ended and peace finally came. It was linked to the great religious upheaval of the sixteenth century—the most meaningful development in Western civilization at that time.

#### THE REFORMATION

The revulsion of many educated people at the time of Savonarola—a few from the upper classes, but the majority from the middle class—against immorality and corruption in Florence, accompanied by a revival of religious zeal was not an isolated episode. There was a cry for reform in Italy and beyond the Alps, as there had been in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Savonarola, his disciples, and his many followers and ad-



mirers were devout Catholics who wanted to reform the Church. They were not alone. Beginning in 1515, sincere believers, whose chief goal was the restoration of faith, met at the Oratory of Divine Love in Rome. Among them were the future Cardinal Contarini, a Venetian, and the future Cardinal Caraffa, later Pope Paul IV, a Neapolitan. Moved by sincere and deep faith were members of new monastic orders: the Theatines (founded in 1524 by Saint Gaetano and Caraffa), the Capucines (an offshoot of the Franciscans, organized in 1528), the Barnabites (1530), and the Somaschians (1532).

The need for a spiritual revival transcending ecclesiastical reform was felt widely and deeply outside Italy, where, openly or clandestinely, the heretical Lollards survived in England, Hussites in Bohemia and Germany, even Catharists in France. With Luther in Germany and with Zwingli in Switzerland, the call for the reform of the Catholic church, which found support in Erasmus and Thomas More who refused to leave the Church, became a protest against the Church (the term Protestant was first used in 1529). With Calvin and Farel in Geneva, the protest against Roman Catholicism became the Reform of Christianity. The beginnings of the Protest at Wittenberg in 1517 and Zürich in 1518 had been humble, but as the years went by it swept Europe like a hurricane. Until the hurricane spent itself in the bloodbath of religious wars, European developments revolved around religious conflict: the Lutheran Protest, the Anglican secession, the Calvinist Reform, the Counter-Reformation. In some nations—the Dutch, the English, the French—the conflict freed energies; it became the source of emancipation. In others—the Italian, the Spanish—it stifled energies.

At first, few members of the Italian ecclesiastical hierarchy paid attention to Luther's 95 theses nailed to the door of Wittenberg's cathedral on October 31, 1517. Few, if any, heard of Zwingli and his sermons in Zürich, or of Farel in Geneva later. They did not read the writings of Luther and Calvin and were unaware of their implications. The two Medici cousins Leo X and Clement VII who occupied the papal throne for nearly twenty years, Clement's successor Paul III, most of the cardinals, archbishops, generals of monastic orders and heads of monasteries, had very worldly interests. Many were nonbelievers. They were interested in politics or the political implications of religious developments, but theological disputes left them cold.

#### PROTESTANTISM IN ITALY

In Germany, the revolts of the Anabaptists in Swabia and Westphalia, Melanchthon's presentation of the Confession of Augsburg, the formation of the Schmalkaldic League and the war it waged, the secularization of the Teutonic Order, amounted to a political and social revolution. The religious-political

changes in Scandinavia were also revolutionary. In England, Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy of 1534, eliminating papal leadership over the English Catholic church, was the final chapter in a conflict between the king and Pope Clement which had lasted several years. In Italy, a Protestant circle was formed in Naples around the Spaniard Juan de Valdés; another grew in Ferrara around the duchess Renée of France, daughter of Louis XII, who was sympathetic to Calvinism. The two surviving Tuscan republics, Lucca and Siena, provided sufficient liberty for the diffusion of Protestantism. Bernardino Ochino, Pietro Carnesechi, Pier Martire Vermigli, Pier Paolo Vergerio (a bishop), Aonio Paleario, Lelio and Fausto Socini (these two, founders of modern Unitarianism) were just some of the many Italians to whom Protestantism appealed. The republican martyr Burlamacchi, Michelangelo, the poet Vittoria Colonna, were reputed to be close to heresy. Paolo Acconcio was among the first to stress the principle of religious toleration.

The rude awakening of the Italian ecclesiastical leadership to the implications of the Protestant revolt, not only for the papacy but for the whole Catholic church, came during the pontificate of Paul III. The pope himself—last in the long series of worldly popes indifferent to things spiritual—was concerned primarily

*Pope Paul III and his nephews Alexander and Ottavio Farnese. Titian. Alinari*





with the fortunes of his family and the consolidation of his power in the Papal States. But around the pope were Italian and foreign advisers deeply concerned with what was happening to religion beyond the Alps and was beginning to happen in Italy. Some were convinced that the very survival of the Church was at stake. In 1536, the pope was induced to appoint a commission to suggest solutions for a situation that was growing more critical each day.

#### THE CATHOLIC COUNTER-REFORMATION

The commission became the battleground for two parties. On one side, led mainly by the Italian cardinal Contarini and the English cardinal Pole, were the *conciliatoristi*—those favorable to theological innovations and institutional changes designed to bridge the gap between Catholics and Lutherans (then the main Protestant body) and make possible an agreement based on compromise. On the other side, led by the Italian cardinal Caraffa and the Spaniard Ignatius de Loyola (canonized in 1623) were the *rigoristi*, who rejected all compromise, wanted to maintain intact the traditional theological and institutional structure of the Church, and aimed simply at eliminating heresy through stronger centralized action. The *conciliatoristi* were defeated and seemed to disappear from the Catholic scene—to reappear with renewed strength and greater power of persuasion four hundred years later during the pontificate of John XXIII. (Decisions adopted at the Twenty-first Ecumenical Council Vatican II, which influenced Catholicism everywhere,

were largely those advocated by the *conciliatoristi* when the Renaissance was dying in Italy.)

The doctrinal line of the *rigoristi* was, by and large, that of the Society of Jesus, the monastic order founded by Saint Ignatius in 1534. At that time it had among its leaders two other Spaniards, Lainez and Salmerón. The order received the approval of Paul III in 1540, with some reservations which were eliminated in 1543. Cardinal Contarini met Luther's most influential collaborator Melanchthon in 1541 in Regensburg, in southern Germany. The agreement they reached was rejected by the pope and the majority of the cardinals. The Universal Inquisition (better known as the Roman Inquisition, a new and more efficient body distinct from the Papal Inquisition of the thirteenth century) was organized in 1542, and immediately set to work to extirpate heresy. The academies of Naples and Modena, many of whose members were inclined to Protestantism, were closed. It was decreed in 1543 that no book could be published without the approval of ecclesiastical authorities. Lists of forbidden books were consolidated in the *Index* of 1559, made more complete in 1564, then kept up to date until the revolutionary changes of the 1960s. Following Julius III del (or dal) Monte, elected as compromise candidate between conflicting factions, the next popes, Marcellus II Cervini and Paul IV Caraffa, were leaders of the *rigoristi*. Their background as efficient inquisitors later brought to the papal throne Pius V Ghisleri, Sixtus V Peretti, Clement VIII Aldobrandini, the most distinguished popes in the last third of the sixteenth century. The Catholic Reformation (or Counter-Reformation, of which Inquisition and Index were the pivotal elements) checked the diffusion of Protestantism and enabled Catholicism to recover in the seventeenth century part of the ground lost in the sixteenth.

Bust of Cardinal Gaspare Contarini by Vittoria. Church of Santa Maria dell' Orto, Venice. Alinari



Cardinal Cervini before his election as Pope Marcellus II. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection







Pope Paul. Cardinal Caraffa  
before his election as Pope Paul  
IV. NYPL

#### THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

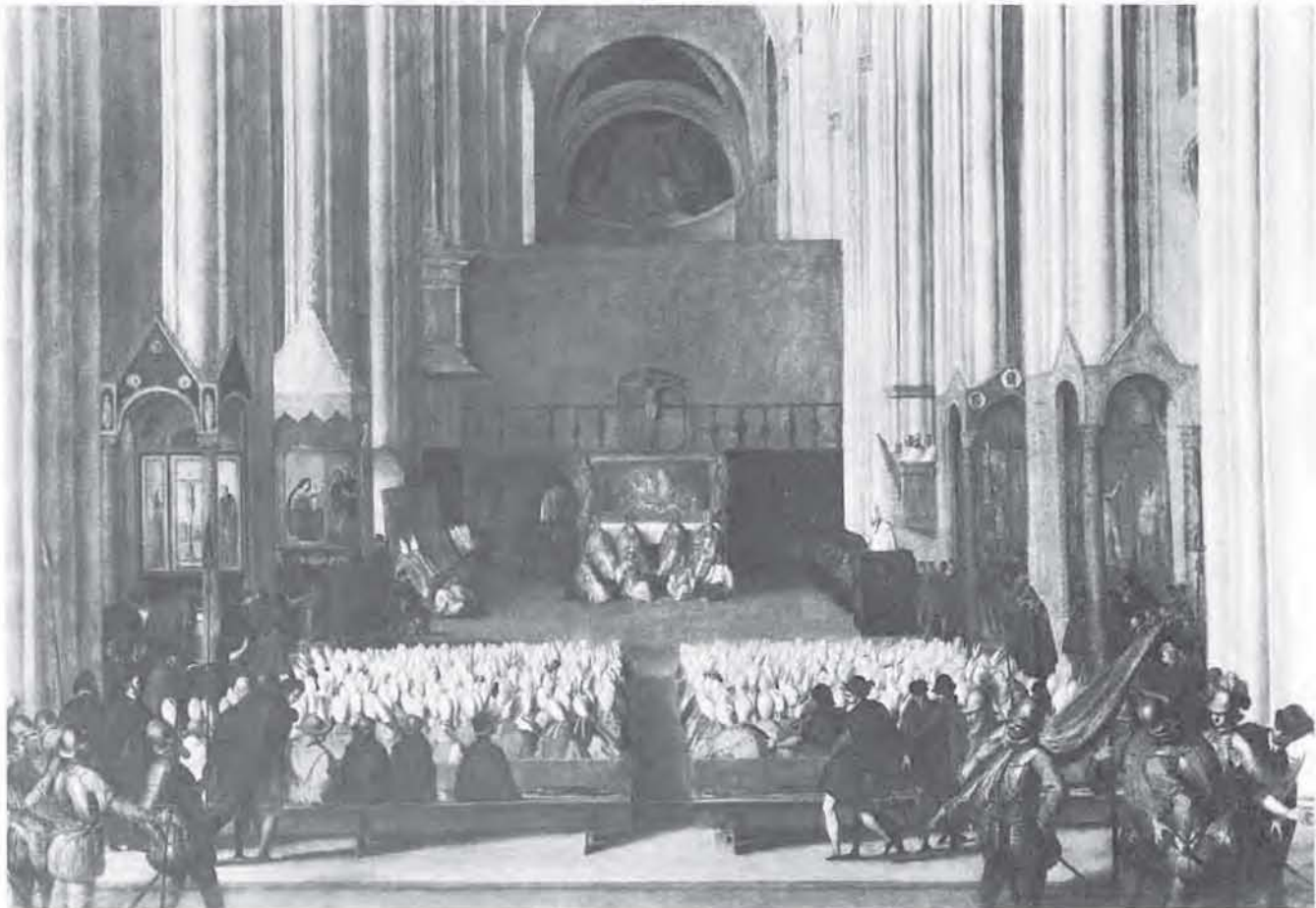
An Ecumenical Council, the nineteenth, met in Trent (capital of an autonomous Italian bishopric included in the Kingdom of Germany) in December 1545 to deal with the reform of the Catholic church in the sense advocated by the Jesuit order: the strengthening of papal authority and the rigid enforce-

ment of dogmas. Suspended after fifteen months in 1547, the council met again in 1551/52 and later in 1562/63, after a ten-year interval marked by the complete victory of the *rigoristi* in Rome. Although deeply influenced by the representatives of the Spanish clergy who provided ideas and principles, the Council of Trent was mainly an Italian affair; in the later sessions there were 189 Italian bishops and only 81 non-Italian. The final document of the council, the *Professio Fidei Tridentina*, approved nearly unanimously in December 1563, received the sanction of Pope Pius IV in November 1564.

Pius V, elected in 1566, canonized in 1712, embodied the decisions of the Council of Trent in the *Catechismus Romanus*, the *Breviarium Romanorum*, the *Missale Romanum*. The *Professio* remained the foundation of Catholic doctrine and institutional structure until the revolutionary changes introduced by Council Vatican II. It explicitly put Catholic tradition on a par with the Scriptures. It reserved to the clergy the sole right to interpret Scriptures and tradition. It stressed the essential importance of the seven sacraments, and the more-than-human character of the priest administering them. It confirmed the dogma of transubstantiation, the veneration of images, the doctrine of salvation through both works and faith. The council closed questions previously left open, and returned to the papacy the authority it had lost since the time of Boniface VIII early in the fourteenth century.

As had happened in the twelfth century—but on a

*The Council of Trent (1545) by Titian. Louvre, Paris. Giraudon*





larger scale and in a more purposeful and better organized way—there was a revival of religious fervor. Notable Italian figures in the revival, besides the already mentioned popes, were San Luigi Gonzaga, San Carlo Borromeo and his cousin Cardinal Federico Borromeo, San Filippo Neri, San Roberto Bellarmino, Sant' Andrea Avellino. Missionary activities multiplied; Catholicism then reached China, Annam (now Vietnam), and Japan. New monastic orders were established by Italians: the Congregation of the Priests of the Oratory (founded by the Florentine San Filippo Neri in 1548), the Fatebenefratelli (1572, devoted to hospital work), the Camillians (1585), the Scolopi (1600, educators as competent as the Jesuits). Corruption among the clergy ended. Catholic educational and charitable institutions also multiplied. At a time when Italy was becoming less and less prosperous, economic suffering was softened by the increased



*Apparition of the Virgin to Saint Philip Neri by Guido Reni. Church of Santa Maria at Vallicella, Rome. Anderson*



*Saint Carlo Borromeo and victims of the plague. Painting by Orazio Borgianni. Church of Saint Adriano, Rome. Alinari*



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# IN THE HANDS OF FOREIGNERS (1560–1796)

*From prosperity to poverty – Spain as a way of life – Exceptions to passivity – Order and peace – The papacy – The fragmented third of Italy – Tuscany – Piedmont – Smaller states – Venice, the independent republic – Austrian hegemony – Dynastic changes – Enlightened rulers and ministers – Corsica becomes French – Beginning of a new era.*

## FROM PROSPERITY TO POVERTY

**I**N the first account of Italy ever written in English, William Thomas, in the middle of the sixteenth century, expressed nothing but admiration. The Po Valley was “the pleasantest and fairest plain of all Christendom” and Naples “one of the fairest cities of the world.” In Venice there were “above 200 palaces able to lodge a king,” in Milan the Duomo was “one of the rarest works of our time” and the castle (Castello Sforzesco) “the worthiest and strongest of all Europe.” In Genoa there was “the goodliest house that any private has builded in our days,” and in Rome, Saint Peter’s, when completed, “would be the goodliest thing of the world.” Thomas was deeply impressed by the Arsenal of Venice which regularly employed six hundred craftsmen and apprentices and housed “weapons that suffice . . . to arm an army of 100,000 men,” also by the hospital of Santa Maria Novella in Florence for which were spent “yearly 20,000 crowns, by reason whereof they have excellent physicians, good apothecaries, diligent ministers, and every other thing necessary.” As a civil servant, he was particularly interested in public revenue: the Republic of Venice had a revenue nearly twenty times that of England; the Duchy of Milan gave the Emperor “more money yearly . . . than some of his realms”; and even the small domains of the Este provided their ruler with a larger revenue than that of the king of England.

The evidence of wealth and prosperity that struck Thomas still existed in 1559, when the Franco-Spanish duel for the control of Italy and for supremacy in Eu-



Naples. Engraving by C. Duchetti (1585). NYPL



Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi, Venice. EPA

rope ended. Soon, however, changes became noticeable. Apathy replaced dynamism, with results more immediately apparent in the economic than the political and intellectual fields. Agriculture—in Italy, as elsewhere with few exceptions, still the foundation of the economy—declined. Industrial enterprises closed down. Milan and Florence were losing their centuries-old leadership in manufacturing, Italian bankers lost ground to the more enterprising and efficient Dutch and English bankers. Internal and external trade shrank. There was seldom any sharp economic decline (as would occur in the Duchy of Mantua ravaged by



charitable work of the Church. There was greater concern for the poor, the sick, the aged, the widows and the orphans, than had ever existed before in Italy or anywhere else.

#### END OF THE RENAISSANCE

The revival of faith was one side of the coin. The other was the end of freedom of expression, suppressed by censorship and rigid control over communications media (enforced by the secular power subservient to ecclesiastical authorities), and by ecclesiastical monopoly over education. The humanists Carnesecchi and Paleario and the philosopher Bruno were executed for expressing dissenting views. Italians sympathetic to transalpine religious ideas were perse-

cuted, as were those who formulated their own interpretation of Christianity, such as the Socinians, or Unitarians, and the Waldensians. Except for a few Waldensians who fought successfully in remote Alpine valleys, dissenters were suppressed. The poets Tasso and Boccalini, the philosopher Campanella, the historian Sarpi, and the scientist Galileo paid dearly for their attempt to escape intellectual conformity.

Freedom of expression is disturbing. Its disappearance made Italians of all classes generally more content than they had been during five centuries of turbulent progress. At a time when the English and Scots, the Dutch and French, were shaken by new ideas and torn by dissensions, Italians—except for a dwindling minority—enjoyed spiritual quiet and intellectual peace.



*Portrait of Pietro Carnesecchi by Domenico Puligo. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Brogi*





Castello Sforzesco, Milan. EPA

imperial troops in 1630): the decline was gradual and continued throughout the country well into the first third of the eighteenth century. The population remained nearly stationary, while the number of people gainfully employed diminished. Many young people entered monasteries and convents simply to escape starvation. Taxes became more and more oppressive: at the middle of the seventeenth century subjects of the king of Spain and of the Papal States provided their rulers with larger incomes, squeezed from smaller production, than they had one hundred years earlier. Large-scale banditry, much of it of the Robin Hood variety, became endemic in the countryside, particularly in the kingdoms of the South and the Papal States, and was a plague elsewhere.

Underlying the economic decline was a change in national character. It is difficult to say which of the two main developments of the sixteenth century—the establishment of Spanish domination or the Counter-Reformation—had the greater influence in molding post-Renaissance Italians and developing characteristics that have not until recently begun to fade away. The two developments complemented each other. They combined to produce conformity, docility, and passivity, to create the conviction that governmental authority is out of the reach of common people and that hierarchical order is the natural order. The outcome of these two developments was a radical transformation of Italian society, a transformation perhaps as radical as the social transformations of the fourth and fifth centuries, and of the eleventh century.

SPAIN AS A WAY OF LIFE

Spanish domination, established in 1502–1530 and consolidated in 1530–1559, lasted until early in the eighteenth century. During that long period the history of Italy is the history of individual rulers and their ministers rather than of the people. Passivity at all levels of society became a dominant characteristic of the Italian way of life. Since it was a characteristic of the way of life of all peoples subject to Spanish rule, it could not be considered an isolated Italian phenomenon.

During the ninety years that followed the final defeat of Moslem Spaniards, Catholic Spain conquered a vast European and transoceanic empire. The conquest was primarily the result of centralization of power and military efficiency, combined with political ambition, greed, and genuine religious zeal. While carving out an empire, Spain declined economically. The remarkable medieval Iberian civilization had been chiefly the work of dissident Moslems and of Jews. Moslems and Jews did not long survive the Catholic triumph, even when they tried to save themselves through conversion. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the non-Catholic minorities had been eliminated. Their agricultural efficiency, their industrial and commercial enterprises, and also their intel-



The exit of the laborers from the arsenal of Venice. NYPL



lectual dynamism, all this was gone too. A nation honoring religious vocation and military discipline does not provide a favorable environment for the growth of business activities. A nation enforcing conformity represses, even perhaps suppresses, intellectual progress. What happened in Spain happened in Spanish possessions as well. There had been decline in the kingdoms of the South before Ferdinand II's viceroys began to govern; the decline was now accelerated. The Duchy of Milan had been very wealthy in 1500; it was not so wealthy in 1559 and even less so in 1600. What happened in the territories directly governed by Spaniards also happened in the puppet states. Economic dynamism and the political power that springs from it died together with intellectual vitality. Italians settled into a quiet, uneventful, unexciting life.

#### EXCEPTIONS TO PASSIVITY

Happily for the Italian nation there were exceptions to the dominant passivity. "The Romans have in their hearts . . . a certain memory of their ancient liberty," wrote William Thomas. Not only the Romans under papal rule. In July 1647, a revolt against the Spaniards broke out in Naples. It failed, but it lasted long enough to bring a republic into existence for several months and to give rise to hopes of an independent kingdom under Prince Henry of Lorraine or

Prince Thomas of Savoy-Carignan. The insurgents found leaders in men of the working classes, such as Masaniello (Tommaso Aniello) and Annese (who led the republic for five months), in aristocrats such as the prince of Massa, in middle-class people such as Genoino and D'Andrea. In Palermo, insurgencies in 1647 and conspiracies in 1648/49 were led by the *popolani* La Pelosa and D'Alesi, the priest Rao, the noblemen Requezena and Racalmuto, the lawyers Pesce and Lo Giudice. Sardinian insurgents killed the Spanish viceroy in 1668. The people of Messina kept their city free from the Spaniards for four years in the 1670s. The Piedmontese Waldensians fought back when the dukes of Savoy tried to suppress them in 1560/61, 1655, and 1686; finally, in 1689, they won the right to worship according to their beliefs. The people of Piombino in 1562 and those of Urbino in 1573 revolted against tyrannical rulers. And without popular support, the Venetian *signoria* would not have been able to resist the Turks in Crete in a war that lasted twenty-four years.

#### ORDER AND PEACE

Since popular participation in the events of the time was limited, the actions of rulers—Spanish viceroys and governors, popes, dukes, princes of semi-independent states, oligarchies of the few surviving

*The Revolt of Naples, 1647. Painting attributed to Micco Spadaro, National Gallery of Capodimonte, Naples. Alinari*







*Masaniello. Attributed to Micco Spadaro. National Gallery of Capodimonte, Naples. Alinari*

republics—were what mattered. In 1555 Emperor Charles V decided to create a Supreme Council of Italy to deal with the administration of his Italian possessions. The council was actually organized four years later by the emperor's son, and successor in Spain and Italy, Philip II. It was composed of three Spaniards and three Italians, one each for the Kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily, and one for the Duchy of Milan. (The Kingdom of Sardinia was supervised by the Council of Aragon.) The council, under the king, was the supreme authority on all political, administrative, and judicial matters concerning kingdoms, duchy, and the *Stato dei Presidi*. Viceroys and governors were predominantly Spanish, but some were Italian: a Gonzaga governed the Duchy of Milan efficiently, a Colonna was viceroy in Naples, and a Trivulzio in Sicily. Perhaps the most important achievement of Spanish rule was the end of baronial lawlessness in the Kingdom of Naples under the viceroy Pedro of Toledo. Except for a few short episodes (the wars waged by the dukes of Savoy and the popes for possession of the duchies of Montferrat and Castro respectively), peace reigned among the Italian states. In spite of banditry, there was more order in areas ruled directly or indirectly by Spain than there had been before 1559. Some attention was paid to education; for instance two universities were founded in Sardinia in the seventeenth century. Under Spanish rule, numerous churches (some of them magnificent), monasteries, and convents were built; and old ones were restored and embellished.

Intellectuals of later generations have claimed that Spanish rule was disastrous for the Italian nation. However, though Spanish rule was severe, it was not arbitrary. Spanish generosity toward the Church appealed to the Catholic masses. Many Italians had made successful careers in Spain. Spanish ways had become Italian ways. Generations that were not concerned with economics or with freedom of expression saw in Spain more good than evil.

The revolts in Naples and Palermo failed largely because the majority of the people supported the Spaniards. Whenever foreign troops threatened or invaded the Duchy of Milan, the people sided with the Spaniards: this happened in the war against the Grisons and their Swiss allies for the control of the Valtellina (1620–1626) and again when the French besieged Pavia in 1655. In spite of the friendly reception given at first to the British who landed in Sardinia in 1708 and to the Austrians who captured Milan in 1706 and Naples in 1707, all orders of society in the three states were soon hoping for the speedy reestablishment of Spanish rule. An eager welcome was given to the Spaniards when they seized Sardinia in 1717 and Sicily in 1718. Pro-Spanish conspiracies were organized in Milan. The people of Naples and of Sicily enthusiastically greeted young Prince Charles, the son of Philip V of Spain, whom the fortunes of war had made conqueror of the two kingdoms in 1734. It was hoped that through the new king the old ties with Spain would be reestablished.

#### THE PAPACY

Of the twenty popes who occupied the Holy See from the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) to the Peace of Utrecht (1713), which ended direct Spanish rule in Italy, five reigned too briefly to leave a mark on

*La Torre Grande, Sardinia. Built by the Spanish in the seventeenth century to defend themselves against raids. EPA*







*Pavia. Plan of the city drawn in 1704. NYPL*

the Church or on the Papal States. Six more were not only deeply religious but also constantly concerned with the good of the Church and the welfare of their subjects. Pope Pius IV and Pius V devoted their energies to the reorganization of the Church on the basis of the decisions of the Council of Trent. Sixtus V curbed banditry, improved the administration of the Papal States, tried without much success to stimulate economic activities, and beautified Rome. Innocent XI



*Pope Sixtus V. Monument by Antonio di Bernardino Calzagni, 1589. In front of the Santuario della S. Casa, Loreto, Marches. EPA*

*Transport of Pius V to Santa Maria Maggiore. Vatican Library, Rome. Alinari*







*Innocent XI. EPA*

Odescalchi opposed Gallicanism (the king-sponsored antipapal autonomism advocated by part of the French clergy), and felt the wrath of Louis XIV who seized papal possessions in Provence and (perhaps mindful of what the envoy of Philip IV had done to Pope Boniface VIII in 1303) sent an "ambassador" to Rome accompanied by eight hundred soldiers. Innocent XII Pignatelli, with a decree issued in 1692, ended the corruption deriving from the sale of offices and from "small nepotism," the practice of granting lucrative positions to the pope's relatives. Clement XI Albani struggled to check the diffusion of Jansenist deviationism. Secular matters, relating to territorial expansion or the advancement of relatives, or both, were the foremost concern of the other popes. From near and not so near relatives who, at that time, were granted titles, vast landed estates, church and other offices, and large sums of money, originated some of the wealthiest families of today's Roman aristocracy. The palaces and villas they built, with money diverted from proper use, are among the most splendid in and around Rome. Of these popes, Gregory XIII Boncompagni is also remembered for the reform of the calendar (1582), Paul V Borghese for having fanned the flames of the Thirty Years' War, Clement VIII, Urban VIII Barberini, and Innocent X Pamphili for having brought under direct papal rule the duchies of Ferrara (1598), Urbino (1631), and Castro (1649) respectively.

*Innocent XII. Engraving of 1695. NYPL*



*Bust of Gregory XIII.  
Museo Civico, Bologna.  
Alinari*





## THE FRAGMENTED THIRD OF ITALY

What had previously been the medieval Kingdom of Italy was still formally part of the Holy Roman Empire and owed feudal allegiance to its emperors (the cadet branch of the Habsburgs, who ruled from Vienna vast Germanic domains, the Kingdom of Bohemia, and the parts of the Kingdom of Hungary saved from the Turks in 1526–1562). Less than a third of Italy in area, the kingdom included the districts north of the Papal States and west of the Republic of Venice: most of Lombardy, Piedmont, Liguria with Corsica, half of Emilia-Romagna, and Tuscany. Besides the Duchy of Milan and the *Stato dei Presidi* held by Spain, there were six major states: the Duchies of Florence, Parma, Modena, and Mantua-Montferrat, the Principality of Piedmont (the major part of the Duchy of Savoy), and the Republic of Genoa. Of the many smaller lordships, Piombino was ruled by the Appiani and later by the Ludovisi, Massa by the Cybo, Masserano and Monaco by the Fieschi and the Grimaldi (two Genoese families), Pitigliano by the Orsini, Guastalla by Gonzaga cadets, and so on. Lucca preserved its republican institutions.

On a few occasions imperial paramountcy was not an empty word: imperial sanction validated the annexation of Montferrat by Mantua in 1536 and of Mantua by Milan in 1708, enabled an illegitimate branch of the Este to rule Modena after they had lost Ferrara, and put Tuscany under the rule of the house of Lorraine in 1737. The titles of Imperial Vicar, granted in 1582, and Royal Highness, granted in 1690, gave the dukes of Savoy precedence over their peers. However strong the fiction of imperial paramountcy may have been, in 1560 this whole area was a Spanish sphere of influence.

## TUSCANY

Cosimo de' Medici, the duke of Florence since 1537, did not doubt that he had precedence over the other rulers of this section of Italy. Had not Florence been a major power in the peninsula for more than two hundred years? Was not his duchy bigger, richer, and more populous than any other—except the Duchy of Milan, which was not in the running, since its duke was the king of Spain? Had not Florence annexed the former Republic of Siena, fully supported Catholic Reform, and created a naval force to help protect Italian shores against the Turks? Cosimo believed he should have a new title to demonstrate his precedence among rulers. In 1564, a group of anti-Genoese Corsican notables asked the duke of Florence to annex Corsica and take the title of king. The temptation was strong, but so was the opposition of Spain, which sided with its other puppet, the Republic of Genoa. Finally, in 1569, Pope Pius V granted Cosimo the title of grand duke of Tuscany; the emperor added his approval in 1576. It was a hollow title, however. Tuscans were no

longer what they had been since the time when Pisa became a major Mediterranean power. In the authoritarian Tuscan state the rulers' dynamism could have compensated for the people's passivity. But Cosimo's six Medici successors who ruled until 1737 were mediocre men, and under them the grand duchy declined.

## PIEDMONT

The opposite happened in Piedmont. The Savoy proved to be of a different fiber from the Medici. Cosimo's contemporary, Duke Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, the victor at Saint Quentin, had been given back his ancestral domains in Piedmont and Savoy at the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis. He was the first of his family to be more Italian than French. Turin became the duke's permanent residence. When French garrisons left, Spain surrendered Asti, once a leading city-state, to Emmanuel Philibert. He was first and foremost a soldier. On a militia basis, he created a strong military organization that remained a basic feature of the state until his descendant Victor Emmanuel II became king of united Italy, three hundred years later. It was not a large army—just over twenty thousand men—but it was a good army, composed of reliable, well-trained, and well-equipped men, and loyal officers. The Piedmontese military establishment played the role in Italian affairs that the Prussian was to play in German affairs from the seventeenth century on.

For several decades there was no hope of Piedmont's escaping from Spanish protection. The situation changed when civil wars ended in France and the French kings could once again compete on an equal footing with the Spanish kings. In the early 1590s,

*Equestrian monument of Emmanuel Philibert, Piazza San Carlo, Turin. ICI*





Emmanuel Philibert's young and capable successor, Duke Charles Emmanuel I, invaded France with the aim of conquering Provence. In 1601, the Peace of Lyons gave the duke the territory of Saluzzo in Italy in exchange for Burgundian districts on the right bank of the Rhone. For the next three decades Charles Emmanuel and his successor Victor Amadeus I played Spain against France. Plans for the annexation of Geneva and of Milanese and Genoese territories failed, but at the Peace of Cherasco, in 1631, Victor Amadeus I secured about half of the Montferrat. For about the next sixty years, the Savoy dukes sided with France, thus freeing themselves from Spanish tutelage. Victor Amadeus II briefly joined a league of European powers against Louis XIV, then returned to the French alliance in 1696 (when France gave back to him the city and fortress of Pinerolo), and in 1703 again sided with France's enemies during the War of the Spanish Succession. Together with his cousin Eugene of Savoy-Carignan, the famous commander of Austrian troops, Victor Amadeus II defeated the French at the battle of Turin in 1706. He entered Milan shortly after. At the Peace of Utrecht he added to his domains the rest of the Montferrat, several districts that formerly belonged to the Duchy of Milan, and the island of Sicily. Compelled to exchange Sicily for Sardinia in 1720, he

and his descendants continued to be known until 1860 as the kings of Sardinia, although Piedmont was by far the most important part of their state. Leaving aside considerations of the morality of policies involving continual shifts in alliances, the fact is that the state of the Savoys, well administered and militarily powerful, had by early in the eighteenth century become the leading Italian state.

SMALLER STATES

In the other states of this section of Italy during the period of Spanish dominance there was intrigue and corruption, and, occasionally, evidence of integrity and a sense of responsibility. The general scene, however, was one of decay. The upper classes were arrogant and the lower classes docile, and all shared in the general conformity. Most princes lived beyond their means, loading their subjects with taxes. Because several ruling families were dying out, succession problems gave rise to conflicts. The one remarkable figure among the ruling princes of this period was Alessandro Farnese, duke of Parma, great-grandson of Pope Paul III, grandson of Emperor Charles V, and (in the service of his uncle Philip II of Spain) one of the ablest generals of his time. The oligarchic republics



Duke Charles Emmanuel I. Engraving by E. Kiefer. Biblioteca Reale, Turin



Victor Amadeus II's entry into Palermo. Engraving by Francesco Ciche. Biblioteca Reale, Turin. NYPL



Victor Amadeus I, Duke of Savoy. NYPL



of Genoa and Lucca fared a little better, from an economic standpoint, than most monarchical states, although they were continually threatened by the ambitions of the dukes of Savoy and the grand dukes of Tuscany respectively. Because of its loyalty to Spain, Genoa was bombarded by French ships in 1684.

#### VENICE, THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

Free of any formal allegiance to emperors and popes, and independent of Spain, the Republic of Venice was the last refuge of the artistic and literary Renaissance. Its oligarchic structure, perfected in the sixteenth century, provided efficient despotism and a stability envied by most Europeans. In spite of its absolutism, for a few generations after the triumph of *rigorismo* in the Catholic church there was greater tolerance in nonpolitical matters in Venice than existed elsewhere in Italy. The first two decades of the seventeenth century, when pope, emperor, and king of Spain combined to threaten Venetian sovereignty, were particularly difficult for the republic. On the perennial question of secular versus ecclesiastical jurisdiction, a serious conflict broke out between Venice and Pope Paul V in 1605. In 1615–1617 war was waged against Austria, which tolerated, if not encouraged, pirates in-

festing the Adriatic Sea. In 1618 there was a Spanish-sponsored conspiracy aimed at overthrowing the republic.

Papacy, empire, and Spain were not the only enemies of Venice. Hot or cold, the war between the re-



*Pope Paul V. Statue begun by Cordier (1611) and completed by Sebastiani (1613). Piazza Cavour, Rimini. EPA*

*The courtyard of the Doge's Palace, showing the procession of the papal legate. Follower of Canaletto (eighteenth century). National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Gift of Mrs. Barbara Hutton*





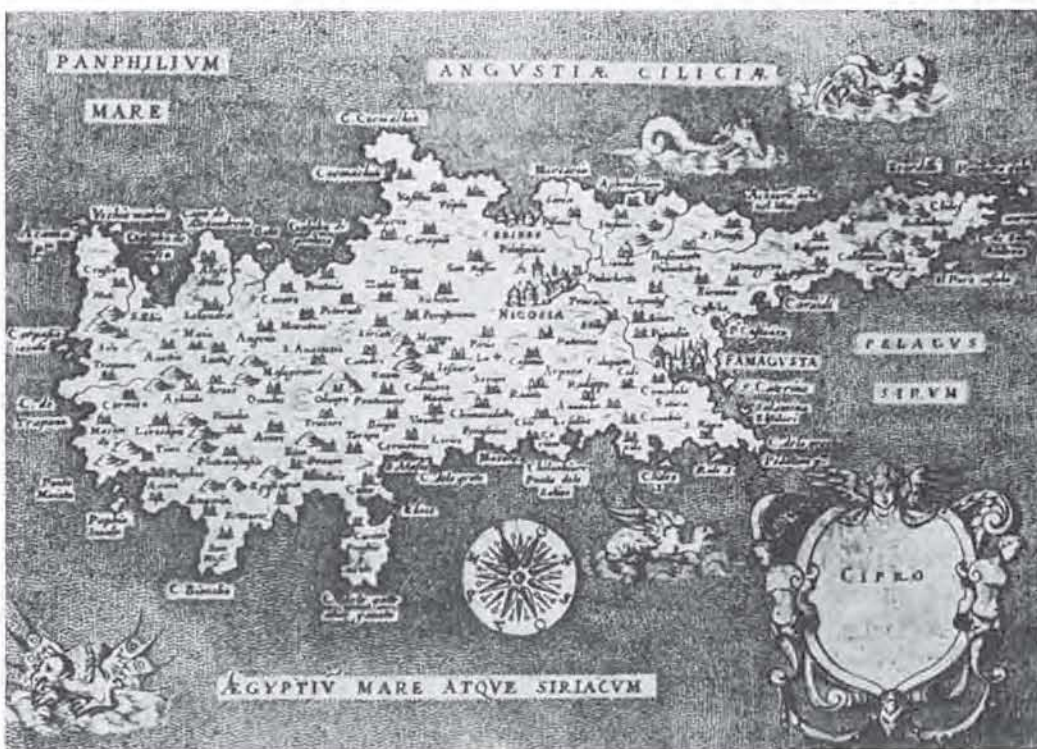
public and the huge empire ruled by Turkish sultans, which had begun in the fifteenth century, never abated and was a constant, painful, and costly drain. Unsuccessful in the 1565 attempt to seize Malta—ably defended by the Knights of Saint John led by the Grand Master La Valette—Turkish admirals conquered Venetian-held islands in the Aegean in 1566, and moved against Cyprus, a Venetian possession since 1489, in 1570. After an eleven-month siege, the Turks captured Famagusta, the island's main city and fortress. The Venetian commander Marcantonio Bragadin was flayed alive. Through the efforts of Pope Pius V, a league had meanwhile been formed to rescue Cyprus. On October 7, 1571, the fleet of the league defeated the Turks at Lepanto, off the Greek coast. It was the biggest naval engagement since the battle of Actium between Antony and Octavianus in 31 B.C., and it ended Turkish supremacy in the Mediterranean. Of the 239 allied ships in the battle, 116 were Venetian. Despite the victory, Cyprus was not recovered. In 1645 the Turks attacked the island of Crete, which had been under Venetian rule since 1204. The war for Crete lasted twenty-four years, but, in 1669, Crete also was lost. In 1684, Venice joined a league formed to halt the Turks who in the previous year had besieged Vienna. Under the leadership of Francesco Morosini, the last great Venetian admiral, the forces of the republic conquered Morea, the southernmost part of Greece. It was held until 1718. Behind these dry facts is the tragedy of a small state fighting an exhausting war for three centuries against a powerful enemy.

AUSTRIAN HEGEMONY

The Italian political scene changed radically early in the eighteenth century, and these changes were

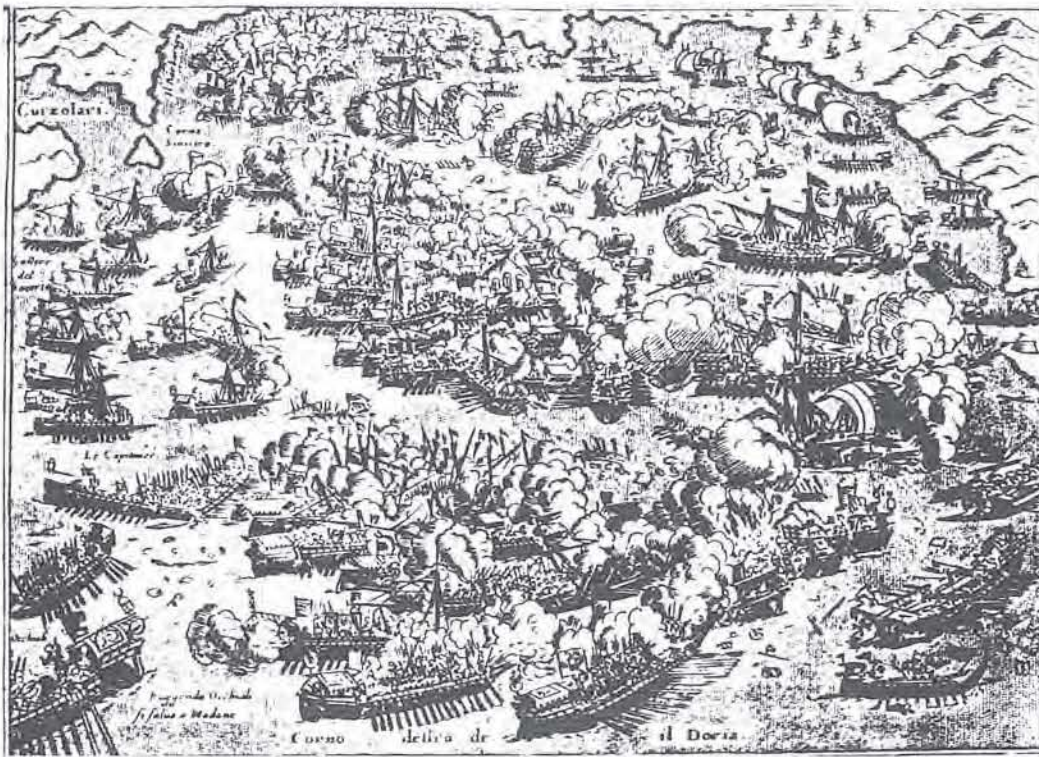


Turks lay siege to Rhodes. From fifteenth-century manuscript. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

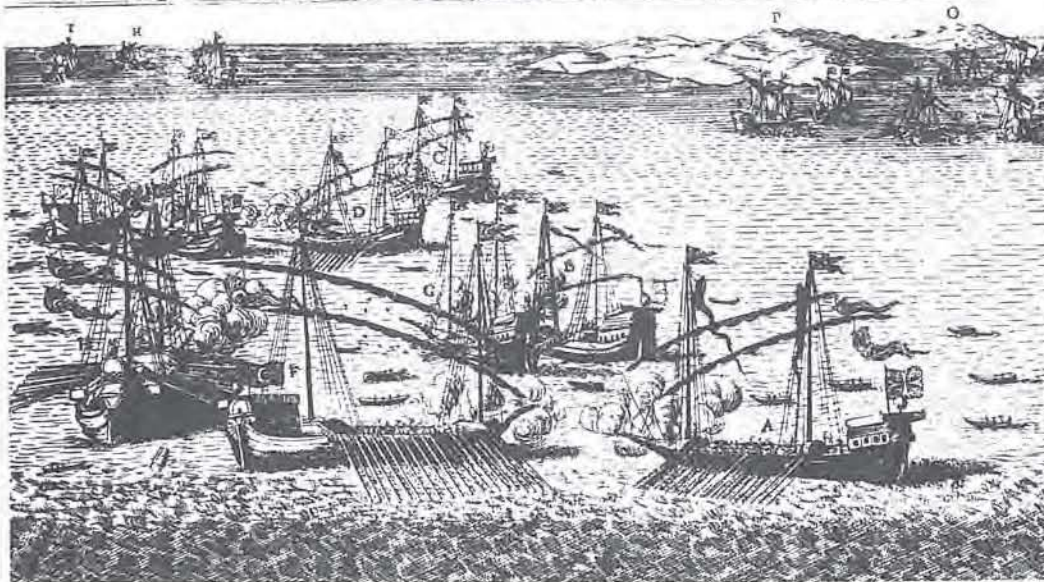


Cyprus. Etching by Tomaso Porcacchi from The Most Famous Island in the World. Padua, 1620. NYPL





*The Battle of Lepanto. Etching from The Most Famous Island in the World by Tommaso Porcacchi. Padua, 1620. NYPL*



*Capture of Two Turkish Galleys. Etching of the late seventeenth century. NYPL*

soon manifested in the intellectual and economic life of the nation. A Spanish king, the Habsburg Charles II, died in November 1700 without issue, and a long, bloody war ensued between France and Austria, the ruler of each country upholding the rights of a claimant to the throne. Mention has been made of Austrian successes in Italy: the defeat inflicted on the French at Turin, the occupation of Milan, of Naples, and the *Stato dei Presidi*. There was also the expulsion of the

*Francesco Morosini. Etching from Ducal Insignias. Venice, G. Albrizzi, 1696. NYPL*





Spaniards from Sardinia by the British allied with the Austrians. By the end of 1708, only Sicily remained under Spanish rule and in 1713 the island was handed over to the duke of Savoy. Spanish domination was over. It was followed by a century and a half of Austrian domination. An eighteen-year French interlude (1796–1814) divided the Austrian rule into two periods, unequal in length and profoundly different in character. The first period extends from 1706 to the defeats inflicted on the Austrians by French revolutionary troops, led by the young Corsican general Napoleon Bonaparte in the spectacular campaign of 1796. During this period, Austria played a progressive role in the areas she controlled. Austrian rule had an emancipating influence, especially insofar as it stimulated the awakening of the educated classes. The second period (*see* Chapter 11) lasted from 1814 to 1859. This time Austria played a reactionary role, acting as a brake to any kind of change in the Italian nation.

Except for its name, its capital, and its past, there is nothing in common between the present Austrian republic and the Habsburg-ruled Austrian state of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which so deeply influenced Italian developments. The events that led a German family to become rulers of one of Europe's most powerful states had begun in the thirteenth century, when the imperial dignity was bestowed on Count Rudolf of Habsburg, a minor German feudatory. By 1700, when an Austrian Habsburg claimed the succession in Spain against a French Bourbon, the Austrian state was the largest in Catholic Europe, second only to France in population. It had held the imperial crown uninterrupted since 1438. It was the dominant power in Germany. It had a large enough revenue to maintain a strong military establishment and to buy the services of able generals. At the end of the seventeenth century, it had expanded into central Europe by annexing districts previously held by the Turks in Hungary, Croatia, and Transylvania.

#### DYNASTIC CHANGES

The Treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt, with which the War of the Spanish Succession ended in 1713/14, had recognized the French Bourbon Philip V as king of Spain. They had also transferred Spanish possessions in Italy to Austria (except for Sicily, which was given to Victor Amadeus II of Savoy). In 1717/18, at the instigation of the Italian-born Cardinal Alberoni, Philip V's all-powerful minister, a series of successful raids reestablished (briefly) Spanish rule over Sardinia and Sicily. A British fleet landed an Austrian expeditionary force in Sicily, the Spaniards were compelled to withdraw, and, in 1720 at the Peace of The Hague, it was decided that the Austrians would keep Sicily and that Sardinia would go to the duke of Savoy. A few years later, in another war caused by conflicting dynastic interests (this time in relation to the Polish crown), Austrian troops were defeated in Italy by the



Cardinal Giulio Alberoni. Minister of Philip V. Etching by Domenico De Rossi. NYPL

French allied with Spain and Sardinia. In 1734, Neapolitans and Sicilians received as liberators a Spanish expeditionary force led by the young Prince Charles, son of Philip V and his second wife, the dynamic and ambitious Elizabeth Farnese of Parma. The following year, he was recognized as king of the Two Sicilies, on

Charles III of Spain, King of the Two Sicilies, 1734–1759. Painting by F. Liani. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples





condition that Naples and Sicily never be reunited with Spain. In exchange for these losses, Emperor Charles VI obtained that his son-in-law Francis of Lorraine (the future emperor and coruler of Austria with his wife Maria Theresa) would succeed the last Medici grand duke in Tuscany. As the result of other dynastic arrangements, a younger son of Philip V and of Elizabeth Farnese became duke of Parma in 1748, and, through his marriage to Beatrice d'Este in 1771, a younger son of Francis of Lorraine was assured the succession to the Duchy of Modena. On the eve of the French Revolution, Austria directly ruled a shrunken Duchy of Milan and, through Austrian archdukes, or their in-laws, Tuscany and Modena. It should, however, be noted that although Austrian political influence was strong, Austrian hegemony was never as absolute as Spanish hegemony had been.

The disappearance of Spanish officials and garrisons in Italy early in the eighteenth century weakened the power of authoritarian institutions. In the 1760s, antitraditional and progressive attitudes became so widespread among the educated classes that a new tone was set for the Italian nation. The process of awakening began on a small scale in the first generation that had not felt the stifling Spanish despotism. It gained impetus at the end of the century under the powerful stimulus of the French revolutionary upheaval, and developed into the patriotic, liberal, and democratic *Risorgimento* of the nineteenth century.

#### ENLIGHTENED RULERS AND MINISTERS

In an authoritarian, rigidly conformist, and hierarchical society such as Italy's in the eighteenth century, change, if it comes at all, comes at first from above. Only those who belong to the ruling classes, or at least are close to them, can risk departing from accepted ways. While the people slept, some of the princes and governors of foreign-held districts and their ministers (some Italian, a few foreign) changed the institutions. They aimed at making absolutism more absolute, only to end, paradoxically, by weakening the authoritarian structure of the society, and thus opening the road to later changes from below.

The Bourbon and Habsburg-Lorraine princes, ruling Italian districts that included nearly half the area of the country and more than half the population, wanted primarily to strengthen their states. To achieve this aim (on the advice of competent ministers who had assimilated ideas concerning progress put forth by British and French thinkers), they introduced policies designed to weaken the privileged classes and increase the number of efficient citizens capable of providing the state with able administrators, good soldiers, and industrious, productive artisans and farmers. The weakening of the privileged classes—the bulwark of traditionalism—meant the limitation, even at times the suppression, of the vestiges of feudal rights, and the consequent emancipation of the long-

suffering rural masses. It meant the equalization of laws and, in particular, the end of separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It also brought about a measure of religious tolerance and less severe censorship (independent opinion magazines began to appear in the 1760s). The increase in the number of efficient and active citizens was achieved through the establishment of new schools and a partial secularization of education, and through the application of economic reforms based on the ideas of such advocates of the free market and free enterprise as the French *physiocrates* and Adam Smith. All this was tantamount to a revolution.

The period of reforms began in earnest soon after the long and exhausting War of the Austrian Succession ended. It lasted into the 1770s in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and in the duchy of Parma, ruled by the two Bourbon brothers Charles and Philip, and into the early years of the rule of their sons, King Ferdinand IV and Duke Ferdinand. It lasted well into the 1780s in the Duchy of Milan and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, ruled, after the death of Emperor Francis I of Habsburg-Lorraine in 1765, by Emperor Joseph II and his brother Grand Duke Leopold I (later emperor). In Naples and Sicily, the force behind the reforms was the Tuscan Bernardo Tanucci, in effect

Bernardo Tanucci. Anonymous engraving. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence





the prime minister for over twenty years, until his dismissal by Ferdinand IV in 1776. In Parma, the Frenchman Guillaume du Tillot led the reform. In Milan, the Italians Giorgio Pallavicino and Beltrame Cristiani and the Austrian Carlo Firmian were capable, progressive administrators. In Florence, among the many remarkable men who collaborated with Leopold I, were Pompeo Neri, Francesco Gianni, and Giulio Rucellai. With the support of the grand duke, an attempt to reform the Tuscan Church was initiated by the Jansenist bishop of Pistoia, Scipione de' Ricci.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the largest number of liberal-minded, progressive Italians were to be met in Milan and Naples. Milan was the home of Cesare Beccaria, the best-known Italian *philosophe* of his generation; the brothers Pietro and Alessandro Verri, men of letters and scholars deeply involved in the events of their time; the economist Gian Rinaldo Carli; the poet Giuseppe Parini; the naturalist Lazzaro Spallanzani; the physicists Luigi Galvani and Alessandro Volta. Among those who lived in Naples were Antonio Genovesi, the first European to hold a university chair in economics (1754); Ferdinando Galiani, another prominent economist; the jurists and political scientists Gaetano Filangieri and Mario Pagano.

The example set by the Bourbon and Habsburg-Lorraine princes and their ministers was imitated to some extent by King Charles Emmanuel III of Sardinia and by his minister Giovanni Bogino. However, they were concerned more with making old institutions more efficient than with introducing new ones. Within the oligarchies ruling the Republics of Venice, Genoa, Lucca, and Ragusa, a few people began to think in terms of reforms, but the main efforts aimed at preventing change, so nothing was done. There was no change in the Papal States either, except that, in



Cesare Beccaria. Etching by G. A. Sasso. NYPL



Carlo Emanuele III. Late eighteenth-century etching. NYPL



Pompeo Neri. Etching by B. Bordiga. NYPL

1773, Pope Clement XIV Ganganelli was compelled by a coalition of Catholic rulers (bent on increasing the power of the state at the expense of that of the Church) to dissolve the Jesuit order, which, since its formation, had been the main pillar of the papacy. The energies of the eighteenth-century popes were absorbed by the ever more difficult effort to hold their ground against political secularism, which sought to curtail the power of the Roman church, against intellectual movements opposed to Catholicism as a faith



and a philosophy, and against internal religious dissidence in the form of Gallicanism, Febronianism, and Jansenism. When revolution broke out in France in 1789, Italian states governed by native authorities—the oligarchic republics, the Papal States under Pius VI Braschi, and the Kingdom of Sardinia under Victor Amadeus III—had the negative distinction of being more tradition-bound and less advanced than those which, through European wars, had come under the rule of foreign sovereigns.

#### CORSICA BECOMES FRENCH

A grievous territorial loss occurred in the eighteenth century, the first since Alpine districts of the Duchy of Milan had been occupied by the Swiss in 1512, and kept: the island of Corsica was annexed by France. The series of sixteenth-century revolts against Genoese rule had ended in 1569, two years after the murder of their major leader Sampiero di Bastelica.

Relations between the Genoese overlords and their Corsican subjects always remained strained. A new series of uprisings began in the 1730s. It was stimulated by the changes that had occurred elsewhere in the western Mediterranean. A German adventurer, Theodore von Neuhoff, was briefly king of Corsica in 1736. Genoese hold over the island was further weakened in the 1740s when Austrians and Sardinians attacked the Republic. The Austrians occupied Genoa. They were expelled by a popular insurrection started according to tradition by the youth Balilla Perasso (since then a symbol of anti-Austrian patriotism), but French aid was the main factor in the survival of the Republic. A few years later, a full-fledged insurgency led to the establishment of an independent Corsican government under the able leadership of Pasquale Paoli, a remarkable man whose progressive ideas were close to those of the founders of the American Republic. Unable to muster sufficient force to recover the island, the Genoese oligarchy sold it to France in

*Pope Pius VI blessing the crowd in the Campo Santi Giovanni e Paulo. By Francesco Guardi. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*





Victor Amadeus III, king of Sardinia. Engraving by Porporati. Biblioteca Reale, Turin



Monument of Pasquale Paoli, Corsica. EPA



1768: the Corsican war of liberation ended in defeat in 1769, and Paoli went into exile. That year, in Ajaccio, the island's capital, Napoleon Bonaparte was born. Enthusiasm for the French Revolution, the defeat of Paoli in another insurgency, and the astounding success of Napoleon as leader of the French nation, would make the Corsicans French.

Because ruling families died out, because of the fortunes of war, and in some cases because of the outright sale of his sovereign or semisovereign state by an impoverished prince to a richer neighbor, all small lordships had disappeared from Italy by 1789. Exceptions were the Principalities of Piombino and Monaco, the former ruled by the Ludovisi and the latter by the Grimaldi. In spite of the annexation of

Mantua, the Duchy of Milan, then an Austrian possession, was considerably smaller than it had been under Spanish rule. Piedmont, the Italian mainland portion of the Kingdom of Sardinia, had expanded to the Ticino River. A different kind of change had not yet affected Italy territorially in the northeast but was soon to do so. The Republic of Venice had given shelter in Istria and Dalmatia to Slavs fleeing Turkish rule, and so had the Republic of Ragusa. The outcome was that in Istria, Dalmatia, and Ragusa, though the dominant element in the population—politically, intellectually, and economically—was Italian, the majority of the people were Slavs. As the result of what had been done when Venice and Ragusa were independent republics, Yugoslavia (the new state of the





*Ajaccio, Corsica. The capital of Corsica and birthplace of Napoleon. EPA*

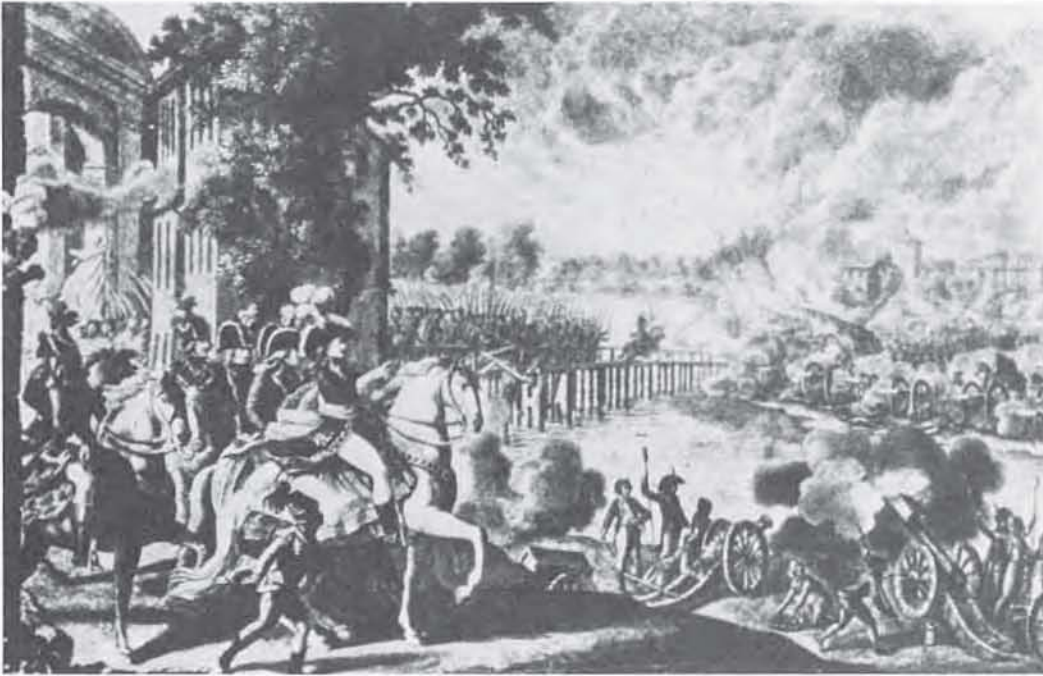
southern Slavs created in 1918) would annex in the twentieth century the areas in which Italians were no longer a majority of the people.

#### BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

This period of paramount Austrian influence, of partial awakening of the educated classes, of peaceful reforms from above to which the masses were usually indifferent and sometimes actively hostile, ended abruptly when people became aware of what was happening in France after July 14, 1789—Bastille Day. Support for the French Revolution or antagonism to it was now the focal point of political and intellectual action. Nothing else mattered anymore. Between 1792 and 1795, admirers of the Revolution—soon to be called Jacobins—organized conspiracies in Naples, Tuscany, Turin, Palermo, and Bologna. They failed, but the revolutionary enthusiasm did not abate. Then came pressure from outside, in the form of military intervention. Since the autumn of 1792, the newly established French Republic had been at war with its Italian neighbor, the Kingdom of Sardinia. The Sardinian French-speaking duchy of Savoy, and the

countship of Nice where the population was part French and part Italian, had been overrun and annexed to France. In Provence, Avignon and the Comtat-Venaissin were no longer papal but French. War against Sardinia had been at a standstill for more than three years along the Alpine range when, in March 1796, the young Napoleon Bonaparte took over the command of the French army. In a few weeks he reorganized the thirty-six thousand badly equipped men. In April he won the first victories against the Austrians and against the Sardinians. Victor Amadeus III sued for peace and obtained it in May, formally surrendering Savoy and Nice to France. On May 16, Bonaparte entered Milan, after having soundly defeated the Austrians at Lodi. An Italian provisional government replaced the Austrian administration. Soon after, insurgents expelled the duke of Modena from his duchy. In October delegates from Modena and Reggio, joined by delegates from Bologna and Ferrara in the Papal States, created a Cispadane Republic to which they soon gave, together with a democratic constitution, a new flag: green, white, and red. It was to become the flag of the Italian patriots; it is today the flag of the Italian Republic.



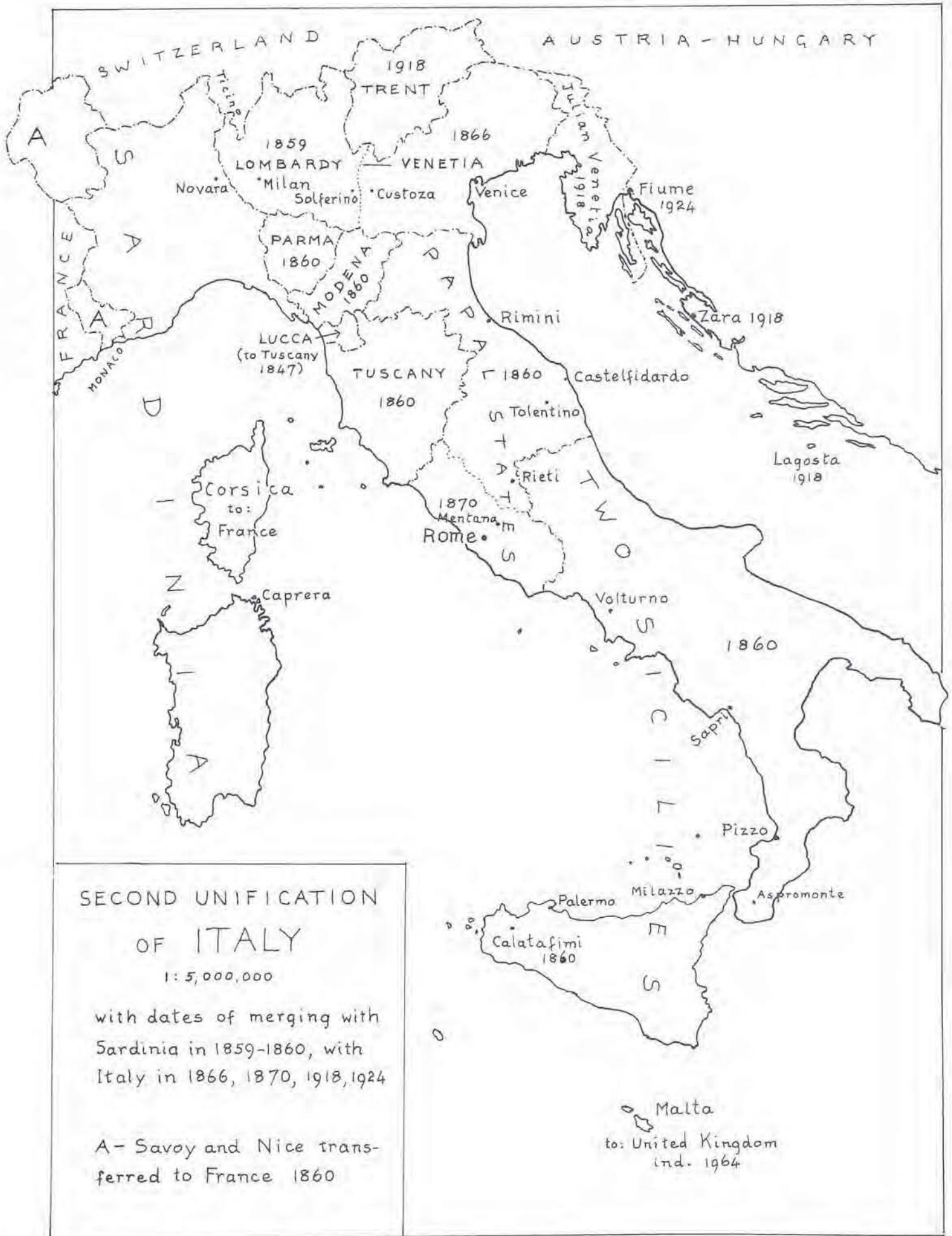


*The Battle of Lodi. NYPL*

*Reggio Emilia, Palazzo Comunale, "Sala del Tricolore." This is the room in the town hall where the Congress of the cities of Emilia instituted the Cispadane Republic and proclaimed their flag the tricolor which became the national flag. EPA*







## SECOND UNIFICATION OF ITALY

1: 5,000,000

with dates of merging with Sardinia in 1859-1860, with Italy in 1866, 1870, 1918, 1924

A - Savoy and Nice transferred to France 1860

Malta to: United Kingdom (ind. 1964)



## II

# AWAKENING: THE *RISORGI- MENTO* (1796–1861)

*The Risorgimento begins – French interlude – Changes – Restoration – Austrian hegemony again – Liberals, moderates, and democrats – Early conspiracies and insurrections – A new generation – Mazzini – Gioberti and Garibaldi – Cavour – Beginnings of liberalization – 1848, the first war of the Risorgimento – The brief hour of democracy in 1849 – Liberalism in the Kingdom of Sardinia – Repression – Cavour's diplomacy – 1859, the second war of the Risorgimento – Revolutions – Garibaldi's Camice Rosso – The Papal States shrink – Italy!*

### THE RISORGIMENTO BEGINS

**T**HE year 1796 was a watershed. For nearly three hundred years it had been taken for granted in Italy that people obey and rulers rule as they see fit. For nearly three hundred years Italians had been subjects and not citizens. It did not matter whether the ruler was a native prince, a foreign governor, or a prelate: directly (if princes or popes) or indirectly (viceroys and governors) his authority derived from God, his will was law. It had been a long era of despotism and enforced conformity—and of slumber for the nation. Even on the rare occasions when some few people took political initiative, the insurgents' aim had simply been to replace a bad master with a good master. The Neapolitans who revolted in 1647/48, and who called themselves republicans, immediately looked for a king whose authority would be as arbitrary and absolute as that of the Spanish viceroys. The Genoese who chased the Austrians from their city in 1746 retained the absolute oligarchic regime organized in the sixteenth century.

Before 1796 there had been a few Italians who thought about liberty, about government by the peo-



*Napoleon declaring himself president of the Italian Republic, 1798. NYPL*

ple, about freedom of thought and conscience. Following the example of what had been done originally in England and later in France, they set up lodges of the clandestine Freemasonry—which opposed absolutism, censorship, and conformity, and stood for constitutional government, freedom of the press, religious tolerance, and economic liberty. Following a few conspiracies in the early 1790s, some action occurred in the midst of the disruption created by the French invasions. It was the result of a commitment to liberty.

In 1796, during the clash between the French and Austrian armies, some Italians organized states ruled by citizens, not by princes, governors, or prelates. These Italians were few, and the new states soon collapsed, but with the efforts of those who in late 1796 organized the Cispadane and Lombard republics and called for volunteers to fight a war of national liberation, the awakening of the Italian nation began. At first touching only small sections of the people in small areas of the country, the awakening then came to more and more Italians. What had been a handful of men and women in 1796 was a sizable group twenty years later, and a vast section of the nation by the middle of the nineteenth century. From this awakening came the *Risorgimento*, when Italians repeated the feat of their ancestors in the medieval Kingdom of Italy in the twelfth century: they expelled foreign rulers and replaced despotism and enforced conformity with liberty.

### FRENCH INTERLUDE

Early in 1797, Bonaparte invaded the Papal States and, at the peace treaty of Tolentino, compelled the old and frail Pius VI to recognize the Cispadane Republic, which included the former papal provinces in Romagna. Then he pursued the Austrians, who asked



for an armistice in April. The peace treaty between Austrians and French, signed later in the year at Campoformio, sanctioned the cession to Austria of all Venetian territories, except the Lombard districts annexed to the Cisalpine Republic (formed in June through the union of the Cispadane and Lombard republics). Stifled by centuries of despotism, incapable of fighting, and no longer glorious, powerful, and rich, the Republic of Venice, which had enjoyed de facto independence for over a thousand years, ceased to exist. Shortly afterward, democrats overthrew the oligarchy in Genoa and renamed the state the Ligurian Republic. Excited by his successes in Italy, and full of grandiose dreams, Bonaparte returned to France.

For several years events followed in quick succession. The changes scarcely left time to breathe. In February 1798, to punish the pope for his opposition to revolutionary France, French troops occupied Rome, where a republic was proclaimed. Ferdinand IV of Naples and Sicily came to the aid of the pope. Defeated, he fled to Sicily, and in January 1799 a republic was set up in Naples by a group of prominent liberal intellectuals. Other French troops had meanwhile entered Tuscany and occupied Piedmont. In 1799, Russian armies came to Italy to aid the Austrians who were also supported by the British navy. The Cisalpine Republic ceased to exist. The papal government was reestablished in Rome. Ferdinand IV returned to Naples where more than a hundred liberals were summarily executed, among them Pagano, Conforti, Admiral Caracciolo.

The success of the anti-French coalition did not last long. To the relief of most Frenchmen, Bonaparte, with army backing, made himself dictator of France shortly before the end of 1799. In June 1800, Bonaparte won the battles of Montebello and Marengo, and reestablished in Italy the conditions that had existed

in 1797. The political map kept on changing. First Piedmont (where the husband of Napoleon's younger sister Paulina, Prince Borghese, was later made governor), then Liguria, followed by Parma and Tuscany, finally Latium and Umbria in the former Papal States, were annexed to France. On July 5, 1809, a French general forced his way into the papal residence in Rome, and asked Pius VII Chiaramonti to retract a recently issued statement reiterating papal supremacy over temporal sovereigns. Pius VII refused, and next day was deported to France, to be confined later in Savona. Early in 1802, the Cisalpine Republic was renamed the Italian Republic. Bonaparte, now Napo-

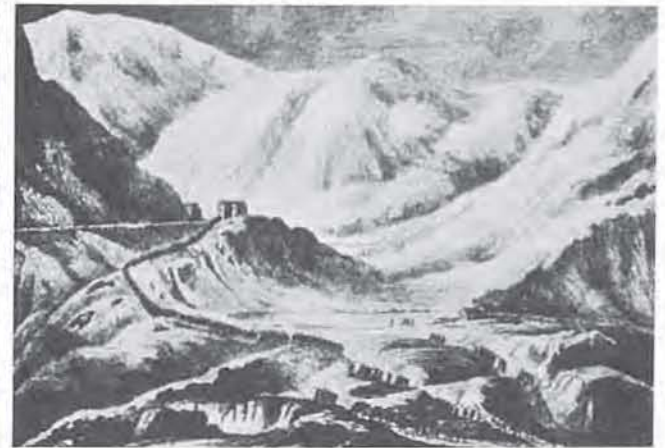


*Statue of Pauline Borghese, sister of Napoleon Bonaparte, as Venus Victrix. By Antonio Canova. NYPL PC*

*Entrance of the French into Naples, 1799. From a lithograph by Hippolyte Bellangé. NYPL PC*



*The French army crossing the Gran San Bernardo Pass. NYPL*







*Pope Pius VII in the Sistine Chapel. Ingres. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*

leon I, emperor of the French since 1804, changed the republic into a kingdom in 1805. He made himself king, and added first Venetia, then the Marches to the newly established Kingdom of Italy. He entrusted the government of the kingdom to the hands of his loyal stepson Eugène de Beauharnais and to capable ministers like Melzi and Prina. With Ferdinand IV's lack of cooperation in opposing the British as a pretext, Napoleon seized Naples in early 1806, and named as king first his brother Joseph, then his brother-in-law Joachim (Gioacchino) Murat. Lucca and Piombino had, since 1805, formed a principality ruled by Napoleon's eldest sister. Another sister was given the duchy of Guastalla in 1806, for a short while. Trent, ruled independently since the Middle Ages by its prince-bishops, was annexed to Austria in 1802, passed in 1805 to Bavaria, and was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1810. The Republic of Ragusa, the Italian outpost on the Balkan coast, occupied first by Russians and then by the French, lost its independence in 1808. By the end of the century, Ragusa's Slavic suburb of Dubrovnik was more important than the old Italian center of the city. Malta, occupied by the French in

*Eugène de Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy. Louvre. Giraudon*







Joachim Murat, King of Naples. EPA

1798, fell to the British two years later. In 1802 Italians achieved equality with the Germans and the French in Switzerland: in that year, Lombard Alpine valleys, conquered by the Swiss in the fifteenth century and early sixteenth, joined (as the sovereign Canton Ticino) the reorganized Swiss confederation.

By 1809, nearly one-third of Italy, divided into fourteen departments, had been incorporated into France. The Kingdoms of Italy and of Naples, the principality of Lucca-Piombino and the duchy of Guastalla were French controlled. Aside from Malta, only the islands of Sicily and Sardinia, protected by the British navy, remained outside the formidable Napoleonic Empire. Ferdinand IV of Bourbon reigned in Sicily, and Victor Emmanuel I of Savoy in Sardinia. In Sicily, a major base against Napoleon's despotism, the British envoy Lord Bentinck, who tried to liberalize the institutions of the island and was mainly responsible for introducing a constitution in 1812, at times counted more than the king and his ministers.

#### CHANGES

French domination in Italy lasted only a short time, but its effects remained. It was a tornado, sweeping away rigid institutional and social structures that had contained what the Italian traditional way of life had become—molded by the Counter-Reformation and by Spanish domination. The French introduced administrative, judicial, ecclesiastical, educational, and economic reforms on a larger scale than had been achieved by the reforming princes and ministers of the eighteenth century. The confiscation and sale of church property brought a redistribution of wealth. The uniform Napoleonic civil code replaced a wide diversity

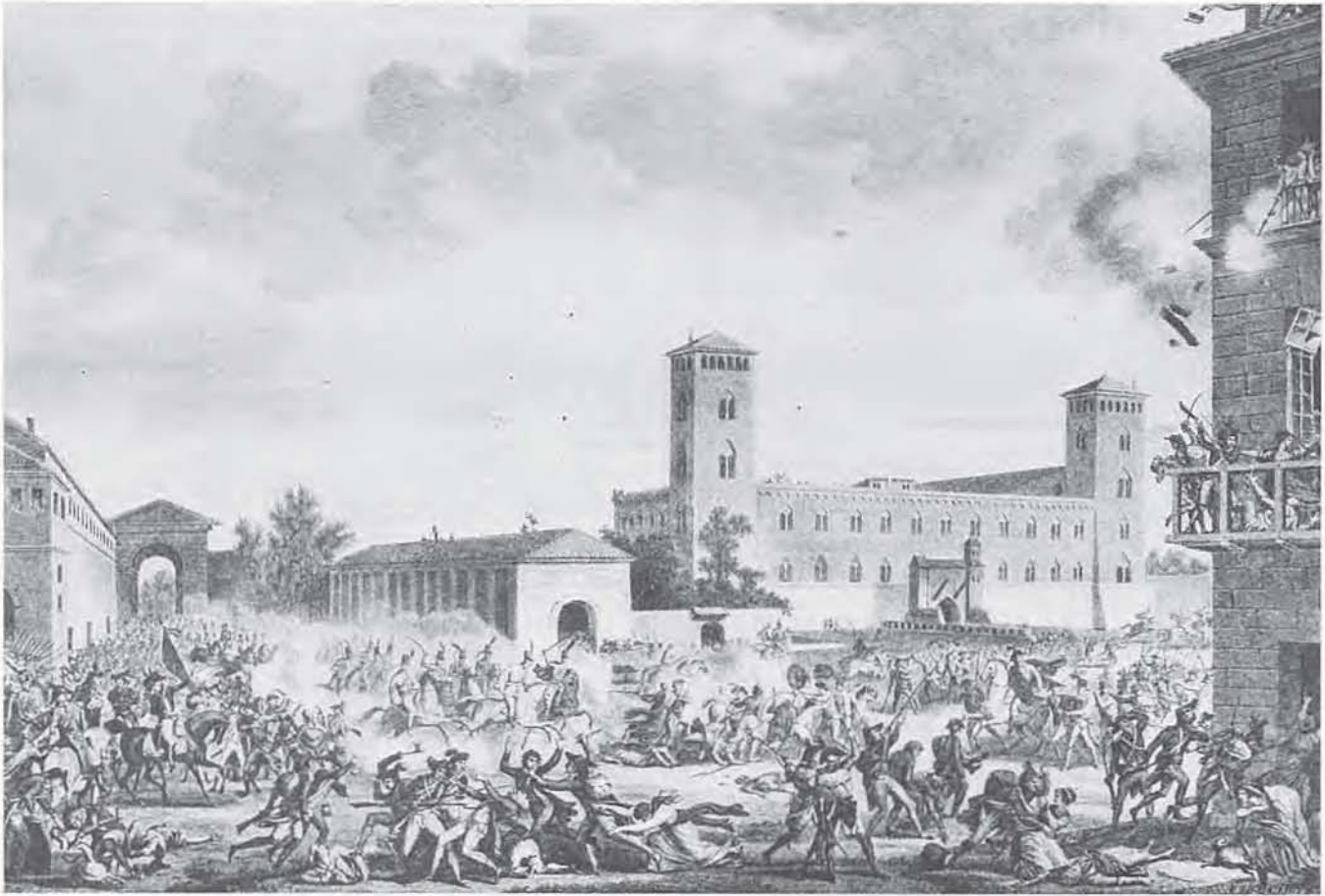
of laws. The residues of feudalism were abolished in the Neapolitan state by King Joachim. When the tornado had blown over, many of the old institutions were reestablished, but they were not as solid as they had been before 1796; the values supporting them survived but had weakened noticeably. There was now a dynamic progressive minority, strong enough to act and to make its action felt.

The Italian masses, regardless of class, had remained consistently hostile to the French. They showed it in the 1790s with the riots during which the French envoy to Rome was killed; with the massacre of French soldiers in Verona; with insurrections in Binasco, Arquata Scivina, Lugo, Rome's Trastevere; with the killing of Neapolitan liberals. They showed it later when they enthusiastically welcomed the returning former rulers. These were the majority. Then there was the minority. The French had been warmly received by many educated Italians who were inspired by the ideas, values, and aspirations of the French Enlightenment and the French Revolution. In "liberty, equality, fraternity" were included the ideas of progress, national sovereignty, popular government, freedom of conscience, of the press, and of teaching, equality of opportunity, social justice, scientific inquiry, materialism, and an end to privilege and restrictive economic practices. These ideas opened a new world; they were the negation of everything implicit in Italian traditionalism.

The liberal minority, formed chiefly of professional middle-class people and progressive members of the upper classes, had organized the short-lived democratic republics of 1796–1805. When, by 1805, it became clear that the French had come to Italy not to liberate but to occupy the country, the liberals split. Most of them continued to give their support to French rule, which they rightly considered an improvement over the ancien régime of divine right princes, theocratic popes, and oligarchic republics. Others remained aloof or became clandestine opponents, determined to replace French despotism one day with Italian liberty. In 1807 or 1808, members of the latter group began to organize in the Kingdom of Naples, as a dissident offshoot of pro-French Freemasonry, the clandestine movement of the *Carbonari* ("charcoal burners") which played an important revolutionary role in the 1820s and early 1830s. Later, liberals aspiring to the creation of a united constitutional Italian state formed the *Italiani Puri* society, with headquarters in Milan.

In the winter of 1813/14, Bonaparte's vast European empire collapsed under the assault of an anti-French coalition led by Great Britain, Russia, and Austria. There was no general insurrection against the French in Italy, as there had been in Spain since 1808, and in Germany and the Lowlands in 1813. Nor was there any opposition to the large Austrian forces and the smaller British ones that occupied the country. Two attempts were made in 1814/15 to spare Italy





*Revolt in Pavia against the French, 1796. NYPL PC*

further foreign domination. Both failed. In April 1814, after Beauharnais abandoned the kingdom he could no longer defend, a provisional government was organized by liberals in Milan, which relied upon British, and perhaps Russian, support. Among the Milanese liberals, Federico Confalonieri, General Lechi, and the poet Ugo Foscolo were the most active. The British government and the Czar, however, decided not to intervene in Italy, and the Austrians occupied Milan in May. The second attempt, supported on a national scale by Freemasons, *Italiaci Puri* and *Carbonari*, aimed at unifying Italy under the constitutional rule of the king of Naples, Joachim Murat, who had deserted his brother-in-law Bonaparte in the hour of crisis. Murat counted on the loyalty of the Neapolitan army and the support of the Italian nation. He received neither. Few heeded the Proclamation of Rimini, issued on March 30, 1815: the first call for a united Italy in the nineteenth century. Defeated at Tolentino in early May, Murat fled, only to return in October with a small band of loyal veterans who had followed him into exile. He was captured and executed at Pizzo in Calabria. Ironically, among the first to die in the nineteenth-century struggle for the unification of Italy was this gallant French warrior.

*Federico Confalonieri. EPA*







*Ugo Foscolo. EPA*

chies of Parma and Modena were ruled by relatives of the Austrian emperor. The theocratic Papal States were reestablished according to their pre-1796 boundaries and were ruled by Pius VII whom Napoleon had released from his second confinement in France in January 1814. Victor Emmanuel I of Savoy left Cagliari and went back to Turin. Border districts, which had been left to France at the peace treaty of 1814, were returned in 1815 to the Sardinian kingdom, which also annexed (as a result of the policy adopted by the great powers to strengthen states bordering France) the territory of the former Republic of Genoa. In 1816, the Bourbon Ferdinand IV of Sicily and Naples became Ferdinand I, king of the Two Sicilies.

*Ferdinand I, King of the Two Sicilies. EPA*



#### RESTORATION

After nearly twenty years of turmoil, Italians settled down under the new order created by the great powers at the Congress of Vienna in 1814/15. In the northeast, eastern Friuli, Trieste, Istria, and Trent were incorporated into the Austrian Empire and administered directly from Vienna. The territories of the former Republic of Venice (except for Istria and the Balkan districts) and of the former Duchy of Milan formed the Lombard-Venetian kingdom, which was administered by Austrian officials and garrisoned by Austrian troops and owed allegiance to the Austrian emperor. The Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Du-



*The Congress of Vienna (from a contemporary painting). NYPL*



Another Bourbon was made duke of Lucca. The Valtellina, held by the Grisons from 1512 until 1797, was incorporated into the Lombard-Venetian kingdom. Canton Ticino remained a member state of the Swiss Confederation, Corsica a French department, and Malta a British colony. Of the minuscule independent states, only the Republic of San Marino and the Principality of Monaco survived.

#### AUSTRIAN HEGEMONY AGAIN

Austria ruled about a third of Italy, directly or indirectly, and exercised paramount influence over the rest. As before 1796, only more so, Italy was in effect an Austrian dependency. But there was a difference. The Austria that ruled Italy after the Congress of Vienna was no longer the Austria of the reforming Habsburg-Lorraine princes Francis I and his sons Joseph II and Leopold II. It was the reactionary Austria of Francis II and of his trusted chief minister, Metternich. It was politically despotic, religiously intolerant, intellectually conformist, and economically stagnant. For nearly four decades Metternich was the main power in the Austrian state and a major influence in European continental affairs. The French Revolution, with its violence, its Jacobin terror of 1793/94, its revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, had terrorized most Europeans, not just the supporters of the ancien régime but also the minorities of reformers who wanted progress and change without a wholesale holocaust. As Metternich saw it, the function of Austria—in area and population the largest European state west of Russia—was first and foremost to prevent a recurrence of the violence and bloodshed that had occurred between 1789 and 1815. His policies had two aims: to maintain internal order in the vast area over which Austria exercised paramount influence, including therefore Germany and Italy; and to maintain peace everywhere in Europe. Alexander I of Russia, the founder of the Holy Alliance of 1815 which, in the name of Christian principles, was ordained to enforce European order and peace, supported Metternich's program.

Most Italians had been resentful of any kind of violent change and were relieved when Habsburg-Lorraine, Bourbon, and Savoy princes, and the pope, returned to their capitals. If there were regrets, they were only for the passing of the old oligarchic republics, particularly the Venetian and Genoese ones. Clericalism—the all-pervading intellectual and political influence of the Roman church—was the foundation of what was now the traditional way of life. Traditionalists, who had many able spokesmen (among them the ascetic friar Pope Gregory XVI Cappellari and Count Monaldo Leopardi, father of the poet Giacomo Leopardi), agreed that the ignorance of obedient poor masses was preferable to the enlightenment of free and prosperous citizens. There were parts of Italy where 90 percent or more of the people were illiterate.



*The study of Monaldo Leopardi at Recanati. EPA*

The traditionalists miscalculated. Being ignorant, the masses were also apathetic, and their apathy contributed to the success of the liberal minority of the nation later in the century.

#### LIBERALS, MODERATES, AND DEMOCRATS

Italian liberalism in 1815, and after, was mainly the result of education. There were many liberals among the young people educated in universities (Padua, Pavia, Bologna, Pisa, Naples, etc.) where, for a while, modern ideas and new disciplines had been taught. Liberals could be found among those who had held responsible positions in the administrations of the Republic and Kingdom of Italy, the Kingdom of Naples under Joseph Bonaparte and Joachim Murat, and the regions annexed to France; among officers who had served in Napoleonic armies; among businessmen aware of how liberty could benefit the economy; among members of the professional classes. Liberalism was identified not so much with social classes as with ways of thinking: with empiricism, philosophical materialism, and, later, positivism, all of which postulated the priority of reason, used the scientific method, and rejected the authority of revelations and books. The ideas, values, and aspirations of Italian liberals were part of the revolutionary intellectual current, which had as spokesmen great thinkers like Galileo, Giannone, Beccaria, Romagnosi. The liberals' program paralleled that of contemporary British and French





*Gian Domenico Romagnosi. EPA*

reformers, and seemed thus to justify the reactionaries' derisive contention that they wanted to introduce "foreign" ideas and institutions.

Differences among liberals had already come into the open during the short period of Italian democratic republics. Right-of-center moderates favored constitutional parliamentary regimes based on limited suffrage, under a hereditary monarch. On the national level, they favored the new political formula devised by the Founding Fathers of the American republic, federalism, which was of great interest to European progressives. Moderates could be found in 1815 primarily among members of masonic lodges. Later they had as main spokesmen two able Piedmontese statesmen, Cesare Balbo and Massimo d'Azeglio; Terenzio Mamiani and Pellegrino Rossi, who became ministers of Pius IX in 1848; Bettino Ricasoli in Tuscany; Carlo Poerio, Silvio Spaventa, and Antonio Scialoja in Naples; Ruggero Settimo in Sicily.

The progressive, or liberal, Catholics were close to the moderates, differing chiefly in their religious feeling and in the role they attributed to the papacy. Among prominent progressive Catholics were the great novelist and poet Alessandro Manzoni, and the patriot Silvio Pellico, who was for many years a political prisoner in Austrian jails. Progressive Catholicism had its most influential intellectual and political spokesman in the Piedmontese Vincenzo Gioberti, whose book *Del Primato Morale e Civile degli Italiani* (briefly, *Il Primato*) contributed to the formation of the neo-Guelph movement in the 1840s: a movement aimed at the formation of a federation of Italian constitutional states under the leadership of the pope.

For some time the term liberal was applied to all progressive Italians: to all who opposed absolutism, clericalism, and foreign domination. Later, particularly from the early 1840s on, it applied only to the moderates and the neo-Guelphs; left-wingers called themselves democrats or republicans. Moderates looked

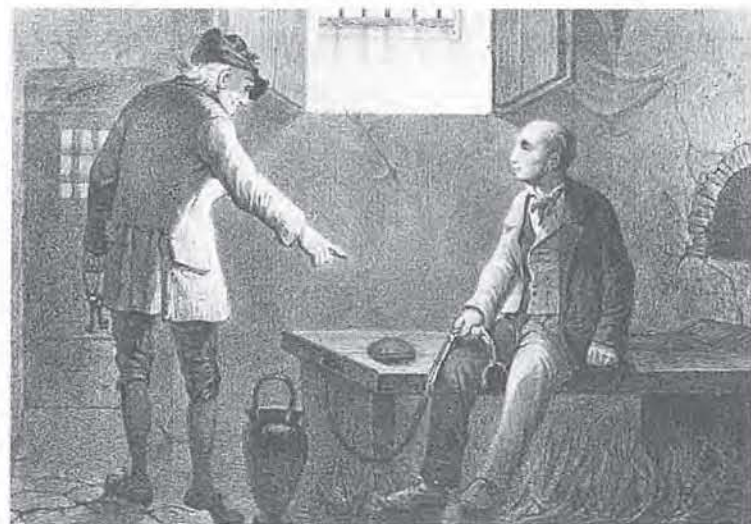


*Cesare Balbo. EPA*



*Massimo D'Azeglio. EPA*

*Silvio Pellico in prison. EPA*







Silvio Pellico and Piero Maroncelli being transported to the fortress of Spielberg. EPA



General Guglielmo Pepe. EPA

with admiration at the constitution of Great Britain and a way of life freer than in any other nation, whereas left-wingers took their inspiration from Rousseau, regretted the failure of French Jacobins, and sympathized with the socialist tendencies that had originated in Great Britain and France. Democrats held a generous concept of the innate goodness and capacity for improvement of all human beings, and placed a greater emphasis on equality and justice than did the moderates. They were intolerant of limitations on national sovereignty, wanted universal suffrage and uniform education for all, opposed—as improperly limiting the exercise of the popular will—systems based on checks and balances, and at first were less concerned than the moderates with economic structures (except for preferring cooperation to competition). Imbued with deep and sincere nationalistic convictions, they desired a unitary republican state. During the first two decades after the collapse of French rule, democrats were most numerous among members of the *vendite* (or cells) of the *Carbonari*. Among prominent *Carbonari* were: General Guglielmo Pepe, a leader of the Neapolitan revolution of 1820, the Milanese conspirator Giorgio Pallavicino, and Ciro Menotti, the organizer of the 1831 insurrection in Modena. From the early 1830s until his death in 1872, Giuseppe Mazzini was the most influential democratic leader: Mazzinianism and republicanism were synonymous.

In Italy, as elsewhere in Europe, there was considerable antagonism between moderates and democrats. Sometimes there was collaboration; for instance, in the revolutionary upheavals of 1820–21, during the

first phase of the 1848/49 revolution, and in the 1850s when the liberal prime minister of Sardinia, Count Cavour—strongly supported by democrats whose main spokesman was Daniele Manin, leader of the Venetian Republic in 1848/49—became the chief figure of a movement in which most liberals and democrats joined hands, and which successfully aimed at creating a united constitutional Italian state. From the moderates and neo-Guelphs of the *Risorgimento*, today's right-of-center Liberals and center Christian Democrats ideologically descend; the democrats were the forebears of today's Republicans and Democratic Socialists.

#### EARLY CONSPIRACIES AND INSURRECTIONS

It would have been strange had the upheaval caused by French domination died out completely as soon as the Austrians returned to Italy and traditional authorities were reestablished. Besides the Freemasons and the *Carbonari*, a number of smaller clandestine groups were at work. Between June 1817, when an attempted insurgency failed in Macerata, and March 1831, when a republic of the United Provinces which included Romagna, the Marches, and Modena, existed briefly, there were many conspiracies, a few revolts, and three uprisings. In the 1820 uprising in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies the brothers Guglielmo and Florestano Pepe were prominent leaders. The 1821 uprising in the Piedmontese area of the Kingdom of Sardinia was organized chiefly by the young officer Santorre di Santarosa, who died later in the Greek





*Daniele Manin proclaiming the Venetian Republic, March 22, 1848. EPA*



*Santorre di Santarosa. EPA*

War of Liberation. Those who played important roles in the 1831 uprisings in the eastern provinces of the Papal States, in Parma and the Duchy of Modena were: the former Napoleonic officers Carlo Zucchi and Giuseppe Sercognani, Count Pepoli, Professor Fran-

cesco Orioli. But the conspiracies, revolts, and uprisings were not the prelude to a new era; they were the end of the great revolutionary storm that had begun in earnest in Italy in 1796. Everything failed. Through swift and efficient repression (military intervention in Naples and Piedmont in 1821, in Modena and Bologna in 1831, police action in the Lombard-Venetian kingdom), Austria maintained the status quo. Prisons were

*General Carlo Zucchi. Museo del Risorgimento, Reggio Emilia*





full. However, the masses of the population were scarcely aware that anything was happening: for them order and peace reigned.

#### A NEW GENERATION

Less closely linked to the French Revolution, and genuinely Italian, was the action of the liberal and democratic minority belonging to the generation that achieved maturity in the 1830s and 1840s and witnessed the unification of most of Italy in 1859–1870. Fearful of repercussions from the July 1830 revolution in France, which replaced authoritarian rule with a constitutional liberal government, the Sardinian authorities increased their vigilance. At the end of that year, their attention was drawn to a twenty-five-year-old intellectual, the Genoese Giuseppe Mazzini, and a younger aristocrat of twenty, the Piedmontese Camillo Benso di Cavour. Mazzini was arrested and kept in jail for three months. After his release he went into exile, first in France and Switzerland, then in Great Britain where he spent most of the rest of his life and made friends with influential politicians and thinkers. Cavour, a junior officer in the Sardinian army, was confined to an isolated Alpine fortress. King Charles Felix allowed Cavour to resign his commission and to retreat to a family estate in the countryside. Mazzini became the most influential leader of Italian democratic republicans, and Cavour of liberal moderates. Working on different levels and through different means, they had an equal role in promoting the unification of the nation, and in replacing despotism with free institutions. They never met.

#### MAZZINI

Dissatisfied with Freemasonry and *Carboneria*, Mazzini in 1831 organized the secret society *Giovane Italia* (Young Italy) which Italian exiles in France and Switzerland joined. In Italy it was chiefly young *ex-Carbonari* who joined the society. In its total dedication to the cause of Italian independence and unification, to republicanism as the vision of an egalitarian free society, Young Italy reflected the thought and conscience of Mazzini, a man of superior intelligence and of total moral integrity, a believer in God, who—sharing his mother's Jansenism—put duty above all else. Mazzini's *I Doveri Dell'Uomo* (*The Duties of Man*), published in England in 1843, was one of the most influential Italian books of the nineteenth century.

#### GIOBERTI AND GARIBALDI

Young Italy organized its first rising in 1833. It failed. One man who had played a minor role in the rising and escaped arrest was the thirty-two-year-old Turin-born priest Vincenzo Gioberti. Gioberti went into exile in Belgium and later became the leader of



Giuseppe Mazzini. EPA



King Charles Felix of Sardinia. EPA

progressive Catholics who cooperated with liberals and democrats. A second rising was organized by Young Italy in 1834. A twenty-seven-year-old sailor Giuseppe Garibaldi took part in it, escaped arrest, and went into exile in Latin America, where some of his friends had preceded him. There he joined the insurgents who battled unsuccessfully for the independence of southern Brazilian districts against the





Giuseppe Mazzini and General Girolamo Ramorino, February 1, 1833. Bertarelli Collection, Milan. EPA

Vincenzo Gioberti. EPA



Giuseppe Garibaldi at the battle of San Antonio del Salto (during the conflict between Uruguay and Argentina), 1846. EPA





autocratic imperialism of the central government. Later he joined the insurgents who battled successfully for the independence of Uruguay from the oppressive rule of an Argentinian dictator. When revolution broke out in Italy in 1848, he was well known among liberals and democrats as a patriot, a fearless soldier, and an able commander.

#### CAVOUR

Cavour, besides managing the family estate at Leri, near Vercelli, where he pioneered progressive agricultural techniques, became a keen student of economics and political science. He traveled to Geneva (his mother came of a prominent Genevese family), where he was exposed to the Swiss experiment in liberty and the ideas of the Calvinist theologian Vinet on separation of church and state. He also stayed in Paris, where he had influential relatives. More than once he went to Great Britain where—like Voltaire, Montesquieu, and many other great Europeans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—he observed (and admired) free institutions at work. In the late 1830s and in the 1840s he plunged into business activities that gained him considerable wealth: banking, canal and railroad building, import-export trade. In Turin he organized clubs where economic and political problems were discussed. He wrote prolifically, especially on economics and problems of nationalism. When, in 1847, he founded his own newspaper, he had become the embodiment of European liberal thought. Soon he became the embodiment of Italian political action, first as deputy to the Sardinian parliament, then as a cabinet minister and prime minister of the Kingdom of Sardinia, and finally as the first prime minister of united Italy.

Mazzini, Cavour, and Garibaldi played the major roles in the revolutionary events leading to the unification of Italy in 1859/60. There were others who played scarcely less crucial roles. A few humanitarian measures enacted by Pope Pius IX Mastai-Ferretti on his election to the Holy See in 1846 made the pope the liberals' idol for nearly two years and caused a great wave of emotion among Italians of all classes. Neo-Guelphs saw in the pope the personification of their hopes. Twelve years older than Mazzini, Mastai-Ferretti, as an archbishop, had helped a few young revolutionaries involved in the 1831 uprising to escape capture by the Austrians. Two sons of Napoleon's younger brother were linked to these revolutionaries. The elder died during the 1831 revolution; the other, Louis Napoleon, born in 1808, lived to become the ruler of France for nearly twenty-two years. In 1849, as president of the French Republic, Louis Napoleon sent the expeditionary force that destroyed the Roman Republic headed by Mazzini and defended by Garibaldi; in 1859, as Napoleon III, emperor of the French, he led the armies that defeated the Austrians. Victor Emmanuel of Savoy, who as king of Sardinia refused



*Camillo Cavour.*  
NYPL PC



*Pope Pius IX.*  
EPA



*Attilio and Emilio Bandiera.* EPA



to yield to Austria in 1849, and who, in the 1850s, loyally supported his prime minister Cavour and his liberal policies, became the first king of united Italy.

*BEGINNING OF LIBERALIZATION*

The Mazzinian conspiracies of 1833 and 1834 were followed by many others. A prophet more than a statesman, Mazzini was an inspirer of men, not an organizer. The conspiracies failed. The executions in 1833 of Jacopo Ruffini and in 1844 of two young Venetians, Attilio and Emilio Bandiera, and seven of their companions who had landed in Calabria to start an insurrection, were particularly tragic. Austria, traditionalism, and clericalism appeared to be strongly entrenched, but their strength was actually less than it seemed by the middle 1840s. On instructions from ministers of Charles Albert (king since 1831), who in his youth had befriended *Carbonari*, Sardinian censors allowed the publication of books, pamphlets, and articles promoting liberal ideas. The benevolent grand duke of Tuscany, Leopold II, refused to act as an Austrian puppet and tolerated the cultural activities of liberal intellectuals like Gino Capponi and Giampietro Vieusseux. Shocked by the backwardness of the state he had been called to rule, Pius IX engaged in a policy of liberalization. No one failed to notice that there had been no attempt at repression when a large crowd assembled in Rome to applaud the success of the liberal Protestant cantons against the league of conservative Catholic cantons in the brief Swiss civil war of 1847. Scientific congresses provided liberals with opportunities to meet in various Italian cities. Early in 1848, there were demonstrations and attempted uprisings in Palermo, Naples, and Tuscany.

1848, *THE FIRST WAR OF THE RISORGIMENTO*

Then came the unexpected. A nearly bloodless revolution in Paris, at the end of February 1848, led to the proclamation of a republic in France. Everywhere in Europe, liberals, democrats, and patriots were jubilant. During the first days of March, demonstra-

tions in Vienna grew into a revolution. Metternich resigned and fled. Uprisings and revolutions soon followed in Germany, Hungary, and Italy—the vast area between France and Russia of which Vienna had been the political capital since 1814. Italian sovereigns who had not done so already, renounced despotism and granted constitutions. Liberals dominated new governments; Balbo, D'Azeglio (and the neo-Guelph Gioberti), in Turin; Ridolfi and Capponi in Florence; Mamiani and Rossi in Rome; Poerio in Naples; Settimo in Palermo. (In July, the provisional government in Palermo offered the Sicilian royal crown to Charles Albert's younger son, who refused it in order not to antagonize Ferdinand II.)

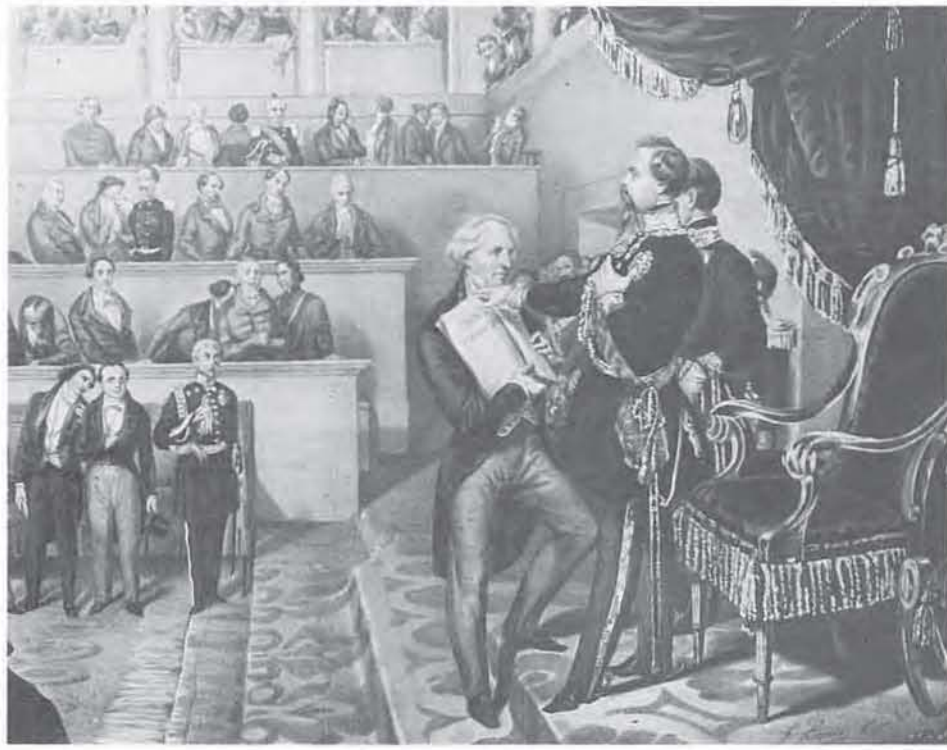
The first uprisings took place on March 17 in Venice under the leadership of Manin and Niccolò Tommaseo, and on March 18 in Milan where liberals headed by Count Gabrio Casati and democrats headed by Carlo Cattaneo cooperated. Austrian garrisons were expelled from these and other cities of Lombardy-Venetia. In response to an appeal from the revolution-

*The Constitution of Piedmont, 1848. EPA*



Gino Capponi, EPA





Count Gabrio Casati. EPA

Victor Emmanuel II, with his hand on the Constitution of Piedmont, addresses Parliament. EPA

ary administration organized in Milan, and pressed by his own liberal ministers and by demonstrations everywhere in his kingdom, King Charles Albert of Sardinia declared war against Austria on March 23. Sardinian troops advanced rapidly to the Mincio River. Between May 10 and July 3 provisional governments in Lombardy, Venetia, Romagna, the former Duchies of Parma and Modena, asked to merge with

Sardinia. Liberals pressed Ferdinand II of the Two Sicilies, Pius IX, and Leopold II of Tuscany to join Sardinia in the war against Austria. In April, papal troops under General Durando, Neapolitan under Pepe, and Tuscan under De Laugier, went north with the aim of adding thirty thousand men to the fifty thousand Sardinians already engaged against the Austrians.

Charles Albert entering Pavia. EPA







*Charles Albert crossing the Gravelona bridge with the Piedmontese army. NYPL PC*



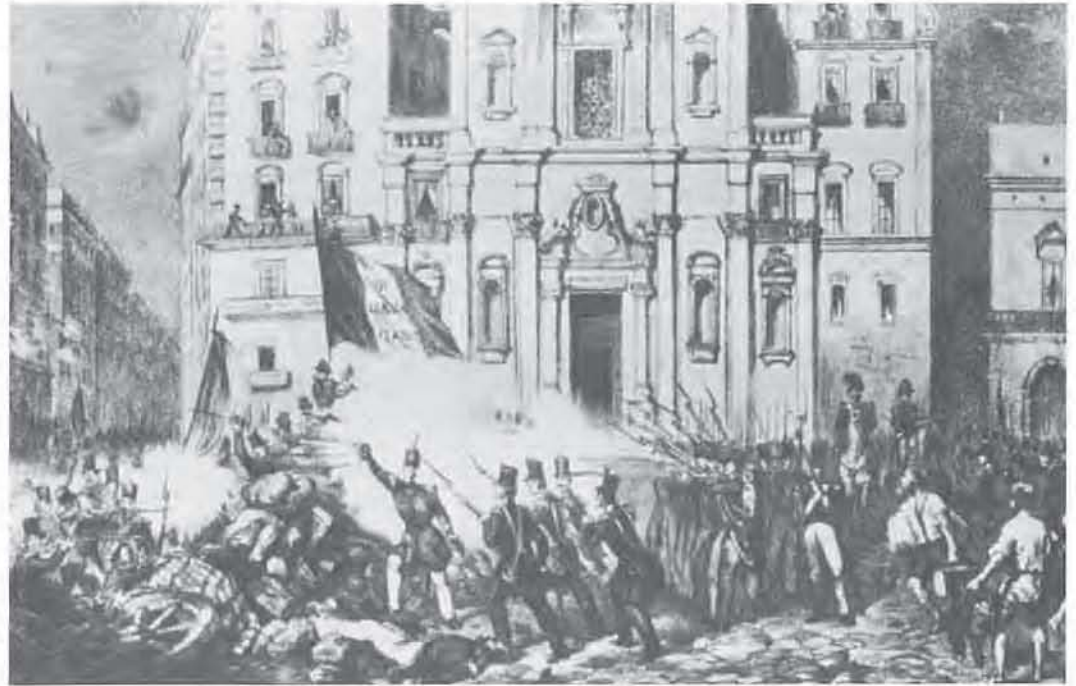
*The five days of Milan. Battle of Porta Tosa. EPA*



*Victor Emmanuel II at the Battle of Goito. EPA*



*Street fighters of May 15, 1848, at Naples. NYPL*



But these successes were short lived. A new crisis began in a few weeks. Pius IX was the pope of all Catholics. He could not, therefore, act as an Italian ruler to the detriment of a non-Italian Catholic sovereign—the emperor of Austria—on whom, moreover, he relied for Catholic supremacy on the Continent. Having declared at the end of April that he could not take part in a war between Catholic states, Pius IX ordered his troops to remain in papal territory. This was a major blow to the war for independence and, by implication, to liberalism. The majority of Italian Catholics rejoiced at the pope's decision. The neo-Guelph minority became uncertain. (The papal order was not obeyed by all the troops; many soldiers and officers followed General Durando and joined the war against the Austrians as volunteers.) Counting on the support of the masses of the people, Ferdinand II of the Two Sicilies suspended the constitution in May and ordered the arrest of leading liberals soon after. Following the papal lead, he ordered his troops to withdraw from the war against Austria. General Pepe and about two thousand men followed Durando's lead and went to Venice, which they helped defend against the Austrians in the siege of 1849.

The political crisis that suddenly engulfed the empire had not affected the Austrian armed forces; they remained loyal to their emperor and to the long-established traditions he represented. Confident of the loyalty of the troops, generals took the initiative in reestablishing the emperor's authority. Sardinians and volunteers had achieved minor successes in May and June. They were defeated late in July at Custoza and compelled to evacuate all occupied territory. An armistice was signed between Sardinia and Austria.

Pressed by a democratic cabinet headed by Urbano Rattazzi, Charles Albert denounced the armistice in March 1849 and returned once again to the field of battle. Defeated a few days later at Novara, he abdicated in the hope that his son Victor Emmanuel II would be granted more favorable peace conditions. He went to Portugal, where he died soon after.

#### *THE BRIEF HOUR OF DEMOCRACY IN 1849*

Liberals had been dismayed by the political defeats inflicted by Pius IX and Ferdinand II. They were even more dismayed by the military defeats inflicted on the Sardinians by the Austrians. Democrats proceeded to take the offensive. Luigi Settembrini and

*Luigi Settembrini. EPA*





several of his friends organized a conspiracy in Naples with the aim of overthrowing Ferdinand II, ending Neapolitan separatism, and merging the Two Sicilies in an Italian state. The conspiracy failed. The assassination of the liberal prime minister Rossi in Rome was followed by the flight of Pius IX to Gaeta, where he was soon joined by Leopold II of Tuscany. Republicans seized power in Florence under the leadership of a triumvirate composed of Domenico Guerazzi, Giuseppe Montanelli, and Giuseppe Mazzoni. The Roman Republic, proclaimed on February 9, 1849, was led by another triumvirate consisting of Mazzoni himself, Carlo Armellini, and Aurelio Saffi. The revolutionary assembly made Manin dictator of the Venetian Republic. Calls for volunteers came from the governments of the three republics and from the provisional government of Palermo, which faced an invasion of troops loyal to Ferdinand II.

Victorious at Novara, Austrian armies moved against Tuscany, Venice, and remaining centers of democratic resistance in northern Italy such as Brescia. The troops of Ferdinand II reoccupied Sicily. A French expeditionary force landed in Civitavecchia to reestablish papal rule in Rome where the Triumvirs entrusted to Garibaldi the command of the available forces of about twelve thousand volunteers. Heroism abounded in the besieged cities, in encounters with more numerous and better-equipped troops, in desperate attempts to reach those still fighting, in the aid civilians gave to those trying to escape Austrians and police. Goffredo Mameli, the young poet whose hymn to Italy is now the national anthem, was one of many who died at the walls of Rome. Garibaldi's courageous wife Anita, exhausted, and debilitated by disease, died in the swamps of Comacchio. The priest Ugo



Carlo Armellini. EPA



Aurelio Saffi. EPA



Entry of the French into Rome,  
July 12, 1849. EPA





*Goffredo Mameli, poet and soldier. EPA*

Bassi, Garibaldi's loyal companion, and Angelo Brunetti (the Roman republican leader nicknamed Ciceruacchio) met death before a firing squad. The small volunteer forces could not stop the Austrians and French for long. Tuscany fell in May. After a few successful engagements against the French and Bourbon mercenaries, Rome finally surrendered early in July. The Austrians entered Venice, last bulwark of the European revolution that had started eighteen months earlier, at the end of August. In the areas controlled by Austria, in the Papal States, and in the Two Sicilies, the police worked hard to eliminate revolutionaries; jails were full and hangmen busy.

*Angelo Brunetti, nicknamed Ciceruacchio. EPA*



#### LIBERALISM IN THE KINGDOM OF SARDINIA

There was a major difference between the situation that had existed in Italy prior to March 1848 and the state of affairs after August 1849. In one important area of the country, the Kingdom of Sardinia, there was genuine liberty. Mainly on the advice of Massimo D'Azeglio, then the most prominent of the Piedmontese liberals, Victor Emmanuel II rejected the Austrian request that constitutional liberties be abolished in his kingdom. Here, freely expressed consensus strengthened the institutions of the state; individual activities made for economic expansion, the foundation not only of prosperity but of military power also; ideas could be formulated, initiatives taken, plans made and carried out not only by cabinet ministers and deputies but by citizens of the kingdom and by tens of thousands of exiles who had come from all over Italy to Turin and Genoa. The exiles, particularly the Lombard Giorgio Pallavicino and the Sicilian Giuseppe La Farina, acting in close cooperation with Manin who was in Paris, were responsible for the formation in 1856/57 of the *Società Nazionale* (National Society), which aimed at the unification of Italy under Victor Emmanuel. The National Society became the Italian arm of the Sardinian liberal regime. In it, joining hands in a common effort to create constitutional unitarianism, were moderates willing to renounce particularism and democrats willing to renounce republicanism.

The hopes of Italian patriots were focused on Sardinia. Cavour was their man. As soon as he was elected he made his mark in the Sardinian Parliament. A member of the D'Azeglio cabinet in 1850, he became prime minister in 1852. In Parliament, he brought about a liberal coalition of his own progressive moderates and of Rattazzi's democrats—the same coalition that outside Parliament later gave birth to the National Society. Supported by a strong parliamentary

*Cavour's study. Palazzo Carignano, seat of the Italian Parliament in Turin. EPA*





majority and by the king. Cavour made internal administration more efficient, improved public education, curbed divisive ecclesiastical privileges (as a result, he was excommunicated by the archbishop of Turin). Most important of all was the reorganization of the armed forces. Enlightened financial policies, political stability, dynamic private initiative, and governmental stimulus quickly made Sardinia's continental regions the most economically advanced area of Italy. In 1855, Cavour was able to convince the parliamentary majority and the king that Sardinia should join Great Britain and France in the war being waged in the Crimea to check Russian expansion toward the Mediterranean. It was an act of open hostility against Austria, which, though neutral, was friendly to Russia—and was interpreted as such in Vienna. The fifteen thousand Sardinians sent to the Crimea distinguished themselves at the Chernaya and in other engagements. As a result of the participation in the war, Sardinian delegates were able to raise questions concerning Italy at the Paris Peace Congress of 1856. From then on, Sardinia could count on the support of France's emperor and British public opinion. Many Britishers in influential positions sympathized strongly with Italian patriots, and were shocked by the excesses of the police in the Two Sicilies, publicized and severely condemned by Gladstone.

#### REPRESSION

In Sardinia there was liberty and progress, but elsewhere in Italy police repression was more severe than ever. In the 1850s, courageous patriots organized conspiracies and uprisings in Lombardy, Venetia, Romagna, Tuscany, Sicily. The despot Charles III of Bourbon (whose father had been promoted in 1847 from duke of Lucca to duke of Parma) was killed. Agesilao Milano's attempt on the life of Ferdinand II failed, as did that of Orsini and Pieri against Napoleon III, hated by Italian republicans for his role in the events of 1849. Among the many patriots executed

were Speri, who had led the defense of Brescia against the Austrians in 1849; the priest Tazzoli, organizer of a conspiracy in Lombardy; Sciesa, a Milanese republican, and Calvi, who had led an uprising in Cadore. The Neapolitan Pisacane, scion of a noble family and a committed democrat, landed at Sapri, south of Salerno, with a small band of exiles; surrounded by Bourbon troops, he killed himself rather than fall into the hands of the enemy.

#### CAVOUR'S DIPLOMACY

Sardinia was now stronger than it had been in 1848 and there was considerable unrest in Italy, but Cavour knew it would take more than these two factors to expel Austria and her puppets from Italy. After the Peace of Paris, he devoted his energies to winning the military cooperation of France. Entrusted with dictatorial powers and supported by a majority of the French nation, the Emperor Napoleon III aimed at reestablishing the European leadership of France, once again economically and militarily the strongest power on the Continent. The war against Russia had been a good appetizer: Russian imperialism had been checked—at least for the time being; and French influence was strong in the Ottoman Empire. Owing to France a new state—Moldavia-Walachia (after 1862, Romania)—had been created in the strategic area between the Austrian, Russian, and Ottoman empires.

Napoleon turned his gaze toward Italy, as so many French rulers had done since the times of Pepin III eleven hundred years before. His simple aim was to replace Austrian hegemony with French hegemony; his instruments would be the Kingdom of Sardinia and the papacy. Late in 1857, he informed Cavour that he would help should Sardinia again become involved in a war against Austria. The attempt of Orsini and Pieri in January 1858 against the emperor's life at first seemed to end all plans for French-Sardinian cooperation; but after thinking it over, Napoleon decided, correctly, that if he aided Italian patriots their ani-



*The attack on Sebastopol. NYPL*





Paris Peace Conference, 1856. EPA

mosity would change to friendship. Cavour's plan was to expand the Kingdom of Sardinia as much as possible, unifying at least all of northern Italy. The main objective was to expel the Austrians; the rest would follow. In July 1858, at the emperor's invitation, Cavour met Napoleon secretly at Plombières. There was no written treaty, only an oral agreement that if Austria were to attack Sardinia, France would come to the rescue; all areas north of the Apennines would be added to Sardinia, which, in exchange, would surrender Savoy and Nice to France; Umbria would be joined to Tuscany to form a Central Italian kingdom; the kingdoms of Northern Italy, Central Italy, Two Sicilies (or separate kingdoms of Naples and Sicily if Sicilians preferred to be on their own), and papal Latium would form a federation headed by the pope; Victor Emmanuel's teen-aged daughter Clotilde would marry Napoleon's cousin and namesake Prince Napoleon (nicknamed Plon-Plon). The emperor hoped that this cousin would become king of Central Italy and that another, Lucien Murat, would replace the Bourbons on the throne of Naples.

#### 1859, THE SECOND WAR OF THE RISORGIMENTO

Sardinia prepared for war. A call for volunteers went out among the exiles. Garibaldi, who had been living for some years on a farm on the island of Caprera off the Sardinian coast, was asked to take command of three thousand volunteers. The National Society prepared for insurrections. The Austrian government fell into a trap set by Cavour and declared war on Sardinia on April 23, 1859. The second, and major, war of the *Risorgimento* was under way. The day Austrian troops invaded Sardinian territory, one hundred thousand French troops crossed the Alps. Victory followed on victory. Victor Emmanuel and



The Zouaves and the Imperial Guard dislodging the Austrians from the Porta Magenta in Milan. NYPL PC

The French army marching through a Sardinian fortified place toward the Austrian lines. NYPL PC





Napoleon entered Milan together. At the end of June, at Solferino and at San Martino (not far from Mantua), the biggest battle of the war was fought. Between the French, Sardinians, and Austrians (led by Napoleon, Victor Emmanuel, and the young emperor Franz Josef respectively), casualties were over thirty thousand—in just a few hours! The carnage of Solferino and San Martino, the growing hostility of French Catholics (until then Napoleon's main supporters) to a war that threatened the integrity of the Papal States, the massing of Prussian troops on the Rhine as if preparing to attack France, induced Napoleon to sign the armistice of Villafranca early in July. Lombardy (and, by tacit consent, Parma) would be annexed by Sardinia; Habsburg-Lorraine princes would be reinstated in Tuscany and Modena; and the pope would not be deprived of any territory. Napoleon communicated these terms to Victor Emmanuel: no more mention was made of Savoy and Nice. Angered, Cavour resigned. Victor Emmanuel had a better understanding of Napo-



*Turin. Sardinian cavalry going to the camp, 1859. EPA*



*Battle of Solferino. EPA*

*Entrance into Milan of Victor Emmanuel II and Napoleon III. EPA*







Meeting of the emperors of France and Austria at Villafranca. EPA

leon's difficulties and agreed to the armistice. Lombardy became formally part of Sardinia and a peace treaty was signed in Zürich on November 10.

#### REVOLUTIONS

The landslide had begun. In bloodless revolutions, liberals established themselves in power: in Tuscany in April; in Parma, Modena, and papal Bologna in June. Uprisings in Umbria and the Marches were suppressed by mercenary troops loyal to the pope. Cavour had appointed commissioners to govern the liberated areas: D'Azeglio in Bologna, Boncompagni in Florence, Farini in Parma. After Villafranca the commissioners were withdrawn, but liberal provisional governments, headed respectively by Cipriani, Ricasoli, and Farini (as representative of the *Società Nazionale*) made it clear that no restoration would be tolerated, and that people unanimously wanted union with Sardinia. Cavour and Italian patriots now had other friends. At the elections in May, a Liberal majority had been elected to the British House of Commons. All the major political figures now in power in London (Lord Russell, Lord Palmerston, Gladstone) were friendly to Italy. Napoleon vacillated. In accordance with the wishes of the parliamentary majority, and of Italian patriots everywhere, Cavour became prime minister again. In March 1860, he persuaded Napoleon to accept the merging of Tuscany, Romagna, Modena, and Parma with Sardinia, in exchange for Savoy and Nice. The state of which Cavour was prime minister now included one-third of Italy.

#### GARIBALDI'S CAMICE ROSSE

The war against Austria and the incorporation of Lombardy had been the first chapter. The revolutions in Florence, Bologna, Modena, and Parma, and their merging with the Sardinian state, had been the second chapter. Now came the third. It was the most spectacular and the most unforgettable for Italians. Ferdinand II of the Two Sicilies had died in 1859 and was replaced by his well-meaning but ineffectual son Francis II. The *Società Nazionale* had organized an uprising in Palermo, in April 1860. It was quickly suppressed. Other revolutionary attempts were launched in the island by the republicans Rosolino Pilo and Nicola Fabrizi. With Cavour's knowledge and approval, La Farina in Turin requested and obtained the cooperation of Garibaldi to free Sicily from the Bourbons. With the connivance of the Sardinian government, which supplied money and weapons, Garibaldi and a thousand secretly recruited volunteers boarded two ships at night and sailed from Quarto, near Genoa, on May 5. British ships patrolled Sicilian waters. On May 11 the *Garibaldini*, whose red shirts became a byword, landed at Marsala, Sicily's westernmost port.

Only a poet can do justice to the events of the next five months. At Salemi, Garibaldi proclaimed a dictatorship over Sicily in the name of Victor Emmanuel. On the following day the red-shirted Thousand routed an enemy force three times its size at Calatafimi. On the twenty-seventh of May, having broken through an army of twenty-five thousand, they entered Palermo. The *Garibaldini*, who were joined by thousands of





Francis II, King of the Two Sicilies. EPA.



Garibaldi and the Redshirts land at Marsala. NYPL PC

The entrance of Garibaldi into Palermo, May 25, 1860. EPA

The Battle of Calatafimi. EPA



Sicilians and volunteers from the north, on July 20 won a victory against the Neapolitans at Milazzo which completed the liberation of the island. The success of what initially had appeared a mad enterprise, in the opinion of most, was owed to Garibaldi, who set the example of extreme bravery, who knew how to lead on the battlefield, and who inspired men to do or die; to those like Sirtori, Bertani, Bixio, Mario, Medici, Crispi, Depretis, who shared military and political responsibility with Garibaldi; to the courage, enthusiasm, and discipline of the *Camice Rosse* (the Redshirts) and to the active support of Sicilian patriots. Italian liberals and democrats felt a surge of pride. Foreigners applauded.

The Battle of Milazzo, 1860. EPA





The island itself had been liberated, but the mainland remained. With British aid, Cavour maneuvered to prevent possible Russian and Austrian intervention in favor of Francis II. He got Napoleon's reluctant approval of a policy of French nonintervention on condition that the pope be not disturbed in the possession of Rome and Latium. British ships kept the Bourbon navy at bay in August while the Garibaldini crossed the Strait of Messina. From Reggio to Naples there was no opposition. The populace was stunned; officials of the Bourbon administration disappeared; regiments disintegrated. On September 7, Garibaldi entered the capital of the Two Sicilies. Enemy forces had been reorganized and regrouped. The last battle—the biggest battle of the astounding campaign—was fought on October 1 at the Volturno River, north of Naples. Garibaldi won. Francis II withdrew to Gaeta, then went into exile in Rome. Except for a couple of garrisons, which would surrender early in 1861, the Italian South had been liberated. The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies had ceased to exist.

#### THE PAPAL STATES SHRINK

The fourth chapter in the 1859/60 unification story was a short one. Garibaldi had made it clear that from Naples he was going to Rome: this action would be intolerable to the French emperor whose plans for creating a subservient Italian federation had miscarried miserably. Mazzini had gone to Naples to create a government antagonistic to that of Turin; Garibaldi was against this move, but some of his closest collaborators favored it. To forestall Garibaldi's march on Rome and Mazzini's republican government, Cavour obtained Victor Emmanuel's consent to dispatch an army to occupy the Marches and Umbria, cut Garibaldi

off from Latium, and ensure that the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies would be incorporated in the Italian state. In one nearly bloodless battle, at Castelfidardo late in September, papal mercenaries led by a French legitimist were defeated. The Marches and Umbria were liberated. On October 26, Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel met on horseback at Teano, north of Naples. The conqueror greeted the newcomer as king of Italy, and a few days later returned to his farm in Caprera.

#### ITALY

The first Italian parliament met in Turin in February 1861. The Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on March 17. Ten days later a motion was carried recognizing Rome as the capital of Italy. The new Italian state did not yet include all the Italian nation, but the *Risorgimento's* main goal had been achieved. His work done, Cavour died on June 6.

*The meeting of Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel II at Teano. EPA*

*The Battle of Castelfidardo, 1860. EPA*







Humbert I. ICI

12

## THE TROUBLED KINGDOM OF ITALY (1861–1946)

*The ordeal of united Italy – Three major phases – From constitutionalism to democracy – Rome and Venice join united Italy – Right-of-center and left-of-center alternate (1861–1891) – The Triple Alliance – Short-lived colonialism – Liberalism, 1901–1922 – Pope Leo XIII and the beginning of Christian democracy – Socialism – Nationalists – Social tensions and economic progress – Foreign policy – Interventionists versus neutralists, the crisis of 1914–1915 – Italy in World War I – Postwar turmoil – Fascism – Parliamentary paralysis – The Communist party is established – The Fascist March on Rome – Mussolini: from prime minister to dictator – The Lateran Treaty and the racial laws – Fiancheggiatori – Antifascism – Fascist imperialism – The conquest of Ethiopia – Intervention in Spain – The alliance with Nazi Germany – World War II: Fascist Italy joins Nazi Germany – The Allies liberate Sicily – Armistice – The Resistance – German surrender – End of the monarchy.*

### THE ORDEAL OF UNITED ITALY

PROGRESSIVE Italians were elated in 1861. Unification, which a short time before seemed a generous dream, was now a reality. It is true that Rome and Latium were still under papal rule; that in the northeast—in Venetia, Trent, Friuli, Istria, Trieste, and the Italian communities of Dalmatia—Austrian officials and Austrian garrisons remained; that peripheral areas long considered Italian (Corsica, Nice, Ticino, Malta), where the loyalty of most people was now to a nation other than the Italian, were lost or were being lost. In spite of all this, there was one united nation from the Alps to Sicily, from the Strait of Otranto to Sardinia. In an area larger than that which had originally been united by the Romans, four-fifths of all Italian-speaking people, more than twenty-two million, lived under the same government and had the same flag as their symbol.

The elation did not last long. There were problems which all together were probably greater than the sum of problems anywhere else in Europe. It had been assumed by the liberal minority now governing the nation, by democrats and by all other patriots who had shared in the struggle against foreign domination and native despotism that unification would automatically bring national cohesion. They were convinced that if they instituted uniform laws, administration, and schools, and amalgamated administrative personnel and the armed forces, they could eliminate illiteracy (three-fourths of all adults had had no schooling whatever); improve health conditions (malaria, tuberculosis, and pellagra took a heavy toll every year, infant mortality was tragically high, serious epidemics broke out from time to time); create an economic infrastructure that could eliminate poverty through industrialization, improve agriculture, speed the growth of services, develop trade. Instead, national cohesion remained weak; large-scale banditry, subsidized by Bourbon loyalists who had fled to Rome, broke out in the rural areas of the South; integration and amalgamation proved difficult in a nation whose regional loyalties were strong and could easily lead to separatism; and in spite of sound policies and strenuous government efforts, for decades there seemed to be no economic takeoff.

A gulf yawned between the minority active during the *Risorgimento* and the traditionalist majority attached to an authoritarian way of life, opposed, or at best indifferent, to political liberty, and convinced that freedom of the press and of conscience opens the gate to deceit and heresy. What traditionalist Italians still wanted was the way of life shaped three hundred years before. This majority was not identified with one class: it included sectors of all classes—just as sectors of all classes belonged to the progressive minority. The progressive few were not numerous enough to shake the stagnant many. Unification had been a political revolution; the real revolution—the change from old



values, ideas, and attitudes to new ones making for a different way of life—was slow in coming. In fact, it did not come for the majority of the nation until after Italy had successfully overcome the crisis caused by foreign invasions and the other tragic events of 1943-1946—until after the republic of the many had replaced the monarchy of the few.

### THREE MAJOR PHASES

The eighty-five years of monarchical rule in Italy consisted of three major and totally distinct phases. There was a first phase, which lasted about a generation, from 1861 to the early 1890s, when dynamism and efficiency at the government level seemed to make little or no difference to the nation. While most other European nations progressed, the Italian nation stagnated. At this time the great migratory movement began. By the 1880s it had gathered momentum and involved millions of Italians who, despairing of improvement at home, looked for a better life abroad. The second phase lasted about two decades, until 1915. New men, new ideas, and new movements appeared on the national scene. Tensions that developed were successfully overcome by liberal policies aimed at the expansion of free institutions. There was progress, in all fields. Most gratifying was the beginning of an economic takeoff, which raised the national income, improved standards of living, and strengthened Italy as a major European power. With its numerous influential and articulate advocates, and with millions of Italians passive, traditionalism was still powerful, but was losing ground. With more and more people participating responsibly in the events of the time, the nation was marching toward democracy. This promising start ended abruptly with Italy's involvement in World War I. For thirty years democratic progress was at a halt. Much ground was lost. Too much suffering and exhaustion caused by the war, and too many divisions among progressive Italians, enabled advocates of the authoritarian way of life to regain the upper hand. Out of the political and spiritual turmoil of the war and the postwar period came fascism, a sad reversion to the age of absolutism and conformity. King Victor Emmanuel III was nominally head of the state, but from 1922 until 1943 all power, without checks or restraints, was in the hands of the dictator Benito Mussolini. Fascism finally drowned in the terrible bloodbath into which the dictatorship had dragged the nation. Through their participation in the Resistance during the final phase of World War II, Italians regained their honor, their liberty, and once again became masters of their destinies.

### FROM CONSTITUTIONALISM TO DEMOCRACY

The Italian state of 1861 was a constitutional kingdom. In the Sardinian constitution of 1848, now the Italian constitution, the hereditary king enjoyed con-

siderable power as head of state. Within a short time, however, the executive power became subject to the legislature, to a parliament composed of an elected house (the chamber of deputies) and an appointed senate. The chamber, elected on the basis of limited suffrage (only half a million citizens were qualified to vote in the 1860s), was more powerful than the senate. When Humbert I succeeded his father Victor Emmanuel II in 1878, Italy had a parliamentary form of government such as existed in Great Britain, France, and the smaller progressive states of Western and Northern Europe. The electoral reform of 1881 brought the number of voters to over two million; the reform of 1912 introduced near-universal male suffrage.

Two main parties alternated in power until the 1890s: the moderate *Destra* (Right) and the democratic *Sinistra* (Left). In the Sardinian Parliament of the 1850s the *Sinistra* had moved to a position keyed to willingness to work within the existing limited constitutional frame and at the same time aiming to widen it—as they successfully did. The *Destra* had a parliamentary majority from 1861 to 1876, when its main leaders were former collaborators of Cavour and non-Piedmontese moderates (Ricasoli, Lamarmora, Minghetti, Lanza, Sella). The *Sinistra* had as main representatives former patriotic conspirators and republicans (Rattazzi, Depretis, Cairoli, Crispi, Zanardelli) and enjoyed a parliamentary majority from 1876 to 1891.

The *Destra* wanted a strong centralized administration, considerable autonomy for the executive, limited suffrage, respect for ecclesiastical authority subordinated to separation of church and state, sound financial policies, as little involvement as possible in conflicts between other nations, and an efficient military establishment. The *Sinistra* wanted wider suffrage, bureaucratic decentralization, subordination of the executive to the legislative power, straightforward anticlerical policies, compulsory lay universal educa-

Bettino Ricasoli. EPA







Mario Minghetti. EPA



Urbano Rattazzi. EPA



Francesco Crispi. EPA

tion at the elementary level, a diminution of the fiscal burden weighing heavily on the lower classes (even at the cost of an unbalanced budget), and a dynamic foreign policy aimed at increasing Italian influence in international affairs. To the left of the Sinistra was the anticonstitutional *Estrema*, formed mainly of followers or sympathizers of Mazzini. After Mazzini's death in 1872, the Radicals, whose position became close to that of the Sinistra, seceded from the Mazzinian and other republicans. There were then no representatives of political Catholicism in Parliament. Pope Pius IX, resentful of the loss of most of the Papal States in 1859/60, in 1868 had issued the *non expedit* decree instructing Catholics not to participate in the political life of the Italian state. For devout Catholics the decree was an order, and they obeyed it.

#### ROME AND VENICE JOIN UNITED ITALY

After the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy, the paramount concern was to complete the work of 1859/60. For all patriots it was particularly intolerable that Rome should still be in papal hands. Garibaldi acted on behalf of all patriots when in 1862 he went to Sicily and raised volunteers for a march on Rome. But the pope had a powerful protector in the French emperor. To avoid French intervention, the Italian government reluctantly sent troops to stop Garibaldi. At Aspromonte in southern Calabria, at the end of August, there was a brief encounter in which the hero of Italian unification was wounded. The volunteers dispersed and Garibaldi was sent back to Caprera. Napoleon III asked the Italian government to move the

capital from Turin to Florence, implying that Rome was not to be Italy's capital. The move took place in 1865. In 1867 Garibaldi made another attempt to march on Rome. In October a small group of volunteers reached the outskirts of the city, but was defeated by papal mercenaries at Villa Glori. The main body was attacked by French troops at Mentana early in November and compelled to withdraw to Italian territory. Three years later, in July 1870, dictatorial presumption led Napoleon III to declare war against Prussia. In August he was forced to order the withdrawal from Rome of the French garrison, now needed to fight the Prussians. Led by General Raffaele Cadorna, Italian troops crossed into Latium. After a token resistance of papal mercenaries at Porta Pia, light infantry units, the *bersaglieri*, entered the city on September 20 through a breach in the walls opened by the artillery unit commanded by Luigi Pelloux, a future prime minister. To the enthusiastic rejoicing of all Italians, except those whose main loyalty was to the pope, Latium was incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy. Rome was now the capital. It was a momentous event, for Italy and for the papacy. It meant the obliteration of the Papal States, which had existed *de facto* since the time of Leo I in the middle of the fifth century, and which had changed boundaries but little since the eighth century.

Shortly before, in 1866, the brief third war of the *Risorgimento* had been fought. Bent on replacing Austrian hegemony over Germany with Prussian hegemony, Otto von Bismarck, chancellor of Prussia, had asked for Italian cooperation in fighting Austria. War started in June. Now a general in the Italian army,





*Garibaldi wounded at Aspromonte. EPA*



*General Raffaele Cadorna. NYPL*



*Italian troops at Porta Pia, September 20, 1870. EPA*

*The Battle of Custoza, June 1866. EPA*





Garibaldi occupied part of the Trentino and won a victory over the Austrians at Bezzecca. The main Italian army was defeated once again, as in 1848, at Custoza. The Trentino remained in Austrian hands together with other districts on the eastern border; but through the mediation of Napoleon III, Venetia and most of Friuli were added to the Italian Kingdom.

*RIGHT-OF-CENTER AND LEFT-OF-CENTER  
ALTERNATE, 1861-1891*

During its fifteen years in power, the Destra achieved the successful integration of the bureaucracy, the judiciary, and the armed forces. It was able to balance the budget (a considerable feat for a new state faced with enormous problems); to improve the economic infrastructure (in 1876 there were nearly five thousand miles of railroad instead of the one thousand miles that existed at the time of the unification); to establish the foundation of an efficient public school system; and end, at the cost of a campaign in which thousands of lives were lost, Bourbon-inspired lawlessness in the South. Separatism was checked: age-old differences among Italians and regional particularism began to weaken. The Destra, heeding Cavour's ideas, tried to solve the thorny problem of relations with the papacy and the Catholic church in Italy generally, by passing in 1871 a law guaranteeing the complete liberty of the pope. The law was not, however, accepted by the pope and his successors, and claims to the former Papal States were not renounced until the Lateran treaties of 1929.

During the next fifteen years the Sinistra, progressive and passionately patriotic, widened the suffrage; abolished taxes weighing heavily on the poor; took the first steps toward social legislation (protection of women and children in factories, accident insurance); expanded the school system; abolished ecclesiastical tithes and compulsory religious instruction; stimulated industrial expansion through government initiatives, and agricultural improvement through the establishment of a large number of cooperatives and savings banks; enacted greatly improved legal codes; strengthened the military forces; curbed the Neapolitan criminal Camorra but failed to curb the Mafia of western Sicily. The governments of the Sinistra and the parliamentary majority supporting them abandoned their free-trade principles after having been in power a few years, and in 1887 introduced full-scale protectionism.

In the 1880s many members of the Destra and of the Sinistra, realizing that new problems had created new political realities, favored a realignment of political forces. Agostino Depretis, the most authoritative statesman of the Sinistra, made himself the interpreter of the need for realignment, bringing together through a conciliatory policy (which came to be known as *trasformismo*) a majority of the Sinistra and a minority of the Destra. *Trasformismo* (which, by a different name, still exists in the 1970s) has often



Agostino Depretis. NYPL

been criticized. Actually, in its adjustment to changing conditions and changing problems, it reflected the political maturity and sense of responsibility of Italians active in public life.

*THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE*

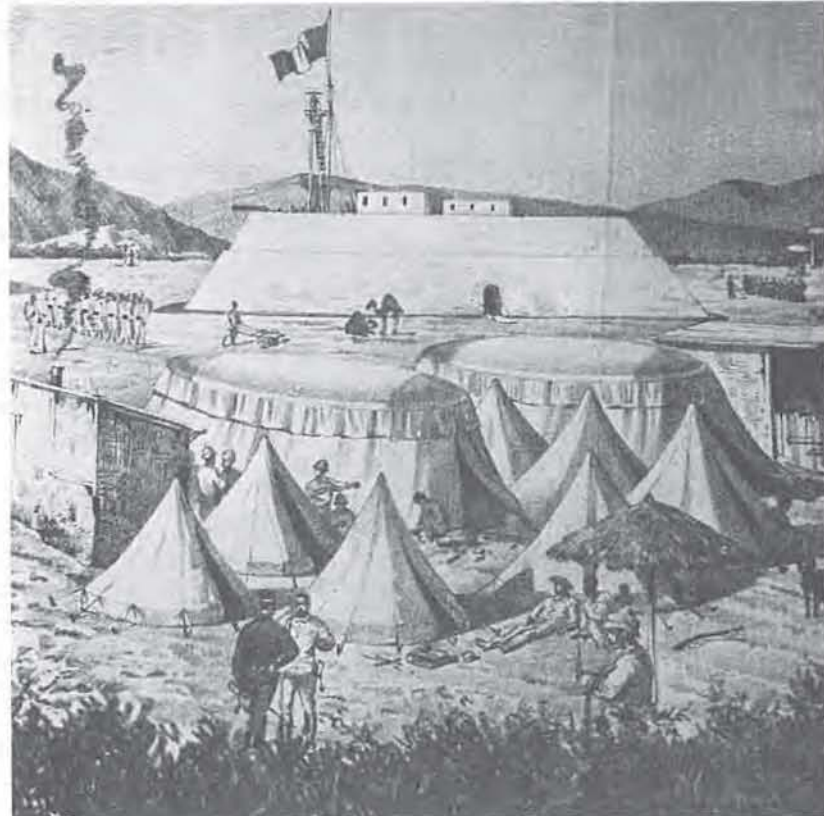
The dynamism of the Sinistra in international affairs meant, in practical terms, involvement through alliances, and the beginning of colonialism. Since 1871, when the German Empire had come into existence, one of Chancellor Bismarck's chief aims had been the consolidation of peace in Europe through a system of German-centered alliances and the isolation of France, reputedly still the most aggressive nation in Europe. German support for Austrian claims in the western Balkans in 1878 had led to an alliance between the two central European empires in the following year. There was a growing number of responsible Italians for whom anti-Austrianism, after Italian unification, was a thing of the past. Some of them hoped that in time German pressure and compensations in the Balkans would induce Austria to surrender Italian-speaking border districts. Moreover, if Austria held Trent and Trieste, what was to be done about France's holding Corsica and Nice? In 1881, the establishment of a French protectorate over Tunisia, only a short distance from Sicily and possessing a large Italian community, caused a profound emotional reaction in Italy where it was interpreted as a threat to the nation's security. Italian trade with both Germany and Austria was increasing, and greater economic collaboration appealed to many. Furthermore Italy and Prussia had been allied in 1866. Playing on these various



elements, Bismarck induced Italy to join Germany and Austria (since 1867 Austria-Hungary) in a formal alliance. The Triple Alliance, as it was known, remained a basic feature of the European scene for over a generation, until finally denounced by Italy on May 3, 1915.

#### SHORT-LIVED COLONIALISM

In the 1880s much of tribal and Islamic Africa was partitioned among seven European powers. Italy was one of them. A chaotic situation had been created by insurrections, religious fanaticism, slave raids, and civil wars in the vast area of northeastern Africa now included in the Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia, and divided then between districts claimed by Egypt, a small and loosely organized Ethiopian Empire, and a large number of independent small Islamic states and pagan tribal communities. Italians acting in an individual capacity had cooperated in the struggle for the abolition of slavery in that area. Other Italians were active as missionaries and explorers. Democrats imbued with nationalistic fervor, whose main spokesman was the former Mazzinian Francesco Crispi, aimed at bringing parts of northeastern Africa under Italian control. Great Britain spurred the colonial ambitions of the Sinistra. A British suggestion for joint intervention in 1882 in Egypt, where a prosperous Italian community had settled, and where a number of Europeans had perished the previous year at the hands of Arab nationalists, was rejected by the Italian government. Italy proceeded, however, to annex Assab, a small port on the Red Sea and nominally an Egyptian possession since the 1820s. Shortly afterward, the British asked for Italian cooperation in putting down



*A military encampment at Beilul, Eritrea, 1883. EPA*

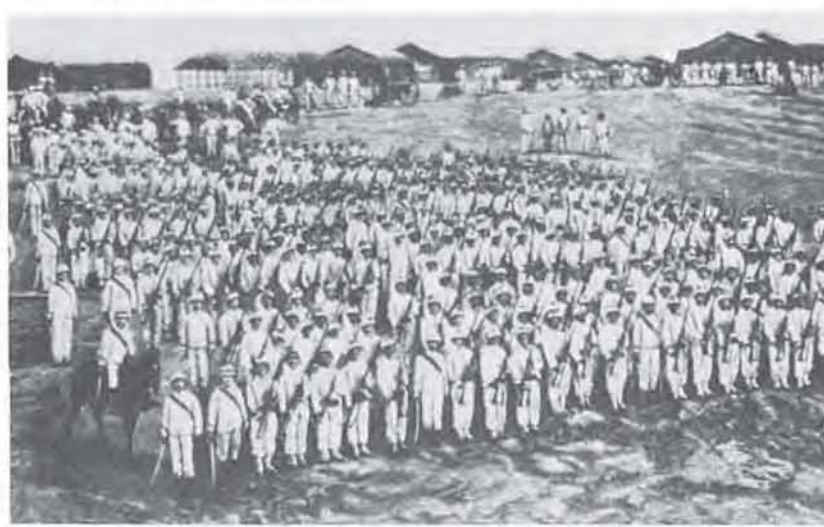
the slave-raiding followers of the Mahdi Mohammed Ahmed, who were then devastating the Sudan. This request led, in 1885, to the Italian occupation of Massawa, north of Assab, and of its mountainous hinterland, since time immemorial part of Ethiopia. Intervention in an Ethiopian civil war on the side of Menelek II, king of Shoa and later emperor, led to the Treaty of Ucciali of 1889 which—according to the Italian version—made Ethiopia an Italian protectorate. In the same year two small Somali sultanates put themselves under Italian protection; with the addition of a coastal area surrendered by the sultan of Zanzibar, and of districts in the interior, they became Italian Somaliland. Assab and Massawa became the colony of Eritrea.

The 1890s were an agitated decade. More and

*A commemorative kerchief of the Triple Alliance. EPA*



*A battalion of infantrymen at the camp of Moncullo, near Massawa. Illustrazione Italiana*





more industrial workers and peasants were aware that a different and better life existed, and they intended to share it. Migration to the United States, to Argentina, to Brazil, and in smaller numbers to many other countries, was a solution for millions. But more millions, destitute and often unemployed, remained. What in the 1870s and 1880s had been the action of a few revolutionaries (of the anarchist Carlo Cafiero or the socialist Andrea Costa for instance) became, in the 1890s, a vast movement of social protest. Intellectuals like Antonio Labriola, Filippo Turati, Enrico Ferri, inspired the organization of a fast-growing labor movement and of the Socialist party, formally established in 1893. Anarchists were numerous and active; one of them, Gaetano Bresci (a sometime resident of Paterson, New Jersey), assassinated King Humbert I. There were numerous clashes between police and strikers. Particularly violent were the clashes in the

rural areas of the lower Po Valley and in Sicily, where associations of militant workers were given the name of *fasci* (or unions—literally, bundles).

In 1893, a financial scandal involving deputies and ministers caused a government crisis. In 1895, Ethiopia's emperor rejected the interpretation of the Treaty of Ucciali establishing a protectorate, moved against the Italians and defeated them at Adowa (Adua) in March 1896. Prime Minister Crispi was compelled to resign. His successor, the conservative Antonio di Rudinì, had to do so also, after serious rioting had broken out in Milan in May 1898. Under the premiership of General Pelloux, public order was maintained through the large-scale use of martial law. In 1900, the murder of King Humbert, a mediocre but good man, was a shock that helped mend the situation. Completing the process initiated under Depretis, most members of the Sinistra and the Destra merged



*Filippo Turati. ICI*



*Antonio Labriola. NYPL*



*Enrico Ferri. Avanti della Domenica*



*The Congress of the Socialist party in Rome, 1906. NYPL*



*A workers' association going to a meeting in Rome, May 1, 1891. Illustrazione Italiana*



*Clash between demonstrators and police in Milan, May 15, 1898. Illustrazione Italiana*



*The assassination of King Humbert I by Gaetano Bresci, 1900. Photoworld*





informally into one liberal democratic group with the aim of preserving and strengthening free institutions. The liberal democrats (usually referred to simply as liberals) were the main force behind Italy's government until they were overthrown by the Fascist coup of 1922.

#### LIBERALISM, 1901-1922

Shortly after his father's death, Victor Emmanuel III, at the designation of the parliamentary majority, appointed as prime minister the old veteran of the first war of the *Risorgimento* Giuseppe Zanardelli, for a long time a prominent leader of the Sinistra. The minister of the interior Giovanni Giolitti, the most prominent Italian statesman since Cavour, soon replaced Zanardelli in the premiership. The Piedmontese Giolitti had been prime minister briefly in 1892/93 and became prime minister for the last time in 1920/21. He was for thirty years the most authoritative figure in Italian politics. Supported by strong parliamentary majorities, Giolitti remained prime minister until the spring of 1914, except for brief periods when the premiership was held by his collaborators Alessandro Fortis and Luigi Luzzatti, or by his opponent Sidney Sonnino.

Liberals of this period were unflinchingly, even if moderately, progressive. From the Destra they had inherited a deep attachment to parliamentary institutions and respect for sound financial policies, from the Sinistra a program of gradual reforms aimed at promoting economic expansion, at diminishing inequalities, and at bringing more and more citizens into the political process until democracy could be achieved. The divisions among the liberals were related to the degrees of moderatism and progressivism of the various groups. To the right of the majority led by Giolitti was the deeply nationalistic moderate wing headed by Sonnino and Antonio Salandra. To the left was a radically progressive wing whose major spokesmen during the crucial post-World War I period were Francesco Saverio Nitti, prime minister in 1920/21,

and Giovanni Amendola, who died in 1925 of wounds inflicted by Fascist mobsters.

In order to bring about the passage from constitutional liberalism to liberal democracy, between 1901 and 1914 Giolitti and his collaborators aimed at inducing the main hostile sections of the nation (Catholics, socialists, and—appearing then as a distinct political force—nationalists) to accept parliamentarianism. There was considerable success with Catholics, some with socialists, none with nationalists.

#### POPE LEO XIII AND THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

Since the revolutionary upheavals of the late eighteenth century, there had been Catholics (including members of the lower clergy) on the side of liberals, democrats, and patriots. But support for traditional authoritarianism and opposition to progressive movements had remained the policy of the Roman church. Sustained efforts had been made by Gregory XVI and Pius IX (except in the latter's brief progressive period from 1846 to 1848) to stem the tide of agnosticism, materialism, and atheism growing in Catholic nations in the wake of liberal successes, as well as the tide of

*Caricature of Giolitti as Moses, promising manna from heaven. NYPL*



Victor Emmanuel III. ICI

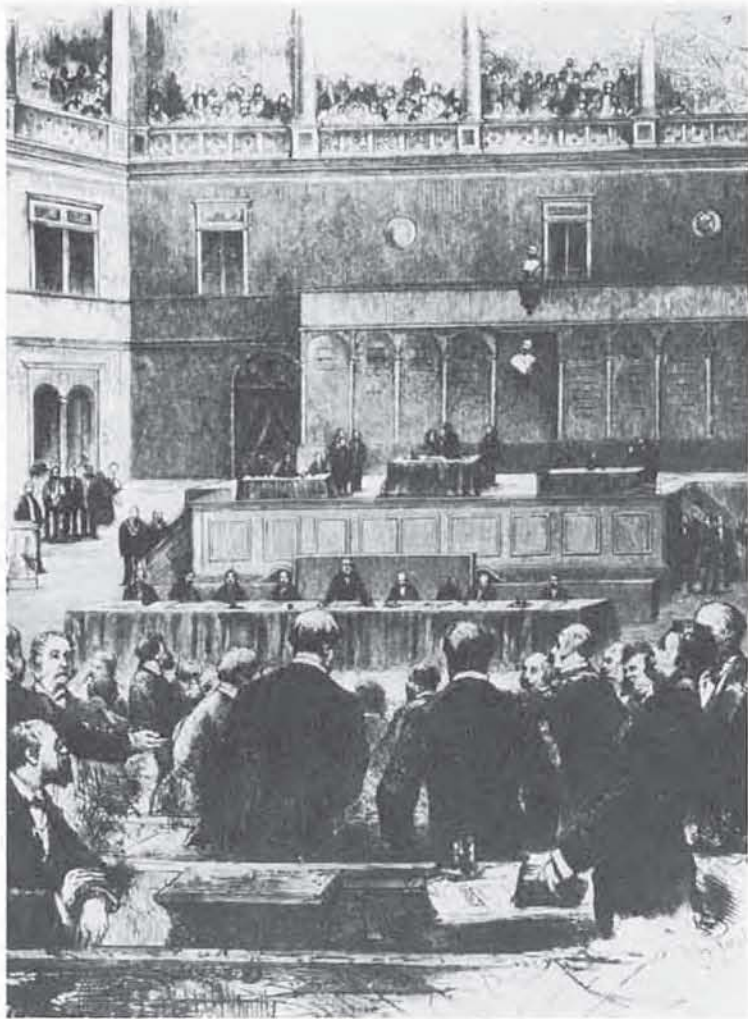
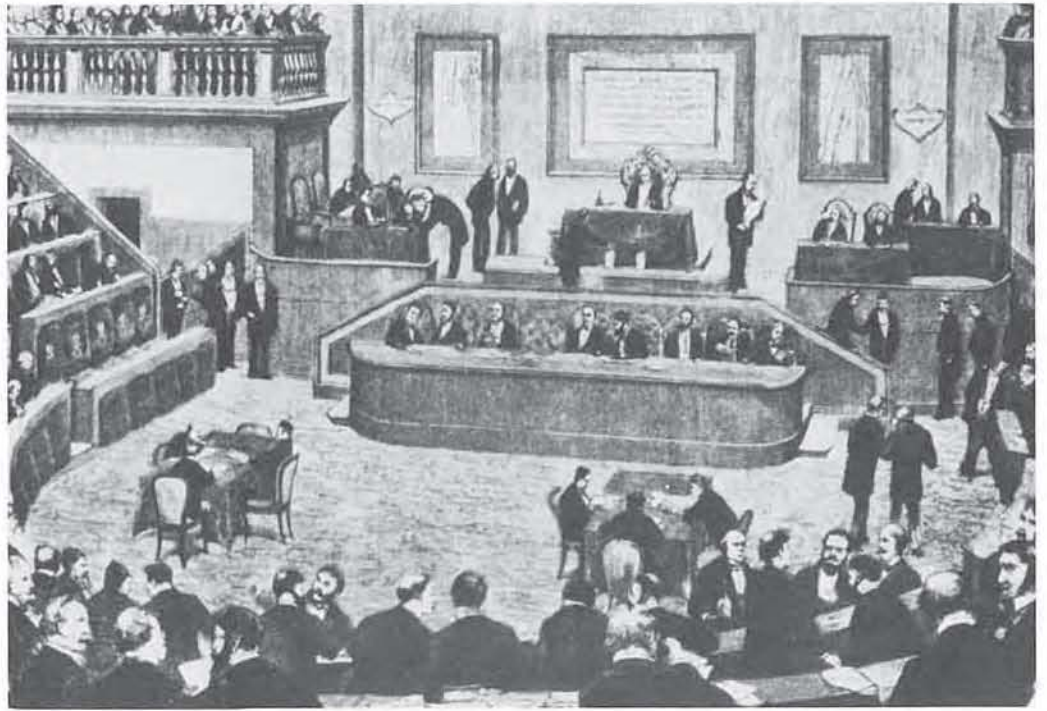


Giovanni Giolitti. NYPL





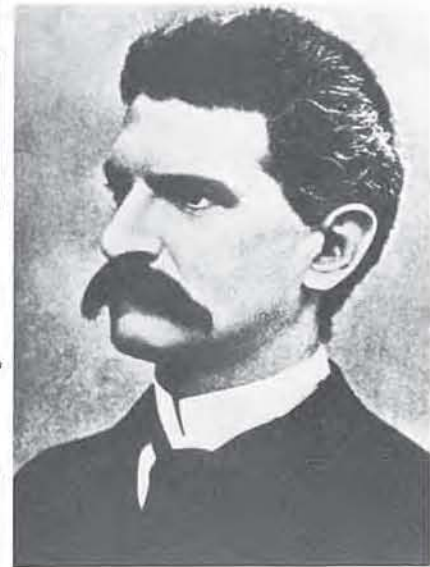
*A session of the Italian Senate. Illustrazione Italiana*



*A session of the House of Deputies. Illustrazione Italiana*



*Antonio Salandra. NYPL*

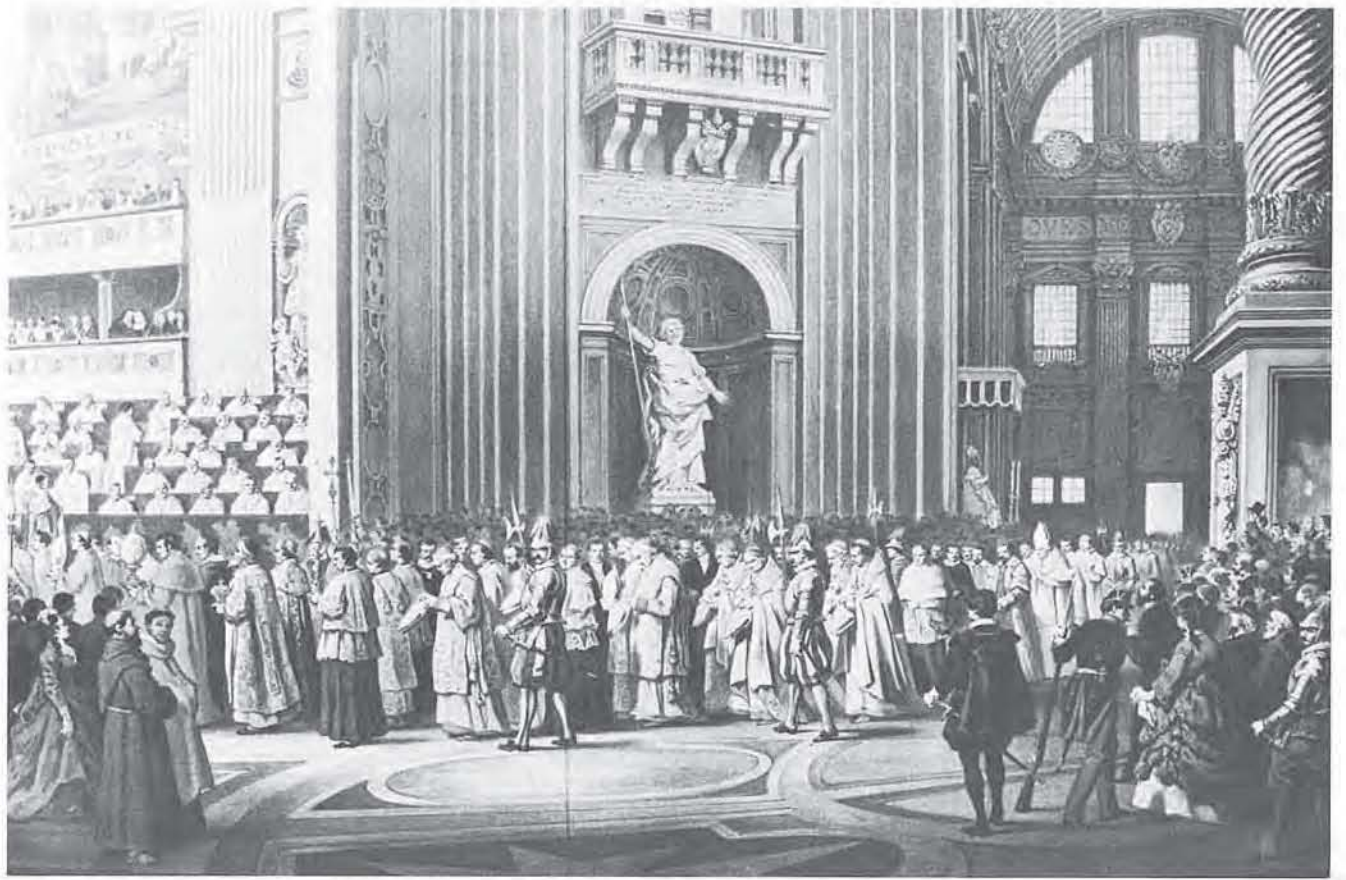


*Sidney Sonnino. NYPL*



*Giovanni Amendola. EPA*





*The opening of Vatican II Council I, December 8, 1869. EPA*

modernism among believers. On the theoretical level, there had been the encyclicals *Mirari Vos* and *Quanta Cura* (to which was attached the *Syllabus Errorum* listing heretical ideas and ideologies), in 1832 and 1864, and the dogma of papal infallibility approved in 1870 (a few months before the end of the pope's temporal power) by Council Vatican I. On the political level there had been the reactionary policies of Cardinals Lambruschini and Antonelli.

A radical change occurred when Pius IX was succeeded in 1878 by Leo XIII Pecci. The reign of the new pope was on a level with the reigns of Gregory I, Gregory VII, and Pius V, as a crucial period in the formulation of the Catholic position. Leo XIII had received from the cardinals who elected him a clear mandate to adjust the teachings of the Roman Church on earthly matters (political, economic, social) to the modern world. The encyclicals *Libertas* and *Rerum*

*Novarum* were, together with several others and with numerous papal pronouncements, expressions of the renovation then being carried out, (and to be carried further under John XXIII in the 1960s). In the 1880s an American cardinal expressed approval of democracy. This was followed by a French cardinal's Vatican-inspired toast to the French Republic (lay and

*Pope Leo XIII before the Porta Santa on the Jubilee (1900). EPA*



*A caricature from Fischietto on the dogma of papal infallibility. NYPL*



democratic!) in 1890. Groups called Christian Democrats were organized in Italy in the 1890s, formulating the policy of Catholics in a democratic society. In 1907 Pope Pius X Sarto condemned modernism (which in Italy had as major spokesmen the novelist Fogazzaro and the historian Buonaiuti) but at the end of 1903 he had authorized a limited participation by Catholics in Italian political life. This was a major triumph for Giolitti's policy of drawing Catholics into the liberal democratic mold. Wider participation was authorized in 1913 when political Catholicism began to be represented in parliament. The *non expedit* decree was abolished by Benedict XV Della Chiesa in time to allow the newly established Popular party led by Luigi Sturzo, a Sicilian priest, to participate in the elections of 1919.

#### SOCIALISM

Marxists, whose position was best summarized in the slogan "One class, one party, one idea" were the organizers of the Socialist party, from which socialist factions inclined toward anarchism and libertarianism had been excluded. Democracy for Marxists did not then mean the equal rights of people free to hold and express different views, but rather a less expensive means than violence to achieve power. Once in power, Marxists would discard democracy as an obstacle to the final goal of a totally uniform society. Reflecting developments among German socialists (at that time the leaders of Continental socialism), dissension arose in Italy in the late 1890s and early 1900s between orthodox Marxists (the *massimalisti*) who were unwilling to use violence but were opposed to observing the rules of parliamentary or representative democracy, and particularly to any form of collaboration with non-socialists; a Marxist revolutionary wing advocating the ruthless use of violence; and a revisionist and reformist wing that was no longer Marxist, supported democracy, subordinated the achievement of socialist goals

to the requirements of the democratic process, and accepted the concept of equality between socialists and nonsocialists.

In the years just preceding Italy's participation in World War I, the revolutionary wing (which seceded in 1921 to form the Communist party) counted among its brilliant young spokesmen Benito Mussolini, who was appointed editor of the party newspaper in 1913. Prominent among the *massimalisti* were Costantino Lazzari and Giacinto Serrati. A group of revisionists who had favored cooperation with nonsocialists in order to change from a capitalist to a mixed economy and to enact substantial labor and social legislation left the party in 1912. Its leaders were Leonida Bissoleti, and Ivanoe Bonomi (prime minister in 1921/22 with Liberal support, and again in 1944/45). Ideologically close to the revisionists were numerous reformists, led by Turati, Claudio Treves, and Giuseppe Modigliani, who remained in the party until 1922. Whatever the situation inside the socialist movement in 1914, there were many Democratic Socialists ready to participate in the life of the nation within the framework of free institutions.

#### NATIONALISTS

From the educated classes came the Liberals who governed the nation, their traditional opponents the Republicans (a small group after 1900), the Catholic leaders who had followers in all sections of the population, the Socialists (Marxist and non-Marxist); also the small but vocal and influential nationalist movement. Turn-of-the-century nationalism was different from the nationalism of the *Risorgimento*, when patriotism, liberalism, and democracy were closely linked. With an obsessive need to prove their nation's greatness, the new nationalists wanted a strong government subject neither to parliamentary nor popular controls, capable of suppressing all divisive tendencies and mobilizing all available resources to achieve the terri-

Pope Pius X. NYPL



Pope Benedict XV, NYPL



Luigo Sturzo. ICI







*Leonida Bissolati. NYPL*



*Pasquale Villari. NYPL*



*Claudio Treves. NYPL*

torial expansion equated with greatness. Nationalists wanted the annexation of districts that geographically or historically or ethnically could be considered part of Italy, and the creation of an overseas colonial empire. Influenced by French friends and French examples, nationalists led by Corradini, Federzoni, and Villari founded the authoritarian Nationalist party in 1910. Party membership was small, and in the 1913 elections only three Nationalist deputies were elected; but sympathizers were many, particularly among high officials, officers of the armed forces, the landowning gentry, and right-wing liberals.

The liberal policy from 1901–1914 was to make clear to Catholics, Socialists, and Nationalists that parliamentary democracy could be useful to all. On this basis, liberals, led by Giolitti, acceded to the Catholics' request for a relaxation of anticlericalism and for better relations with the papacy; to the request of Democratic Socialists (and of Republicans) for universal male suffrage; and to the Nationalists' request for a new round of colonial expansion. Whatever the advantages and disadvantages of democratization may have been, liberal Italy was becoming more and more the Italy of all Italians.

#### SOCIAL TENSIONS AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS

There was no lack of agitation, tension, and turmoil from 1901 on. To the anarchist and Marxist movements of the previous decades was added a syndicalist or anarco-syndicalist movement which derived its ideology from the Russian Bakunin and the Frenchman Sorel. The climax of the agitation was reached in the revolutionary riots of June 1914 led by the anarchist Enrico Malatesta, in which an important role was played by Pietro Nenni, then a Mazzinian republican; always a convinced democrat, he was later for nearly four decades Italy's foremost Socialist leader, and, in the 1960s, vice-premier in the progressive government coalition of Democratic Socialists, Catholics, and Republicans. The riots were quelled without the bloodshed that had marked repression in the 1890s. Industrial and agricultural workers struck repeatedly for higher wages and better working conditions. Labor unions merged in 1906 to form the Italian General Confederation of Labor (now the Socialist and Communist IGCL).





*Pietro Nenni. ICI*



*A group of industrial workers on strike in Turin. 1906. NYPL*



*Striking agricultural workers. Photoworld*

With agitation went considerable economic progress. Agricultural real output (then nearly half the national income) doubled, and capital invested in industrial corporations increased fivefold in the eighteen years preceding Italy's entry in World War I. From 1900 to 1914, the number of industrial enterprises increased from 117,000 to 224,000. In just ten

years, 1900–1910, foreign trade doubled. The Italian merchant marine had become one of the largest in Europe. Foreign capital helped. German, Swiss, Belgian entrepreneurship, managerial and technical know-how stimulated the Italian economy. Emigration was condemned by many (nearly a million Italians left the country in 1913) but the emigrants' remittances helped to balance international payments. In dollars of the early 1970s the Italian gross national product amounted to a little less than thirty billion in 1914. Since the population had increased to over thirty-five million, per capita income was around \$800, or less than half of what it was to be in 1970.

The Liberal leaders' insistence on a sound currency, financial solvency, and a balanced budget went together with the execution of important public works. The railroads, nationalized in 1905, were extended. Marshes were reclaimed in the lower Po Valley, and aqueducts built. Ports and harbors were modernized. A large number of public buildings were erected all over the country. Illiteracy was cut in half (still, two-fifths of the adults were illiterate in 1914) through expanded public education, made compulsory until the age of twelve. The toll taken by malaria, pellagra, and other diseases was reduced. Social security was improved, and cooperatives were encouraged. A labor council was established in 1906 to act as an intermediary between labor and government. By 1914, much still remained to be done to achieve the goal of a democratic society. Much, however, had been accomplished.

#### FOREIGN POLICY

The Triple Alliance was maintained (but with growing misgivings because of Austro-Hungarian territorial ambitions in the Balkans, and German imperialism in the Near East particularly). Relations with Great Britain remained friendly, as they had been



since unification, and those with France improved. But foreign policy proved to be the Achilles' heel of the Italian liberal regime. Giolitti and his supporters, basically opposed to military action, did not foresee the outcome of an initiative they took in 1911 to placate the nationalists. Agreements of the Sinistra with Germany and Austria in 1882, with Great Britain in 1890, of the liberals in 1909 with France and Russia, had recognized, as a sphere of Italian territorial expansion, two large desert provinces of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa: Tripoli and Cyrenaica. It was all part of the dividing up of inefficiently governed Moslem areas among Christian nations, which had been going on since the middle of the eighteenth century. In September 1911, Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire, weakened since 1908 by a series of revolutions and counterrevolutions. In October an expeditionary force occupied the coastal area of the two provinces, soon united as the colony of Libya (the ancient name of the area). In May 1912, units of the Italian navy occupied Rhodes, once the headquarters of the Knights of Saint John, and a few smaller Aegean islands.

It had been an easy little war, but there was a sequel. Taking advantage of Ottoman defeats, four small Balkan states attacked the Ottoman Empire in 1912. They won, but in 1913 they fought one another over the division of the spoils. In the emotional climate created by the war, Serbian nationalists who aimed at uniting all Serbs (and possibly other southern Slavs), including those inhabiting Austro-Hungarian districts,

conspired to assassinate the Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary. The assassination was carried out in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. At the end of July, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Russia came to the rescue of the small Slavic state and declared war on Austria-Hungary, whose ally Germany declared war on Russia and her ally France. When German troops heading for Paris invaded Belgium, Great Britain declared war on Germany. World War I was on. For Italy it meant the beginning of a thirty-year-long tragedy.

#### INTERVENTIONISTS VERSUS NEUTRALISTS, THE CRISIS OF 1914-1915

The events of June-July 1914 did not directly concern Italy, but it was difficult to stay out of the war after a local conflict had become a European one. On August 3, on the basis of a clause in the 1882 treaty of alliance, the Italian government (then led by Salandra) adopted a policy of nonintervention. Emotions were soon roused. Most Italians wanted to stay out of the war. The majority of liberals heeded Giolitti, convinced that neutrality would bring greater political and economic gains than intervention. The majority of socialists, both *massimalisti* and reformist, were sincere pacifists and internationalists. The majority of Catholics did not want to participate in a conflict pitting Catholic Austria-Hungary against the Catholic French nation. At first, a small minority favored intervention on the side of Germany. Nationalists sought expansion at the expense of France. A larger minority, composed mainly of democrats, supported intervention on the side of the Allies whom they considered the defenders of democratic values and institutions against repressive and aggressive German militarism. A third minority, composed mainly of revolutionary Marxists and syndicalists, supported intervention in the hope—shared then by Lenin and his

*Italian-Turkish War, 1912. Bayonet attack on the Hill of Merghet near Homs, Libya. EPA*



*Italian-Turkish War. The Florentine Lancers in action, Libya, 1912. EPA*







*Italian-Turkish War. The capture of Tripoli, Libya, 1911. EPA*

Bolsheviki—of transforming a war between nations into a war between classes.

The Allies and Germany worked assiduously to influence public opinion and politicians. The Allies were the more persuasive. French nationalists convinced Italian nationalists that their first duty was to liberate Trent, Trieste, and the other districts inhabited by Italians and held by Austria-Hungary. French socialists induced some Italian socialists (among them Benito Mussolini) to come out in favor of the Allies. There were violent pro-Allies demonstrations organized by nationalists on the right and by democrats on the left. Inflammatory speeches were made by exiles from Trent and Trieste. Leading intellectuals spoke

for intervention. Foremost was Gabriele D'Annunzio, then at the height of his popularity as a poet and novelist. By the spring of 1915, the neutralist majority had adopted the defeatist attitude of those who sense that the times are against them.

Against German advice, the Austro-Hungarian government rejected the requests of Salandra and his foreign minister Sonnino for territorial concessions. French and British representatives promised instead, in the event of victory, not only Trentino, Trieste, eastern Friuli, and Istria, but also German-speaking South Tyrol (now the Alto Adige), most of Slavic-speaking Dalmatia, coastal areas of Albania, and additions to the colonial empire. A formal agreement was





Gabriele D'Annunzio. EPA

signed secretly in London on April 26, 1915. Early in May, Italy denounced the Triple Alliance. War on Austria-Hungary was declared May 23.

ITALY IN WORLD WAR I

At war, the Italian nation was once again united. Though large sectors of the socialist movement refused to renounce their pacifism and internationalism, they made no attempt to disrupt the war effort. Anti-war liberals and Catholics felt their responsibility as citizens and, once war had been declared, they supported it. Everyone in Italy had expected a short war. Instead it turned out to be a long, exhausting one, demanding the mobilization of all human and material resources and imposing a terrible burden on a nation psychologically and militarily unprepared.

Most of the fighting was trench warfare, which was as totally new for Italians as for all other nations involved in the global conflict fought primarily in Europe. It resulted in an appalling number of casualties on both sides. There were some minor successes for the Italians, such as the capture of Gorizia in eastern Friuli. There were daring naval and air raids. There was also a major disaster, for in October 1917 German-led Austro-Hungarian divisions broke through the Italian lines at Caporetto. They were not stopped

until they reached the Piave River, not far from Venice. However, after the shock of the defeat, the nation rallied and made one more supreme effort.

At the end of the winter of 1917/18, after the surrender of Romania and the collapse of Russia, Germany seemed to be winning. German divisions took the offensive twice on the western front in 1918. Strengthened by American troops, the Allies held their ground and threw back the enemy. Allied offensives were successful in the Balkans and the Middle East in September and October 1918. In early October it was the Italians' turn to attack on the Piave. They crossed the river and advanced. By the end of the month the Austro-Hungarian Empire was disintegrating: Czech nationalists had taken over in Prague, Croat nationalists in Zagreb, Hungarian democrats in Budapest. The armistice of November 4 ended hostilities on the Italian front. Trent and Trieste were liberated. On November 11, for the first time since August 1, 1914, the guns fell silent on the western front. The bloodiest war man had ever fought, a terrifying nightmare, had ended. Over half a million Italian soldiers lay dead. Many more were crippled physically or emotionally for life.

POSTWAR TURMOIL

The fourth of November was a sunny day, and the nation rejoiced. But not for long. The discipline stoically maintained during three and a half years of fighting and suffering weakened. As a result of prewar liberalizing measures and, even more, of war experiences shared by millions, there was greater participation in national life. However, too many of those who had belonged to the silent passive sectors of the popu-

Newspaper headlines of declaration of war on Austria-Hungary.







*World War I. In mountainous Carso, a vigorous Italian counteroffensive routs Austrian troops. EPA*

lation and were now articulate and active rejected free institutions as being either too liberal and therefore detrimental to traditional values, or not liberal enough and therefore restrictive of the citizens' quest for a better and freer life. Nationalists and millions of conservative Catholics on the right, and millions of

socialists on the left, either hated or despised the parliamentary liberal regime. Hatred and contempt were intensified by rapid worsening of economic conditions. Essential commodities, including bread, were scarce. Inflation was rampant. Unemployment skyrocketed. Strikes disrupted public services. The revolution in



Russia—the most impressive event in Europe at the time—fired the imagination of millions who flocked to the Socialist party, led by *massimalisti* who in October 1919 enthusiastically joined the Communist Third International. In 1920, when strikes and rioting multiplied, a Russian-type revolution seemed imminent in Italy. Nonsocialists, two-thirds of the nation, were deeply frightened.

#### FASCISM

At the other end of the political spectrum, nationalists also agitated. Their ranks, swollen by demobilized young officers, were larger than in 1915, when they had successfully pushed Italy into the war. Besides the Nationalist party there were other, more militant, organizations, among them the *Fasci di Combattimento*. The first *Fascio di Combattimento* had been founded in Milan by Mussolini and a few dozen war veterans on March 23, 1919. The nationalists, who had been interventionists, reacted violently to the violence of antiwar socialists.

Nationalists were also deeply shocked by what happened at the Peace Conference. Trentino, the Alto Adige (or South Tyrol), eastern Friuli, Trieste, Istria (over nine thousand square miles with one and a half million inhabitants of whom about half were Croat, Slovene, or German), had become Italian territory. But Dalmatian areas promised to Italy in 1915 had been given to Yugoslavia, the new southern Slavic state composed of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes (and large minorities of six other nations). Italy was not given a share of German colonies. Italian claims on the Italian city of Fiume (Rijeka), Hungary's main port, were denied. To prevent the Yugoslavs from annexing Fiume, D'Annunzio, then the nationalists' idol, led the "March of Ronchi," so called from the village in the Isonzo River valley where volunteers had gathered.

D'Annunzio's followers (known as *Legionari di Ronchi*) occupied the city. Together with some outlying areas it formed for over a year the de facto independent Regency of the Quarnaro. In it was established a regime founded on the authoritarian institutions advocated by the Nationalist party, and derived from ideas formulated by Catholic thinkers concerning political structures, economic systems, and social problems.

#### PARLIAMENTARY PARALYSIS

The Italian government seemed unable to cope with the extremists' agitation. It was not altogether the government's fault. At the time of Cavour and the Destra, liberal parliamentarianism had postulated government by the representatives of parliamentary majorities. With near-universal male suffrage and with the increased participation of citizens in public life, liberal parliamentarianism had become liberal democracy postulating government by the representatives of popular majorities. But there were no majorities in parliament or in the nation. Even before the first post-war elections, the 1914/15 conflict between neutralists and interventionists had deeply split the liberals who then held about two-thirds of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. When the war ended, the old split made the formation of a parliamentary majority impossible, in spite of the efforts of Prime Minister Victor Emmanuel Orlando, a jurist and an able statesman. As the result of the 1919 elections, Socialist representation doubled, Catholic (now the Popular party) more than tripled, while Liberals held less than one-fifth of the seats. Only a coalition between two of the three main political groupings could provide government stability. In spite of many well-meant efforts, no coalition was achieved. Sturzo, the founder and leader of the Popular party, wanted cooperation with Socialists and

D'Annunzio giving a speech to his troops. September 12, 1919. ICI



Victor Emmanuel Orlando. Photoworld





prevented agreements between the Popular party and Liberals. Most Socialists did not want to cooperate with anyone.

All postwar governments abiding by parliamentary rules were minority ones. This was the case of the government headed by Orlando's successor, Nitti, whose left-of-center coalition sponsored badly needed economic reforms and—to the great disgust of all nationalists—abandoned territorial claims in the eastern Mediterranean. Another minority government was that of Giolitti, who had as loyal collaborator Italy's foremost twentieth-century intellectual Benedetto Croce. His foreign minister Count Carlo Sforza reached a compromise agreement with Yugoslavia on Fiume and Dalmatia after which Italian troops occupied Fiume, expelling D'Annunzio. Even shakier minority governments were those led by the Democratic Socialist Bonomi and by Giolitti's right-hand man Luigi Facta.



*Benedetto Croce.* EPA

#### THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS ESTABLISHED

Socialist agitation reached its climax at the end of the summer 1920, when the General Confederation of Labor called for a general strike and workers took over a number of important factories in the industrial North. After less than two weeks, workers spontaneously returned the factories to the managers: from then on socialist agitation subsided. Three major factors had checked socialist revolutionism. In the first place, as more became known of what was happening in Russia, fewer socialists (even among the *massimalisti*) were willing to emulate the excesses of the Communists' Red Terror. In the second place, the Popular party and Catholic labor organizations attracted large sections of the working classes, particularly among the peasants, and turned them away from Marxist atheistic and collectivistic revolutionism. Thirdly, thanks to the policies of Giolitti (who refused to use coercion against strikers) and his collaborators, there was gradual economic improvement.

The ebbing of the leftist revolutionary tide was intolerable for young Marxist intellectuals convinced that they were on the threshold of the Promised Land, their imaginations fired by the Bolshevik successes in Russia where terror was wiping out all opposition and the Red Army was winning the civil war. They shared Lenin's belief in the legitimacy of ruthless violence by totally committed and totally disciplined revolutionaries. They despised democratic values, hated democratic institutions, and aimed at establishing the Leninist dictatorship of the vanguard of the proletariat. Led by Armando Bordiga, Angelo Tasca, Antonio Gramsci, Palmiro Togliatti, the pro-Bolshevik minority, nearly one-third of the party membership, seceded from the Socialist party in January 1921 and formed the Communist party. Bordiga, the first secretary-general of the new party, was replaced after a short while by Gramsci, the nominee of Zinoviev, then the leader



*Antonio Gramsci, founder of the Italian Communist party.* EPA

*Palmiro Togliatti.* Photoworld





of the Third International. After Gramsci's arrest, in 1927 Zinoviev's successor Bukharin appointed Togliatti as secretary-general. Togliatti held the position until his death in 1964. The 1921 elections (the last free elections in Italy until 1946) were a disappointment for the Communist leaders.

By the end of 1920 the possibility of a leftist revolution no longer existed. But the fear caused by two years of turmoil and disorder remained. A strong reaction set in among vast sectors of the two-thirds of the nation that had opposed socialism. It led to a revolution from the right within two years. The most militant elements of the reaction were the black-shirted followers (*Camice Nere*) of Mussolini, a hodgepodge of war veterans, former revolutionary socialists, nationalists, landowners who had feared the loss of their holdings, fringe intellectuals, assorted adventurers. Nearly as militant were the blue-shirted young members (*Camice Azzurre*) of the Nationalist party. (*Camice Nere* and *Camice Azzurre* merged in 1923.) Though reaction seemed to be directed against revolutionary socialism, in reality it was directed against the liberal parliamentary state, which was held responsible for the growth of socialism and of disorder in general.

#### THE FASCIST MARCH ON ROME

During the winter of 1920-1921, groups of Fascists, organized in well armed action squads (*squadre d'azione*, hence the other name given to Fascists, *squadristi*) began a systematic terrorist campaign with the aim of destroying socialist political, economic, and cultural organizations. Because the Fascists identified liberalism and democracy with subversion, they assassinated liberals, democrats, and progressive Catholics, together with Socialists and Communists. Socialists not inhibited by pacifism organized their own fighting units (the *Arditi del Popolo*) and a minor civil war was fought in many districts of northern and central Italy. Several thousand anti-Fascists and a few hundred Fascists died.

Membership in Fascist squads rose rapidly from a few thousand to tens of thousands. The *Fasci di Combattimento* were organized as the cohesive and hierarchical Fascist party in 1921, with an initial membership of about three hundred thousand, more than that of any other political party. Soon, as well as violence against individual opponents and the systematic destruction of labor centers, cooperatives, workers' institutes, socialist and communist newspapers, there was the occupation of municipalities with leftist administrations. Fascist squads would converge on a village or a town and eject the mayor and the aldermen. Those who refused to leave were beaten up, given castor oil, sometimes assassinated. From villages and small towns, the Fascists progressed to the occupation of provincial and even regional capitals, such as Bologna and Perugia. Because of the government's

parliamentary weakness, and because of the large number of sympathizers in key positions in the public administration, the police, and the armed forces, Fascist violence was seldom repressed. Fascists brought to trial would be acquitted, as some judges were sympathetic to Fascism and most others were fearful of Fascist threats.

In October 1922, at a mass rally of the Fascist party in Naples, Mussolini, now called *il Duce* ("the leader"), and the other leaders decided to deal with the central government in Rome as they had done with local elected administrations. A quadrumvirate, formed by Italo Balbo, Michele Bianchi, General De Bono, and Dino Grandi, was entrusted with the execution of the plan. Fascist squads numbering about thirty thousand men were concentrated in localities around the capital. On October 28, they marched on Rome. The *marcia di Roma*, patterned on D'Annunzio's *marcia di Ronchi*, aimed at replacing the parliamentary regime founded on free elections with a centralized, all-powerful executive. Not trusting the loyalty of the armed forces, whose commanding officers were generally sympathetic to fascism, Facta's ministry resigned, leaving King Victor Emmanuel III with the responsibility of deciding whether to entrust the government to the hands of the fascists or risk a civil war. The king chose the first alternative. On October 31, Mussolini formed a new government that included his own fascists, several nationalists, and a few right-wing Catholics and liberals.

#### MUSSOLINI: FROM PRIME MINISTER TO DICTATOR

After many years of tension, the establishment of a strong government headed by a young man (Mussolini was thirty-nine), capable of enforcing order, putting an end to strikes, making public services efficient again, and dealing from strength in foreign affairs, produced a genuine feeling of relief among millions of Italians. Then and later, Fascists—believers in violence as the foundation of a totalitarian state pursuing national greatness—were never more than a small minority of the nation. However, admirers and supporters of Fascism were many: Fascism satisfied the nationalists' craving for aggrandizement, and the young radicals' craving for a new social order; it satisfied the Catholics' desire to stamp out atheism and materialism, and the property owners' desire to stamp out collectivism. It satisfied the general longing for order. Popular support for Fascism was particularly strong between 1927—when the Labor Chart established the foundation of the corporate economy (advocated by Catholics, neither capitalistic nor collectivistic)—and 1936, when Ethiopia was conquered.

Approval, relief, and fear induced a majority of deputies to legalize Mussolini's policies by granting him dictatorial power in November 1922. Government by decree replaced government by law. The fascist action squads became a state-financed militia under





*A Fascist convention in Naples. Mussolini at center, Michele Bianchi, one of his quadrumvirs, to left. Illustrazione Italiana*



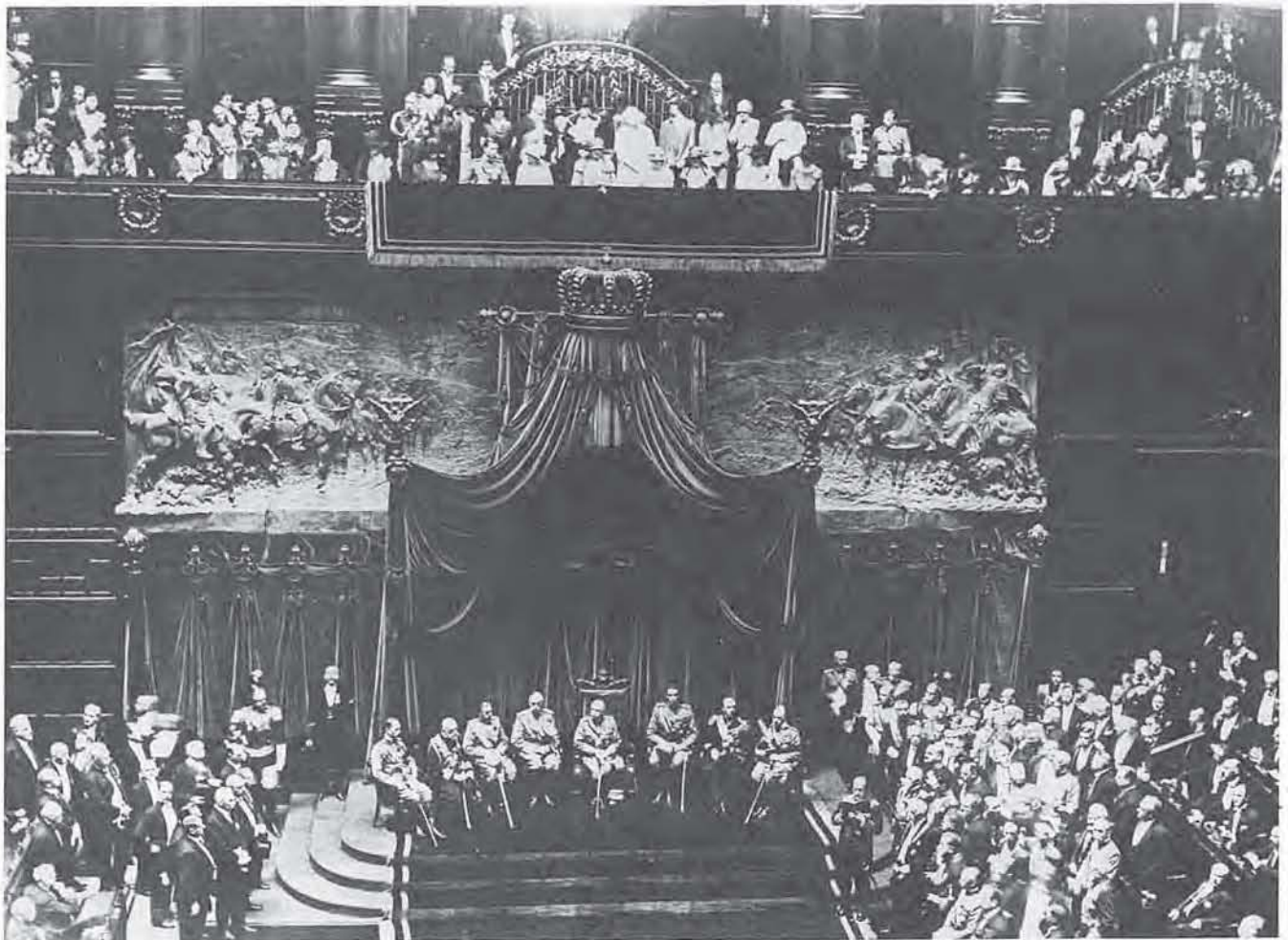
*Fascist leaders being reviewed in Rome, after the overthrow of the Facta government. Photoworld*



Mussolini's personal command. Censorship curbed the press. In 1923, the Nationalist party merged with the Fascist party; most right-wing liberals joined the Fascist movement; a few but influential Socialists (Ferri for one) and Communists (Nicola Bombacci) came out openly in favor of Fascism; at the annual convention of the Catholic (Popular) party, a majority voted to support Fascism. Sturzo, a staunch Christian Democrat, resigned as secretary-general and was replaced by Alcide de Gasperi, a former deputy from Trentino to the Austrian parliament in Vienna.

Sincere approval of Fascist policies as much as a mixture of blandishments and terrorism gave Mussolini victory in the April 1924 elections. Candidates supporting him received nearly five million votes,





*Mussolini addressing the opening of Parliament, with King Victor Emmanuel and his staff seated on the platform.*  
Photoworld

and those of all other parties little more than two million. Because of his uncompromising stand for democracy and against Fascism, the Socialist leader Giacomo Matteotti was assassinated June 10, 1924. A severe crisis ensued. Most non-Fascist deputies left Parliament and set up a loose coalition called *Aventino* (in reference to the plebeians' secession to the Aventine hill in fifth century B.C. Rome). Opposition to Fascism in the senate was led by Croce, Luigi Einaudi (later President of the Republic), and Luigi Albertini, editor of the most important daily newspaper. But the *Aventino* proved unable to shake Mussolini who was supported by the militia, devoted party members, most of the business and landowning communities, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the royal court, together with millions of Italians of all classes whose first loyalty was to the Catholic church and the monarchy, or who simply put order and quiet before anything else. After a short lull, there was a renewal of Fascist violence, its victims political leaders and outspoken intellectuals. First the Communists, then other deputies, left the anti-Fascist parliamentary coalition. Opposition collapsed.

From January 1925, when Mussolini made it clear that he would brook no opposition or dissent, to July 1943, when military defeats caused the dictatorship to



*Giacomo Matteotti.* UPI

crumble, the history of Italy is not the history of the Italian people but only that of a ruler and his close collaborators. The state was reorganized. An admirer of Lenin, Mussolini patterned the Italian Fascist one-party state on the Russian Communist one-party state. Power was concentrated in the hands of *il Duce*, just as in the USSR power was concentrated first in Lenin's hands, then in Stalin's. The Grand Council of Fascism corresponded to the Soviet Praesidium, and the Fascist



OVRA to the omnipotent Cheka, the Soviet secret police. The judiciary lost its independence, and a special tribunal dealing with political crime was set up in November 1926 after all non-Fascist political organizations had been outlawed. Free elections were replaced by Soviet-type unanimous plebiscites. Local self-government was abolished, together with what freedom of the press, worship, teaching, and association remained.

The reorganization of the Italian economy in 1927-1929 along the lines of corporatism corresponded to Stalin's bureaucratic collectivism. Strikes and lockouts were outlawed, and membership in government-controlled associations of employers and employees was made compulsory. A Ministry of Corporations, aided by a National Council of Corporations, fulfilled some of the Soviet Gosplan's functions, being given wide authority on questions of prices, wages, profits, and investment priorities. In 1931 IRI and IMI were created, two government-owned holding companies controlling much of Italian industry and most of Italian banking, respectively. Fascist corporatism remained largely ineffectual. Fascists prided themselves on their economic achievements: the increase in the yield of grains; the reclamation of marshy areas in the Maremma north of Rome and the Pontine Marshes to the south, in Sardinia, the lower Po Valley; the settling of several thousand farmers in Libya; the improvement of railroads and roads (including the building of a few *autostrade*); the increased output of electricity; the expansion of new industries; new public buildings. There is little doubt that the Fascists and the public were genuinely convinced that economic miracles had taken place. In actual fact, there had been just the

reverse, but lack of discussion and of criticism kept people ignorant of the real situation. From 1922 to 1942, the increase in the labor force and in the gross national output was less than the increase in population: thus unemployment was higher, and per capita income, the standard of living, had declined.

#### THE LATERAN TREATY AND THE RACIAL LAWS

Of importance in internal policies were changes in the relations between Italy and the papacy, and in the status of the Jewish minority. Pius XI Ratti, who saw in Fascism an efficient bulwark against Communism, was pope during most of the Fascist period. The Lateran Treaty negotiated by the able Cardinal Gasparri and signed on February 11, 1929, ended the conflict between the Italian state and the papacy. The latter renounced all claims on former papal territories in exchange for the creation of the independent state of Vatican City (an enclave in Rome including the Vatican Palace, Saint Peter's, and a few other buildings), and the payment of a lump sum. A Concordat signed the same day regulated the position of the Catholic church in Italy. Racial laws aimed at segregating the Jews once again from the rest of the population were passed in 1938. Considering that anti-Semitism had been almost nonexistent in Italy and that there were only a few tens of thousands of Jews, the racial laws caused a good deal of surprise and made clear the influence that German National Socialism exerted over Italian Fascism.

Superficially, Fascist control over Italian life was complete. Some divisions did, however, exist at the top level of the Fascist leadership and there was an

*Stadio dei Marmi built under Mussolini, on left; Olympic stadium on right. ICI*







*Education of young boys. A Fascist classroom. Photoworld*



*Pope Pius XI. EPA*

*Mussolini visits a Jewish quarter. Photoworld*



*Cardinal Gasparri and Mussolini signing the Lateran Treaty in 1929. EPA*

*Following his reinstatement as an independent sovereign, Pius XI receives the diplomatic corps at the Vatican. Photoworld*





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Placards and caricatures of Ethiopians carried by a crowd in Italy on the evening of the Italian invasion. NYPL PC

Mussolini in Ethiopia. Photoworld



Mussolini distributes medals to Spanish volunteers. Photoworld



Popular support for Mussolini and the invasion of Ethiopia, 1935. NYPL PC

Italian anti-Fascist exiles fought on the republican side.) When the nationalists won at the end of March 1939, it was practically the eve of World War II. Fascist leaders, living in the dream world of their own creation, did not realize how great a psychological and economic strain had been imposed on the Italian nation as a result of its participation in the Spanish civil war.

#### THE ALLIANCE WITH NAZI GERMANY

East Africa was far off, Spain on the periphery of Europe: more crucial for Italy were the events of the 1930s in Central Europe. Italian Fascists had rejoiced when Hitler established his dictatorship in Germany. Fascism and National Socialism shared similar ideologies, advocated similar institutions, and had similar goals of aggressive imperialism. The chief difference was the absence, until 1938, of anti-Semitism in Italy. There had been, however, one problem between the two dictatorships: Austria, which Mussolini wanted to keep as a buffer state and which Hitler wanted to make into a province of Greater Germany. Grateful for support received during the Ethiopian War, Mussolini decided to let Austria go. The Rome-Berlin Axis came into existence through the agreement of October 25, 1936. Strengthened by Italy's participation in the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan in 1937, it led to the Steel Pact of May 22, 1939, a formal military alliance between Germany and



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*Former Fascist headquarters in Catania. NYPL PC*

#### ARMISTICE

The war was not over. Victor Emmanuel, Badoglio, and their advisers and collaborators lacked the courage to make clear decisions. Had they informed the Germans that from then on Italy would be neutral (as pro-German Spain and pro-Allied Turkey were), they would have been voicing the will of the nation. Instead, in the worst Machiavellian spirit, they assured the Germans that Italy would continue fighting on their side, while at the same time they were trying to make contact with the Allies. Neither the Germans nor the Allies trusted the new Italian government. Germans occupied the Alpine passes and increased their army divisions in Italy from seven to seventeen. An armistice, secretly negotiated with the Allies and signed at Cassibile on September 3 (the day British troops under General Montgomery crossed the Strait of Messina), was made public on the eighth, when a large Allied invasion force commanded by the American General Clark was approaching the beaches of Salerno. Just as Fascism had disintegrated on July 25,

*The British Eighth Army begins invasion of Italy across the Strait of Messina. U.S. Army Photograph*



so now, on September 8, the Italian state disintegrated, and with it most of the army. The king, Badoglio, and several ministers fled to Allied-occupied Apulia. Sporadic resistance by gallant army units in Italy and in the Balkans was soon overcome by the Germans. The navy joined the Allies, who advanced northward from Reggio, Taranto, and Salerno. The Germans occupied all of northern and central Italy. On September 14, a raid by German paratroopers freed Mussolini, whom Hitler appointed head of a Social Republic established in German-occupied Italy.

#### THE RESISTANCE

Twenty months of atrocious warfare followed. To the war fought by the Allies against the Germans (each with some Italian auxiliaries) along the front moving northward from Salerno, was added the war waged everywhere in German-held territory by the Italian Resistance against Germans and Fascists. Insurgent activities already begun in September soon developed into a large-scale and effective Partisan movement.

During the days immediately following the announcement of the armistice, units of the Italian armed forces that had not disintegrated fought against Germans in and around Rome. They were overcome by the superior strength of the enemy. In Rome during the same days, and in Naples from September 28 to October 1, there was fighting between the unorganized, untrained, badly armed populace and the Germans, with hundreds of casualties. Street fighting delayed but did not prevent consolidation of German control in Rome. It speeded German withdrawal from Naples.

Before the end of September, hundreds of thousands of patriots of all ages and both sexes, committed anti-Fascists, soldiers and officers of no longer existing divisions of the Italian armies, industrial workers and young people who refused to be conscripted for labor for the Germans, escaped prisoners of war, had taken to the mountains and to sparsely inhabited hilly areas

*American troops on shore after leaving invasion boats. U.S. Army Photograph*







*German paratroopers free Mussolini in 1943. Photoworld*

*American troops enter Naples October 3, 1943. U.S. Army Photograph*



*Group of Partisans, Langhe (near Cueno-Alba). Cars were covered with British flags to guide R.A.F. planes. NIHMLI*

*Sabotage of a railroad. NIHMLI*





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*The Battle of Cassino. March 15, 1944. U.S. Army Photograph*

the liberation of Rome and compelled the Germans to fall back to the strongly fortified Gothic Line, north of Florence. The withdrawal from Italy of Allied troops which were needed for the August, 1944, invasion of southern France, enabled the Germans (continually harassed by the Freedom Volunteers) to hold the Gothic Line until the spring of 1945. A new Allied offensive started on April 5. A general insurrection ordered by the CNLAI on April 25 freed Milan and much of northern Italy from the Germans. Allied troops were received enthusiastically and proceeded rapidly toward the Alps and beyond. Captured by Freedom Volunteers, Mussolini was executed on April 28. The German surrender was signed the following day, and on May 2 all fighting ceased in Italy. Tens of thousands of Allied soldiers had died in the Italian campaign, and more than twice as many Italian Resistance fighters. Between one-fourth and one-third of the nation's wealth had been destroyed.

#### END OF THE MONARCHY

The monarchy had turned against Fascism too late, and did not long survive the end of the war. After the liberation of Rome, Badoglio resigned. At the suggestion of distinguished leaders who in pre-Fascist times had been loyal monarchists (Croce, De Nicola, Orlando, and Sforza among others) Victor Emmanuel transferred royal powers to his son Prince Humbert, who was appointed lieutenant-general of the Kingdom of Italy. Bonomi became the premier of a coalition government composed exclusively of ministers enjoying the confidence of the anti-Fascist CNL parties. Rarely had there been in Italy a ministry including so many distinguished and responsible figures. The *fiancheggiatori* were now eliminated as completely as the fascists had been on July 25, 1943. In spite of the fact that nearly half of Italy was still under German occupation and that war was being bitterly fought on



*American soldier greeted by an aged Italian woman, 1944. U.S. Army Photograph*

Italian soil, the work of political reconstruction along democratic lines got under way. Through their initiative and hard work, citizens made a start toward economic recovery.

At the designation of the northern CNLs and the Freedom Volunteers, in June 1945 the Central Committee of National Liberation replaced Bonomi as premier with Parri, leader of the Action party and the foremost Partisan commander. A consultative assembly of appointed members was set up in which each CNL party had equal representation. Sforza was chosen speaker of the consultative assembly, whose main function was to prepare for a constitutional referendum and for the election of a Constituent Assembly. The presence of Allied troops discouraged internal authoritarian forces of the right and of the left, and protected the northern borders from the greed of well-armed neighbors bent on territorial annexation. In December, the Christian Democratic party and the Liberal party joined hands in order to compel Parri to resign the premiership. He was succeeded by De Gasperi.

Victor Emmanuel abdicated on May 9, 1946, in favor of his son, and went to Egypt where he died the following year. On June 2 the referendum was held to decide whether Italy would continue as a monarchy or become a democratic republic. Out of twenty-three and a half million votes cast, nearly thirteen million were for the republic. Humbert II went into exile. The Italian monarchy had lasted eighty-five years, nearly a quarter of them spent in wars.



*Ex-King Humbert in Spain. Photoworld*



## I 3

# THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY (1946–)



*Palazzo Quirinale, Rome. In 1947 this building became the official residence of the presidents of the Italian Republic. EPA*

*The impact of the Resistance – The changing political scene – The republican constitution – Political parties (1948–1971) – The nation copes with problems – The peace treaty – Foreign policy 1947–1971 – Achievements at the level of public activities – The public sector of the economy – Achievements at the level of private activities – Intellectual dynamism – Changes in Italian Catholicism – Changes in Italian Marxism – Free enterprise – Ingenuity – Economic dynamism – The changing economic scene – Optimism.*

## THE IMPACT OF THE RESISTANCE

THE tragic events of 1943–1946—the defeats on land and sea, the foreign and civil wars, the invasions, the disintegration of the state, the hunger, deportations, and massacres—added up to more than a political crisis. As had happened four hundred years earlier during the agony of the Renaissance, as had not happened on a sufficient scale during the closing phase of the *Risorgimento*, new ideas and values, not just new institutions, became dominant in the nation. The ideas and values embodied in the Resistance were the real revolution taking place amid the fighting and ruins. It was paid for with the lives of those who in conscience stood up against evil, and in so doing chose to die. Begun during the Resistance, the process of the nation's transformation still goes on.

From the brutal struggle between Goths and Byzantines in the sixth century to bloody battles fought in a recent past between French and Austrians, many foreigners had fought their wars on Italian soil. Most Italians had remained spectators, their energies absorbed by one single, simple aim—survival. From 1943 to 1946 Italians had not been spectators. The turmoil and chaos of the war had freed them from coercive institutions and habits of thought. They took advantage of this freedom to determine where they stood. During the war, a few were subservient to the Germans and many chose to side with the Allies, but the millions who took part in the Resistance and were now free citizens had not acted on behalf of any foreign nation. They had acted as Italians. The Resistance was a search for identity and an awakening of

conscience: from the awakening came the postwar dynamism of the Italian nation.

In 1946, Italians were not of one mind either ideologically or politically. Variety produced a richer life and contributed to progress. Most Italians were, however, agreed on what is fundamental in a democratic society: exercise of intellectual and political liberty, and acceptance of the few simple rules for the conduct of public affairs in a free society. Some agreed because they were convinced that democracy is preferable to its only alternative in the contemporary world—one-party dictatorship. Others agreed because democracy, temporarily at least, suited their purpose. Whatever the motivations, Italians of different opinions cooperated in establishing a democratic republic and in making it work.

## THE CHANGING POLITICAL SCENE

The break with the recent Fascist past was total. Fascism was gone, even if as an idea it still lingered for a small minority (about one Italian in twenty, according to election returns from 1948 to 1970). Spokesmen for what had been the dominant minority in pre-Fascist Italy—such as Croce, Orlando, Nitti, Sforza, De Nicola—were respected, but had a small following, as did many other former prominent liberal and democratic leaders who were not tainted with Fascist sympathies. The radical republicanism that had once inspired the revolutionaries of 1796, Mazzini and his disciples in the nineteenth century, and recently those who had joined Justice and Liberty and the Action party, found few supporters. The ideals and aspirations identified with socialism had gained ground, but their impact on the nation and the state was weakened by the deep cleavage between democratic and authoritarian socialists, between Socialist and Communist parties. With the Christian Democratic party, political Catholicism—once an opponent of democracy and now a supporter—became the dominant force in Italy.

The June 2, 1946, referendum had established the Italian Republic. On the same day elections for a Con-



# REPUBLIC OF ITALY

1: 5,000,000

- boundaries of the Republic
- - - regional boundaries







*Displaced victims of war find shelter in the archways beneath Via dell'Amba Aradam, Rome. Photoworld*

stituent Assembly were held. The fiction of the equal strength of the CNL parties (used to set up the consultative assembly, which now ceased to function) collapsed. The Christian Democratic party polled over 35 percent of the vote, approximately the proportion of genuine Catholic believers in the nation. Advocates of partial or total collectivism—most of them Marxists of various persuasions—were divided fairly equally between Socialists and Communists (approximately 21 percent and 19 percent of the total vote). Liberal and democratic parties which in pre-Fascist days had opposed both political Catholicism and collectivism received about 16 percent of the vote. The balance went to a number of smaller parties.

#### THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

By a vote of 453 to 62, the republican constitution was approved by the Constituent Assembly on December 22, 1947; it came into force on January 1, 1948. The first twelve articles were statements of general principles. Those concerning national sovereignty, equality of citizens, and civil rights were inspired by democracy. Articles stating that labor was the foundation of the republic, that economic obstacles to equality needed to be eliminated and that everyone should contribute to the nation's collective efforts were of socialist inspiration. Articles on the sovereignty of the Catholic church, on differences between Catholicism and other creeds, on the inclusion of the 1929 Concordat in the constitution, were of Catholic inspiration. Forty-two articles dealt with the rights and duties of citizens. Fifty-nine dealt with the organization of the state as a parliamentary republic. The functions of

head of state (President of the Republic) and head of government, or prime minister, were separate. The former was elected by parliament for a seven-year period. He nominated the prime minister who, with his cabinet, assumed power only after having received a vote of confidence from the majority in parliament, consisting of a chamber of deputies and a senate. Elections were to take place on the basis of proportional representation, and only in exceptional situations could parliament delegate legislative functions to the executive. Half a million citizens had the right to ask for a national referendum on any subject except the budget, amnesties, and the ratification of international agreements.

A score of articles concerned the organization of the twenty geographical-historical regions into which Italy is divided, the ninety-odd administrative provinces, and over eight thousand municipalities. Regional self-government was first granted to Sicily and Sardinia. It was granted later to the French-speaking Val d' Aosta in the northwest; to the Trentino-Alto Adige in the north where a restless German-speaking minority accounted for about one-fourth of the population; and to Friuli-Trieste in the northeast. The granting of self-government to the other fifteen regions was delayed until 1970 (largely because Christian Democrats and rightist parties feared that some—Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Umbria—would come under the control of the Communist party and its allies). Assemblies elected in the fifteen regions in June 1970 drafted regional charters and set up regional administrations. In two of them (Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany) Communists had a dominant position. In the provinces, of-





*Election Day in a village outside Milan, 1948. Photoworld*

ficials of the central government cooperate with elected assemblies. The administration of the municipalities is in the hands of an elected municipal council which chooses the aldermen responsible for the various branches of local functions. One of the aldermen is elected mayor by the municipal council.

#### *POLITICAL PARTIES 1948-1971*

As the Christian Democratic party polled a plurality of votes in all general elections held between 1946 and 1971, a Christian Democrat was always prime minister. De Gasperi headed all ministries until August 1953. (He died the following year, lamented by his followers and respected by his opponents.) Since 1953, prime ministers have changed according to which group in the Christian Democratic party prevailed, and what parliamentary coalition supported the government. Prime ministers who were spokesmen for the conservative Christian Democratic right wing were Pella, Scelba, Tambroni; for the moderate center Segni, Zoli, Leone; for the left wing aiming at collaboration with Socialists and possibly with revisionist Communists Fanfani, Moro, Rumor. The tenth Christian Democratic prime minister, at the end of this quarter-century period, Colombo, was considered primarily a technocrat—an able administrator and a wise chairman of the board more than an ideologically motivated politician. Animated debates accompanied each cabinet change but basic Christian Democratic policies remained essentially the same: American-type New Dealism in economic and social affairs, cooperation

with the United States and a pro-European unity policy in external affairs. The presidents of the Republic were first De Nicola, a liberal who had been elected head of state by the constituent assembly in 1946, and was president until the first regular parliament met in 1948; then Einaudi (1948-1955), also a liberal, foremost Italian economist and once a loyal supporter of Giolitti; Gronchi (1955-1962), a prominent Catholic labor leader; Segni (1962-1964) who resigned because of illness; Saragat (1964-1971), leader of the Social Democratic wing of the socialist movement; and Leone (1971- ), the Neapolitan Christian Democratic jurist who had distinguished himself as a successful mediator between conflicting factions.

After the 1946 elections, De Gasperi headed a tripartite coalition of Catholics, Socialists, and Commu-

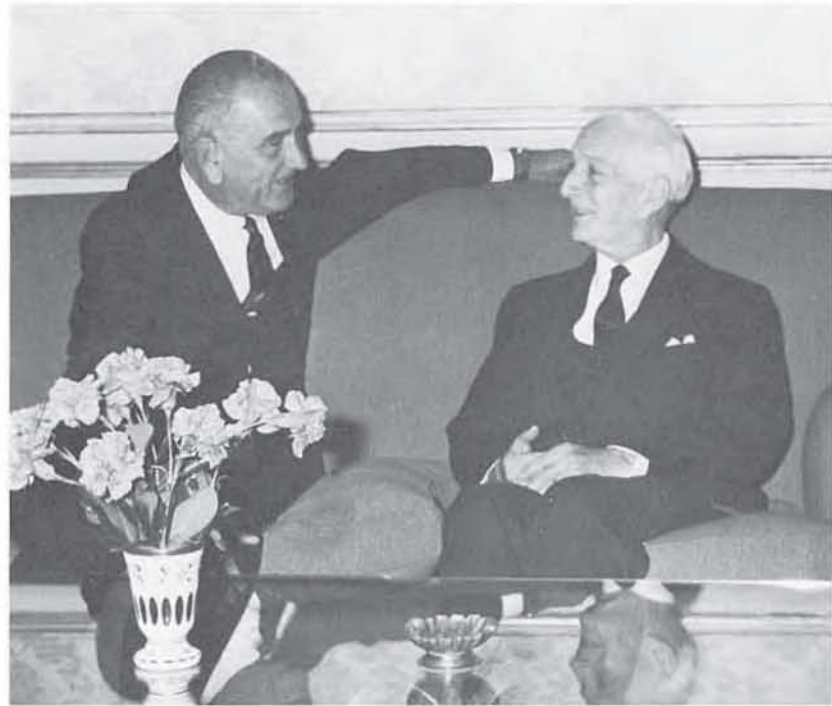
*Alcide de Gasperi. EPA*







*Giovanni Gronchi (left) and Enrico de Nicola. ICI*



*Lyndon Johnson and President Antonio Segni. ICI*



*President Luigi Einaudi. ICI*

*President Giuseppe Saragat. ICI*



*Giovanni Leone acknowledging the official announcement of his election as Italy's sixth president. UPI*





*De Gasperi's cabinet, 1948. Photoworld*

nists for a few months. The Communists used their position to obstruct government activities, with the aim of demonstrating (as they were also then doing in France and Finland) that democracy could not work and should be replaced by a dictatorial so-called "people's democracy." Socialists acrimoniously debated among themselves the problem of collaboration with the Communists. Early in 1947 the anti-Communist Socialist minority, led by Saragat, seceded and formed a separate Social Democratic party. As a result, the tripartite coalition collapsed. After that for twelve years the Republic was governed by a parliamentary coalition of Catholics, Social Democrats, the right-of-center Liberal party (occupying the position held by the Destra after 1861), and the left-of-center Republican party (corresponding to the Sinistra after 1861). Cabinets at times included representatives of this centrist parliamentary coalition, at times only Christian Democrats and independents.

The republican constitution having come into force, elections for a regular parliament were held in April 1948. There was a good deal of agitation: tension in Italy mirrored the rapidly growing cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the widening gulf, after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia of February 1948, between Soviet-controlled Eastern European countries and European democracies. The united front of Communists and majority Socialists polled less than expected—31 percent of the vote. With 48.5 percent of the vote, the Christian Democrats elected a majority of deputies and senators. Altogether, the center parliamentary coalition supporting the government had 62 percent of the vote. After the elections there were Communist-inspired demonstrations and strikes, and an unsuccessful attempt was made against the life of the Communist leader Togliatti. Soon, however, tension abated. By the time new elections were held in 1953, fear of Communism had



*Pro-Communist mass meeting in Rome, 1950. Photoworld*



*Anti-Communist poster mocks Palmiro Togliatti as puppet of Moscow. Photoworld*

lessened considerably. The Christian Democrats polled a more realistic 40 percent and their allies 9 percent, enough to give them a slight majority in Parliament. Communists and majority Socialists were still cooperating, but presented separate lists of candidates. The Communist vote rose to 23 percent, the Socialist vote was 13 percent. After the refusal of left-of-center Republicans and Social Democrats to collaborate any





Army forces in Abbadia San Salvatore patrol street, fearing a Communist uprising following the attempt on Togliatti's life. Photoworld



Communist poster during election of 1948. Photoworld

longer with the right-of-center Liberal party, the center coalition came to an end. In 1960 the right wing of the Christian Democratic party tried to govern the nation with the support of a rightist parliamentary coalition including Neo-Fascists and Monarchists. Demonstrations all over Italy by leftist parties, from the Republicans to the Communists, forced the rightist cabinet to resign.



Christian Democrat anti-Communist poster (1958). Photoworld

The 1956 events in the Soviet bloc (Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, agitation in Poland, revolution in Hungary) had a deep impact on the majority Socialists, many of whom gradually drifted away from the Communists. This created the possibility of a center-left parliamentary and governmental coalition. Through the mediation of Saragat and the leader of the Republican party La Malfa, Christian Democrats and majority Socialists were induced to collaborate. In 1961, the majority Socialist party supported the Christian Democrats in parliament, and finally, in 1963, what had been in 1919-1922 a major goal of the Catholic Popular party's founder Sturzo was realized: a coalition of Catholics and Socialists united in their desire to improve living conditions and in their opposition to the dictatorship advocated by Neo-Fascists on the right and Communists on the left. The coalition was based on Catholics agreeing to some of the Socialists'



economic reforms, and on Socialist concessions to the Catholics in the fields of education, church-state relationships and control of public communications media.

The pro-Communist wing of the majority Socialist party seceded in 1963 and formed a new small party, the PSIUP (or Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity), whose position was identical to that of the much larger pre-Fascist *massimalismo*. The majority Socialists and the Social Democrats received about 14 percent of the vote at the national 1968 elections. At these elections the combined vote received by communists, PSIUP, and other fellow-traveling candidates was about the same as that of the 1948 Popular Front—an index of remarkable political stability. The Catholic-led center-left coalition received almost as many votes in 1968 as the Catholic-led center coalition had received twenty years before—again, an index of remarkable stability. Except for the fact that Socialists and Social Democrats were again divided, the regional elections of 1970 showed only a minimal change in the voting strength of the various parties. In regional elections in Sicily and municipal elections in Rome and several other cities in 1971, rightist voters reacted to agitation and strikes with a shift away from Christian Democratic moderatism to more militant positions; on the other hand there was no weakening of center-left and leftist parties on whose strength the survival of the Italian democratic republic depends. The main issue at the presidential election of December 1971 was the position of the future president toward Communist participation in a coalition government. The choice of a middle-of-the-roader, Leone, meant that a majority of the thousand-odd members of the enlarged Parliament acting as electoral college were not necessarily opposed to Communist participation but undoubtedly cautious in taking a major political step.

#### THE NATION COPES WITH PROBLEMS

Elections, coalitions formed and dissolved, cabinet shifts, and party splits make a dreary chronicle. They are nevertheless indicative of the sense of responsibility prevailing among the Italian people since the upheavals of the tragic summer of 1943. Grave problems faced a nation that had emerged wounded and impoverished from a long period of totalitarian dictatorship and from a ruinous war—graver than the problems faced in 1861. Free democratic institutions had been introduced by those who had been the soul and mind of the Resistance: their survival—the survival of republican democracy—to many seemed a miracle. Perhaps it was; certainly it was the result of the will of millions of Italians. Democracy was helped to survive by a balance between political Catholicism and Communism, the two main forces in the nation. But more important than the balance was the political maturity of many of the nation's leaders (made evident by their willingness to reach a majority consent through compromise), and the sense of moderation of most Italians.

#### THE PEACE TREATY

A major aim of the Parri and De Gasperi CNL governments in 1945/46 had been the reestablishment of the nation's sovereignty through the elimination of Allied political and administrative controls. This was achieved by the end of 1945. Once sovereignty had been regained, the immediate aim of Italian foreign policy was to end the state of war against the Allies created by Fascism in 1940. Peace terms were the result of laborious negotiations between American, British, and Soviet diplomats and representatives of other countries with which Italy had been directly at war (Ethiopia, France, Greece, Yugoslavia). After September 1945, the Italian government was consulted. The peace treaty was signed February 10, 1947. Territorial acquisitions made during the first phase of World War II (Slovene and Dalmatian districts of Yugoslavia) were of course lost. Albania was once again independent. Italy also had to give up three thousand square miles on her northeastern borders where Slavs formed the majority of the population; where, too, there had been the large Italian urban communities of Pola (Pula), Fiume (Rijeka), Zara (Zadar), and many smaller ones; most Italians emigrated. Four small districts in the western Alps were surrendered to France. All the colonies were lost. Libya, first administered by the British, became an independent kingdom in 1952 and a republic in 1969. Eritrea, federated with Ethiopia in 1952, was integrated into the Ethiopian Empire in 1962. Somalia was administered as a United Nations trusteeship by Italy until 1960, when it joined the former British Somaliland to become an independent republic. The Aegean islands were transferred to Greece. Clauses limiting Italian armed forces and imposing payments of \$260 million as reparations to countries damaged by Italian occupation were soon revised, and many were rescinded.

Most painful of all for Italians was the loss of the city of Trieste which was claimed by Yugoslav national Communists, supported at first by the Soviet Union. Tito's Partisans had taken over the city in May 1945 and were not dislodged by the British Eighth Army

Dockside, Trieste, seen from bridge of U.S. cruiser Fargo. Photoworld





until atrocities against Italians had been committed. To prevent Yugoslav annexation, the Allies obtained an agreement from the Soviet Union that the city and a small surrounding area (including parts of northern Istria) should become a Free Territory. The city and less than one-third of the Free Territory were to be administered by the Allies; the rest, with sixty-five thousand inhabitants, 80 percent of them Italians, by Yugoslavia. In March 1948, Count Sforza, the foreign minister, obtained a declaration from the United States, Great Britain, and France recognizing the city's right to rejoin the mother country. A new situation arose after Yugoslavia's dictator Tito quarreled with Stalin. Following a British-American agreement in October 1953, Trieste and the area of the Free Territory north of the city were returned to Italy in 1954, while Yugoslavia annexed the area south of the city.

#### FOREIGN POLICY 1947-1971

After the Communists were eliminated from the governmental coalition in 1947, Italian foreign policy followed a consistent line; Italy played the role of a peaceful power whose main interest was to lessen antagonisms and tensions. Cooperation, mutual understanding, and friendship, especially with the United States and democratic European nations, were keynotes of Italian policy under De Gasperi and his foreign minister Sforza, and their successors. An attempted customs union with France failed because of the combined nationalist and Communist opposition in both countries. A few days after General Marshall, then the American secretary of state, announced (in a speech at Harvard University on June 5, 1947) American willingness to finance European economic recovery, the Italian government asked that the plan for recovery through American aid (the Marshall Plan) be discussed not only by the Western Big Three (as suggested by the British and French governments) but by all European states concerned. The joint discussions led to the creation in April 1948 of the Organization for European Economic Recovery, which played the major role in fostering European economic progress and political stability. In the 1960s, with the inclusion of the United States, Canada, and Japan, it became the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Italy was one of the original members of the Council of Europe, created in 1948. She was a participant in the negotiations leading to the formation in 1951 of the Coal and Steel Community, which included Belgium, France, the German Federal Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. She took the initiative in the agreements leading to the treaties of Rome of 1957 that set up the six-member European Economic Community (EEC). She joined the Western European Union, reorganized in 1954 with the aim of promoting military and economic cooperation between Great Britain and the six members of the European Economic Community. The Italian govern-

ment consistently advocated the inclusion of Great Britain and other European democratic countries in EEC.

At the invitation of the United States, Italy joined the negotiations that led to the signing, on April 4, 1949, of the North Atlantic Treaty, and to the forming of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Italian Manlio Brosio, a former Resistance leader, influential member of government, and ambassador to Washington in 1955-1961, was NATO's secretary-general for several years after 1964. As a NATO member, Italy reorganized and modernized the armed forces, in which about four hundred thousand men were enlisted and on which about an eighth of the government budget was spent. Italy also accepted United States military bases on her territory. Relations between American military personnel and Italians were uniformly good, despite the violent anti-Americanism of the Communist and fellow-traveling press.

The Italian government supported the American position in the major crises of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union: the Soviet blockade of Berlin and the Allied air lift of 1948/49; the Korean War; the Hungarian and Suez crises of 1956; the Berlin Wall crisis of 1961; the Cuban missile crisis of 1962; and in most questions concerning disarmament and nuclear control. In relation to the long and bitter Vietnam War, the Italian government, as well as the papacy, stood for a compromise peace, without victors or vanquished.

Italy's membership in the United Nations was repeatedly vetoed by the Soviet Union, although she had joined all the major United Nations organizations: UNESCO, ILO, WHO, IMF, FAO (which, since 1951, has had its headquarters in Rome). Included in the package deal between the United States and the Soviet Union negotiated during the brief international thaw following Stalin's death in 1953, Italy was able to join the United Nations in 1955. Ever since, she has played a mediatory and conciliatory role in the Assembly as well as in the Security Council.

Italian relations were particularly good with Great Britain and the German Federal Republic. Once the

*The fleet landing area for the headquarters of the commander of the Sixth Fleet, Gaeta, Italy. Department of the Navy*





Trieste question had been settled, relations with Yugoslavia, as well as those with Greece (where Italian wartime occupation had caused considerably less antagonism than the German), remained consistently friendly. Difficulties arose at times with Austria since the Italians resented the use of Austrian territory as a base for nationalist terrorist agitation among the fewer than two hundred thousand German-speaking inhabitants of the Alto Adige (South Tyrol). Careful not to take sides when disputes arose, Italy was able to maintain or establish good diplomatic relations with Latin American republics and with old and new Asian and African independent states.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

In post-World War II Italy, the seamy side of public life—corruption, intrigues, scandals—no longer hidden by censorship and protected by those in power, as had been the case during the Fascist period, was brought into the open. But this seamy side was only a minor, even minimal, element in national life. The republican government's achievements were considerable. Democracy functioned; liberty thrived; in spite of outbursts of strikes, of some students' agitation, and riots in 1970–71 related to local grievances (for instance in Reggio Calabria and L'Aquila), order prevailed. Majority consensus for government policies and minority restraint made for stability. Public administration was improved. Self-government at the level of local communities, provinces, and regions was extended; democracy was not only representative but more and more participatory. Independent once again, and strengthened by the establishment of a Constitutional Court (partially patterned on the Supreme Court of the United States), the judiciary regained the dignity it had lost under the Fascist dictatorship. Illiteracy was reduced, remaining only among the older generation. Elementary education for all was no longer an empty slogan and secondary education, once the privilege of

the ruling minority, was open to all. Steps were taken to reform the antiquated structure of Italian universities and to accommodate the fast-growing number of young people aiming at higher education. Scientific research was stimulated by public agencies. A system of social security and improvement in public health measures eased the strain imposed on many by poverty and by fluctuations in economic conditions.

#### THE PUBLIC SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY

Sound financial and economic policies within the context of a frankly mixed economy created conditions favorable to the fast growth of the gross national product, which by 1970 (when it was over ninety billion dollars) was in real terms nearly triple what it had been thirty years earlier when Italy intervened in World War II. These policies, derived from a pragmatic approach to economic and social problems, were linked in particular to Einaudi and Ezio Vanoni.

Three new government agencies stimulated the economy. The most important was the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* (Fund for the South), created with the specific aim of raising the economic level of the southern regions, thereby correcting an ever-worsening situation dating from the Middle Ages. In 1970, the per capita income in the South was just about half of what it was in the northern and central areas, but in that year the rate of growth was about half as much again in the South as in the North and Center. The Cassa invested the equivalent of several billion dollars in developing the economic infrastructure of the South; training workers, setting up factories, improving agricultural techniques.

A public oil monopoly established under Fascism became, in the postwar period, the autonomous government agency ENI, which competed with private enterprise. Under the dynamic leadership of Enrico Mattei (an imaginative and efficient entrepreneur more than cautious bureaucrat, although a state official) ENI expanded in the 1950s into one of the largest and most profitable Italian corporations. Its main areas of activity were the exploitation of the newly discovered

*Turin Polytechnic. EPA*



*Lazio. Land reclamation in the south. Part of the Italian land reform program. EPA*







Enrico Mattei. ICI

oil and gas fields (the former mostly in Sicily, the latter in northern Italy), the refining of crude oil produced abroad, and the distribution of oil and gas. ENI also branched out in other areas of production including nuclear energy. Through subsidiary companies, it contributed much to the development of the oil industries in the Middle East and Africa. In 1962, the consolidation of most enterprises producing electric power into another autonomous government agency, ENEL, led to fast growth in the output of electricity, a source of energy important in a country possessing minimal reserves of solid and liquid fuel. Italy became the fourth-ranking electricity producer in Western Europe.

Land reform was carried out in the 1950s, and a plan was approved by Parliament in 1964 for supplying financial and technical aid to farmers intent on improving crops and livestock and on mechanizing their farms. Transportation was improved through the expansion of the road system and the building of several thousand miles of throughways (*autostrade*), the replacing of secondary railroad lines by public bus lines, the modernization of harbors, the establishment of an efficient state-owned airline (*Alitalia*).

ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE LEVEL OF PRIVATE ACTIVITIES

Important as they were, activities run by government officials and paid for with taxpayers' money contributed only a small part to the nation's progress after

Superhighways, Milan.  
EPA



Sarom refinery near Ravenna. EPA

Dam at San Dalmazzo provides power for electrical plant used by industries in Lombardy, Piedmont, and Liguria. Photoworld





the proclamation of the Republic. Most of the progress came from what Italians did in their private capacity. Gone were the inertia that brought stagnation during the first decades after unification in 1861 and the passivity that contributed to decline under the Fascist dictatorship. Intellectual dynamism, progressive changes in ways of thinking, economic expansion, rising standards of living, emancipation of those who had been held in positions of inferiority, lessening of inequality, weakening of the traditional rigid class structure—everything that fostered the variety, liveliness, and richness of the national scene—came primarily from what the citizens themselves did.

#### INTELLECTUAL DYNAMISM

The downfall of Fascism freed minds from the state-enforced conformity in which they had been held by censorship and fear. The emancipation of minds went further: bonds and inhibitions derived from conventional but universally accepted ways of thinking weakened even more in the postwar period than after the triumph of the politically successful *Risorgimento*. In literary and artistic pursuits there were innovation, boundless creativity, and a new vigor (see Chapters 14 and 15). Deep, sincere emotions had been stirred by the war, the enemy occupation, and the Resistance, and these were reflected especially in the literature of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Then came a less emotional, more sober period, tinged with skepticism and pessimism—a period characterized by experimentation, restless avant-gardism, greater curiosity about what was being done in other nations. Several novelists, poets, and critics of the older generation (Palazzeschi, Soldati, Alvaro, Campanile, Montale, Ungaretti) maintained their popularity. Authors who had lived in exile or whose creativity had been curbed by censorship (Silone, Pavese, Quasimodo, Moravia, Vittorini, Levi) wrote freely and achieved wide reputation in the postwar decades. Younger writers like Calvino, Pasolini, Sciascia, and Cassola, became well known. Natalia Ginzburg, Alba de Céspedes, Anna Maria Ortese were among the prominent women writers.

Italian culture was emerging from the long isolation responsible for centuries of narrow provincialism. Italians were becoming more and more familiar with fellow writers and artists abroad. Foreign authors, Americans especially, were read avidly in translation. Italian writers and artists acquired a reputation abroad that they had not enjoyed since Renaissance times. Translations of Italian books became best sellers. Works of Italian painters and sculptors created enormous interest. The works of Italian architects and engineers were commissioned in foreign countries. Italian films, from Rossellini's *Open City* and *Paisà* and De Sica's *Bicycle Thief*, produced in the immediate postwar years, to Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (a title that became a household word) and Satyricon, Visconti's *Rocco*



Pier Paolo Pasolini. ICI



Michelangelo Antonioni. ICI

Anna Magnani. ICI





*e i suoi Fratelli*, Pasolini's *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* and *Teorema*, Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*, and many others, competed with the best produced anywhere, and actresses like Anna Magnani, Sophia Loren, Gina Lollobrigida, Claudia Cardinale, Silvana Mangano, were sure international box-office successes.

#### CHANGES IN ITALIAN CATHOLICISM

Since the early 1960s, freedom of debate, guaranteed by the law, deeply affected Catholicism and Marxism, the two most influential systems of thought in the nation. For several years after the end of the war, clergy and laity on the Catholic side, ideologues and disciples on the Marxist side, formed two large cohesive blocs. In the late 1960s these groups were still large, but not as cohesive as before. As long as Pius XII lived, nothing seemed to shake the logically integrated system of principles and values that constituted the Catholic position. The situation changed radically during the brief reign of his successor John XXIII Roncalli, elected in 1958 as a compromise candidate between the two major groups into which the cardinals were divided—one rigidly conservative, the other cautiously progressive. Motivated by inner convictions (possibly a return to youthful sympathies for modernism, condemned by Pius X in 1907) and by pressures on Catholicism in nations on both sides of the Atlantic where Protestantism or unbelief was dominant, John XXIII issued statements interpreted by Catholics and non-Catholics as departures from what had been orthodox positions since the sixteenth-century Council of Trent. The encyclicals *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, inspired by a generous concern for the sufferings of people everywhere, gave John XXIII a worldwide popularity such as no other pope had ever

Pope John XXIII. Photoworld



enjoyed. The debates in Council Vatican II, convened by him, indicated the presence of a strong trend toward innovation in the Catholic episcopate. There had always been a few innovators among Italian Catholics, but in the late 1960s their numbers swelled into a movement that became disruptive of Catholic unity. John XXIII's successor Paul VI Montini was elected



Pope Paul VI. Photoworld

in 1963 with near unanimity by the cardinals, who were now concerned about keeping innovations within bounds compatible with tradition. Because of the position Roman Catholicism occupies in Italy, the crisis of the Catholic church, at once spiritual and institutional, had a deep impact on all aspects of national life.

#### CHANGES IN ITALIAN MARXISM

For decades, Communists and their sympathizers—a plurality if not a majority of the intelligentsia in post-war Italy—had accepted the discipline basic to the Leninist interpretation of Marxism. Individual dissent had never become collective protest. Many had expected sympathy for the national Communist deviation (Titoism) to lead, if not to a split in the Italian Communist movement, at least to a secession, but this did not happen; not in 1948, when Tito asserted the independence of Yugoslav Communism from the Soviet Union, nor in 1956 when non-Communists and national Communists tried, briefly, to govern Hungary jointly and were quickly suppressed by Soviet troops. Only a few intellectuals continued to express their preference for national Communism, and they left the party. Intellectually and politically, Italian Marxists seemed to be satisfied with polycentrism, the limited autonomy



within a unitary Communist world movement advocated by Togliatti in 1956 and later retracted.

The situation changed in the late 1960s. What could not happen in countries ruled by Communist dictatorships happened to Italian Marxism operating within the framework of democratic institutions: dissident factions found a voice in their own publications, and at times formed their own organizations. Dissidence was limited to the intelligentsia, but was sufficient to loosen (and so weaken) what had previously been a rigidly centralized and disciplined movement. By the end of the 1960s there were a number of different factions: national Communists little concerned with Communism as a worldwide movement; humanist Marxists opposed to dictatorship and brutality; revisionists, ready to accept democracy not as a temporary expedient but as a system preferable to others; Maoists, or "Chinese" Communists, who combined belief in Stalinist ruthlessness with Trotsky's doctrine of the permanent revolution. With such factionalism, the control exercised by the leadership over the rank and file became less complete. The events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 had a greater impact on Italian Marxism than the events of 1948 and 1956. At a meeting of over seventy parties, called by the Soviet leaders in Moscow in June 1969, Italian communists dissociated themselves from Soviet policies. Revisionism, which means in practice the end of dogmatism and therefore of the advocacy of dictatorial tyranny, was making inroads among Italian communists and was becoming a source of tension within the ranks of the Communist party.

#### FREE ENTERPRISE

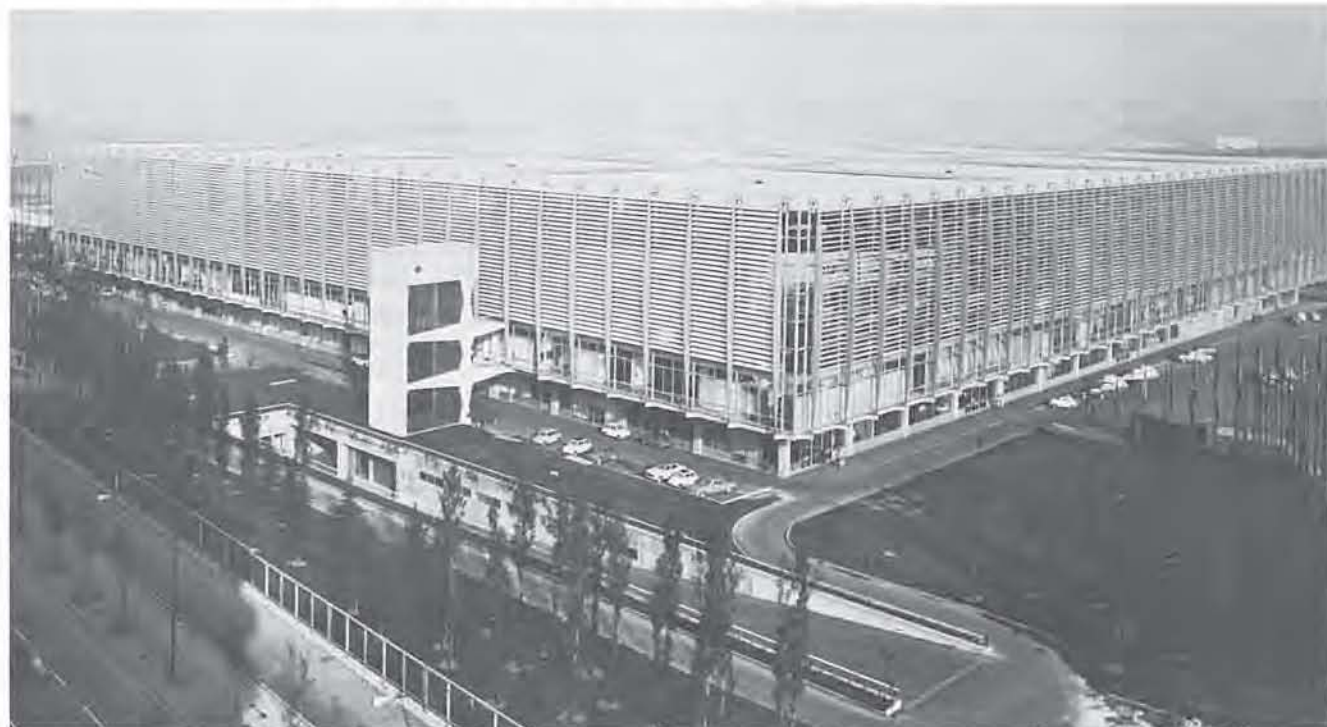
What the abolition of censorship and the emancipation from conventional ways of thinking did for literature, the arts, and modes of thought generally,

abolition of the closed institutional structure of fascist corporatism and a widespread spirit of initiative did for economic activities. Whatever name is given to the formal structure of the postwar Italian economy (social capitalism, neocapitalism, welfare economy, mixed economy), there was greater economic liberty than the nation had known since unification. After the establishment of the Republic, recovery and then expansion were stimulated by the sound government policies already mentioned, and by several billions of dollars poured into the Italian economy by the American government and American private enterprise (with smaller investments from other countries). Policies work, however, only if there is a response from the people, and foreign aid helps only if used productively: Italians responded to policies and put funds made available by foreigners to good use. The ingenuity, imagination, and hard work of millions of Italians combined to produce an economic takeoff in the late 1940s, and a subsequent industrial expansion.

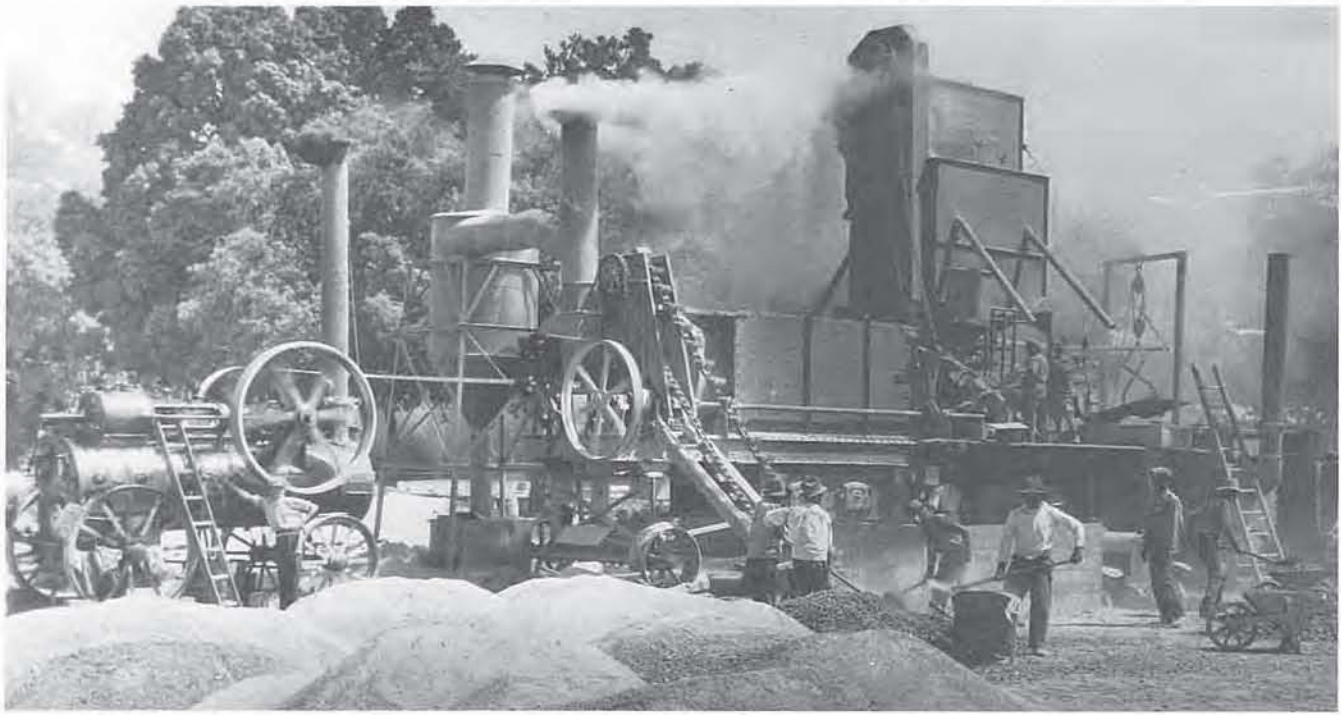
#### INGENUITY

Recovery started amid ruins, before the end of the war. The Italians did not wait for government action to clear fields, to rebuild bridges and roads, to reconstruct cities and villages. Nor did they wait for government initiative to produce commodities in short supply or totally lacking as the result of the war. Much of the matériel left behind by the fighting armies was utilized. If there was not enough capital for the construction of new buildings, the damaged ones were repaired. As there was not enough money to produce and buy cars, the Vespa (motor scooter) was invented. American mass-produced ships, no longer needed for the war, were bought at minimal prices and formed the nucleus of the new Italian merchant marine (the old

*Palazzo del Lavoro, Turin. Designed by Pier Luigi Nervi. EPA*







*Road rebuilding after the war. Photoworld*



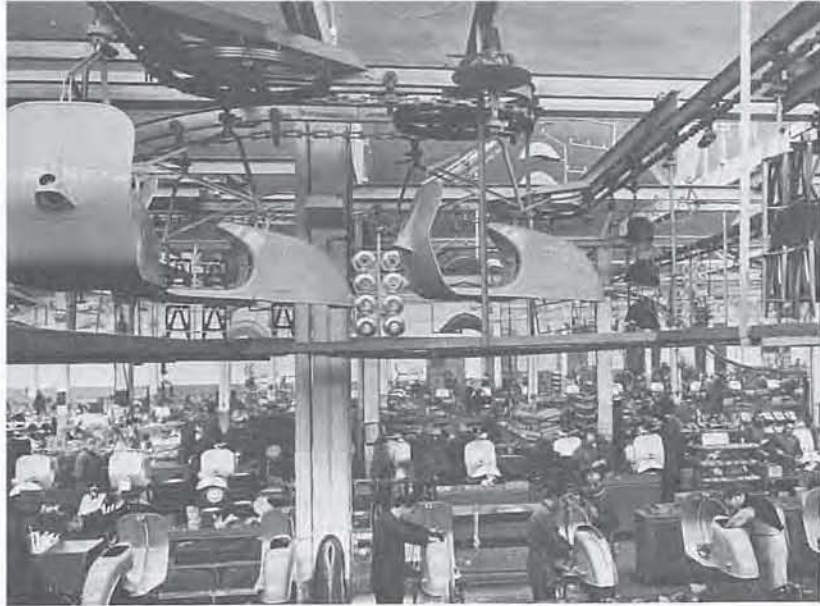
*The Abbey of Montecassino, totally destroyed during the war, was restored by the republic. EPA*

*Cassino, Lazio. Modern housing. EPA*

*Potenza, view of the new city. EPA*







*Assembly line in a motor scooter factory, Liguria. ICI*

fleet was at the bottom of the sea). They made do with what there was: it was little, but proved to be enough for a start.

#### *ECONOMIC DYNAMISM*

The first steps toward economic recovery, from 1944 to 1946, were difficult. They were the result of hundreds of thousands of modest initiatives, many taken not by individuals acting on their own but by people working together. The successes of the first years snowballed at a rate that surprised the experts. The major role in the Italian economic "miracle" may have been played statistically by large private and public corporations (FIAT, Montecatini, Pirelli, Edison, Olivetti, Marzotto, Ansaldo, Terni, ENI, etc.). As a revolutionary national phenomenon, it was played by hundreds of thousands of medium and small entrepreneurs—in manufacturing, trade, agriculture, in the service industries. They created a new optimistic and dynamic economic climate in the nation.

Of the enterprises that sprang up in the five or six years before the effect of government policies and foreign aid could be felt, many failed, but many more succeeded, expanded and stimulated new initiatives. Italy led all European nations in new fields of production such as the manufacture of electrical appliances.

*Olivetti plant at Naples. Olivetti-Underwood*



*Cottages given workers after twenty years of service in the cellulose industry, Pavia. Photoworld*



*A kindergarten staffed by trained personnel for children of Olivetti employees, Ivrea, Piedmont. Olivetti-Underwood*

*Housing for the employees of the Olivetti Company, Ivrea. Olivetti-Underwood*





Up-to-date methods of production increased the efficiency of fast-expanding older fields, such as mechanical industries. Manufacturing was no longer limited to the northwestern triangle of Milan-Turin-Genoa. Factories were built in regions where agriculture had long been the only productive activity. New life was infused into what had been sleepy and lazy provincial towns: visitors who had known prewar Ravenna or Pescara would not have recognized them in 1970. What happened there happened in hundreds of other localities. It took time for the efforts of both private and government initiative to spark the economic take-off in the underdeveloped regions of the south. There were many false starts, but finally the takeoff began, first in communities on the eastern and southern coast of Sicily, in the Bari-Taranto-Brindisi area, around Naples, and around Cagliari.

Service industries grew also. The expansion of the hotel industry, combined with the improvement of transportation, increased the number of foreign tourists—an important item in the Italian balance of international payments. Italy attracted more tourists than any other country in the world. Germans, Americans

(about two million in 1971), French, British, and Swiss (in that order) were the most numerous with the Americans in the first place as suppliers of valuable foreign currency. Foreign trade in 1970 amounted to nearly one-third (\$28 billion) of the gross national product. Internal retail trade overexpanded in relation to consumer needs, but this situation was corrected by the growth of chain stores, public markets, and department stores.

Agriculture had been hindered by the excessive number of people trying to make a living from the land, and the resulting scarcity of capital available for investment. The land-centered economic policies of the fascists had made the situation worse. When World War II ended, there were about as many people engaged in agriculture in Italy as there were in the United States, where the area of farmland is about twenty times as large. A radical change took place in the postwar period. Industrial growth created millions



*Modern Turin. EPA*



*St. Mark's, Venice. EPA*

*Modern Milan showing football stadium in foreground. EPA*







*Fruit trees growing in the newly irrigated farmland of Matera, in Lucania, or Basilicata. The region has been transformed through the government's development project for the South. ICI*

of new jobs, with the result that in 1970 there were less than half as many peasants (farmers cultivating the land they owned, tenant farmers, sharecroppers, laborers) as there had been twenty years earlier. Government policies had helped hundreds of thousands of families to acquire the land they cultivated and to transform most of the remaining sharecroppers into tenant farmers. In many parts of Italy large estates (*latifundia*) had become things of the past. The productivity of agricultural labor doubled in fifteen years. In 1970 agriculture gave employment to less than one-fifth of the labor force and contributed one-tenth to the gross national product.

#### THE CHANGING ECONOMIC SCENE

The economic revolution and the consequent exodus from rural areas caused a large-scale redistribution of the population. This change created problems, especially in large cities like Milan, Turin, Rome, to which masses of people flocked from the poorer regions and the countryside. Another effect of the redistribution was an easing of the deep cultural differences between the traditional geographical-historical units into which the land and the people were divided. Unemployment and underemployment were still high compared with the developed nations of western and northern Europe. In 1970 unemployment fluctuated at around 4 percent of the labor force. A substantial migratory movement toward the more industrialized areas was unavoidable, considering the absence of restrictions on movement and the breakdown of traditional isolation. But there was considerable improvement since the war, and it was reasonable to expect that within a decade or so the unemployment and underemployment would be reduced to what they were in Scandinavia, the German Federal Republic, and France. Per capita income more than doubled in real terms between 1938 and 1968, growing during these thirty years from just over \$750 to about \$1,700

(in 1965 dollars). By the late 1960s, Italians were better fed, housed, and clothed than they had ever been. Domestic appliances were no longer a luxury for the few; nor were cars. People traveled more, thus ending the isolation of local communities which had been a major source of stagnation. Health conditions improved through free medical care, the expansion of hospitals, the development of health centers, generally better working conditions, and higher remuneration.

Much still remained to be done to reach the level of the advanced progressive nations of northwestern Europe (some of which only two or three generations earlier had been as undeveloped and poor as the Italian nation was just before the economic takeoff of the late 1940s). There had nevertheless been enormous progress, considering the limits of economic growth imposed by the availability of capital, natural resources, and labor.

#### OPTIMISM

In terms of the increasing number of people benefiting from rising levels in nonmaterial as well as material activities, of wider horizons for the minds and of higher standards of living, of more liberty and less inequality, progress in Italy during the republican period was substantial. Situations that had fostered stagnation and passivity had been removed, and many old problems had been solved. For the first time since the agony of the Renaissance over four hundred years earlier, the entire nation was emerging from backwardness; not just the educationally and economically privileged few, as had been the case since the mid-eighteenth century, but the masses; not just Lombards, Piedmontese, Ligurians, but the inhabitants of all twenty regions.

There was another side to the picture. Some of the old problems remained and new ones had arisen. Progress was uneven. Social changes brought about by new experiences, values, and aspirations, and by economic expansion, were accompanied by imbalance. Attainments did not come up to expectations. Since people were more aware of defects and shortcomings than of merits and achievements, and were free to express themselves, dissatisfaction was widespread, especially among the intelligentsia. Privilege, ignorance, and poverty had diminished, but resentment of what remained had increased.

All in all there was reason for optimism. The Italian nation had successfully overcome the growing pains of the 1890s but had failed to overcome the growing pains of the post-World War I period. Chances were that the 1970s would see a repetition of what had happened in the 1890s rather than of what had happened in the 1920s, and that republican democracy, combining liberty with order, progress with stability, diversity with unity, would survive.



# I4

## THE WRITTEN WORD

*From Latin to Italian – Thirteenth century – Dante – Petrarch – Boccaccio – Fifteenth century – Patrons of letters – Ariosto – Machiavelli – Guicciardini – Other humanists and Renaissance writers – Era of intellectual repression – Tasso – Sarpi – Vico and Giannone – Minor writers of the era of repression – Eighteenth-century revival – Parini and Alfieri – The nineteenth century – Romanticism: Manzoni, Foscolo, Leopardi, Mazzini – Other Risorgimento writers – Astride two centuries – Croce – Pirandello – From Fascism to the republican era.*

### FROM LATIN TO ITALIAN

COMPARED with other European peoples, Italians were relatively late to use their language in writing. Latin, in its modified medieval form, was widely known and remained the exclusive literary language longer than in any other nation whose vernacular also derived from it. And even after Italians became accustomed to using the spoken language—or a polished form of it—in their writing, they continued to speak and write Latin for centuries.

There are documents in the language people spoke that date as far back as the tenth century. There are texts of twelfth-century folk songs in Italian dialects: Genoese, Tuscan, Neapolitan. Some of the most important works, however, were still written in Latin in the thirteenth century: the great theological and philosophical treatises of Saint Thomas Aquinas; the more mystical works of Saint Bonaventura of Bagnorea; the lives of the saints by Iacopo da Verrazze; the informative histories of Sicily in verse and prose by Pietro da Eboli and Niccoló Jamsilla. Religious songs such as the *Dies Irae* by Thomas of Celano, and Iacopone of Todi's *Stabat Mater*, which centuries have not made stale, were also written in Latin. Early in the fourteenth century, authors who used the vernacular still wrote in Latin if their works were addressed to a European public as well as to Italians. Dante wrote *De Monarchia* in Latin in 1312, and Marsilius of Padua wrote *Defensor Pacis*, probably the most im-



*Saint Francis by Bonaventura Berlinghieri. ICI*

portant medieval work in political science, in Latin in 1324. The continued use of Latin notwithstanding, Italian was born as a literary language in the thirteenth century.

### THIRTEENTH CENTURY

An early piece of writing in the vernacular, and one of the finest, was Saint Francis's *Cantico delle Creature*. The monastic order founded by Saint Francis in 1209 aimed at helping the ordinary people: it was fitting that he should write in their language. The Franciscan Iacopone of Todi (imprisoned by Pope Boniface VIII on suspicion of heresy) wrote some of his most moving poems in Italian. Between the 1220s and the 1260s came an astounding flowering of letters at the court of the kings of Sicily. With the Sicilian school, a new era for Italian literature began. Frederick II, king of Sicily and emperor, a gifted poet himself and a generous patron of arts and letters, gave hospitality to exiles from southern France, where a cultural revival had flourished; among them were poets who sang and wrote in Provençal. Inspired by their example, the king tried his hand at writing in Italian. His two brilliant sons, Enzo, the unfortunate king of Sardinia who was kept prisoner for twenty-three years after being captured in battle, and Manfred, who ruled Sicily until the Angevin invasion, did likewise. Frederick II's chancellor (or prime minister) Pier delle Vigne, Jacopo of Lentini, Mazzo Ricco of Messina, and Ciullo of Alcamo, all belonged to the Sicilian school. It did not last long: more than a



chivalrous king and a man of great intellect was lost when Manfred was killed at the battle of Benevento.

By the middle of the thirteenth century others, farther north, were writing in Italian. Familiar as they were with the elegance and harmony of classical Latin, their language differed somewhat from the Tuscan vernacular. The new style, the *stil nuovo* as it was called, was adopted by the poets Guido Guinicelli of Bologna and Guido Cavalcanti of Florence, and by many of their contemporaries. Thanks to Dante and the other two great writers of the fourteenth century Petrarch and Boccaccio, the vernacular of the *stil nuovo* became the Italian language, one of the most important factors in maintaining the unity of a nation that was deeply divided politically.

#### DANTE

Dante Alighieri was born in 1265 of a well-to-do family in Florence, where he grew up and was educated. As a young man, he fought at Campaldino and Caprona in the citizens' militia that enabled Florence to maintain its independence against powerful enemies and to become the principal Tuscan state. He was active in civic affairs and participated in the republic's political life at a time when it was particularly turbulent. In 1302, the faction he belonged to having been defeated by opponents with the aid of the king of Naples, Dante went into exile. He never

returned to Florence but lived as best he could—always maintaining his dignity—through the bounty of generous *signori*.

A powerful mind enriched by encyclopedic knowledge, a passionate heart, a firm will, and an astounding mastery of language made Dante Italy's greatest poet. As a man in love, he wrote *Vita Nuova*. As a thinker concerned with problems of communication he wrote *De vulgari eloquentia* and *Convivio*. As a universal man embodying the totality of his times, he wrote the *Divine Comedy*, the most widely read and heavily annotated Italian literary classic. The poem deals with man and God, with life and the afterlife, with sin and virtue. It explains and teaches as it guides its readers to the brink of the unknown. The *Divine Comedy* is a great deal more than poetry: it is the statement of faith of a believer, a philosophical treatise, a great historical work, a forceful political tract. Freely mixing the Catholics' heavenly host with the Ancients' mythological figures, Dante brought to its culmination the fusion of Christianity and paganism that had been the work of Saint Gregory Magnus seven hundred years earlier. Dante made Italians familiar with the synthesis of Scholasticism and Aristotelianism that had been the achievement of Saint Thomas Aquinas, which, ever since, has been the philosophical foundation of Catholicism. By stressing the rôle of reason while transmitting the tradition of the Middle Ages, Dante unwittingly prepared the ground for humanism. Thanks to the *Divine Comedy*,

Dante Alighieri. EPA



Dante's Tomb, Ravenna. ICI





Italians have an especial awareness of the tormented decades in which Dante lived. It was a period notable in the expanding Catholic commonwealth for the collapse of the prestige of the papacy and the empire, for the strengthening of national identities and the rise of secularism; notable in northern and central Italy for the passage from free republican city-states to authoritarian regional states (most ruled by *signori*, some by merchant oligarchies) and for the beginning of the heightened spiritual tensions that would produce the Renaissance. The writings of Dante contributed powerfully to the struggle against clericalism and to the cause of centralized against decentralized government. More important, they played a fundamental role in strengthening the unity of Italian culture. A Florentine and a Tuscan, Dante was deeply, and consciously, Italian. Patriots of the nineteenth century and nationalists of the twentieth found in him a great source of inspiration.

#### PETRARCH

Among Dante's fellow exiles from Florence was the father of Petrarch. The poet Francesco Petrarca was born in 1304 in the then independent Tuscan city of Arezzo. A law student, he later took Holy Orders—without enthusiasm and perhaps without conviction either. The declarations of platonic love for Laura in his sonnets are as moving as Dante's praises of Beatrice, and are entirely removed from any religious preoccupations. Petrarch lived in and near papal Avignon, in Milan at the court of Bernabò Visconti, also in and near Venice. He traveled widely both in Italy and north of the Alps, and in the course of a long journey begun in 1333 he found, in Liège, two hitherto unknown orations of Cicero. This discovery stimulated him to search for more manuscripts of ancient authors.

Dante was the last, and the greatest, Italian medieval writer. Petrarch was the first and the greatest spokesman for humanism, the postmedieval mode of thought that preceded the Renaissance and remained part of it. The medieval intellectual knew works of Latin and Greek authors, but he saw them through contemporary Catholic eyes. Petrarch, instead, saw them as they had been in their own time, the product of a culture founded on values and ideas radically different from those of the culture in which he lived. Dante's was a Christianized Virgil. Petrarch read and meditated upon the real Virgil, also upon Horace, Cicero, and many other ancient authors. What Petrarch (soon imitated by others) did was tantamount to discovering a new world. He was a man who delighted in finding what had been long lost, and who cherished it; in his writings there is no hint that he thought of himself as a revolutionary, but he was, in fact, more of a revolutionary than the conquering princes and insurgent peasants of his century. In poems and in prose Petrarch expressed admiration for the Graeco-Roman civilization. He wanted to bring



Petrarch. ICI

it back to life. By comparison, the present was inferior: to improve it one had to take inspiration from the ancients, who had been more concerned with man, with life on earth and its problems, than with God, the afterlife, and the interpretation of Holy Writ. The foundation of humanism is, simply, respect for the human being; but in the radical interpretation that was particularly popular during the second half of the fifteenth century and down to the time when a religious storm swept Europeans, humanism meant making man the center of our concerns. As such, it contained the seed of much that was to develop in the last two centuries. By the fourteenth century, humanists no longer considered theology the most important discipline. It was superseded by the study of man, and in this sphere Plato and Platonism were found of greater help than the scholastic interpretation of Aristotle that Dante had inherited from Saint Thomas Aquinas.

#### BOCCACCIO

Giovanni Boccaccio, the illegitimate son of a Florentine businessman, born in Certaldo, southwest of Florence, became a close friend of Petrarch. His father sent him to Naples for his apprenticeship in business, and there the young man fell in love with, supposedly, a daughter of King Robert. Financial losses, resulting from the bankruptcy of one of Florence's largest banking concerns in 1340, caused Boc-





Giovanni Boccaccio. NYPL PC

caccio to return home, however, and to look for employment in public service. The need to earn a living (and it was always a meager one) proved no obstacle to his literary career. Boccaccio wrote copiously both in verse and prose. He was instrumental in spreading the newfound awareness of ancient culture, an awareness that inspired him to describe ordinary normal life with its work, its joys and sorrows, its daily problems to be faced no matter what happens in public affairs or between man and God. The medieval age of faith was definitely left behind, together with the transcendental problems that had heightened the tensions in the mind and soul of Dante and, even if to a lesser extent, of Petrarch. Boccaccio's major work *The Decameron*, still widely read today, is timeless. The one hundred tales, supposedly told to each other by young people who went to a country villa near Florence to escape the Black Death then ravaging Europe, deal with young and not-so-young love, with husbands and wives tired of their mates, with adventure, with jokes that are often rather crude. The episodes are light, amusing, refreshing—and could have taken place in any Italian community at any time. Boccaccio made fun of priests and nuns, something that only a generation earlier would have involved considerable risk. Catholicism was then, even more than it is today, the foundation of Italian life and culture, but Boccaccio's readers discovered that

they could be anticlerical, that is to say opposed to the dominant influence of the clergy, without being anti-Catholic. The diffusion of a new attitude toward the Church (or, rather, toward the men and women who personified it) in the second half of the fourteenth century meant, as has already been noted, a transformation in the Italian way of life. With Boccaccio, humanism became more than a few intellectuals' awareness of new ideas and new values: it became the modern thought of the time.

Minor writers of the fourteenth century were many and distinguished. The Florentine Franco Sacchetti followed in Boccaccio's footsteps by writing the *Trecentonovelle* (the three hundred tales). Other Florentines (Dino Compagni, the Villani brothers Giovanni and Matteo) wrote fascinating chronicles of their times. A small stream was swelling into an imposing river by the end of the century.

#### FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Among the many who were feverishly and successfully looking for works by ancient writers were the Tuscans Niccolò Niccoli, Poggio Bracciolini, and Tommaso Parentucelli (Pope Nicholas V). Books were collected and libraries started. In the early fifteenth century, more works were made available by Greek scholars who came to attend meetings in which the reunification of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches was discussed. Other books were soon brought by the more numerous Greeks who came to find refuge and employment in Italy after the Turks captured Constantinople and annihilated as much of the Byzantine culture as they could.

The intellectual horizon was widening. Among the distinguished thinkers who discussed the humanists' ideal stressing reasonableness and toleration and opposing fanaticism and violence were Marsilio Ficino, Antonio Manetti, and Pico della Mirandola. Giovanni Pico, cadet of the counts of Mirandola (one of a dozen tiny self-governing lordships in the lower Po Valley) was a major figure in the brilliant literary circle surrounding Lorenzo the Magnificent in Florence. He had a short life—born in 1463, he died in 1494. His essay on man, written in 1486 and still widely read, is even more topical today than it was then. Angelo Ambrosini, known as Poliziano, Italy's greatest fifteenth-century poet, belonged to the same literary circle. Lorenzo the Magnificent was himself a distinguished poet. Ranking close to Poliziano was the Neapolitan Jacopo Sannazaro, whose *Arcadia* created a lasting genre; he deserves to be remembered, too, for his loyalty to the king of Naples, attacked and defeated by greedy French and Spanish kings. The Florentine Luigi Pulci and the Emilian Matteo Maria Boiardo wrote lively epic poems about the wars between Moslems and Catholics in Charlemagne's time. Pomponio Leto, an illegitimate scion of the Neapolitan baronial Sanseverino family, and Giovanni Pontano were



among the founders of academies in which humanists met and discussed. Though their reputation rests primarily on their other achievements, Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci were also distinguished writers.

One name must be added to the already long list of fifteenth-century literary figures: Vittorino of Feltre, an educator and an innovator. In our century, John Dewey, the American philosopher of education, formulated ideas akin to those held five centuries earlier by Italian humanists. Modern progressive education, geared to the emancipation of the young from conformity and to the development of the individual personality—the antithesis of education as indoctrination, practiced in most nations at all times—began not only as an idea but as practical innovation with the school Vittorino founded in Mantua in 1423.

#### PATRONS OF LETTERS

An essential part of the fifteenth-century intellectual scene are the statesmen and rulers whose gener-

osity enabled men of letters of many different tendencies (not only the humanists) to engage in research, to study and to write. Among them were, in Florence, the chancellors of the Republic Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni (the latter a distinguished writer himself), and the two Medici Cosimo and Lorenzo. In Rome, there were Pius II and some of the Renaissance popes succeeding him. The Aragonese kings of Naples were munificent patrons; so were the Visconti and Sforza dukes of Milan; Hercules I and Alfonso I of Este, dukes of Ferrara; the Montefeltro and della Rovere, dukes of Urbino; the Gonzaga of Mantua, the Malatesta of Rimini, and other rulers of smaller Italian states.

#### ARIOSTO

The impetus given to letters in the fifteenth century carried through the first half of the sixteenth. One of Italy's four greatest classical poets was Ludovico Ariosto whose epic poem *Orlando Furioso* was written between 1506 and 1516. Born in 1474 to a titled but



*Medal depicting Vittorino da Feltre by Pisanello. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel Kress Collection*



*Portrait of Ariosto. Titian. ICI*



not affluent family of Reggio Emilia, Ariosto, like Boiardo, was in the service of the Este dukes of Ferrara, whose statesmanship and good artillery spared the duchy the disasters that befell most of their neighbors in the first half of the sixteenth century. The positions he held kept Ariosto busy, but still left him time enough for writing. Unlike Dante, Petrarch, and Tasso, he was not torn by inner conflicts. Though he lived in turbulent times, he was as much at peace with himself as a man can be. A radiant harmony of words and content were keystones of his poetry. There is little that is tragic or sad in it, nothing that is dismal or morbid. The characters created by a fertile imagination became alive in his verses, as they were in his mind. He, too, told of the legendary events in the struggle of Charlemagne and his fearless paladins against the mighty Saracens—the paladin Orlando is the Roland who died at Roncesvalles. To people reared in a Catholic society conscious of the long-drawn-out conflict with the Moslems, and at a time when new Saracens, the Turks, seemed to be becoming ever more threatening, eighth-century events were topical. Young warriors, chivalrous knights, beautiful women, wise old men, all moved swiftly and in quick succession through *Orlando Furioso*. There are amazing adventures in faraway lands, in which gods and magicians have a hand; there are strange peoples of unknown countries, and strange animals. It is pagan. It is a splendid fairy tale splendidly told: a wonderful escape from a grim present.

#### MACHIAVELLI

In the wide spectrum of Renaissance intellectual life there was room for Ariosto's serene poetry and Machiavelli's stormy prose. The Florentine Niccolò Machiavelli left to posterity an adjective, Machiavellian, not a pleasant word to those who stress the rule of law, who include honesty, truthfulness, and compassion in morality and deny that the end justifies the means. He himself, though, was a failure as a Machiavellian. He was very much the small man swept away by big events. He may, possibly, have been a better man than the content of *The Prince*, the book on which his fame rests, would indicate.

Born in 1469, Machiavelli was still a young man when he was made the head (secretary was his title) of the second chancery in the administration of the Republic of Florence, which dealt with internal affairs and defense. A shrewd information agent, Machiavelli was sent on missions abroad to find out what dangers threatened the republic. He met and conversed at length with Caesar Borgia and with pawns both big and small of the international political game. He lost his job when the Medici, already a power in the church, were reinstated in Florence by the Spaniards in 1512. It was to gain favor with the new rulers that Machiavelli wrote *The Prince*, giving the impression that he supported tyrannical monarchist rule. He was

nevertheless not trusted. He remained without a position, but with a small private income. During the fifteen years of the first Medici restoration, Machiavelli wrote copiously. In his history of Florence and his biography of the fourteenth-century lord of Lucca Castruccio Castracani, he proved to be a superb historian. *Mandragola* was the best play of the Italian Renaissance. He dealt with politics in *The Prince* and in a longer work *The Discourses*, a commentary on the first ten books of Livy's history of Rome. When the republic was reestablished in Florence in 1527, Machiavelli hoped to return to his previous post; but now it was the republicans' turn to mistrust him. He died soon afterward, a disappointed and embittered man.

Machiavelli's prince could have been Caesar Borgia, totally ruthless, treacherous, immoral, and cruel, but at the same time concerned about the stability of the state and the welfare of its subjects; he could have been Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan; or Ferdinand, king of Naples; or any other of the many Italian despots, big or small, of the time. Nowhere does Machiavelli say that he approves of treachery and cruelty, but he makes it clear that the first duty of the prince—today we would say the dictator—is to stay in power, and he lists the means by which prince or dictator can so do.

In the *Discourses* there is a different Machiavelli, a patriot and sincere republican. The public, in Italy and abroad, knows Machiavelli as the author, not of the *Discourses*, but of *The Prince*; as the amoral, unscrupulous theorist who stated that politics are outside morality, that might is right, that the end justifies the means. As such, Machiavelli is the antithesis of the American Founding Fathers and of European democrats such as Mazzini, who stood for republican-

Portrait of Machiavelli by Santi di Tito. EPA





ism, for a society founded on rights and duties (i.e., on morality) and on the equal liberties of all citizens. *The Prince* has been, and still is, favorite reading for dictators and would-be dictators the world over.

Whether it be right or wrong to attribute Machiavellianism to Machiavelli, it is a fact that the sordid political behavior described as Machiavellianism played a tragic role in Italian life for centuries, providing the ruling class with a justification for arbitrariness and deceit, and the masses with a justification for moral weakness.

#### GUICCIARDINI

As a historian and a political scientist Francesco Guicciardini ranked with Machiavelli. He was born in 1483 into a distinguished Florentine family. An ambitious man, and a weak one, he became a servant of the Medici in Florence and in Rome, so betraying the republicanism and secularism that he knew to be preferable to despotism and clericalism. After the assassination of Duke Alexander, Guicciardini played an important role in defeating plans to reestablish the republic. He counted on being the power behind the throne when he helped young Cosimo de' Medici to succeed Alexander. But Cosimo had a mind of his own, he was no puppet. Guicciardini was obliged to retire to his country house, where, in twenty volumes, he wrote a brilliant detailed history of Italy from the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492 to the death of Pope Clement VII in 1534.

Francesco Guicciardini. NYPL PC



#### OTHER HUMANISTS AND RENAISSANCE WRITERS

Early in the sixteenth century, humanism still inspired the Venetian poet and historian Pietro Bembo, in late life a cardinal with leanings toward the *conciliatoristi*; also the Mantuan Baldassare Castiglione, an accomplished man of the world and of letters who wrote his delightful and informative *Il Cortegiano* (*The Courtier*) at the court of the dukes of Urbino; the Tuscans Giovanni della Casa, author of *Galateo* and a leading churchman who served as papal ambassador and as archbishop, and Giorgio Vasari, whose lives of Italian artists of his time provide insight into the artists' fascinating Renaissance world. Two other Tuscans, divorced from humanist thought, were Pietro Aretino and Benvenuto Cellini. Aretino was a born writer, untrained, a scandalmonger whose pen was feared by politicians and churchmen who had anything to hide. Cellini was a fearless adventurer, a brave soldier who fought the Spaniards at the siege of Rome, a superb artist, and an egoist whose world revolved around himself. His autobiography is still widely read in Italian and in translation. Traditional discrimination having been partly (and only temporarily) overcome in the field of writing by the progressive sectors of the Renaissance intelligentsia, the first remarkable women writers appeared on the Italian literary scene. Two of the most notable were the Roman wife of a renowned Spanish general, Vittoria Colonna, a friend of Michelangelo, and the Paduan Gaspara Stampa who sang of her love for the Count of Collalto in beautiful lyrics.

#### ERA OF INTELLECTUAL REPRESSION

Thirty-one years separate Vasari's birth from the birth of Torquato Tasso in 1544, but more than time separated them. The worlds they lived in were utterly different. When Tasso reached manhood, the Renaissance was dead or dying everywhere in Italy except as a lingering vestige in the Republic of Venice. A new era was born with the events that occurred between the papal approval of the Society of Jesus in 1540 and papal approval of the *Confessio fidei Tridentina* in 1564: state-enforced conformity triumphed.

The new era was to last nearly two hundred years. There would no longer be a large, turbulent, varied Italian intelligentsia such as had existed since the thirteenth century. (Intellectual dynamism would migrate to a few transalpine nations stimulated by the Italian example of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.) During these two hundred years, from the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, the great Italian literary figures were intellectually isolated and often lonely individuals, not participants in a vast movement. What made them write, how they wrote, they owed to themselves, not to the stimulus of their environment. Among them were Tasso himself, Sarpi, who barely escaped assassina-





Benvenuto Cellini. EPA

tion, down to Vico, ignored by his contemporaries, and Giannone who died in 1748 after thirteen years in prison. There were two Dominican friars: Giordano Bruno, born near Naples, who was executed for heresy in Rome, and Tommaso Campanella from Calabria, who spent thirty years in prison. Both are

Torquato Tasso. EPA



counted among the philosophers rather than among men of letters. There was also Galileo, arrested on suspicion of heresy in his old age, whose fame as a scientist has obscured the man of letters.

## TASSO

Last of Italy's four great classic poets, Torquato Tasso was born in Sorrento, near Naples. His mother died when he was a child. His father, Bernardo, a distinguished poet, was for much of his life a political exile. Tasso studied in Urbino, Padua, and Bologna. As a young man he spent happy years at the court of Alfonso II, duke of Ferrara. Stirred by the events culminating in the great defeat inflicted on the Turks at Lepanto (1571), Tasso wrote his major poem *Gerusalemme Liberata*. The heroes were Crusaders of the First Crusade, not Charlemagne's paladins, but the theme was still that of Pulci, Boiardo, Ariosto: Catholicism struggling against its deadly enemy Islam. Tasso, however, was moved by a different spirit: his piety was deep and sincere. Soon after the poem was completed, he began to suffer torments that were to afflict him until his death, twenty years later. No one can really know how much of the suffering was due to inner tension connected with his own doubts and uncertainties, perhaps with heretical leanings also, and how much to fear of secular and ecclesiastical authorities bent on extirpating heresy from the Italian nation. Whatever the causes, real or imaginary, the intellectual torment was real, and led to periods of semi-insanity. Tasso left Ferrara, whose duke had been compelled to exile his own mother, the French princess Renée (a lady well known for the aid she had given to Italian sympathizers of the religious reform). The

Tommaso Campanella. EPA







Illustration from Tasso's *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, Canto VI. A duel between Ottone the Circassian and Tancredi in the presence of Clorinda. EPA

poet traveled widely and restlessly. When he returned to Ferrara, peace still eluded him. For reasons that are not clear, he was confined for several years. When he died, in 1595, soon after his release, he was in the throes of a spiritual crisis; but the poetic vein never dried up, he had continued to write until the end of his days.

#### SARPI

The Venetian Paolo Sarpi enjoyed freedom of expression thanks to the protection given him by the government of the Republic of Venice. Early in the seventeenth century Venice was engaged in a struggle

for survival, not so much against the Turks, who were attacking her overseas possessions, as against Spain and the papacy. A member of a monastic order and the official theologian of the republic, Sarpi (born in 1552) wrote a learned and convincing defense of Venice when the government refused to surrender two priests to ecclesiastical authorities. The outcome of this was excommunication, and an assassination attempt in which he was severely wounded. Sarpi owes his reputation as a writer chiefly to the brilliant and polemical *History of the Council of Trent*, first published in London in 1619. Echoing the sentiments of fifteenth- (or twentieth-) century supporters of the Conciliar movement, Sarpi deplored the strengthening



of papal authority at the expense of the bishops', which had resulted from the Council of Trent.

#### VICO AND GIANNONE

Two southerners were the major figures at the close of an era when intellectual dissent meant isolation if not outright persecution. Giambattista Vico, held in high esteem as a thinker by later generations, was born in Naples in 1668. For a while he earned his living as a private tutor, then was appointed to a meagerly paid chair at the university of Naples. Thinking and writing made his lifelong poverty bearable. He published many philosophical and juridical essays, but his twentieth-century reputation and popularity are owed to *Scienza Nuova* (or *Principles of a New Science on the Common Nature of Nations*), published in 1725. In this, as in his other works, the style is often involved and obscure, not for lack of clarity of thought but because of the complexity of ideas, the amount of material with which the thinker dealt, and possibly, too, his need to avoid being detected by censors.

Vico's thought was alien to the great current of the seventeenth-century intellectual revolution whose spokesmen were Bacon, Galileo, Descartes, Leibniz, Newton. In his thinking, speculation prevailed over observation, generalizations over analysis, the deductive over the inductive method. He was a fore-

runner of the great system-builders of the nineteenth century. Vico anticipated Hegelianism and Marxism when he postulated that what becomes is, and that what is, is no longer. Like Croce, he asserted that philosophy and history are one. There is little man can know, he maintained, beyond the evidence provided by history. The problems he wanted to elucidate were those once faced by Machiavelli and Guicciardini: the meaning of history, the intrinsic value of human events, the place of politics in man's experience. Historical developments, he wrote, are the manifestations of man's spirit, not the result of God's will, or the actions of influential men, or accident. In historical developments, one phase follows another in a regular cycle in any nation or group of nations, with each cycle at a different level from the preceding one. The formula he developed was accepted later by many as a law explaining the entire historical process.

Eight years younger than Vico, the historian Pietro Giannone hailed from Apulia. Two years before the publication of *Scienza Nuova*, Giannone's monumental (forty-volume) detailed and accurate *History of the Kingdom of Naples*, an Italian classic, had appeared. The author's criticism of commonly accepted interpretations of Neapolitan events, especially of the relationships between the kingdom and the papacy, gave rise to violent attacks. His spirited defense led to his arrest in Turin in 1735 and imprisonment for life. Few Italians at the time read a work that was marked by strong official disapproval. The reverse happened in France, where Voltaire and Montesquieu were among Giannone's admirers and where the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment considered him as belonging to their own intellectual world.

Paolo Sarpi. Bodleian Library, Oxford



#### MINOR WRITERS OF THE ERA OF REPRESSION

Among the writers of these two dismal centuries who conformed to cultural fashions and achieved minor distinction, were three poets: Giambattista Marino, a Neapolitan, and his two contemporaries the Ligurian Gabriello Chiabrera and the Emilian Alessandro Tassoni. In the eighteenth century, the Roman Metastasio was renowned for the light fluency of his rhymes. As often happens in periods of intolerant conformity, erudition took over part of the ground lost by creativity. At the end of the seventeenth century, the learned Calabrian Gian Vincenzo Gravina helped to found the Roman academy, which set the tone in literary circles for several decades. Lodovico Muratori, librarian to the duke of Modena and author of excellent works on the Italian Middle Ages, was an indefatigable researcher and a prolific writer. The editor of a large collection of documents, chronicles, poems, and letters concerning Italian history, he made the ducal library one of the most valuable in Italy.





Giovanni Battista Vico. EPA

## EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY REVIVAL

A few decades elapsed between the political changes that occurred early in the eighteenth century under the pressure of events beyond the Alps, and their impact on the world of letters. Chaos had accompanied the War of the Spanish Succession. When order was reestablished, some freedom of expression was tolerated in a few Italian states (*see* Chapter 10) providing room for literary innovation, for experimentation with unorthodox themes, for some dissent, for more vigorous styles. With the writings of two Venetians, the brilliant playwright Carlo Goldoni whose

Carlo Goldoni. EPA



comedies have delighted Italians since the 1730s, and the didactic moralist Gasparo Gozzi, a master of Italian prose, something new began to stir on the Italian literary scene. The new mood among the Italian intelligentsia was manifested in a number of ways. Academies such as those of the *Pugni* and the *Trasformati* were founded. Periodicals began to appear in the early 1760s (Gozzi's *Gazzetta Veneta* in 1760, and his later *Osservatore* modeled on the British *Spectator*, Baretti's *Frusta Letteraria* in 1763, Verri's *Il Caffè* in 1764, and many others). Translations from the English, French, and German stimulated minds

An illustration from Goldoni's *Donne Curiose*. NYPL

Gasparo Gozzi. EPA





and extended intellectual horizons, now reaching into English scientific empiricism and early Romanticism, the French Enlightenment, German new criticism and poetry. The intellectual circles of Milan and Naples were particularly rich in original and powerful minds (see Chapter 10). Marquis Cesare Beccaria, author of the widely read essay *Dei Delitti e Delle Pene* published in 1764 and translated into English as *Crimes and Punishments*, belonged to the circle of Milan. In the essay was the phrase "the greatest happiness divided among the largest number," which paraphrased by the British philosopher Bentham as "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" became a major democratic slogan.

#### PARINI AND ALFIERI

Two writers took precedence over all other men of letters in Italy in the second half of the eighteenth century. They differed totally in background and training, but they shared belief in progress, commitment to a better future, concern for all men, and contempt for a present characterized by the arrogance of the few and the servility of the many. Both belonged to the Enlightenment and were thus spiritually close to their contemporaries who in France prepared the ground for the revolution of 1789, and in the New World led the American nation to liberty and independence. The Lombard poet Giuseppe Parini was born in 1729 of humble origins. He took Holy Orders chiefly to have the opportunity to study. Self-controlled, urbane, and possibly more of a freethinker than a believer, he never betrayed his vows, even though at that time betrayal was commonplace—and condoned. As a tutor to wealthy youngsters, he ridiculed the artificiality and idleness of the privileged classes and exposed their

Giuseppe Parini. EPA



callousness in delightful polished verse. At first an admirer of the French Revolution, he withdrew into isolation when he realized that the aim of French revolutionary armies was to replace the old tyranny with a new and more efficient despotism.

Twenty years younger than Parini, the Piedmontese Vittorio Alfieri was a wealthy aristocrat who traveled widely, an ardent reformer, and a man of violent emotions. He was well known for his devoted liaison with the Countess of Albany, widow of the last Stuart pretender to the British throne. The many tragedies Alfieri wrote were attacks against despotism. He greeted the French Revolution enthusiastically in its liberal and humanitarian phase but attacked it when it became authoritarian, cruel, and imperialistic. His last writings were hymns of hope for the liberation and unification of Italy. With Alfieri, who died in 1803, the *Risorgimento* phase of Italian letters had begun.

#### THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

For Italian literature, the nineteenth century lasted longer than the conventional one hundred years. It had, first, a romantic phase, which began when deep emotions, generous commitments, and revolutionary upheavals stimulated one another; when the dictates of reason seemed to be discarded by many of those

Vittorio Alfieri. EPA





who engaged in action; when to be a romantic meant to be a patriot, a liberal, or a democrat, to be willing to give up one's life for the struggle against Austria and Austrian-supported despotism and obscurantism. Italy's greatest modern prose writer, Manzoni, and her greatest modern poet, Leopardi, lived during that phase; also Foscolo, scarcely less gifted, and Mazzini, whose political and social message influenced not only his younger contemporaries in Italy and abroad, but the next generations as well. Without Romanticism there would have been no conspiracies, revolutions, and attempted revolutions, there would have been neither the defense of the Roman Republic in 1849 nor The Thousand in 1860: there would have been no *Risorgimento*. The nineteenth century lasted into the twentieth throughout the liberal phase following unification; with D'Annunzio and Deledda well into the 1930s. In the second phase there was no longer a dominant tone; instead, there was a search for new ways to express oneself and for new styles; a search for new ideas also, and new values, all leading to a variety of experiences. To the inner tensions that often enable a writer to rise from mediocrity to distinction were added tensions between different, at times antagonistic, attitudes toward life, its meaning, and its problems. Instead of one goal, there were many. Astride the centuries, on the Italian literary scene as elsewhere in Europe, confused turmoil heralded the tragic decades between the beginning of World War I and the end of World War II.

ROMANTICISM: MANZONI, FOSCOLO,  
LEOPARDI, MAZZINI

Alessandro Manzoni had a long and fruitful life. Born in 1785, the scion of an aristocratic Milanese family, he was reared in the freethinking and rationalistic intellectual climate of the Enlightenment. A spiritual crisis led him to Catholicism around 1810, and he remained a staunch progressive Catholic all his life, a forerunner of those who at the end of the century launched the Christian Democratic movement. He participated as a senator in the meeting of the Italian parliament that proclaimed the unification of the nation. Manzoni's fame rests primarily on *I Promessi Sposi* (*The Betrothed*), a masterpiece of style and character portrayal. His patriotic poems, no less than his religious ones, struck a deep chord in Italian souls. Because he was so widely read all over Italy, he had a unifying influence in the cultural life of the nation. Ugo Foscolo, also a novelist and poet, was the son of a Venetian father and a Greek mother. His life was a restless one. An ardent patriot and a born revolutionary, he chose the bitter liberty of exile when despotism became unbearable in Italy. Giacomo Leopardi was the son of an erudite and reactionary member of the minor provincial aristocracy. He escaped the meanness of small-town life with his vivid poetic imagination, but he had a poor constitution and his



Alessandro Manzoni. ICI

Giacomo Leopardi. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris









historians whose evocation of the past helped to mold the present. The monumental *History of Italian Literature* by the literary critic Francesco De Sanctis was also a detailed and perceptive history of Italian society, and it made a deep impression on generations of students.

#### ASTRIDE TWO CENTURIES

The *Risorgimento* over, literary themes changed and styles took different forms. The Tuscan Giosuè Carducci, born in 1835, poet, teacher, literary historian, and Nobel Prize winner, was the thunderous and progressive poet of a united Italy. A patriot and a democrat, he was virtually Italy's poet laureate. More gentle, less of an ardent nationalist, and more deeply concerned with the problems, rights, and expectations of the awakening masses, was Giovanni Pascoli, from Romagna. The Sicilian Giovanni Verga was the greatest novelist of his generation. In widely read novels, his contemporary Antonio Fogazzaro described the torments of the *modernisti*, the pre-Vatican II modern Catholic reformers. Great popularity was won by the humanitarian socialist Edmondo De Amicis, whose *Cuore*, published in 1886, remained for decades one of the most widely read books in Italy. The Sardinian Grazia Deledda, another Nobel Prize winner, was the foremost woman writer of her generation. She vividly portrayed life as it is for the common people: the setting of her novels is Sardinian, the tone is tragic, evil is ever-present, the characters are simple and proud—the people she had known in her youth.

The decadence, the snobbery, the frenzied nationalism, all revealed in beautiful verse and polished prose by the Abruzzi-born poet and novelist Gabriele D'Annunzio, reflected the dominant mood and aspirations of dynamic sectors of the Italian ruling class

Giosuè Carducci. ICI



The birthplace of Giovanni Pascoli at San Mauro di Romagna, now the Pascoli Museum. EPA

Giovanni Verga. EPA







Antonio Fogazzaro. NYPL PC



Grazia Deledda. Photoworld

from the end of the nineteenth century until the consolidation of the Fascist regime. To an entire generation of Italians, D'Annunzio, whether loved or hated, was more than a man of letters. The real declaration of war against the Austrian Empire was the speech he gave in Genoa early in May 1915, commemorating the sailing of Garibaldi's Thousand fifty-five years before. His gallantry in war impressed the public. His March of Ronchi set the pattern for Mussolini's March on Rome three years later (see Chapter 12). The disciplined social-nationalist authoritarianism he advocated when he was ruling the city of Fiume dictatorially, and institutionalized in the *Carta del Quarnaro* (the charter of Quarnaro, the name given to Fiume's territory) became the Fascists' creed. For Italian nationalists *D'Annunzianesimo* was a set of values, an emotional mood, a political ideology; in short, a way of life. Fascism absorbed *D'Annunzianesimo*, but as long as he lived D'Annunzio, who looked down on fascists, remained a potential thorn in the side of the dictatorship. This did not happen with Filippo Marinetti, a minor literary figure whose name was also identified with a movement transcending literary circles. In 1909, Marinetti issued a manifesto outlining the position of *futurismo*, an intellectual and political national revolt against the establishment. *Futurismo* found enthusiastic supporters among fringe intellectuals. Fascism absorbed this too, and Marinetti remained to the end a committed Fascist.

#### CROCE

Philosopher and statesman, Benedetto Croce spanned much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in his long and productive life. No other Italian intellectual had as much influence on his contempo-



Benedetto Croce. EPA

raries and on younger generations. Immensely erudite, endowed with an original and powerful mind and with great capacity for orderly work, a master of the language and of the complex workings of the intellect, Croce possessed the clarity of mind, the broad vision, the self-control, and the serenity of the truly great, of a Plato or a Kant. He was a deeply compassionate man to whom pride was totally alien. Croce was born in 1866 into a well-to-do family from Abruzzi. Orphaned (his parents perished in an earthquake), he was brought up by relatives who belonged to a Neapolitan



circle that included some of Italy's foremost intellectuals and political leaders. From literary criticism, which was his main interest as a youth, he went on to philosophy, to history, and to the investigation of the meaning of history. The search for the beautiful, the true, the good, and the useful led Croce to write on aesthetics, on logic, on ethics, on economics. An Italian patriot who was also deeply attached to the distinctive culture of the South, he wrote his moving *History of the Kingdom of Naples*. While the fascist storm was sweeping nation after nation, Croce wrote for fellow citizens and for all men his brilliant *History of Europe* and *History of Italy*, focused on a period when liberty was a main concern and free institutions replaced servile ones.

Croce made his reputation as a young man, and lived to the age of eighty-six: for two generations of Italians he was the towering intellectual. He was something more besides. His neo-Hegelian dialectics, his individualistic formulation of the philosophy of idealism, his identification of philosophy with history apart, Croce was an inspiration to many Italians through the example he set and through the sense of duty to oneself and to the community that he demonstrated. What man does, Croce postulated, is an expression of his liberty—what others call autonomy, creativity, spontaneity. He held that the philosopher-historian is not a judge of what is right or wrong in man's doings. It is the citizen who judges. Whenever a crisis arose, Croce the citizen knew where he stood: for liberty. He maintained his stand, whatever the sacrifice involved. Active in public life for long periods, Croce the statesman played a crucial and beneficial role in bringing the best among Italian intellectuals together in opposing fascism, and later in making possible, with a minimum of unrest, the transition from a monarchist to a republican form of government. Today, years after his death, no Italian who has not read and meditated upon some of Croce's works can consider himself truly educated.

#### PIRANDELLO

The Sicilian Luigi Pirandello was Croce's contemporary and his opposite. In Pirandello there was turmoil, not serenity; emphasis on confused emotionalism more than on clear reasoning; pessimism instead of optimism and therefore a negative rather than a positive approach to problems. While Croce was above his time, Pirandello belonged in it. This enabled him to don the flamboyant uniform of members of the Academy established by the Fascist regime. A Nobel Prize winner, Pirandello spoke for the many intellectuals in Italy and elsewhere who found it difficult to understand what was happening to them, to their nations, to mankind; and who were convinced that society was disintegrating. Unable to comprehend the variety and richness of a free way of life, troubled by doubts, they gave up the search for the true and the



Luigi Pirandello in his study, 1936, ICI

good, the beautiful and the useful, thereby falling either into the morass of skepticism or under the spell of dogmatic ideologies. Although he was primarily a novelist and an essayist, Pirandello is chiefly known as a playwright who fascinates and intrigues actors and audiences alike. Fame came to him rather late, in 1921, with *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, which has remained the most popular of his plays.

#### FROM FASCISM TO THE REPUBLICAN ERA

Under the Fascist regime, ideological conformity enforced through censorship and, more important, the constant threat to writers of not being allowed to publish and therefore of being deprived of their livelihood, caused a decline in the overall quality of literary writing. Financial independence and worldwide renown protected Croce, but his was an exceptional position. When Pirandello made a half-hearted adjustment to the dictatorship's demands on writers, he was an elderly man who had already said what he had to say.

Whatever the evaluation of the literary output during the dictatorship, there is no doubt that the Italian literary scene was very much alive both before and after the Fascist interlude, during which exiles made major contributions. Of the writers who (besides Croce and Pirandello) gained distinction, some had made their reputations before censorship and fear stifled letters, others did so after the end of World War II.

There are three names, besides Croce's, that are outstanding among philosophers and historians who were distinguished writers also. Second only to Croce



as a philosopher, Giovanni Gentile became a major fascist theorist who, in the middle twenties as a member of Mussolini's cabinet, reformed the Italian public school system. In the thirties he supervised the preparation of the Italian encyclopedia. In 1944 he was assassinated by Partisans in Florence. A historian and an able scholar, Gioacchino Volpe contributed to the knowledge and understanding of the Italian Middle Ages. He, too, was fascinated by fascism, in which he saw the regeneration of the Italian nation and the promise of a brilliant future. He lived long enough to recognize that these had been illusions. Gaetano Salvemini, as great a historian as Volpe, was, on the contrary, both as writer and as man of action the embodiment of the best in the democratic aspiration toward a society of free and equal citizens. In his scholarly *Magnati e popolani in Firenze*, he wrote vividly and pointedly of the Florentine Republic at a crucial time when those who did not have enough battled those who had too much. Equally lively and committed is his history of the first years of the French Revolution. As a democrat, Salvemini analyzed and interpreted in many works the internal and external policies of Italian Fascism, and explained, in books and pamphlets, the nature of fascism and the threat it represented. During his long exile he taught for many years at Harvard University. As a man of action, he inspired many who played a major role in establishing the Italian democratic republic.

One of the most remarkable of the essayists and novelists, Italo Svevo, a discerning explorer of the psyche, was discovered by Italian and foreign critics and by the public long after his death in 1928. His major work, *Confessions of Zeno*, had appeared in the previous year. The literary critic Giuseppe Antonio Borgese acquired instant popularity with his novel *Rubè*, published in 1921. It contained a realistic rendering of the confused state of mind characterizing much of the European intelligentsia in the post-World War I period. In the early 1930s Borgese chose exile, and spent most of the rest of his life in the United States where he taught and continued to write. His *Goliath* did much to give English-speaking readers a correct understanding of fascism. Two exiles achieved reputation abroad while they were still unknown in Italy. One is Emilio Lussu, who in *Sardinian Brigade* and *Enter Mussolini* vividly portrayed aspects of Italian experience during World War I and its troubled aftermath. The other is Ignazio Silone, whose perceptive novels with ideological overtones realistically describe the hard life of the poor in a fascinating area of central Italy. His *Fontamara* and *Bread and Wine*—two of his many books that were translated into English—were read and admired by foreigners long before they were published in Italy. Carlo Levi, a well-known painter and a militant opponent of Fascism, arrested in the middle thirties, spent considerable time in enforced residence in a small southern community before going into exile. His *Christ Stopped at*



Italo Svevo. ICI

*Eboli*, a best seller both in Italy and the United States, is an admirable commentary on the conditions in which people of the Italian Deep South lived, and on what had brought them about.

Alberto Moravia came to the attention of the critics in his early twenties when he published his first novel, *The Time of Indifference*. Since the end of World War II he has been one of Italy's most prolific and popular writers, and the best known abroad. Elio Vittorini's sensitive *In Sicily*, translated by Ernest Hemingway, is one of many works that gained reputation for the author in English-speaking nations. Another Sicilian, Leonardo Sciascia, wrote vividly and perceptively in a naturalistic vein about people and life in Sicily. *Mafia Vendetta* is a tragically accurate portrayal of the cancerous growth still poisoning life in some sections of the island's long-suffering population. His imaginative and intellectually restless Tuscan contemporary Carlo Cassola has discovered that talk about new forms of literary expression is easier than practice. Though he has made serious efforts to modernize his style, his widely read fiction, part of which has been translated into English, remains rather naturalistic and traditional. Foremost among writers of a younger generation is Italo Calvino, whose fantastic tales have attracted and intrigued Italian and foreign readers. Giuseppe Tomasi, duke of Lampedusa,





Alberto Moravia. ICI



Salvatore Quasimodo. ICI

wrote just one book. Rejected by many publishers and a best seller as soon as it was finally printed shortly after the death of the author, *The Leopard* describes and interprets the collective and individual crises marking the painful passage still being made from a tradition-bound semifeudal society to a modern dynamic one.

By common consent of critics and public, Giuseppe Ungaretti, Eugenio Montale, and the Nobel Prize winner Salvatore Quasimodo are the outstanding Italian poets of the last half century. Fashionable symbolism and so-called hermeticism appealed to all three of them in their youth. Each branched off later along his own original path and developed his own distinctive style. In Quasimodo, Latin and Greek poets and Shakespeare had a brilliant translator and a sensitive interpreter. All three belong to an older generation whose problems were many, whose aspirations were often generous, and commitment to the search for the new, sincere—a generation, too, which was formed intellectually during the first decades of the century and whose world ended in the tragic cruel turmoil of World War II. The postwar generation of poets had different problems, aspirations, and commitments. It lives in a different world but has not yet produced the writer of whom it can be said by common consent that he or she is a great poet.

Giuseppe Ungaretti. ICI





# THE ARTS

## ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, PAINTING

*Influence of ever-present Roman art – Foreign influences – Romanesque art – Eleventh and twelfth centuries: architecture . . . sculpture . . . painting – Beginning of the Golden Age – Creativity – Architecture of the Golden Age – From Brunelleschi to Palladio – Sculpture of the Golden Age – Michelangelo – Painting of the Golden Age: Cimabue, Duccio, Giotto – Fifteenth-century Tuscan painters – Leonardo the artist – Non-Tuscan painters – Raphael – Venetian sunset of the Golden Age – From Renaissance to Baroque – Bernini – Other architects and sculptors – Painters from Caravaggio to Guardi – The modern era – Architects of the modern era – Sculptors of the modern era – Painters of the modern era*

## MUSIC

*Land of music – Medieval music – Provençal influence in the eleventh century – Growing popularity of secular music – The language of instrumental music – Palestrina and the Roman school – The Venetian school – Monteverdi and opera – Chamber music and concertos – Scarlatti and Vivaldi – Other eighteenth-century composers – Grand opera – Verdi – Later composers.*

## ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, PAINTING

### INFLUENCE OF EVER-PRESENT ROMAN ART

**L**ONG after the Roman Empire had ceased to exist in Italy, Italians continued to live with what had been produced by the artistic creativity of the Ancients. Wall paintings deteriorated, of course, if they had not already been destroyed by Christian revolutionaries or German barbarians, and after a while little was left of them. Mosaics were broken up, but not at once and not everywhere. Statues were knocked over; most were destroyed, but there had been so many that some could always be found in the remotest corners of the country. Sculptures on innumerable sarcophagi were spared out of respect for the dead. Basilicas, the former law courts, now had bishops officiating in them; they had become churches. A few of the temples in which pagan gods had been worshiped also became churches. Others, with structural changes, were converted into residential buildings. Most, stripped of all valuables, were left to become ruins, looked upon as they were with distaste as symbols of feared and hated paganism. Theatres and amphitheatres no longer func-



*Roman frescoes in the crypt of the Benedictine convent of Monte Maria di Burgisio. NYPL.*



tioned as public recreation centers for the whole community, but they remained—although deserted—silent witnesses to an unforgettable past. Aqueducts, sometimes doubling as bridges and viaducts, lasted as long as maintenance was kept up.

Because the art of the ancients meant paganism to the Christians, and because any inclination in that direction—even an innocent admiration of artistic masterpieces—endangered the salvation of the eternal soul, Italians of the Dark Ages failed to be moved by Roman architecture, sculpture, or painting. From the fifth century on, the Church of Rome was their sole guide in things of the spirit. Italians were not moved, but the ever-present evidence of Roman art, shrinking though it was through the generations, could not fail to have its influence. On all sides there were superbly proportioned buildings that had been created for architectural beauty and not simply to fulfill a useful function, there were sculptures and paintings in which people, animals, and inanimate objects were incorporated in portrayals of movement and life.

#### FOREIGN INFLUENCES

Hundreds of years elapsed between the last creative sparks of artists of the ancient culture and the first sparks heralding the birth of new, genuinely Italian art forms in the eleventh century. During these centuries the influence of Byzantine art was felt in Italy together with considerable Arab influence in Sicily and some German influence in the North. Except where foreign styles were imitated or where there was the hand of a foreign artist, art remained static and stereotyped. New buildings, new sculptures, new paintings on walls or panels were few compared with their numbers in the long heyday of ancient civilization, and with what they were to be after the end of the Middle Ages. And what was produced was on a relatively small scale. It was the art of an age that had lower cultural levels and lower standards of living.

The Ravenna mausoleums of the Roman empress Galla Placidia and the Goth king Theodoric were fine examples of what architects and master builders erected in the fifth and early sixth centuries. Nevertheless they—together with Theodoric's palace in Ravenna—were a far cry from the superb structures of the early Roman Empire in the first and second centuries, and from those of the times of Diocletian and Constantine, when Roman arts had already declined considerably, as if creativity had been drying up, techniques had become rusty, and financial resources scant. Comparison, though often unfair, is unavoidable, and a visit to Ravenna shows how sharp the downward trend had been by the time the city replaced Rome as the capital of the Roman Empire in the West and became the capital of Ostrogoth and Byzantine Italy. Basilica-style churches were built for centuries, from the famous ones in Ravenna to that of Bagnacavallo in Romagna erected in the early eighth century. As time



Ravenna, outside the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. ICI



Ravenna, Mausoleum of Theodoric. ICI

passed, new edifices were fewer, and most, especially those in Rome in the seventh and eighth centuries, were clumsy imitations of the heavier and more complex Byzantine style. Elsewhere, Byzantine architecture inspired the builders of San Vitale in Ravenna, Santa Sofia in Benevento, Santa Maria in Cassino; it became the dominant style not only in areas effectively or nominally ruled by the East Roman Empire, but also in the Lombard Kingdom of Italy and the Lombard duchies in the South.





Ravenna, Church of San Vitale. EPA

The inside of the Basilica of San Vitale showing sixth-century mosaics. ICI



As early as the fourth century, sculptures on sarcophagi revealed a tendency to adopt Syrian and Egyptian stiffness and simplification of line. The change, particularly in painting, suited an age in which the contemplative mood prevailed in the small educated minority. The use of color and gold was superb, as the mosaics that have survived invasions, wars, bad maintenance, and weather dazzlingly attest. But the aliveness which as late as the fifth century characterized the recently discovered mosaics at Piazza Armerina in Sicily, for instance, was soon a thing of the past everywhere. A prophet or a saint was a stylized image with prescribed gestures, never an individual. An exception to the Byzantine influence was Sicily in the ninth and tenth centuries under Arab occupation. Much of what the Arab artists and craftsmen had produced on the island was destroyed when Catholicism took its revenge on Mohammedanism in the late eleventh century, but enough remains to give an idea of its beauty and fine craftsmanship. The same cannot be said of the German contribution, of which evidence can be seen in churches of northern Italy where Milan's Archbishop Aribert commanded the frescoes painted in the first half of the eleventh century.

#### ROMANESQUE ART

The Byzantine occupation of Italian territories ended in the eleventh century and the German hold over the Kingdom of Italy began to weaken shortly thereafter. With a radical change of leadership in the South and a loosening of society in the North and Center, conditions became more favorable to the development of indigenous art forms. In the age of Romanesque art (corresponding to the religious age of faith and the political age of the *comuni*), originality and innovation began to replace imitation. It was a slow and timid beginning, but it heralded a new era in which the human figure was regaining life and individuality.

#### ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES: ARCHITECTURE . . . .

During that age of faith, the arts primarily served religious purposes. In the eleventh century the church of Saint Ambrose in Milan was rebuilt in imposing majesty in the Romanesque style, a prototype for many other churches including San Michele in Pavia. The architect Lanfranco drew the plans for the cathedral of Modena, begun in 1099. In the twelfth century, Lanfranco, his disciples, and many imitators had a hand in building the cathedrals of Parma, Piacenza, and other Emilian cities; of Cremona north of the Po and of San Nicola in Bari. In 1063, from the plans of Buschetto, the construction of one of the loveliest religious monuments of the Italian Middle Ages was begun: the cathedral of Pisa. Colorful and suffused with light, grandiose but not oppressive, it is a place





Ravenna, Sant'Apollinare in Classe Fuori. Triumphal arch and apse. ICI

Mosaic, Piazza Armerina, Sicily. EPA



for social intercourse as well as for worship. The Cathedral and Baptistry of Pisa were prototypes for others in Tuscany (the cathedral of Pistoia, the baptistry of San Giovanni in Florence), in Sardinia (then a dependency of Pisa), and in Apulia. In the twelfth century, Roman architects began to build cloisters, which soon became a feature of monasteries and convents. The centuries-old connection between Venice and Constantinople, political for a long time, economic when political bonds were dissolved, had influenced the architects of the cathedral of Torcello, which was restored several times between the seventh and the eleventh century. It influenced the architects who in the second half of the eleventh century planned the re-





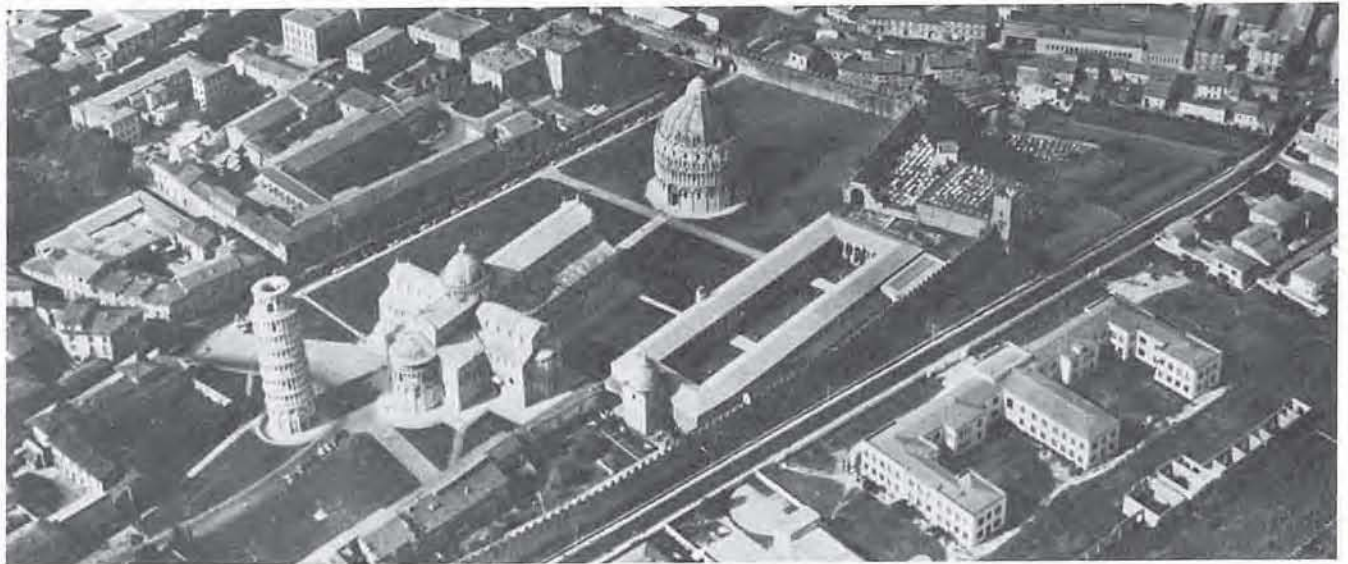
*The cathedral of Modena.*  
EPA

building of Saint Mark's in Venice—one of Christendom's most magnificent cathedrals—which was consecrated in 1098. The oriental style could also be seen in Ancona's cathedral, San Ciriaco, begun in the eleventh century and completed in the thirteenth. During this era Sicily again created something unique: the policy of the Norman Roger II and his successors, founded on the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic and religious communities, was reflected in twelfth-century architecture. The cathedrals of Palermo, of Cefalù, of Monreale (the most famous one, built in 1166–1183) are splendid examples.

#### SCULPTURE

In the Romanesque period there were many opportunities for sculptors since the new cathedrals in particular required great quantities of bas-reliefs and statuary. Sculpture began to be less crude, less "barbarian," more imaginative. There was both strength and originality in the bas-reliefs made by Wiligelmo (Gug-

*Aerial view of Pisa showing Cathedral, Baptistery, and Leaning Tower.* ICI



*San Ciriaco, Ancona.* EPA



*Pisa, the cathedral façade.*  
ENIT







*Cathedral of Monreale. Detail of exterior decoration. EPA*

lielmo da Modena) early in the twelfth century for the cathedral of Modena, and those in the cathedral of Parma to which Benedetto Antelami dedicated his energies for several decades. The gentler style of Maestro Guglielmo, whose sculptures for the cathedral of Pisa date from the middle of the twelfth century, found imitators throughout Italy. In the churches of Rome, Niccolò d'Angelo and Pietro Vassalletto replaced the Byzantine style, by then soulless and static, with imitations of classical Roman sculpture.

#### PAINTING

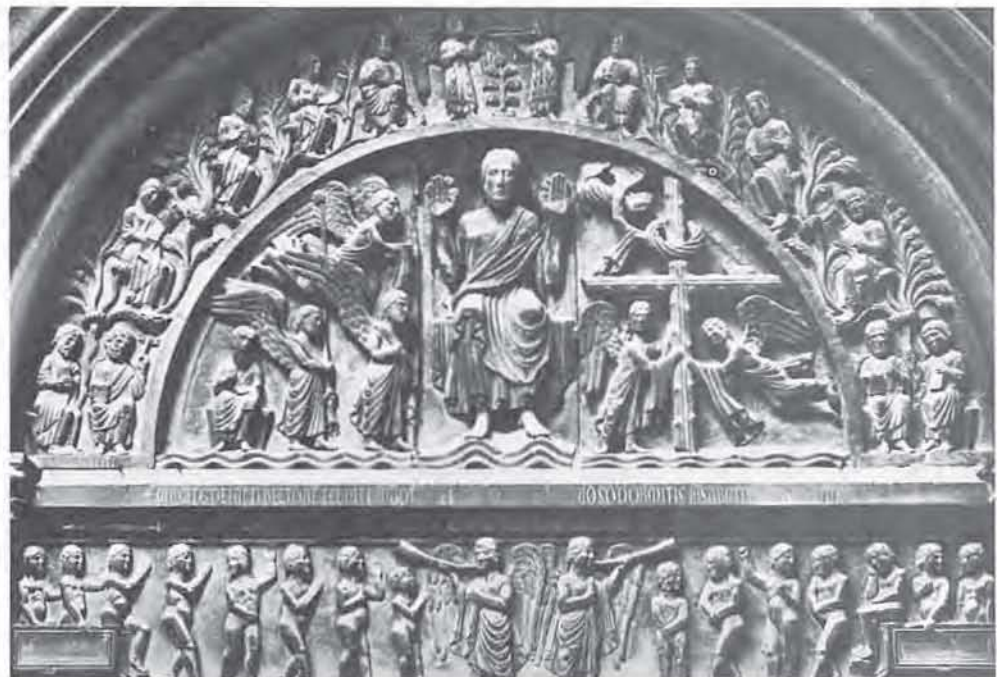
Judging by what survived of it, painting in the Romanesque period—except in Sicily—seemed to have remained more tradition-bound than architecture and sculpture. In Sicily, around the middle of the twelfth century, Roger II and members of the royal family entrusted teams of artisans with the decoration of many churches. The imaginative artisans showed considerable artistic talent: there was little or nothing that was traditional and standardized in the rendering of the apostles in the Cathedral of Cefalù. Sicily may, however, have been less of an exception than was generally assumed: relatively little of the painting remains, as most was fresco work which was destroyed or covered with plaster in later times when fashion changed; but pieces of Romanesque frescoes uncovered here and there in recent decades now indicate that in the peninsula, and the North as well, new life was breathed into painting no less than into architecture and sculpture.

#### BEGINNING OF THE GOLDEN AGE

It is a commonplace to say that there was a revolution in the art world in Italy during the second half of the thirteenth century; that its center was in Tuscany and its initiators were Nicola Pisano from Pisa, Cimabue from Florence, Duccio from Siena. The revolution began in a small way, then it grew, finally exploding and producing masterpieces for several generations. Three hundred years separated the sculptor and architect Pisano, whose period of fullest creativity was the late thirteenth century, and Titian, who continued to paint masterpieces in his old age during the late sixteenth century. These three centuries were the unrivaled Golden Age of Italian art.

Critics, historians, social scientists, and philoso-

*Reliefs from the cathedral of Parma. ICI*





phers have all produced scholarly explanations for the Golden Age—setting forth numerous (and often contradictory) points of view with sagacity and erudition. The favorite approach has been to take one element in the environment in which the artists were reared and worked, and to make it the all-explaining factor. Some of the common explanations have been rapid economic expansion, capital accumulation in the hands of a few, the leisure of the wealthy, urbanization, class tensions, fashionable Maecenatism, the pressure of demand, the vigor of secular or religious convictions, family conditions, the laws of history inherent in matter or in something else, the spirit of the times, the stimulation from contacts in Italy or even abroad, the awareness of ancient classical civilizations. If any of these explanations were satisfactory one could ask why, when that particular factor or set of factors was present in other societies, it did not produce a similar result.

There is no denying that the environment had its influence. In much of Italy, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, there was considerable freedom of artistic expression. Linked to general conditions of liberty, there existed in many self-governing Italian communities the tensions that stimulate imagination and heighten emotions. Thanks to intensive trade, efficient industry, and improved agriculture, in many areas of Italy there was wealth available to invest in the building of palaces and cathedrals and to provide a living for tens of thousands of artists and for artisans who were also artists. There was the patronage of wealthy merchant oligarchies and of generous princes who decided to use public funds for erecting town halls and churches, or their own private funds to build palaces more magnificent than those of their neighbors, palaces adorned with fine and expensive pieces of statuary and paintings honoring the owner or donor.

#### CREATIVITY

The right environmental conditions can perhaps explain the output of run-of-the-mill artists who acquire the necessary skills to produce what is in demand; they may even account for an unusual number of good artists, who are given scope to use their talents. What they cannot explain is the truly great artist, the man of genius. His dedication, his aesthetic sense (perhaps at variance with the current mode), his conceptual power, and his ability to transfer his conception to brick or marble, or a panel, bringing life to inanimate objects; these and his inner tensions, his deep emotions, come from within himself and may or may not be related to outer tensions in the community. Genius is implicit neither in the environment nor in the artistic mode. We only know that during those three hundred years, in the relatively small Italian nation of the times (numerically, one-fifth of today's) more than a normal proportion of remarkable artists were born—extraordinarily gifted individuals who made full use of their gifts.

#### ARCHITECTURE OF THE GOLDEN AGE

In the pre-Romanesque period after the end of pagan civilization, and in the Romanesque period, religious buildings preempted the architects' efforts. What was not religious was not important. In the thirteenth century secular buildings began to be worthy of consideration. First there were the castles built by order of Frederick II, king of Sicily and emperor. The best known of these today is the Castel del Monte in Apulia. In the middle of the century magnificent town halls began to appear, actually doubling as capitols in the North and Center, each city being an independent state. These were the meeting places for the citizens' assemblies and for the many commissions supervising different branches of the administration of the city-states. The citizens of Perugia built one of the earliest remarkable town halls. The town hall of Piacenza—perhaps the finest in the Po Valley—followed soon after. The Tuscan architect and sculptor Arnolfo di Cambio, a disciple of Pisano, planned for the Republic of Florence both the town hall known for centuries as Palazzo Vecchio or Palazzo della Signoria, begun in 1294, and a new grandiose cathedral, Santa Maria del Fiore, begun in 1296. In 1298, the town hall of Siena was built, and in the fourteenth century, in an original style, Venice's imposing Palazzo Ducale, where the meetings of the Grand Council of the Republic were held and where members of the executive had their offices. Nicola Pisano had worked on the Cathedral of Pisa. His son Giovanni was appointed *capomastro* (master builder) by the Republic of Siena, to complete the façade of Siena's cathedral. Another Pisano, Andrea (no relation to Nicola and Giovanni), continued work on the cathedral of Florence in 1337–1347 as *capomastro*, and drew plans for the cathedral of Orvieto. In the early 1330s, Giotto, doubling as architect, built the bell tower for the cathedral of Florence, known ever since as Giotto's Tower. Before the end of the fourteenth century two of Florence's most famous churches, Santa Croce—where some of Italy's great men are buried—and Santa Maria Novella, were completed. In 1386, by order of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, work was begun on Milan's vast and ornate Gothic cathedral, which was finally consecrated in 1557.

#### FROM BRUNELLESCHI TO PALLADIO

An aesthetic and technical masterpiece, the vaulting of the dome of the cathedral of Florence was executed by Filippo Brunelleschi, one of the great architects of all time. He also drew the plans for the church of San Lorenzo and the Pazzi Chapel in Florence. An artist, scientist, and spokesman for all that was best in Italy at the time was Leon Battista Alberti, the illegitimate son of Florentine parents, who spent much of his life in Rome but worked as an architect everywhere in Italy. He designed the Malatesta Tem-





*Giotto's Tower, Florence. ICI*



*Basilica of Santa Croce, Florence. ICI*



*Church of Santa Maria Novella, Florence. ICI*

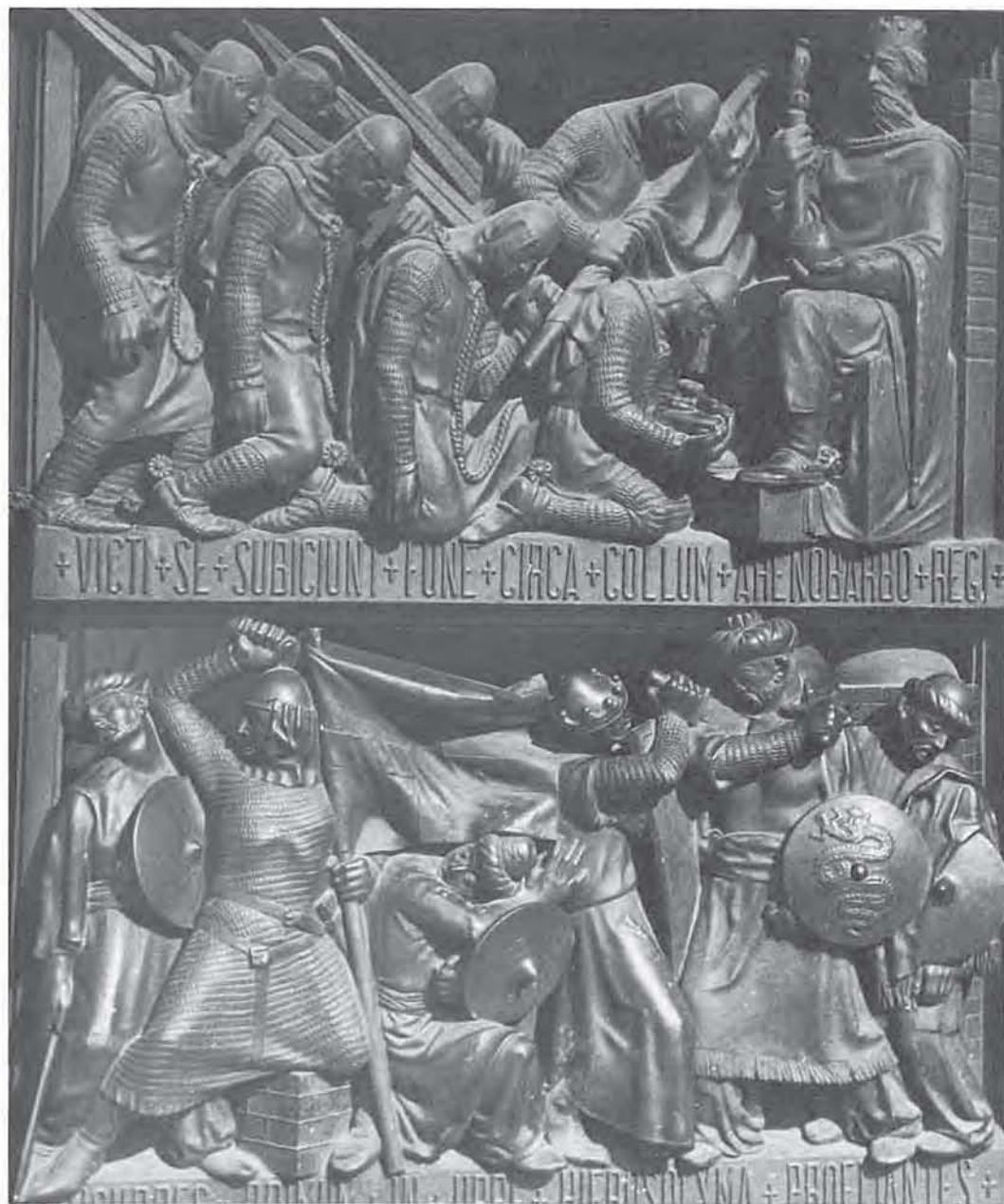




Cathedral, Milan. TWA

ple in Rimini, the church of Sant' Andrea in Mantua, the Rucellai Palace in Florence. The Dalmatian Luciano Laurana (da Laurana) initiated the building of Urbino's superb ducal palace, a magnificent work completed in 1476 for the *condottiero* Duke Federigo of Montefeltro. The town hall of Jesi is also Laurana's work. What Brunelleschi had been early in the fifteenth century, Laurana's disciple Donato Bramante, born near Urbino, was early in the sixteenth. After having spent many years as architect for Ludovico Sforza of Milan, he was asked by Pope Julius II to rebuild Catholicism's major temple, the Basilica of Saint Peter. Work began in 1506. On Bramante's death eight years later, several artists, including Michelangelo, were entrusted with the heavy responsibility of completing one of the most ambitious architectural projects ever undertaken.

A younger architect, Antonio da Sangallo, under whose direction an imposing fortress in Civitavecchia had been constructed, was asked by Cardinal Ales-



Bronze doors of Cathedral, Milan. Photoworld





Malatesta Temple by G. B. Alberti, 1447, Rimini. EPA



St. Peter's, according to the design by Bramante, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection

sandro Farnese (the future Pope Paul III) to build in Rome the palace still known as Palazzo Farnese; this was begun in 1515, and it is one of the most beautiful in the city. The Florentine Jacopo Tatti (called Sansovino like his teacher, the sculptor Contucci) settled in Venice, where he built the Cornaro and Della Zecca palaces as well as Saint Mark's library. Palladio (Andrea di Pietro), twenty years Tatti's junior, was born in Padua but lived mainly in Vicenza. Among his many works for this city were a basilica and a theatre. He built a villa in the country, La Rotonda, which was admired by Thomas Jefferson and became a model for

architects in the United States. Among the great architectural achievements of the Renaissance were the rebuilding of Pavia's Certosa at the end of the fifteenth century and the building of palaces all over Italy. Besides those already mentioned, notable ones were the Medici, Strozzi, and Pitti palaces in Florence; the Vendramin Calergi and Cà d'Oro palaces in Venice; the Palace of the Rettori (City Hall) in Ragusa; the Bevilacqua in Bologna, dei Diamanti in Ferrara, Ducale in Gubbio, della Cancelleria in Rome, Cuomo in Naples, Abbattelli in Palermo.

#### SCULPTURE OF THE GOLDEN AGE

Around 1260 Nicola Pisano was making sculptures for the Baptistery of Pisa. The other Pisanos, too, were sculptors as well as architects. In the middle of the fourteenth century Andrea Orcagna, painter and sculptor, created the tabernacle of Or San Michele in Florence. The Sieneese Jacopo della Quercia was a sculptor whose works adorned churches in Lucca and Siena and the cathedral of Bologna. In 1402, the government of the Republic of Florence held a competition for making the doors of the city's baptistery. The winner was a young sculptor named Lorenzo Ghiberti. The massive doors with their bronze reliefs aroused such admiration that they were called *Porte del Paradiso*, the "Gates of Heaven" (they were partly damaged by the floods of 1966). However remarkable the talents of Jacopo della Quercia and Ghiberti, they were outshone by their contemporary Donatello (Donato di Betto Bardi), whose statues of Saint John the Evangelist, Saint George, the Virgin and Child, bear witness to his genius. In the second half of the fifteenth century splendid works were created by two Florentines: Antonio del Pollaiuolo, a member of the select circle of great artists and men of letters surrounding Lorenzo the Magnificent, and Verrocchio (Andrea di Cione), whose works include the monument to the Medici family in the church of San Lorenzo and the equestrian statue of the *condottiero* Bartolomeo Colleoni. Lively, cheerful, and indefatigable artists were the Della Robbia: Luca, his nephew Andrea, and his great-nephew Giovanni. Giovanni Antonio Amadeo was a sculptor who worked for many years at the Certosa of Pavia and in Cremona. The Dalmatian Giorgio Orsini (or da Sebenico) embellished the merchants' lodge in Ancona with sculpture. The altar in Santo Spirito in Florence and the grand monument to Cardinal Ascanio Sforza in Rome are the work of Andrea Contucci, the first Sansovino.

#### MICHELANGELO

These were a few of the many excellent sculptors. The greatest of them all defies classification. Michelangelo Buonarroti was born in 1475 in the village of Caprese in Casentino, in the upper valley of the Arno. His family moved to Florence when he was a few



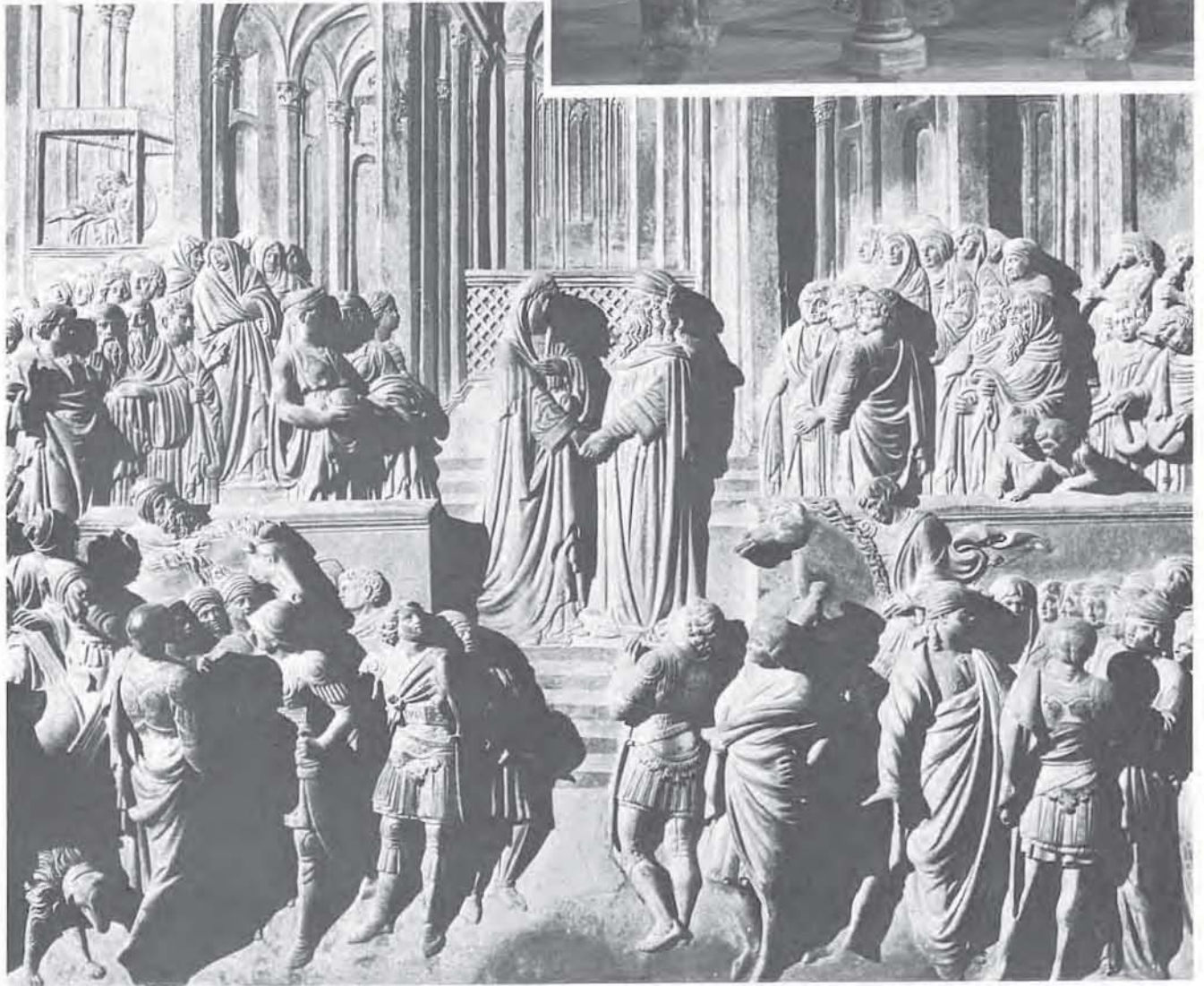


*Pitti Palace, Florence. EPA*

*Pulpit from the Baptistry of Pisa by Nicola Pisano. ICI*



*Porta del Paradiso. Lorenzo Ghiberti. Baptistry, Florence. EPA*







*Donatello's St. George.  
Florence, National Museum.  
ICI*



*Verrocchio's David.  
Photoworld*



*Michelangelo. Portrait by Marcello Venusti. EPA*



*Equestrian statue of Bartolomeo  
Colleoni by Verrocchio. Venice.  
Anderson*



weeks old, and he was entrusted to the care of a marble-worker's wife in Settignano. As a boy growing up in Florence he came to know the Ghirlandaio brothers and was apprenticed in their workshop when he was thirteen—over the strong objections of his father, a member of the professional middle class. Sculpture was already the boy's real passion, and at fourteen he joined the stimulating household of Lorenzo de' Medici, who allowed young sculptors to study his collection of antique sculptures. But for the universal mind of a genius there could be no specialization. Achieving early renown—he was twenty-four when his *Pietà* was installed in Saint Peter's—he went on to produce a vast number of masterpieces throughout a long life, ranging from his David, Moses, the Medici tomb, to the dome of Saint Peter's (completed after his death) and the great Sistine Chapel paintings. Sculptor, architect, painter, poet, man of the world, Michelangelo was deeply involved in the revolutionary events of his times: the downfall of republican liberties in Florence, the rape of Italy by competing foreign invaders, the religious turmoil of the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, the renewed onslaught of Islam. Just as Michelangelo defied classification as an artist, so his commitment to causes transcended narrow provincialism.

*Dome of St. Peter's. Michelangelo. EPA*



*Michelangelo's David. Photoworld*





*The prophet Daniel. Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo.*  
Photoworld



*Moses. Michelangelo. EPA*

**PAINTING OF THE GOLDEN AGE: CIMABUE,  
DUCCIO, GIOTTO**

Cimabue (Cenni di Pepo) and Duccio di Buoninsegna were born at the middle of the thirteenth century in Tuscan commonwealths founded on liberty: Florence and Siena. Freer than other Italians from the bonds of conformity enforced by public opinion or the state, they had also cast off the inner, often stronger, bonds of voluntary allegiance to conformity. Their painting marked the transition from the old stylized art forms to the new art of the Renaissance. Much of Cimabue's work has been lost to us, but enough of it survives in Florence and Assisi to testify to the warm feeling he had for humanity and to his fascination with classical lines. Duccio, the first great master of the Sienese school, was influenced by Cimabue. Passionate and emotional, possessor of a fine sense of color and design, he brought the new humanity into painting. Then came Giotto di Bondone, born around 1266 in a village in the delightful Mugello Valley north of

*Madonna. Cimabue. Uffizi  
Gallery, Florence.*  
Photoworld







*The Betrayal Money, Duccio. Photoworld*

Florence. He may have been a pupil of Cimabue's. He traveled a great deal, but most of his surviving works were painted in Florence, Assisi, and Padua. In 1334 he was appointed *capomastro* in charge of work on the Cathedral of Florence, the highest recognition the republic could give to an artist. As a result of his peregrinations (his presence and works are recorded in Milan, Rome, and Naples among other places), his prolific output of paintings, the pupils he trained, and the disciples and imitators he found everywhere in Italy, Giotto left a deep and lasting impression on Italian art. Dante caused a polished form of the Tuscan dialect to become the Italian language, while his contemporary and fellow citizen Giotto made the Tuscan revolution in painting an Italian one and created a new world of artistic expression. Gone are stylized gestures, the Byzantine rigidity. The figures peopling Giotto's frescoes are human beings, freely moved by their passions and emotions.

#### FIFTEENTH-CENTURY TUSCAN PAINTERS

Art historians have identified many local and regional schools of painting that flourished in Italy in the second half of the fourteenth century. Most derived from Giotto, though a few are linked to the Sienese masters: at Rimini in Romagna, at Bologna in Emilia, also in Lombardy and Venetia. But until the end of the fifteenth century—nearly two hundred years after Giotto's death—Florence remained the undisputed major center of Italian painting. Here, for most of his life, was to be found Masaccio (Tommaso di Ser Giovanni), who, fascinated by the art of ancient Rome, integrated human warmth with classical line and linear perspective, initiating in his all-too-brief life the art of the Renaissance. Here also were two monks, whose

paintings combine a contemplative spiritual appeal with consummate artistic mastery: *il beato* Angelico (Guido di Pietro, from Mugello, like Giotto) and Fra Filippo Lippi who also painted a great deal in Padua, Prato, and Spoleto where he died. Paolo Uccello who often put secular themes—his great battle pieces for instance—on his panels also worked in Florence; so did Piero della Francesca from Borgo San Sepolcro in the upper Tiber Valley, who combined strength with gentle color and line and found imitators and disciples, especially in Umbria and the Marches; Sandro Botticelli whose name at once evokes the *Primavera* and the *Birth of Venus*, two of the most famous paintings of all time; Ghirlandaio (Domenico Bigordi), who with teams of assistants produced enormous numbers of frescoes and had a tremendous influence.

#### LEONARDO THE ARTIST

A citizen of the Florentine commonwealth, though he lived elsewhere most of his life and died in France honored by her king, Leonardo, like Michelangelo, defies classification. An illegitimate child, but surrounded by affection, he was born in the village of Vinci in the hills west of Florence, in 1452. He was a pupil of Verrocchio. An artist, a scientist, an inventor, he was a genius who came closer perhaps than anyone else to the idea and ideal of the Renaissance universal man. His mind ranged over all fields. Tirelessly using his astounding creative power, he constantly explored, questioned, and to the questions devised answers that were acts of creation. Unlike other imaginative thinkers, he never lost contact with reality. He was no utopian, no dreamer, no prophet pointing to the heavens while leading man to a precipice. He was a thinker able to project the limited reality of which people were then aware into a wider and higher reality. To say Leonardo, means to say the forerunner of modern scientific achievement as well as the creator of the *Mona Lisa* and the *Last Supper*.

#### NON-TUSCAN PAINTERS

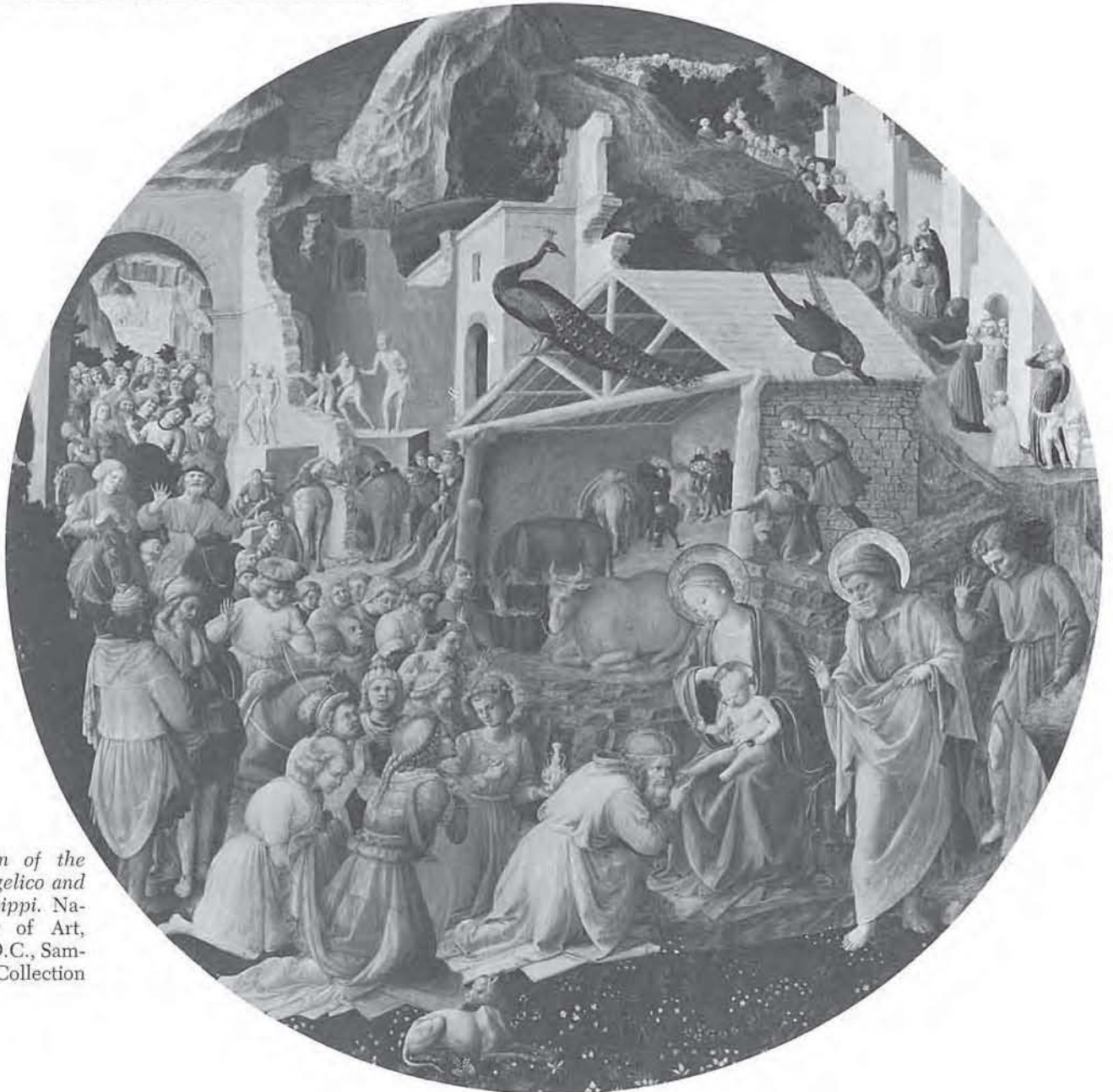
Although citizens of the Florentine commonwealth contributed the most to Italian painting in Renaissance times, there was no lack of brilliant painters outside Florence. Gentile da Fabriano, the first great master east of the Apennines, brought his gentle and human touch to Venice and to the mainland cities of the Venetian Republic which was then fast rising to its zenith in political and economic power. Possibly a disciple of his was Jacopo Bellini, best known for his Madonnas. Jacopo's fame was obscured by that of his illegitimate son Giovanni, who firmly established the artistic reputation of Venice. Religious works, his great altarpieces, alternated with secular, often allegorical, paintings.

Florence and Venice were rich capitals of powerful states, but provincial centers also produced great





*The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew. Duccio. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*

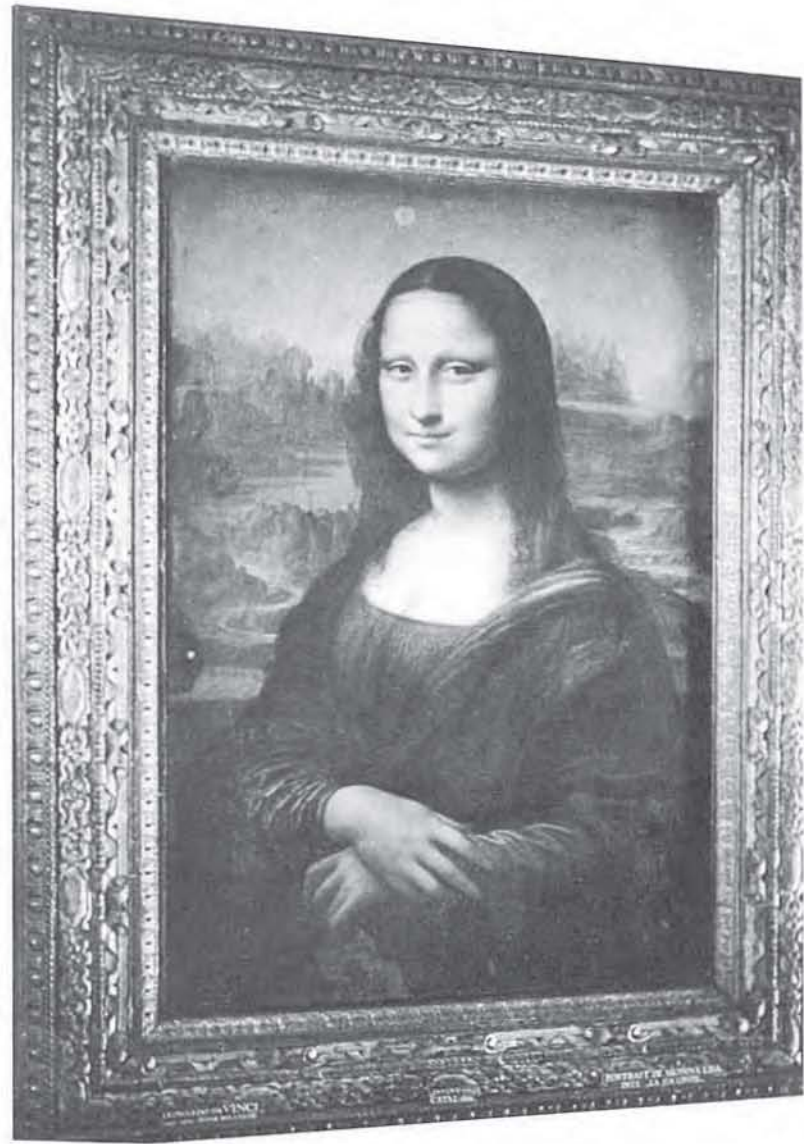


*The Adoration of the Magi. Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection*

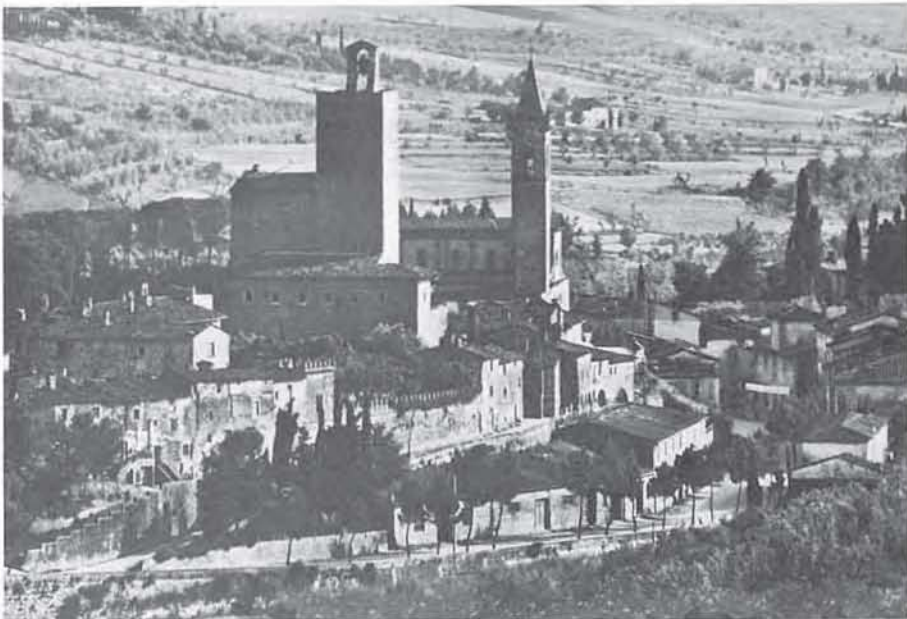




*Leonardo da Vinci. Self portrait. Photoworld*



*Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci. Photoworld*



*Leonardo's birthplace in Vinci. ENIT*



artists. Carlo Crivelli, trained in Venice, spent much of his life painting in the small semi-independent city-states of the Marches. Andrea Mantegna created masterpieces in Mantua, whose marquesses befriended him. In Perugia, independent under the intermittent rule of the Baglioni family, lived Perugino (Pietro Vannucci), born nearby in Città della Pieve. Melozzo and Luca Signorelli, from Forlì and Cortona respectively, worked in Urbino; both were fascinated by the serenity and gentleness of the paintings of Piero della Francesca. Antonio Allegri, called Correggio after the small city where he was born, spent half his life in Parma. Trained in Mantua under Mantegna, he freely mixed Christian and pagan themes in his work, and even incorporated the two in frescoes painted on the dome of Parma's Cathedral and in the San Paolo Convent. In his *Leda and Danaë* he was totally secular and hedonistic.

#### RAPHAEL

Urbino was the birthplace of Raphael (Raffaello Santi or Sanzio), whose father Giovanni Santi was a poet and a painter. His training in Urbino completed, Raphael, still in his teens, looked for wider horizons. He quickly learned all that Perugino could teach him—and it was a great deal—then moved to Florence. In his middle twenties he went to Rome where he began his career by painting frescoes in the Vatican Palace. He settled in Rome, generously befriended by Julius II and Leo X. Raphael was not a deeply tormented man like Leonardo and Michelangelo. He enjoyed life—which included painting—as it could be lived there and then. His figures were always very human and earthy, even when his themes were religious. The *Sistine Madonna* and the *Madonna of the Chair* are two of the most famous of his many great devotional



*St. Jerome in the Wilderness. Pietro Perugino.*  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.,  
Samuel H. Kress Collection





*Madonna and Child with Four Saints. Perugino. Photoworld*



*Detail from The Transfiguration. Raphael and Giulio Romano. Vatican Gallery. Photoworld*



*Madonna and Child. Raphael. Photoworld*



paintings. Among his remarkable secular paintings is the *School of Athens*, one of the most superb frescoes in the Vatican, in which he glorifies the intellectual attainments of ancient times. As a portrait painter, too, Raphael was unrivaled; popes, curia, and princes vied for his work.

#### VENETIAN SUNSET OF THE GOLDEN AGE

The new style had been born in Tuscany. The dawn and heyday of Renaissance painting had been Tuscan, Florentine in particular. The glorious twilight of the Renaissance was Venetian. Last refuge of the freer life of the spirit that underlay the Renaissance, the *Serenissima* served the arts, letters, and political life well. The government of the Venetian Republic resisted state-enforced conformity for longer than was the case in grand-ducal Tuscany, in papal Rome, or in Spanish-ruled Milan and Naples. Venice produced Giovanni Bellini, also Giorgione (Giorgio da Castelfranco), musician as well as painter, sensitive and tending to melancholy; his altarpiece in Castelfranco, the *Tempesta*, and *Portrait of Laura* were among the finest works of a short-lived master who had a profound influence on the Venetian school. One of Giorgione's pupils was Titian (Tiziano Vecellio), born in Pieve di Cadore in 1490, the greatest painter of the Venetian High Renaissance. Titian's earlier works—*Sacred and Profane Love* and *Flora*, for example—show the influence of Giorgione and Bellini. Showered with commissions and honors throughout his long life, he painted altarpieces, mythological paintings and portraits prolifically. His portraits of Paul III and Charles V have done more to create the image of pope and emperor for students than all the books written about them. In old age, far from declining, Titian did some of his finest work. Worthy co-citizens of Titian were Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti), whose use of color and light were as remarkable as his draftsmanship; and the more serene Paolo Caliari (called Veronese after his native city), whose limpid color gives a unique quality to his richly classical compositions. Decline and ruins usually attend the passing of an age, but in Venice the art of the Renaissance ended in a burst of glory.

#### FROM RENAISSANCE TO BAROQUE

One cannot know whether the Renaissance ended because of Spanish dominance in Italy, because of the triumph of intolerance, because of loss of trade, or simply from exhaustion after centuries of creativity and turmoil. We only know that it did end, and that the cleavage was sharper than it usually is between one age and the next.

Great crises and revolutionary changes made post-Renaissance Italy a different nation. As noted in the last chapter, for nearly two hundred years greatness in the field of letters was accompanied by with-



Detail from *Triumph of Faith*. Fresco by Raphael. Photoworld

*Tribute Money*. Titian. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Photoworld







Crucifixion. Veronese. Photoworld

drawal from society, by isolation, at times by persecution. In contrast, the highest accomplishments were reached by artists living in the mainstream of national life.

Spanish cultural influence directed that main current not only during the century and a half of Spanish political control but after it had collapsed—for generations in the South, for several decades elsewhere. Solemn and grandiose, profoundly religious, formal and conformist, the Spanish way of life was much concerned with externals (from public behavior to the façade of a palace). Appearances were what counted most. Possessing a dogmatic turn of mind, Spaniards of the imperial age took their preconceptions for reality, mistaking illusion for actuality. From all this, and more, evolved Italian baroque, the style of innumerable churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries throughout the country. Some were new, but most were rebuilt or transformed (sometimes only their façades). It became the style of palaces of the powerful—Spanish viceroys, kings and princes—and the wealthy, who built the Brera, Balbi, and Rezzonigo palaces in Milan, Genoa, and Venice, as well as the many Roman palaces of papal relatives (during the period of the “small” nepotism), and the Biscari and Valle palaces in Catania.

#### BERNINI

An architect and a sculptor, Gian Lorenzo Bernini was the embodiment of baroque art. He was born in Naples in 1598, and worked for most of his life in Rome, where he was held in particularly high esteem by Pope Urban VIII and Pope Alexander VII. Urban VIII commissioned him to build a canopy over Saint Peter's tomb in the Basilica, the great bronze baldachin later imitated in many other churches. Bernini's greatest architectural work was the vast piazza in front of Saint Peter's with its encircling colonnade.

For relatives of Urban VIII, Alexander VII, and Innocent X, he built the Barberini, Chigi, and Odescalchi palaces. As a sculptor he was equally indefatigable. In creating his marvelous fountains, Bernini spurred the movement that in the eighteenth century led to the building of the Fountain of Trevi, perhaps the most famous fountain in Europe. His monuments to Urban VIII and Alexander VII are among the finest examples of sculpture in the world, and in the *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* he reached the fullest expression of the baroque.

#### OTHER ARCHITECTS AND SCULPTORS

A contemporary, Borromini (Francesco Castelli), began as a humble stonemason and became an architect in his early thirties. He built Sant' Agnese and San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane in Rome, two remarkable baroque churches, and completely remodeled the interior of the basilica of Saint John Lateran. Another of Bernini's contemporaries was the sculptor Alessandro Algardi, noted chiefly for his portrait busts of Robert Frangipane and Olimpia Pamphili. Giovanni Battista Crescenzi was invited to go to Spain where he built the Escorial's Pantheon. Two southerners were notable exponents of baroque architecture during the closing decades of the era. One was Filippo Juvara from Messina, whose work pleased Victor Amadeus II of Savoy—thanks to the fortunes of war, briefly king of Sicily. Juvara was appointed court architect and brought to Turin by the king. Among his many works in Piedmont were the Madama palace and the churches of the Carmine and of San Filippo Neri in Turin; the basilica of Superga on a hill overlooking the city, and the hunting lodge—actually a palace—built at Stupinigi for the king's pleasure. The other southerner was Juvara's pupil, the Neapolitan Luigi Vanvitelli, born in 1700, commissioned in 1751 by Charles of Bourbon to build the royal palace of Caserta, one of the most magnificent in all Italy.



## PAINTERS FROM CARAVAGGIO TO GUARDI

Still close in time to the Renaissance and sharing its creativity even if the moving spirit differed was Michelangelo Merisi, called Caravaggio after the village where he was born. He painted sacred and profane subjects with a bold naturalism and dramatic use of light. Fine examples of his technique are the death scenes of Christ, of the Virgin, of Saint John the Baptist. Later came Guercino (Giovanni Francesco Barbieri), whose ceiling fresco *Aurora* is reputed by some to be the best painting of the seventeenth century. Worthy successors of the masters who two hundred years earlier rounded out the Renaissance were the members of another Venetian trio for whom the baroque belonged to the past and who avoided (or at least two of them did) the airy superficiality of the rococo: Giovanni Battista Tiepolo who followed in the footsteps of Veronese and spent the later years of his life decorating the royal palace in Madrid, where he died; Antonio Canal or Canaletto, a trained architect, whose favorite subjects were the palaces, churches, and canals of Venice, and who also painted many landscapes in England; and Francesco Guardi, who put light and color into sensitive landscapes in which details were often merely suggested and the evocation of a mood took precedence over precise details.

## THE MODERN ERA

In the course of the eighteenth century, dynastic changes and reforms had a liberalizing effect in parts of Italy, and once again gradually loosened the hold of conformity. Although the loosening was partial and only small progressive sectors of the educated classes took advantage of it, it created a climate favorable to the expression of new art forms that made their ap-



*The Crucifixion. Tiepolo. Photoworld*

pearance in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Then, soon, came the deep spiritual turmoil which, at first, accompanied the enthusiasm of many artists for French revolutionary ideas, and later was a manifestation of the determination to achieve Italian unity. Liberalism and nationalism were motivating forces in artistic as well as literary and political life. Since unification was achieved a hundred years ago, the emancipation of one class after another and the formation of new groups held together more by common ideas and values than by economic interests has created diversity as well as tensions and conflicts. All this has stimulated artistic creativity.



*Architectonic Fancy. Canaletto, Parma, Galleria Nazionale. ICI*



Art critics and art historians have tried to classify the modern era—beginning at the end of the eighteenth century—into different phases, each characterized by a dominant school: neoclassicism, romanticism, realism, impressionism, futurism, *novecento*, *stile littorio*, abstractionism, etc. Such classification, however, often distorts what actually happened, since many artists have tended more and more to go their own way regardless of any particular school. During the “modern” period, there has been a great deal of creativity which continues to this day. In this latest era Italian art has rarely approached its own past heights or the heights more recently attained in other nations (the French, for instance, for two generations or so, later the Americans). Beyond this, generalizations are meaningless.

#### ARCHITECTS OF THE MODERN ERA

The first distinguished architect of the modern era was Giuseppe Piermarini, a disciple of Vanvitelli and later his assistant, who soon branched off on his own in a style independent of his master's. Piermarini is best known for the rebuilding (completed in 1778) of Milan's opera house, La Scala. Giuseppe Valadier, who designed Rome's monumental and harmonious Piazza del Popolo and its approaches, belonged to the next generation. He also planned the partial renewal of some of the most attractive provincial cities of what was then the Papal States: Gubbio, Rieti, Rimini, Spoleto, and Urbino. The next group of well-known architects lived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: Guglielmo Calderini built the imposing Palazzo di Giustizia in Rome (completed in 1911, now being restored); Giuseppe Sacconi won the competition for the enormous monument the Italian state erected in Rome to Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of united Italy. Marcello Piacentini and Giuseppe Terragni created the heavy and nonfunctional style—known as *stile littorio*—that most pleased Italy's dictator Mussolini. Among the many examples of this style are monumental public buildings in Milan (the railroad station) and Palermo (the post office). The internationally renowned Pier Luigi Nervi, who is to Italy what Frank Lloyd Wright is to America, belongs to another artistic world entirely. His many works in Italy include the Olympic sports palace and Flaminio stadium in Rome. Many of his beautiful and functional structures can be found as far away as the United States and Australia.

#### SCULPTORS OF THE MODERN ERA

Antonio Canova, the most famous Italian artist of his time, inaugurated the modern era in sculpture. His neoclassicism came close to realizing Winckelmann's noble idea of what art should be. He created the funeral monuments of Popes Clement XIII and Clement XIV in Rome, and to Alfieri in Florence's



La Scala, Milan. Rebuilt by Piermarini. ENIT



Interior of La Scala. ICI

Santa Croce. He received imperial recognition when he was entrusted with sculpting likenesses of the Emperor Napoleon, of his mother, Madame Letizia, and his sister, the beautiful Paolina Borghese. Toward the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth Medardo Rosso achieved considerable reputation. As an artist who broke imaginatively with the predominantly naturalistic style of the era, he came to have considerable influence on younger sculptors. Marino Marini and Giacomo Manzù (Manzoni) are in the first rank among sculptors of the twentieth





Piazza del Popolo, Rome. Valadier. EPA

century. Marini's creative imagination was stimulated by pre-Roman art forms, Etruscan particularly. He is best known for his horses and riders, and for the sensitive bust of Igor Stravinsky. Manzù enriched and modified the classical tradition to which he was linked with his unmistakable individual quality. His bas-reliefs for the Door of Death at Saint Peter's put him in the company of the great masters of the past.

#### PAINTERS OF THE MODERN ERA

What Canova had been to sculpture during the revolutionary era of the early nineteenth century, his Milanese contemporary Andrea Appiani was to painting. Deeply imbued with the neoclassical ideals dominant in the wake of French revolutionism and imperialism, Appiani extolled Napoleon and his deeds in his paintings, thus contributing to the formation and survival of the Napoleonic myth in Italy. In the succeeding generation many painters reacted strongly against the Napoleonic myth and neoclassicism. Within the mainstream of European romanticism floated the *nazareni*, Italian pre-Raphaelites who were in painting what the *Carbonari* were in politics. In his long life, the painter Francesco Hayez, born in Venice of a French father, saw the decline of neoclassicism and survived romanticism. Such paintings as *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Death of Marin Faliero* gained him the reputation of a great artist: later generations remem-



Francesco Hayez. EPA

ber him chiefly for his fine portraits of some of the great nineteenth-century Italians—Manzoni, Cavour, D'Azeglio. Giacinto Gigante was aloof from romanticism. He was the best-known painter of the Posillipo school, which took its inspiration from antiquity but avoided the exaggeration sometimes indulged in by the neoclassicists. The second half of the nineteenth century saw the brief life of Giovanni Segantini, whose impressionistic paintings, tinged with melancholy, had the ethereal quality of the British pre-Raphaelites. One of the outstanding names of the early twentieth century is Umberto Boccioni, whose career ended prematurely on the battlefield in World War I. He was an enthusiastic and dynamic futurist and the best-known Italian representative of the cubism developed by Braque and Picasso. At the end of his life Amedeo Modigliani began to enjoy recognition, especially for his portraits. It grew to worldwide fame after his death in Paris where he had spent most of his creative years. The muted still lifes of Giorgio Morandi were highly esteemed by critics and public alike. The early works of Giorgio de Chirico, haunting, dreamlike pictures in deep perspective, had a strong influence on the surrealists of the twenties; in his later years he engaged in bitter polemics with spokesmen for contemporary art. Landscapes, portraits, still lifes were painted by Filippo De Pisis who was attracted in turn by surrealism, impressionism, naturalism, but never identified himself with any single school.





*Gypsy Woman and Baby. Modigliani. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Chester Dale Collection*



*Giorgio de Chirico. ICI*

## MUSIC

### LAND OF MUSIC

Land of song and music: this is how Italy has often been described in modern times. It is not possible to say with any accuracy how widespread singing and the playing of musical instruments are among Italians, compared with other nations, or how great their inborn talent. But one can definitely say that Italians love music, that in the centuries of transition between ancient and medieval times Italian music became the music of all Western nations, and that since the end of the sixteenth century Italian composers and performers have held a most distinguished place in the world of music.

When Italians were Romans, they enjoyed singing and instrumental music. Musicians performed at public functions and at the parties of the wealthy. Farmers, soldiers, slaves, and gladiators all had their songs. But of the music of that time nothing identifiable remains. Known Western music began as Christian music: being the center of Western Christianity, of what became Catholicism, Italy meant then in music, as in other fields, all the nations embracing Catholicism.

### MEDIEVAL MUSIC

To honor God, the early Christians sang in damp dark shelters where they gathered to pray. When in the fourth century they emerged from the catacombs to worship openly, they perfected the religious songs that were an essential part of their ritual. Community chanting, interspersed with choir and solo singing, induced fervor and united the worshipers. Before the end of the fourth century the Ambrosian chant—named after Milan's sainted Bishop Ambrose—had become a highly complex form, both impressive and harmonious. As to be expected, it was in Rome that the formalizing of religious chanting took place. The chants were adopted as generation followed generation in the churches of all the peoples who, from the Franks in the fifth century to the Lithuanians in the fourteenth, became converts to Catholicism. A succession of popes devoted their attention to the formalizing of the chant. In the fifth century the Schola cantorum, a school for singers where men and boys were trained, was organized in Rome. It still exists. Late in the sixth century Pope Gregory I (Saint Gregory) codified the Catholic liturgy in its final form: the Gregorian chant—a superb whole including many themes—marks the beginning of Western music.

The rejection of everything connoting paganism helped to obliterate the instruments used by the ancients: the lyre, the aulos, the kithara. The organ, however, survived to express Catholic piety, and in modified forms it was used in cathedrals and abbeys. For centuries music was mainly vocal. In time, the Gregorian chant became more complex and varied.





*Angels singing and playing instruments by Lucca della Robbia. Museum of Saint Maria del Fiore, Florence. Alinari*

Parts of the chant were adapted into liturgical dramas, forerunners of the religious plays still performed in European communities. Variations of the chant later formed the *laude*, sung in semipublic devotional gatherings. The chant was modified through the years until its present version was approved by the sixteenth-century Council of Trent and received papal sanction.

#### PROVENÇAL INFLUENCE OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

What music there was before the eleventh century, other than what was performed for religious purposes, is not known. When darkness began to give way to light and the cultural level rose, musicians first discovered new ways of expressing themselves in





*Men and boys practicing singing devotional choral music in parts from a single book. Venice, 1512. NYPL PC*

the short-lived but brilliant civilization centered in Provence, the area west of the Alps closest culturally and politically to Italy. Provence influenced Italian music as profoundly as it did Italian literature. Jongleurs who sang of the epic deeds of legendary heroes, and troubadours who improvised songs of romantic love to the accompaniment of musical instruments, could be found in the twelfth century at the courts of feudatories of northwestern Italy: the marquesses of Montferrat and of Saluzzo, the counts of Turin and of Lunigiana. When French armies ravaged Provence early in the thirteenth century, more singers and musicians came to Italy in search of a living and security—and generous patrons. Two generations later other singers and musicians followed in the wake of Charles of Anjou, Count of Provence, and his knights, conquerors of the Kingdom of Sicily. By the thirteenth century, in all parts of Italy there was secular singing to the accompaniment of instruments: the harp, the lute, the vielle (ancestor of the violin), the portable organ, the recorder, flute, and bagpipe.

#### GROWING POPULARITY OF SECULAR MUSIC

In the fourteenth century, singers of secular songs and musicians who played secular music were much

*Fourteenth-century musical instruments. Anderson*





in demand at the courts of princes and *signori*; they entertained at weddings, country fairs, and other gatherings. New kinds of compositions were created: the madrigal, which was to remain part of the Italian musical scene for several centuries; the *ballata*, originally a song accompanying dancing; the *caccia*, which illustrated a hunt or some other lively scene. In the fourteenth century the first keyboard instrument of the clavichord type was invented. The foremost composer of that century was Francesco Landino who, although blinded by smallpox as a child, had learned to play several instruments. Well known in Italy for his excellent performance, he composed many pieces of which more than a hundred *ballate* and a dozen madrigals are still extant. During the Renaissance the *canzona* was created. Originally a light, rhythmic, fast-moving composition, it suited ensembles at a time when musical instruments had become more varied. Its liveliness made for its popularity, and its success was a big step toward the revolution that occurred in Italian music during the second half of the sixteenth century.

#### THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental music had become a complete language in itself and was the seed that gave birth to a new era in Western music. It affected all Europe. "The music of the Baroque era (roughly 1600-1750) was dominated largely by Italian ideals . . . by 1750 the music of Europe had become in effect an international language with Italian roots," wrote the musicologist Donald L. Grout in *A History of Western Music*. Words, which had held priority in sacred music, became secondary or were dispensed with entirely. Religious chanting had expressed the fervor of believers, but that had been a thousand years earlier: in the sixteenth century, sacred music was renewed, as was the rest of the ritual and theology also. The revolution did not only affect sacred music. Since the times of the wandering minstrels, secular music, too, had been vocal music, song accompanied by one or more instruments. As instrumental music expanded, it was able to express ideas and emotions—at times better than any words could do.

#### PALESTRINA AND THE ROMAN SCHOOL

Deep faith motivated those who belonged to the circles that became dominant in Rome when *rigoristi* triumphed and the Counter-Reformation saved Catholicism. In the new climate developing from the middle of the sixteenth century on—very different from that which had prevailed during centuries of ecclesiastical corruption and widespread unbelief—sacred music rose to new heights. Faith spoke through the works of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, born near Rome in 1526 and known to his contemporaries as the prince of music. He was close to the devout group

brought together by San Filippo Neri, to which belonged many who later became cardinals and popes. Palestrina composed, among other works, over one hundred Masses, of which seventy-nine were based on themes to be found in the Gregorian chant. By his many years of creativity, the excellence and profusion of his compositions, the many pupils he trained, and the success of his style, Palestrina left an indelible mark on Italian music. Among distinguished seventeenth-century composers of the Roman school was Girolamo Frescobaldi, for thirty years the organist at Saint Peter's, who wrote pieces to be used in church services; also Luigi Rossi, who tried his hand at opera



Pierluigi Palestrina. EPA

Girolamo Frescobaldi. EPA





with *Orfeo* written in 1647; and Giacomo Carissimi, who became the acknowledged master of a new form of sacred music, the oratorio, to be performed at concerts.

#### THE VENETIAN SCHOOL

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Venice rivaled Rome as the main center for Italian music. The concern of responsible citizens for the honor of their treasured eleventh-century cathedral, coupled with the resources of a public revenue for a while larger than that of any other European state, caused the republic's ruling body, the *signoria*, to finance generously the singers and musicians attached to Saint Mark's who formed the Cappella Marciana. (To be appointed choirmaster or organist of the Cappella Marciana was to reach the climax of a successful artistic career.) Moreover, the development of secular music was favored by tolerance, a distinctive feature of the Venetian way of life for nearly a hundred years after the triumph of the *rigoristi* in Rome and the consolidation of Spanish control over most of the country. Italian opera, cantatas, sonatas, chamber music, concert music, enjoyed by a select few three hundred years ago, today delighting music lovers everywhere, originated in Venice or had their source in music developed by composers living and working there.

The revolution in music did not happen suddenly. Something new appeared on the Venetian scene during the first half of the sixteenth century, when the reputation achieved by performers (who were often composers as well) in the Netherlands prompted the Venetian *signoria* to appoint Dutchmen as choirmasters and organists at the Cappella Marciana. They brought innovations and trained Italian pupils who in time replaced them. Among the Italians to achieve distinction as original composers during the second half of the sixteenth century were Claudio Merulo, Andrea Gabrieli, and the latter's nephew Giovanni. In 1613 Claudio Monteverdi was appointed choirmaster. He held this position until his death thirty years later,

#### MONTEVERDI AND OPERA

Monteverdi was chiefly a composer. As a young man he had been appointed viola player at the court

of the Gonzaga, dukes of Mantua. In that little city, thanks to the generosity of its rulers and their tolerance of artistic nonconformity, some of the spirit that had once made it one of the liveliest centers of the Renaissance still survived. It was in Mantua that Monteverdi wrote the opera *Orfeo*, which was performed for the first time in 1607. Even in the most traditional field of sacred music he, as much as Palestrina, departed from the conventions of the past—as shown by the Vespers he composed in 1610, a complete liturgical service blending the Gregorian chant with musical innovations. In Venice he fulfilled his official duties as choirmaster by writing sacred music, but he made his most lasting impression in secular music to which he gave a hitherto unattained nobility and depth of expression. (Enhancing his new compositions were the exceptional stringed instruments then being created in his native Cremona.) He also continued to write operas. His last, *The Coronation of Poppaea*, first performed in 1642, still moves audiences today. Largely because of Monteverdi, Venice, where the first opera house was built in 1637, became the operatic capital of Europe. He expanded his madrigals and *canzonas* into varied and complete concertos played by large ensembles. The most notable of these

Claudio Monteverdi. EPA



Canzona manuscript of Giacomo Carissimi. EPA



was *The Duel of Tancred and Clorinda*, first performed in 1624.

Monteverdi has been called the creator of opera. Actually, he was not the first to attempt this new art form. The distinction belongs to two minor composers, Giulio Caccini and Iacopo Peri, who wrote *Euridice* in 1600; but this not very successful work fell into oblivion. Of Monteverdi's many pupils the best known was Pietro Francesco Cavalli, the author of more than forty operas. With the performance of *The Golden Apple* in Vienna in 1667, written in honor of the wedding of Emperor Leopold I, Marc'Antonio Cesti made opera popular in Germanic lands. His better-known contemporary Gian Battista Lulli, born in Florence, went to Paris in his early teens. He settled there, becoming a French subject and changing his name to Lully. He was befriended by Louis XIV who ennobled him, and achieved a reputation as the foremost French composer of the century. In *Alceste*, *Amadis*, and other works in which drama and ballet were combined with instrumental and vocal music, he created his own genre, the lyrical tragedy.

#### CHAMBER MUSIC AND CONCERTOS

Monteverdi's secular music was the fountainhead from which the achievements of later Italian composers flowed. An important creator of chamber music, as well as musical theorist and teacher, was Arcangelo Corelli who was especially well known for his serene and balanced violin sonatas. (It is worth remembering that some of the great violinmakers in Cremona—Amati, Guarneri, Stradivari—were Corelli's contemporaries.) What Corelli did for chamber music his contemporary Giuseppe Torelli—who worked mainly in Bologna—did for concertos, which required a greater number and variety of instruments.



Giovanni Battista Lulli.  
NYPL PC



Arcangelo Corelli. EPA



Instruments made by Stradivari for the house of Medici. Musical Institute, Florence. Brogi



## SCARLATTI AND VIVALDI

Today the best known of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Italian composers are Alessandro Scarlatti and Antonio Vivaldi. Scarlatti wrote church music, but owes his reputation mainly to a large number of polished and expressive cantatas—small-scale operas designed for performance in the spacious reception rooms of the wealthy, without benefit of scenery or costumes. Arias from *Mithridates*, *Tigranes*, and other cantatas became popular beyond the small circles of devotees for whom they were first performed. Vivaldi, the son of a leading violinist of the Cappella Marciana, had taken Holy Orders, but because of frail health was relieved from priestly duties, and so could devote his energies to music. He wrote operas and concertos. His chamber music, in which Corelli's principles were elaborated and expanded, has enjoyed a remarkable revival in the twentieth century.

## OTHER EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY COMPOSERS

Among the many distinguished composers of the eighteenth century was Domenico Scarlatti, son of Alessandro, who became the foremost Italian keyboard composer of his time. With the eclectic Gian Battista Pergolesi the Roman school had a composer renowned for his contributions to church music, also

Antonio Vivaldi.  
NYPL PC



Portrait of Domenico Scarlatti. EPA

Frontispiece of the first published work by Scarlatti: *Sonata XXX* for harpsichord. Conservatory Museum, Florence. EPA

**XXX SONATE**  
PER IL CLAVICEMBALO.

*Dedicate*  
alla Sacra Real Maestà di Giovanni  
Quinto, il giusto Re di Portugallo,  
di Algarve, del Brasile, &c. &c.

di  
DON DOMENICO SCARLATTI,  
Cavaliere di S. Giacomo, e Maestro  
de Serenissimi Principe e Principessa  
delle Asturie &c.

Opera Prima.

Stampate a Spese  
di  
2409  
GERHARDO FRIDERICO WITVOGEL  
Organista della Chiesa nuova Luterana.  
A AMSTERDAM.

N. 73





Giambattista Pergolesi. EPA

for his sonatas and *opere buffe* (comic operas), still popular today. To a younger generation belonged Luigi Boccherini whose chamber music rivaled Vivaldi's, and the Neapolitan Giovanni Paisiello whose popular *Barber of Seville*, first performed in 1782, was a successful *opera buffa* with serious overtones.

#### GRAND OPERA

Paisiello died in 1816. In that year another *Barber of Seville* was performed in Rome. Not an *opera buffa*, it reached a new high in artistic excellence. It still plays to capacity audiences in Italy and wherever opera is loved. With it began the century of Italian grand opera, which for generations has delighted the senses of millions.

As music for the many, not just for a select few as secular music composed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been, Italian grand opera was democratic. Operatic arias were known, appreciated, and sung by people in all walks of life. The response of the *loggione*, the gallery crowded with those who could afford only the cheapest tickets, was more important for composers and performers than the articles of sophisticated critics. Varied and moving, coming from the heart and speaking to the heart, grand opera was romantic. Siding with the oppressed, the down-trodden, the rebels, it was patriotic, liberal, and revolutionary. Plots did not matter. What mattered on the stage were dramatic figures who, with the music of voices and instruments, reached a depth of feeling the written word alone could not convey. Listeners



Monument to Pergolesi. Jesi, Marche. EPA

were moved to pity, anger, hope, love, hatred. The audience wept with *Rigoletto*, laughed with *Don Basilio*, felt the surge of anger with *Tosca*, fell in love with *Mimi*. This was the century when Italian opera singers were as well known in Italy and abroad as the most influential political figures and the most popular writers—perhaps better!

The masters of Italian grand opera were many. The author of the *Barber of Seville* that had its first performance in 1816 was a young genius, Gioacchino Rossini, born twenty-four years earlier in Pesaro in central Italy. Rossini composed his last opera, again a masterpiece, *William Tell*, in Paris in 1829. Then, for reasons that remain obscure, he stopped composing the operatic music in which he excelled. Possibly he felt that he had reached the peak of his abilities and that from then on there would be decline. Possibly there were other motives. His junior by a few years was the Lombard Gaetano Donizetti, whose *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Linda di Chamonix*, and *Don Pasquale* have successfully weathered the passage of time. So have *Norma* and *I Puritani* by the Sicilian Vincenzo Bellini, who started composing at the age of seven, achieved instant recognition at an early age, and died still young, lamented by the European musical world and by the public.





Gioacchino Rossini. EPA



Giuseppe Verdi. ICI



Gaetano Donizetti. EPA

#### VERDI

By common consent of enthusiastic crowds and music critics, the greatest master of Italian grand opera was Giuseppe Verdi, born in 1813 in sleepy, provincial Busseto, once the proud capital of a small independent state. Driven by strong emotions and deep inner tensions and endowed with tireless energy, Verdi became a legend in his lifetime, which spanned the nineteenth century. Between the first and second wars of the *Risorgimento*, applause for Verdi meant applause for independence from Austria and her pup-

pets, for national unity. Verdi stood of course for *Vittorio Emanuele Re d'Italia* (Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy); however, even if the spirit of which the music was the manifestation made for the excitement of the public, the music of itself deserved the applause. Mazzini conspired, Cavour organized, Garibaldi fought—and Verdi united Italians with his music before they were united politically. Wherever there was an opera house (Italy then had more than any other nation), his operas were performed: from Palermo to Venice enthusiastic crowds were moved by the same emotions and shared the same aspirations. *Ernani*, *La Traviata*, *Aida*, *Otello*, were four of his many magnificent operas. Arrigo Boito, a poet and the distinguished composer of *Mefistofele*, wrote several librettos for Verdi's operas.

#### LATER COMPOSERS

In the last decade of the nineteenth century when Verdi wrote *Falstaff*, *Pagliacci*, by the Neapolitan Ruggiero Leoncavallo, was composed and performed. So were some of the best-known operas by two Tuscan composers: *Manon Lescaut* and *La Bohème* by Giacomo Puccini, and *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni. With Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, first performed in 1904, the most brilliant period of Italian operatic composition came to an end. A great deal of distinguished music was nevertheless written in the twentieth century: by Puccini and Mascagni; by Lorenzo Perosi, the foremost composer of sacred music in this century, choirmaster of the Cappella Marciana in





*Caricature of Ruggiero Leoncavallo. EPA*



*Giacomo Puccini. ICI*

Venice and later director of the Cappella Sistina in Rome; by Ottorino Respighi and Ildebrando Pizzetti, both directors of the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome, both composers of operas, symphonies, chamber music. Respighi also wrote successful musical poems, and Pizzetti set to music the poetry of Gabriele D'Annunzio and of T. S. Eliot. The revolution started by Palestrina and Monteverdi was still bearing rich fruit four hundred years later.



*Ottorino Respighi. ICI*



*Ildebrando Pizzetti. Photoworld*



*Pietro Mascagni (center). Photoworld*



# SCIENTISTS AND EXPLORERS

*Broadening horizons – Roman practicality – Decline – Salerno's medical school – The universities of Bologna and Padua – Thirteenth-century travelers – Piano Carpini – Marco Polo – Later travelers – The fifteenth-century intellectual revolution – Leonardo the scientist – Other Renaissance scientists – Explorers – Columbus – The Cabots, Vespucci, Pigafetta, Verrazano – Galileo, scientist and philosopher – Seventeenth-century scientists – Eighteenth-century revival – Galvani and Volta – Nineteenth-century scientists – Marconi – Fermi – Economists – Political scientists – Sociologists – Psychologists and anthropologists – Italian contribution to the exploration of Africa – Twentieth-century explorers.*

## BROADENING HORIZONS

**D**ISCOVERIES and inventions mean more knowledge, greater mastery over the forces of nature, broadening horizons. They matter more in giving birth to a new and higher civilization than able statesmanship, widespread commitment to lofty ideals, creation of literary and artistic masterpieces which raise cultural levels but do not necessarily represent a departure from concepts, values, and institutions making for a way of life.

Scientific discoveries and inventions are often the result of casual observation and accidental experimentation, of what people stimulated by curiosity or necessity, or both, can do with their senses. However, the disciplined use of faculties we refer to as reason is needed to go beyond what can be achieved through the senses: because of its ultimate revolutionary impact, the role reason plays is more of a distinguishing feature in a civilization than political structures, economic systems, the nature of groups making up a national community and relationships between these groups. The best index of the place reason held among Italians, during the various phases of their develop-



Seneca. NYPL

ment, is indicated by Italian contributions to scientific discoveries that broadened intellectual horizons, to explorations that expanded physical horizons, to inventions that increased mastery over nature.

## ROMAN PRACTICALITY

It has never been explained satisfactorily how it was that in ancient Greece, a relative newcomer in the world of civilization, the awareness of reason first developed and with it the search for ways to use it correctly in order to expand knowledge. Except for the influence exercised by Greeks in Italy during the first millennium *a.c.*, it is difficult to explain why Romans developed a way of life in which intuition, imagination, and emotion were curbed and reason correspondingly played a larger role. We only know that this did happen, and that, in ancient Greece as well as in Rome-Italy, it made for civilizations different from those of the ancient Near East.

Unlike the Greeks, however, Romans were neither fascinated by speculation nor concerned about answers to questions that raised fundamental principles. Practicality was an essential trait of Roman civilization. The interests of educated Romans were centered on immediate earthly goals. There were Romans who dealt with philosophical problems (Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius) or had an interest in science (Lucretius, Pliny the Elder, Frontinus, Celsus), but they were few, and whatever their merits as jurists, writers, statesmen, they were not particularly distinguished as



philosophers and scientists. Varro, Columella, and others approached agriculture scientifically. Vitruvius did the same for architecture. Glassmaking techniques were improved, and a Roman may (it is not certain) have invented the mechanical clock. But in general Romans limited themselves to applying reason to the problems of the state, the community, the individual; to construction (aqueducts, bridges, harbors, roads, public buildings); and to war (fortifications, engines of war, warships). Romans were well acquainted with their own vast world, which stretched from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, from the Baltic Sea to the Sahara, but they did not feel an urge to become acquainted with what lay beyond.

#### DECLINE

There is a good deal of truth, if some exaggeration, in the familiar statement that there was no genuine scientific progress in the Western world between the second century B.C. and the seventeenth century. In spite of its rationality, Roman civilization had been indifferent to science, and its successor, Catholic civilization, focused as it was on the afterlife and the supernatural, could not be interested in the scientific study of man and his world. The coming of Catholicism was in fact accompanied by the loss of much of what had been discovered by ancient Greeks and during the Hellenistic era. The Dark Ages were as dark in science as in everything else.

#### SALERNO'S MEDICAL SCHOOL

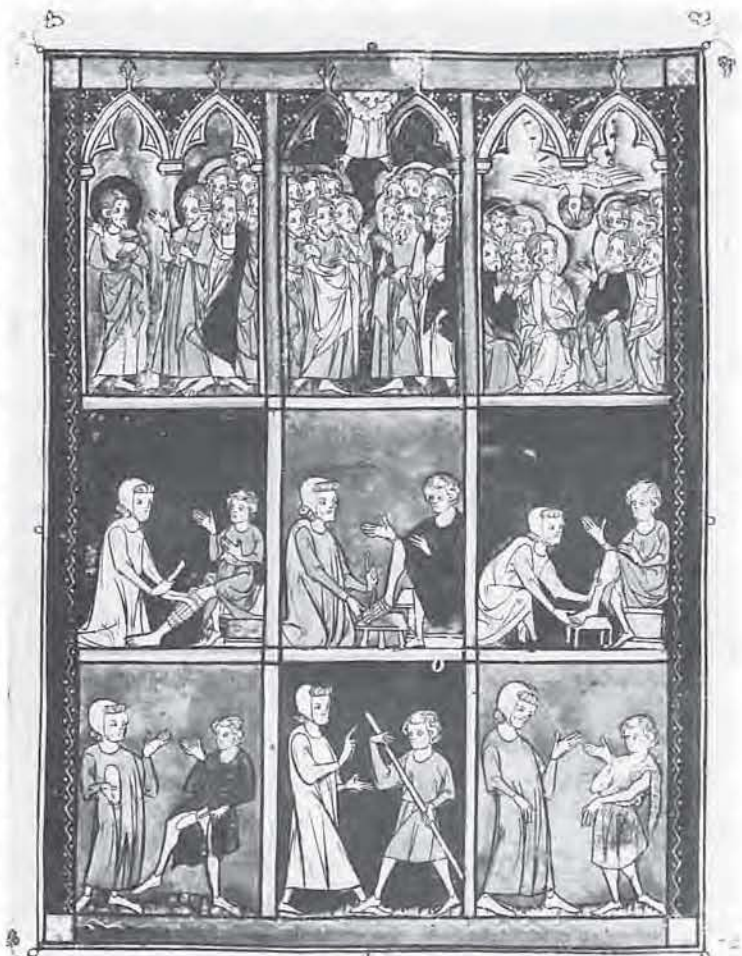
The medical school of Salerno, established in the ninth century when the city was the major center of a breakaway Lombard principality, was for centuries the one institute of learning in Italy in which some room was left for intellectual curiosity to operate. At Salerno in the eleventh century Garioponto, a famous physician who died around 1050, taught and practiced medicine; Peter Cleric or Petroncello, author of a treatise on medicine, lived; the works of Hippocrates and Galen were translated from Arabic versions. The *Flos Medicinæ Salerni* and *De Aegritudinum curatione* were among the works produced by scholars attached to the medical school. The school declined when Angevin despotism replaced the enlightened and tolerant rule of kings such as Roger II and his grandson Frederick II in the Kingdom of Sicily.

In the twelfth century Gerard of Cremona, while living in Toledo, a major center of Moslem culture in Spain, translated Arabic versions of Greek scientific works into Latin. Other works were translated by the Pisan Leonardo Fibonacci who spent some time in the important north African city of Bejaia. Around 1202, Fibonacci completed the mathematical treatise *Liber abaci*, and later joined the circle of lively intellectuals at the court of Frederick II of Sicily.



Illustration from medical treatise. Casanatense Library, Rome

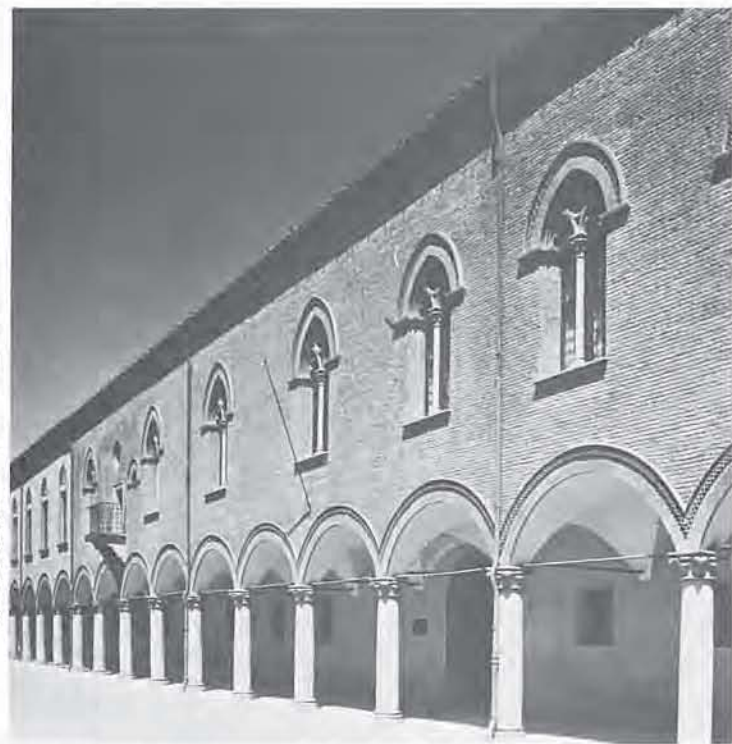
A doctor and a patient with gout. From the work of the Salernitan Platearius, ca. 1300. ICI







Two barber-surgeons in their shop. From the first illustrated edition of a popular medical handbook attributed to Pope John XXI, thirteenth century. NYPL



The University of Bologna. ICI

#### THE UNIVERSITIES OF BOLOGNA AND PADUA

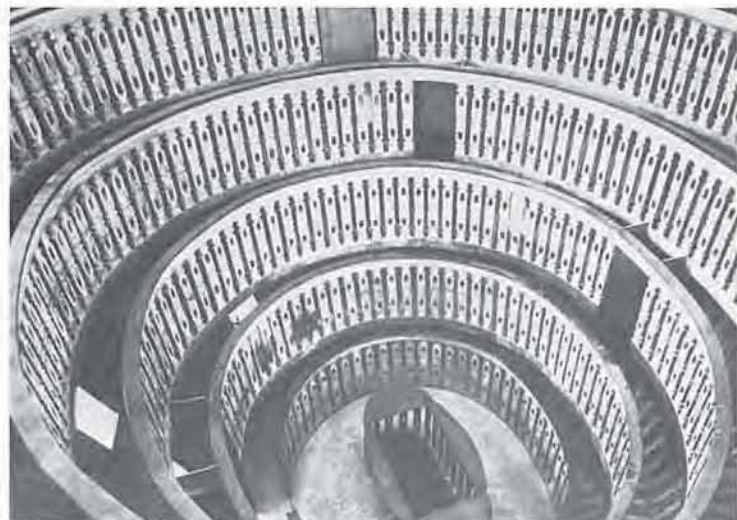
Before the decline of the Salerno school set in and Palermo ceased to be the capital of the South, universities in northern and central Italy had acquired prominence as centers of study, research, and teaching. Many—for instance those of Lucca, Pavia, and Fermo—developed from the twelve *scholae*, or liberal arts colleges, established in the Carolingian Kingdom of Italy early in the ninth century. The University of Bologna, organized late in the eleventh century (possibly in 1088) and famous for its law school, was the first of Italy's great universities. As many as ten thousand students took courses in one academic year. The University of Padua, organized in 1222, acquired a reputation scarcely inferior to that of Bologna.

Administered jointly by teachers and students, the two universities shared the autonomy then enjoyed by guilds. However, unlike the economic guilds, they were seldom deeply involved in the partisan conflicts that disrupted the city-states internally, or in the conflicts between one city-state and another. Republicanism alternated with *signorie* in Bologna where papal authority was firmly established early in the sixteenth century. One *signoria* replaced another in Padua, and Venice took over early in the fifteenth century. Until the establishment of papal rule in Bologna, and for another two hundred years after the establishment of Venetian rule in Padua, there was some scope in the two universities (and in a few others elsewhere in Italy) for the teacher to teach as he saw fit—what is now called academic freedom. Not all studying and research were mere erudition and not all teaching was mere indoctrination. There were teachers who dared to break with tradition. (The freer intellectual climate of the two universities was also beneficial to non-Italians—two who spent crucial formative years at the University of Padua were Copernicus and Vesalius,



The University of Padua. ICI

The University of Padua: anatomical theatre. ICI





who revolutionized astronomy and medicine respectively.) The Florentine Taddeo Aldarotti, the most famous physician of the thirteenth century, taught at Bologna. Around 1315, Mondino was reported to have performed autopsies—then dangerously impious acts. The physician Pietro d'Abano, condemned by the Inquisition and burned at the stake in 1316, taught at Padua.

In the Middle Ages only a feeble light shone in Salerno, Palermo, Bologna, and Padua, but it was better than none. At the practical level, Flavio Gioia may or may not have invented the compass early in the fourteenth century, but Italians did perfect it around that time and make it available to more and more navigators. By the end of the thirteenth century or early in the fourteenth, simple eyeglasses were manufactured at Murano near Venice.

#### THIRTEENTH-CENTURY TRAVELERS

In the thirteenth century it was dangerous to inquire freely. There nevertheless came a broadening of geographical horizons to which Italians made the greatest contribution. Thanks particularly to the success of the First and Fourth Crusades, Europeans (a term limited then to inhabitants of the Catholic commonwealth) went as warriors and traders to Jerusalem, Antioch, Tripoli of Syria, Acre, Famagusta, and, for a while, ruled islands and coastal cities of the ephemeral Latin empire of Constantinople. However, despite this expansion the European world was a small one, bounded to the west by a frightening ocean and encircled elsewhere by the antagonistic, often aggressive worlds of infidel Moslems, schismatic Byzantines, and pagan barbarians.

The early 1240s were years of crisis. Jerusalem fell to the Moslems once again in 1244. In the Holy Land, the Mediterranean, and Spain, the Moslems were the immediate, irreconcilable enemy. A storm was sweeping people and nations to the east. In 1240 the Mongols captured Kiev, the most important Russian city. In 1241 they defeated the Poles and Hungarians, defenders of Catholicism's eastern border, and pursued the Hungarians to the Adriatic. Little was known in Europe about the Mongols, who kept Kiev and all Russia but withdrew from Poland and Hungary. One thing, though, was clear: they were not Moslems. In fact, they were attacking Moslem states. Could not an agreement be reached between the Catholic commonwealth and the Mongols to squeeze the Moslems in an iron vise?

#### PIANO CARPINI

It was an idea. In 1245 Pope Innocent IV sent a sixty-five-year-old Franciscan monk, John of Piano Carpini (probably born in Umbria), as his envoy to the ruler of the Mongols. Father John had traveled extensively in Catholic Europe. A man of learning, he



Monument to Flavio Gioia. Amalfi, Campania. EPA

had been the head of Franciscan monasteries in Germany and in Spain. He reached the headquarters of the Khan of the Golden Horde, on the lower Volga, there to be told that the man he was seeking, the Great Khan, was in Karakorum, two thousand five hundred miles away as the crow flies. Supplied with horses, guides, and an escort, Father John reached his destination in 106 days, in time to witness the elevation of Guyuk, a grandson of Genghis Khan, as Great Khan in 1246. The mission was an exploratory one and no specific agreement was reached. Back in Italy in 1247, Father John was made archbishop of Antivari in Dalmatia and wrote a history of the Mongols, *Liber Tartarorum*. A new world to the east had been discovered.

#### MARCO POLO

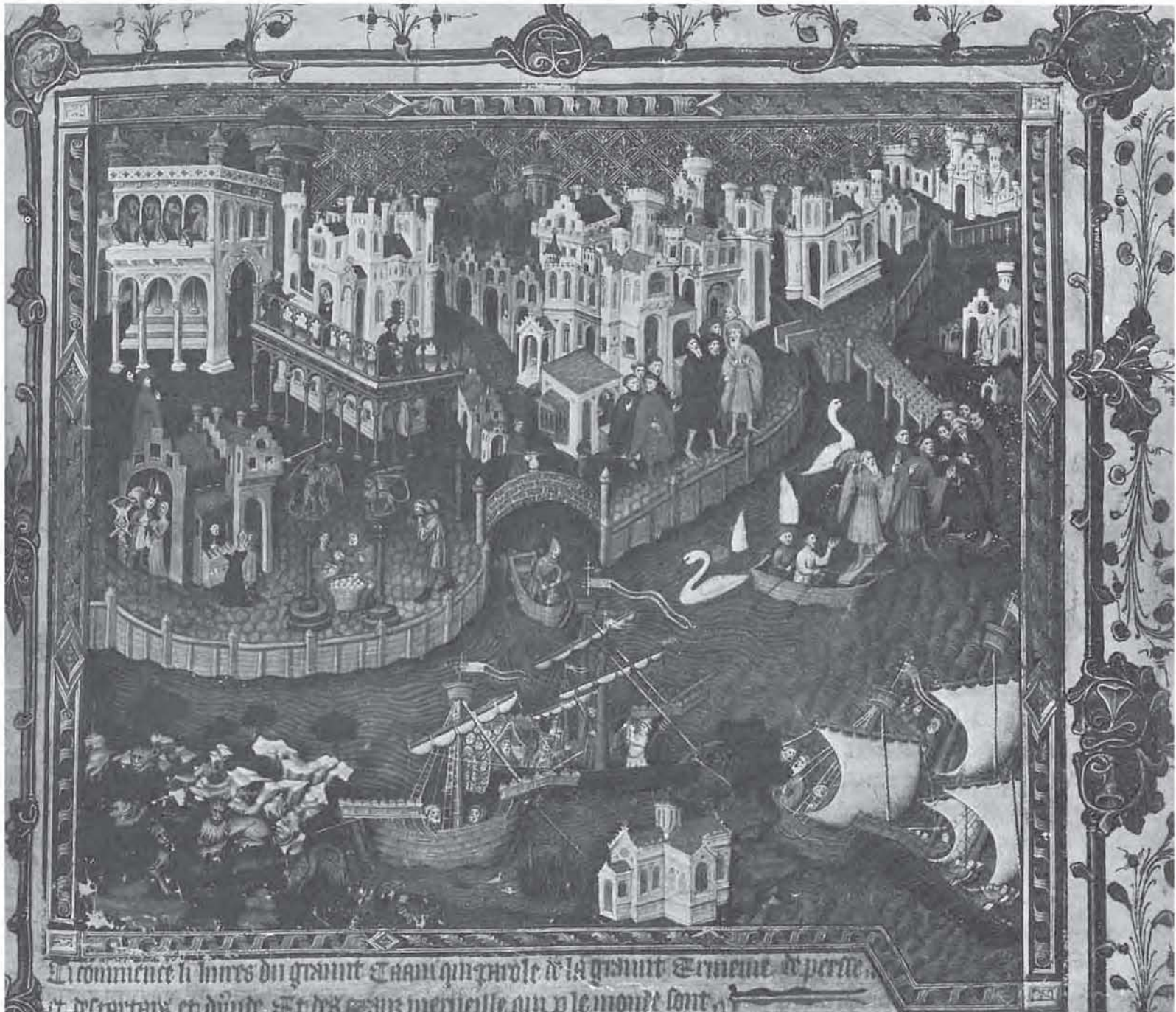
The Mongol Empire, which extended from the Carpathians to the Pacific, soon broke up. However, it had lasted long enough to enable three adventurous Venetian merchants to travel in relative security through much of Asia. In the 1260s, the brothers Niccolò and Maffeo Polo reached Bokhara in central Asia and from there went to the headquarters of Kublai Khan (another grandson of Genghis Khan), who was





Marco Polo. EPA

The departure of Marco Polo from Venice. MS. Bodl. 264.  
Bodleian Library, Oxford



Et commence li livres du grant et petit qui parole de la grant et petite de perle...  
et de fraiz et de diu de se des esur merueille au v le monde sont.



already the ruler of northern China. At the Khan's request, they returned to Italy to ask the pope to send a few learned men to China. The two brothers started on their way back to Kublai's headquarters in 1271, taking with them Niccolò's son Marco.

Marco Polo went from Acre (on the Palestinian coast held by the Crusaders) to Ormuz on the Persian Gulf. Turning north, he went into what is now Soviet and Chinese Turkestan, visiting cities in the latter that no European traveler described again until the second half of the nineteenth century. At Shangtu he found Kublai Khan, who befriended him. These were the years when Mongols launched attacks against Japan, Burma, Annam (now North Vietnam), Champa (now part of South Vietnam), Java, and Sumatra. Marco Polo traveled extensively through China, was the governor of Yangchow for three years, and supposedly made firearms for the Khan. From China he went to Indochina, Indonesia, India. He collected information about East Africa and Madagascar and returned to Venice via Persia and Constantinople. Taken prisoner in 1298 in the naval engagement between the Venetians and Genoese near Curzola, he used his enforced leisure to dictate to a fellow prisoner of war, Rusticiano, probably in the winter of 1299, the first detailed and accurate report available on the Far East and a civilization that, in most aspects, was on a higher level than that of the West. When people read the account of Marco's travels they refused to believe his tales, but the tales were true and still make fascinating reading.

#### LATER TRAVELERS

Piano Carpini and Marco Polo were not the only Italians to leave a written record of their Asian travels. There was John of Montecorvino, the first Catholic missionary to China, who was appointed archbishop of Peking in 1307, and Oderic of Pordenone who wrote about Chinese customs. Later, Niccolò de' Conti traveled through Asia for twenty-five years (1416-1441), disguised as a Moslem. On his return, he narrated his travels to the humanist Poggio Bracciolini who did for Conti what Rusticiano had done for Polo. The Conti-Bracciolini book *India recognita* [*The Indies Rediscovered*] was widely read during the second half of the fifteenth century. So also was the detailed narrative of the travels of Josaphat Barbaro who spent the years 1436-1452 as a trader in the lands of the Tartars and in the Caucasus, and visited the Middle East again in 1473-1479, when the Republic of Venice sent him as ambassador to Persia. Another Venetian, Ambrogio Contarini, traveled widely in Russia and Western Asia in the 1470s.

The East was fascinating and dangerous. So was the West—the ocean beyond which the earth ended, where monsters lived, where, according to sailors' tales, had been sighted the fabled Isles of the Blessed, Island of the Seven Cities, Antilia, Saint Brendan's

Isles. It was dangerous to venture too far out on the ocean, but adventurous sailors could search for the islands and discover how far southern Africa's west coast extended. Two Genoese brothers, Ugolino and Vadino Vivaldi, may have sighted the Canary Islands in 1291, and supposedly named the northernmost one Allegranza. They never returned, and Ugolino's son Sorleone was later reported to have gone to east Africa, hoping that his father had made his way from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. Another Genoese, Lanzarotto Maroncello, supposedly named one Canary island Lanzarote and built a fort there in the second or third decade of the fourteenth century. In 1341, Nicoloso da Recco was put in command of an expedition sent by the king of Portugal to explore the coast of Africa. Fourteenth-century Italian maps indicate that the Azores, a thousand miles west of Europe, were known at the time, but there is no record of who first discovered them. The Portuguese prince Henry the Navigator in 1455 put a young Venetian, Alvise di Ca' da Mosto, in command of an expedition which reached the Gambia River, nearly two thousand miles to the south of Portugal. Beyond the Canary Islands, Ca' da Mosto met the caravel of the Genoese Antoniotto Usodimare. In 1456 the two jointly led an expedition that discovered the Cape Verde Islands and penetrated inland, following the Gambia. Usodimare reported meeting descendants of the Vivaldi brothers in the area.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the sum total of European achievements in the fields of science and exploration was meager. Italian achievements included: translations of the works of ancient Greek scientists and philosophers and of Arab men of learning; a few technological innovations (mostly improvements on inventions borrowed from Near Eastern civilizations); some medical discoveries as well as commonsense treatises on public health and medicinal herbs; and the exploration of distant lands by a few men of God and a larger number of adventurous gentleman-merchants.

#### THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION

The change in modes of thought which at the end of the thirteenth century had fostered the creativity of artists (and of writers a few decades later), in the fifteenth century influenced those endowed with a scientific turn of mind. Humanists had taken advantage of the weakening of rigid intellectual controls in order to discard dogmas and use their critical faculties freely. From books of ancient writers they learned not only many facts and new ideas but also how to think and how to make the best use of reason. Though most humanists had other interests, a few did have the advancement of science at heart. What happened in Italy in the field of science during this period as the result of greater freedom of thought was not comparable



with what had happened in ancient Greece, or with what would happen in some North Atlantic nations from the seventeenth century on. There was, however, a new intellectual climate, and with it came change and progress.

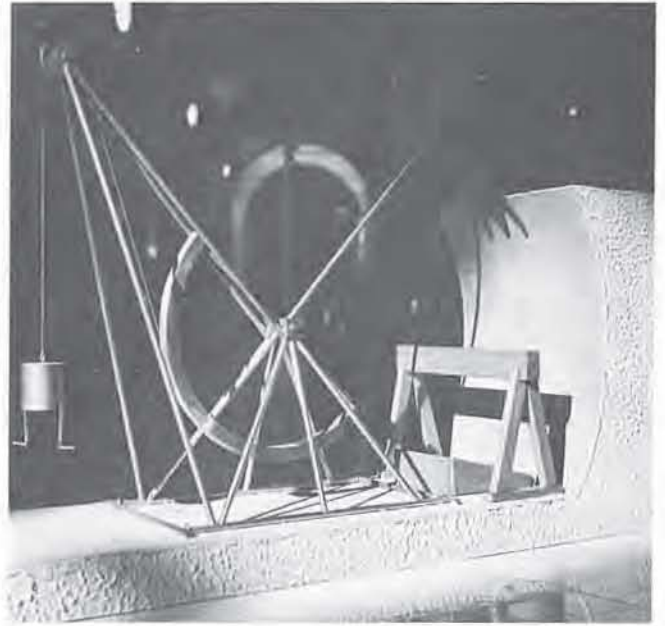
#### LEONARDO THE SCIENTIST

As a representative of that change, one name stands out above all the others. Leonardo da Vinci, besides being one of the greatest artists of all time, was a great scientist and inventor. Perhaps it was from Verrocchio, his teacher in Florence, that he learned the principle that was the key to his thought: knowledge is the child of experience. He was fortunate to live at a time when, in spite of political turmoil, new ideas could be expressed with relative safety. His mind was free and never at rest. He read much. He learned much from others. He assimilated past discoveries and used them as a base from which to go further. In writing to Ludovico Sforza (his patron until 1499) in 1485, Leonardo stated: "I can invent whatever is needed for offense and for defense, on land and on sea. . . . I can build any kind of public and private buildings, and can transport water from one place to another. . . ." This was only part of what he was able to do. He engaged in research in anatomy, botany, the phenomena of sound, and the mechanics of fluids. He discovered mechanical principles. He was a cartographer who made excellent geographical and topographical maps. He knew how to reclaim land (he prepared a project for the reclamation of the Pontine Marshes south of Rome). His drawings include projects for bridges, boats, canals; for staircases, palaces, fortresses; for armored cars and all sorts of war engines; for submarines and diving suits; for different types of flying machines. . . . (If a bird can fly, he reasoned, why should not man be able to fly?) In 1516 Leonardo went to France and settled at the castle of Clos-Lucé near Amboise, then the residence of the French king Francis I. Admired and honored, Leonardo died there in 1519. As a humanist and an artist Leonardo was a man of his time; as a scientist and inventor he soared above it.

#### OTHER RENAISSANCE SCIENTISTS

To an older generation than Leonardo's belonged another citizen of the Florentine commonwealth. Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli studied at Padua. Versed in mathematics, interested in astronomy and astrology, concerned with the solution of practical problems such as the construction of large buildings and finding one's way on the ocean, Toscanelli collaborated with Brunelleschi and was a friend of Leon Battista Alberti.

The Veronese Girolamo Fracastoro belonged to a younger generation than Leonardo's. Like Toscanelli a student at the University of Padua, where he numbered Copernicus among his friends, Fracastoro stud-



*A machine for excavating trenches based on the designs of Leonardo da Vinci. EPA*



*Girolamo Fracastoro. NYPL PC*

ied medicine. In 1530 he wrote a treatise on syphilis, then ravaging western European nations, and in 1546 he published his most important work *De contagione et contagionis morbis* which made him the founder of modern medical pathology. His scientific research (and that of the Belgian Vesalius, a professor at Padua in 1537-1555) was continued by Gabriele Falloppia and Bartolomeo Eustachi, after whom the Falloppian and Eustachian tubes are named, and by Andrea



Cesalpino, who described the circulation of the blood. Arcangelo Piccolomini was the author of an important treatise on anatomy which appeared in 1586 after the author's death. The *Commentary on Dioscorides* by Pierandrea Mattioli is a valuable encyclopedia of Renaissance pharmacology.

A contemporary of Fracastoro was Vannoccio Biringucci, born in Siena in 1480. For centuries, alchemists—magicians and not scientists—starting from false premises and aiming at utopian goals, had experimented with metals. A practical man with a free open mind, Biringucci was not an alchemist: science historians have hailed him as the first chemist. In his *De la pirotechnia*, published in 1540 shortly after his death, he dealt with mining, minerals, metals, alloys and methods for obtaining them, explosives, and the correct procedure for smelting metals in order to make cannon, church bells, and statues. The treatise in which the Venetian Giovanni Agostino Pantheo attacked spurious alchemy was a manifestation of the trend toward scientific observation and experimentation.

Luca de Borgo Paccioli, a friend of Leonardo, published in 1525 a general treatise on mathematics. Tartaglia (nickname of Niccolò Fontana, a Venetian citizen born in Brescia in 1499) became famous for having solved the cubic equation. Besides his own personal contribution to the advancement of mathematics, Tartaglia translated works of Euclid and Archimedes, and was the author of *Nova scientia* published in 1537. Rivaling Tartaglia was Girolamo Cardano, who was born in Pavia in the Duchy of Milan in 1501. His father had been a friend of Leonardo's. Medicine was his calling, and as a physician he relied on his own and on others' experience more than on what Hippocrates and Galen had supposedly said nineteen and fourteen centuries earlier respectively. Cardano was a keen mathematician and also an astrologer. In 1570 he was a professor at the University of Bologna: arrested by order of the Inquisition on suspicion of heresy, he recanted, but lost his post and died soon after. Passing to another field, Bartolomeo da Li Sonetti was a competent geographer and cartographer. In 1485 in *I solario* he described the Aegean islands in sonnets, illustrating them with his own maps.

#### EXPLORERS

The free—albeit limited—intellectual climate prevailing in northern and central Italy in the fifteenth century enabled Leonardo to revolutionize science and technology. The same climate made a revolutionary explorer of Christopher Columbus. As a man of faith (as had been many who ventured in distant unknown lands) and as an adventurer looking for riches and power (as many gentleman-merchants turned explorers had been), Columbus belonged to his time. In overcoming superstitions, fears, and false truths, he



Girolamo Cardano. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection

was ahead of his time. He stood against the consensus of the educated classes to which he belonged, of which clerics were then the largest, and outside Italy the most influential, part. A generation that has seen distances on the earth fantastically reduced, and witnessed the beginning of space exploration, finds it difficult to realize the courage it took to present an unorthodox conception of the shape of the earth, to venture toward what for the overwhelming majority of people was the edge of the world in unwieldy and ridiculously small ships. The unknown that faced those who, at the end of the fifteenth century, crossed the Atlantic because they had decided to do so was more terrifying than the unknown facing the twentieth-century astronauts.

#### COLUMBUS

When, where, and of what parentage Christopher Columbus was born are questions still debated. He

Portrait of Christopher Columbus. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. EPA





was reared in the household of a well-do-do Genoese craftsman, perhaps his father or a foster-father. Whatever his schooling may have been, he was a man of culture. He had the inquisitive mind characteristic of Italian humanists. He went to sea and traveled widely, collecting information about distant lands, about the great ocean, about legends and myths, many of which had a foundation of truth. Confined in their puny Mediterranean world, Genoese and Venetian authorities impatiently and contemptuously shrugged off the suggestion that they finance Atlantic expeditions. Rulers of Atlantic European kingdoms ridiculed the notion of reaching India and the lands where spices originated, via the western ocean. One woman, however, listened to Columbus—Isabella of Castile, a queen in her own right. The wealthy Pinzón brothers, experts in navigation, also thought there was something in Columbus' idea. Early in 1492, the war that lasted nearly eight hundred years, and had been the focal element of everything happening in the Iberian peninsula, came to an end with the final defeat of the Moslems. Spanish Catholics rejoiced. There was elation; now minds could turn to other enterprises.

On August 3, Columbus sailed from Palos in command of three ships, of which only one had a full deck. On October 12, he reached the island he called San Salvador—one of the Bahamas. He met the Arawaks and called them Indians. He sailed on south and reached Hispaniola; the Castilian flag flew next to the cross he erected at his landing place. On March 15,

1493, he was back in Palos. Six months later he left again, this time with a fleet of seventeen ships. In the course of the second, third, and fourth voyages, Columbus was away from Europe for about eight years altogether. He discovered the Greater and several of the Lesser Antilles. He reached South America during the third voyage, Central America during the fourth. The rest belongs properly to the history of the Spanish people and of nineteen Spanish-speaking nations in the Western Hemisphere. In his administrative functions Columbus was a failure. The titles of Admiral of the Ocean Sea and of Governor were of no avail when, accused of instigating an insurgency, he was arrested and shipped back to Spain in irons. He died in obscure loneliness in 1506. Even if he himself did not realize that the "Indies" were a New World, he had proved beyond dispute that the earth is a sphere. As a man who broadened the horizons of Europeans he was on a level with Leonardo.

#### THE CABOTS, VESPUCCI, PIGAFETTA, VERRAZANO

The tale of Columbus' discoveries spread quickly throughout the community of adventurous seamen and enterprising merchants. A Genoese who had settled in Venice, John Cabot (Caboto or Cabotto), traveled for the king of England in 1497 and 1498 to North America where he reconnoitered much of the coast between Delaware and Labrador. The Florentine Amerigo Vespucci, an executive in the Medici banking business and manager of the bank's Seville branch in southern Spain, had helped to fit out ships for Columbus' second and third voyages. In 1499/1500 he accompanied the Spaniard Alonso de Ojeda, who explored, for a distance of two thousand miles, part of the coast of South America from the mouth of the Amazon to the Magdalena. King Emanuel I of Portugal asked Vespucci to explore the land (Brazil) of which Cabral had taken possession for Portugal in 1500. In 1501/02 Vespucci led an expedition that followed—this time for well over two thousand miles—the coast of South America south of its easternmost point, to the La Plata River and perhaps beyond. What he had seen during the two voyages left no doubt: this was not the "Indies," it was a new world. In the introduction to an account of Vespucci's travels written in 1507, the German humanist Waldseemüller proposed that the land mass discovered to the west of the Atlantic Ocean be called America. It was unfair to Columbus, but the name immediately caught the popular fancy—and stayed. Columbus, Cabot, and Vespucci were cultured men. So was Antonio Pigafetta, a Venetian gentleman from Vicenza, who accompanied Magellan in 1519 and was one of the eighteen men completing the first circumnavigation of the globe in 1522. The Florentine Giovanni da Verrazano, to whom Francis I of France entrusted the command of the first French expedition to the New World, explored the coast between Cape Hatteras and Maine in

*A reproduction of the "Santa Maria." Ducal Palace, Genoa. ENIT*







The departure of John and Sebastian Cabot from Bristol on their first voyage. Photoworld



Giovanni da Verrazano. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection



Amerigo Vespucci. EPA

1524. Verrazano was the first European to enter New York harbor. In 1528 he led a five-ship French expedition to Central or (more likely) South America, about which little is known.

#### GALILEO, SCIENTIST AND PHILOSOPHER

Leonardo and his contemporaries belonged to a restricted but influential world of educated people from whom they received stimulation and among whom they found moral support when struggling against superstition and falsehoods. Not so Galileo Galilei, as great as any for his genius, greater than most for his achievements. In what were fast becoming the progressive nations of Europe (the English, the Dutch, the French), a community of intellectuals was forming whose thought was similar to Galileo's,

and who became acquainted with his writings, discoveries, and inventions. They felt his influence deeply. But in Italy, except for a few friends and disciples, Galileo was isolated, particularly during the closing years of his life. He did not speak for a vast expanding movement as did Francis Bacon in England, René Descartes in France, Grotius in Holland and, later, Leibniz in Germany.

Galileo was born in Pisa in 1564, of a well-to-do family. As a student he was interested in medicine, geometry, and mathematics. He spent eighteen years, from 1592 to 1610, teaching at the University of Padua, the one remaining center of learning in Italy where some academic freedom survived. At Padua in 1593 he invented the thermometer (and explained the principles for constructing the pendulum, later made by Huygens). In 1609 he constructed what he called the optic tube—the telescope that opened to his ad-

Galileo Galilei. NYPL



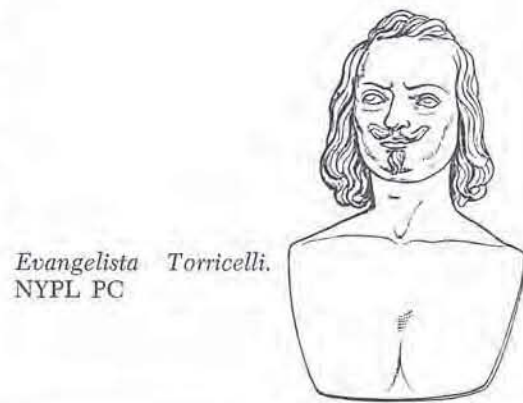


miring eyes and inquisitive mind a universe more imposing, magnificent, and mysterious than anything that had ever been imagined. Galileo was the first to see reliefs on the surface of the moon, dark areas breaking the uniform brightness of the solar surface, four of Jupiter's satellites, Saturn's rings, and the infinite multitude of stars in our galaxy. In 1610 he used other lenses and constructed the microscope, destined to revolutionize medicine and all biological disciplines. It may not be true that Galileo's mind started on its scientific voyage when, at eighteen, he noticed the oscillations of a lamp in Pisa's cathedral; the test of dropping objects from the Leaning Tower may also be a legend; but it is true that Galileo discovered the law of uniform acceleration and the law of inertia and that he formulated new concepts of velocity and force, thus preparing the ground for Isaac Newton's revolutionary synthesis published in the *Principia* later in the century.

Galileo was still in Padua when he wrote *The Sidereal Messenger*, published in 1610. Back in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, no longer protected by the government of the *Serenissima*, he was reprimanded by the Inquisition in 1613. In 1632 he published the *Dialogue on the Two Chief Systems of the World*, as important for the advancement of thought as Bacon's *Novum organum* or Descartes' *Discourse*. What was most important in the *Dialogue* was not so much the author's views on the incompatible systems of Ptolemy and Copernicus as it was the formulation of the scientific method as the correct way of using reason. In stating that ". . . in the discussion of natural problems we ought . . . to begin . . . with sensible experiments and necessary demonstration . . ." Galileo was attacking authority, denying the validity of intuitive truths unsupported by reasoned evidence, in essence, denying revelation. He stressed the priority of reason, replaced dogmatism with criticism, opened the road to empiricism (and to its later derivations, empirical positivism and pragmatism), and condemned static modes of thought then rigidly enforced through monopoly of education, censorship, and fear, in all of Italy except (for a while still) in the Republic of Venice. But his assertions were too revolutionary. He was arrested by order of the Inquisition, tried, and condemned. An old man by now, broken in spirit, he finally recanted and was allowed to return to his home. There he died in 1642.

#### SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SCIENTISTS

Galileo was comforted in his last years by the affection of his disciple Evangelista Torricelli, who experimented with the transmission of light and sound and with magnetism, invented the barometer in 1643, and who died, not yet forty, in 1647. Giovanni Domenico Cassini, born near Nice, was a leading astronomer. He taught at the University of Bologna before moving in 1667 to France where he was appointed



Evangelista Torricelli.  
NYPL PC



Giovanni Domenico Cassini. NYPL PC

director of the Paris observatory. In spite of Galileo's trial and condemnation, some Italians cautiously tried to apply in scientific research the method advocated in the *Dialogue*. Foremost were a few physicians. In 1668 Francesco Redi, a Tuscan, wrote *Experiments on the Generation of Insects*, a book in which he attacked the then current notion of spontaneous generation of life. His experimental examination of a biological problem was worthy of twentieth-century standards. Redi had also been one of the founders in 1657 of the Accademia del Cimento in Florence (still existing today) which provided a model for the Royal Society of London, a major center for the propagation of





Francesco Redi.  
NYPL PC



Marcello Malpighi. NYPL PC

scientific thought. Another scientist-physician was Marcello Malpighi, a professor at the universities of Pisa and Bologna. Malpighi was the first outstanding microscopist. He was interested in the anatomy of plants and animals, completed the studies initiated by Cesalpino on the circulation of the blood, and inquired into the composition, structure, and functioning of glands and other tissues. Giorgio Baglivi, from Ragusa in Dalmatia, perhaps the foremost medical practitioner at the end of the seventeenth century, was also an articulate advocate of the experimental method.

#### EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY REVIVAL

As had been the case during the Renaissance, when toward the middle of the eighteenth century the intellectual climate in Italy took a turn for the better, scientific thought was affected later by the greater freedom of expression than were literary and artistic activities. During the last third of the century especially, a scientist was no longer obliged to be an exile in his own land. Political changes had made possible the formation of a community (not yet a large one) of lively, inquisitive intellectuals, no longer fearful for their liberties or lives when expressing new ideas, no longer restricted by rigid censorship; intellectuals convinced, as Galileo had been, of the priority of reason and capable of using the scientific method to expand the knowledge of natural phenomena. To that community belonged Lazzaro Spallanzani, one of the many eighteenth-century *abati* who were also Enlightenment *philosophes*: not abbots or heads of monasteries, but clerics who usually enjoyed the income of some church property and had few if any religious duties. Spallanzani was interested in physics, mineralogy, and particularly biology. He has been described as the first great experimental physiologist. He studied animal functions: the digestive process, respiration, blood circulation, fertilization, reproduction, and development. His *Tracts on the Nature of Ani-*



Lazzaro Spallanzani. ICI

*mals and Vegetables* established his reputation among the cosmopolitan intelligentsia of the Enlightenment. The Piedmontese mathematical genius Giuseppe Lagrange, of French and Italian descent, who at the age of sixteen was appointed professor of geometry at the artillery academy of the Kingdom of Sardinia, was a





Giuseppe Lagrange. EPA

few years younger than Spallanzani. He was one of the founders of the Academy of Sciences in Turin in 1758. His *Analytical Mechanics* and *Theory of Analytical Functions* were the intellectual climax of the Enlightenment in its mechanistic aspect. Lagrange was considered the foremost European mathematician, and as such he was invited by Frederick II of Prussia to Berlin where he remained for several years. He died in 1813 and was buried in the Pantheon in Paris.

#### GALVANI AND VOLTA

Spallanzani and Lagrange dealt with established disciplines. Two other scientists, whose names became universally known in Italy and abroad in the last decade of the eighteenth century, pioneered new disciplines. A physiologist and comparative anatomist by training and vocation, the Bolognese Luigi Galvani described experiments with electricity—the mysterious form of energy then fascinating professional and amateur scientists on both sides of the Atlantic—in his *Commentaries* in 1791. Experimenting on frogs, Galvani noticed a correlation between muscle twitching and contact with iron and copper. He identified, in what he thought to be animal electricity, negative and positive electrical charges. The words deriving from his name (galvanism, galvanization, galvanometer, etc.) are evidence of the impact of his discoveries. Alessandro Volta, from Como, was the first to occupy the University of Pavia's chair in physics, established in 1779. In 1792 he began a series of experiments aimed at transforming chemical energy into electrical energy, experiments that led to the invention in 1800 of the Volta pile, the first device in the form of a



Luigi Galvani. ICI

battery to maintain steady potential differences between terminals of conductors and enable electricity to be produced in definite quantities. The pile was described in a paper read before the Royal Society of London and became the indispensable tool for further studies in electricity.

#### NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCIENTISTS

Nineteenth-century Italian scientists and engineers contributed further to the study of electricity and to the inventions that aimed at harnessing electrical energy for practical uses. Volta's friend Luigi Brugnatelli invented electroplating in 1805. Antonio Meucci (born in Florence) came to the United States; in 1871 he preceded Alexander Graham Bell by a few years in devising the instrument that later became the telephone. Antonio Pacinotti, a Pisan, invented the Pacinotti ring in 1858 and built the first dynamo in 1860. Galileo Ferraris from Leghorn, a professor at the University of Turin, discovered the rotary magnetic field and, in the 1880s, was a pioneer in the use of polyphase current in motors and in building transformers for electric current. Augusto Righi, who taught in his birthplace Bologna, engaged in the study of electrical conductivity, electrical waves, and magnetism, thus preparing the ground for Marconi's





*Alessandro Volta.* EPA



*Galileo Ferraris.* Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

*Antonio Meucci.* ICI



achievements in wireless telegraphy. Because of his research in radioactivity and the structure of matter, Righi was prominent among the scientists who, during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, bridged the passage from the study of electricity to the study of nuclear energy.

In fields other than electricity, the foremost nineteenth-century Italian scientist was the Piedmontese Amedeo Avogadro, a lawyer by profession and a physicist and mathematician by vocation. Stimulated by the work of Gay-Lussac in France and Dalton in Great Britain, Avogadro engaged in research in physical chemistry and published a study on the distinction between atoms and molecules in 1809. In 1811 he formulated the law according to which equal volumes of different gases at the same temperature and pressure contain the same number of molecules. The law (known as Avogadro constant) became the foundation for further research in physical chemistry after it was popularized in 1860 by Stanislao Cannizzaro in a paper delivered at a scientists' congress in Paris. In 1846 another Piedmontese, Antonio Sobrero, invented nitroglycerin, the dangerously unstable explosive from which, a few decades later, Nobel made the more stable dynamite. In 1852 two Tuscans, Eugenio Baranti (a Scolopian friar) and Felice Matteucci, invented the internal-combustion engine. They were not





*Ascanio Sobrero. NYPL PC*

interested in its practical application, on which others worked after the invention had been described in detail in a British scientific magazine.

The astronomer Giuseppe Piazzi, born in the Valtellina, was a professor of higher mathematics for nearly half a century, until 1826, at the University of Palermo. He was the founder and director of the Palermo Observatory, discovered the first asteroid, Ceres, in 1801, and achieved European reputation with his catalogue, published early in the century, listing the accurate position of nearly eight thousand stars. The best-known Italian astronomer was the Piedmontese Giovanni Schiaparelli, for nearly forty years (until 1900) director of the Brera Observatory in Milan. He discovered and measured the rotations of Mercury and Venus, studied meteor clusters and double stars, described markings he observed on the surface of Mars as canals in 1877.

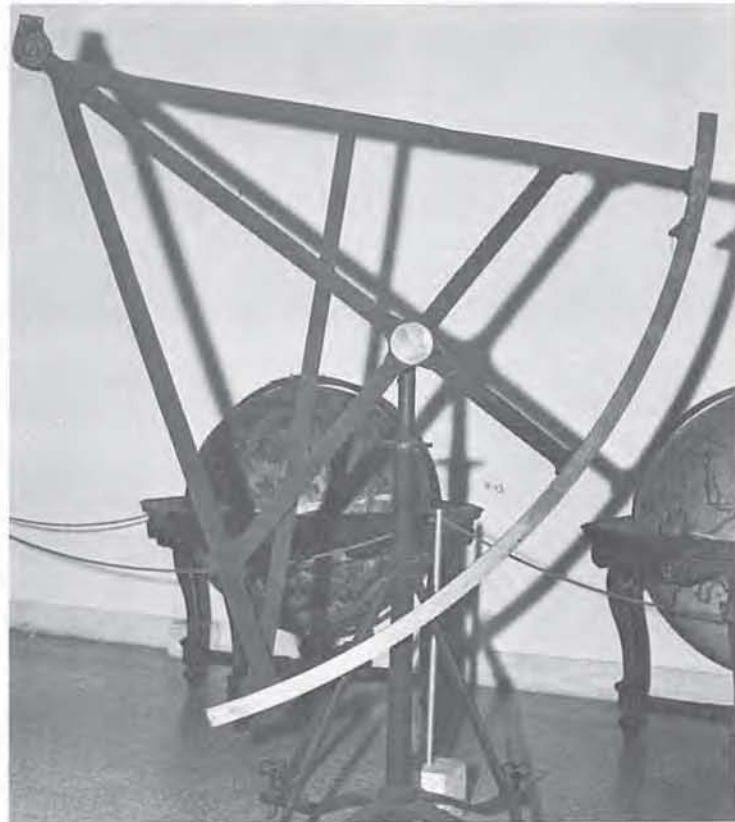
#### MARCONI

In the first half of the twentieth century the greatest Italian contributions to science were those of Guglielmo Marconi and Enrico Fermi. Marconi, a Bolognese born in 1874, combined scientific ability with business acumen. Stimulated by the recent discoveries



*Giovanni Schiaparelli. EPA*

*Schiaparelli's sextant. EPA*

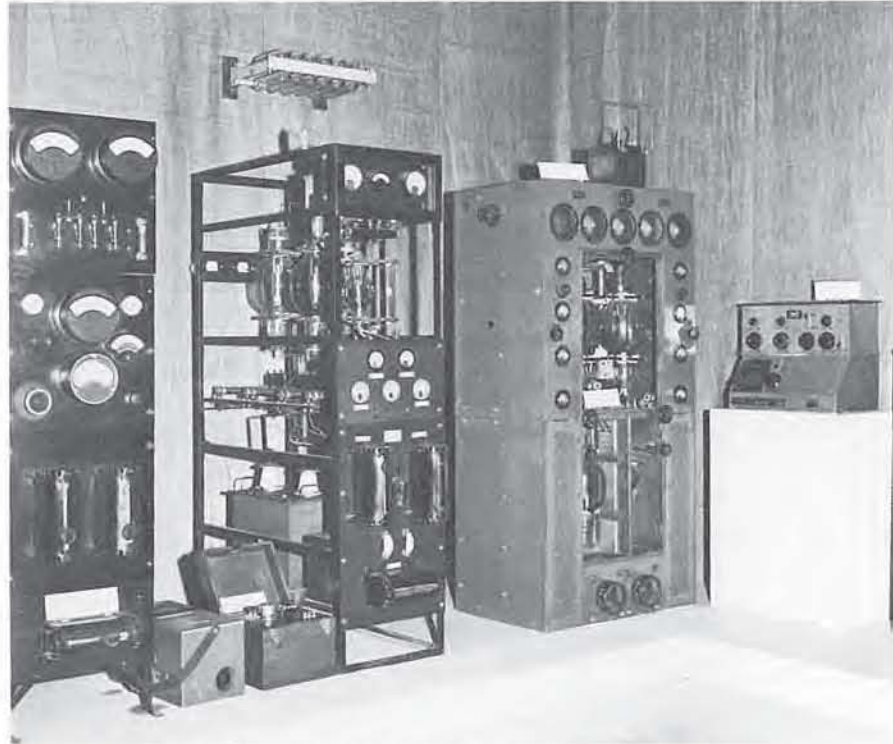


of Righi in Italy and of Hertz in Germany, in 1894 Marconi began experimenting with electrical waves with the aim of sending wireless messages. Theoretical studies had reached a high level in Italy, but financial means for putting discoveries to practical use were hard to come by. Marconi had a British mother, and





*Guglielmo Marconi. ICI*



*Apparatus of Marconi's original wireless telegraph. EPA*

her relatives advised him to go to England, which he did. Backed by the engineer in chief of the British Post Office, Marconi made his first successful wireless transmission in 1896. Five years later he transmitted the first transatlantic message, between the British Isles and Newfoundland. Heaped with honors, and financially successful, he spent the rest of his life in further research and in making wireless a universal communications medium. Mussolini appointed him to the Italian senate in 1929 and president of the Italian Academy in 1930. He died in 1937.

#### *FERMI*

Fermi, a Roman born in 1901, was an imaginative theoretical physicist and a patient experimental scientist. Appointed professor of physics at the University of Pisa at the age of twenty-one, he was promoted to the University of Rome in 1927. He studied protons and neutrons, developed the theory of the decay of beta elements in 1934, and in 1938 received the Nobel Prize in physics for discoveries concerning artificial radioactivity induced by neutrons and thermal neutrons. Shocked by the racial legislation introduced in Italy by the Fascist regime, Fermi came to the United States in 1938, accepted a position at Columbia University in 1939, and was invited to join the team of brilliant American and foreign physicists who (in the wake of the discoveries of Rutherford, Einstein, Bohr, and others) were devoting their efforts to the study of nuclear energy.

#### *Enrico Fermi. UPI*



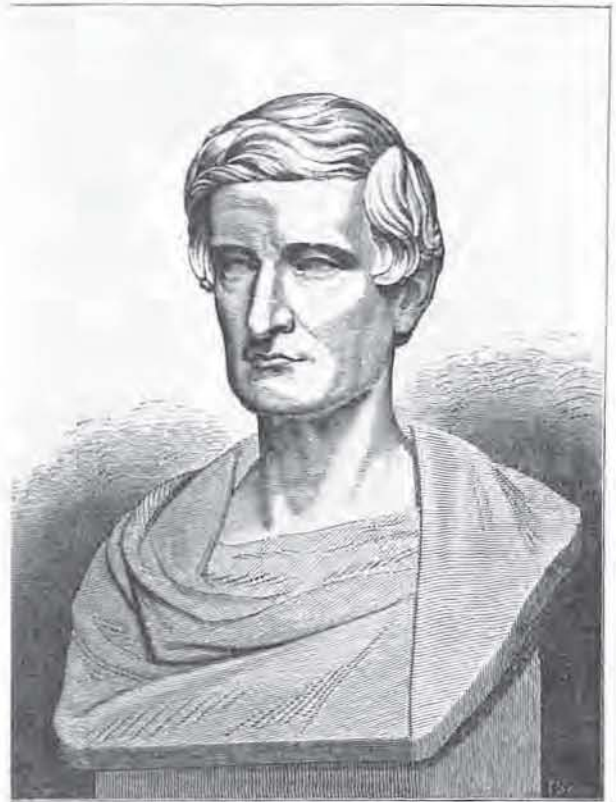


In 1942, President Roosevelt entrusted the execution of the Manhattan Project to these scientists. Fermi was director of the work that led to the first controlled nuclear chain reaction, in Chicago, on December 2, 1942, and to the first atomic explosion on July 16, 1945. In 1946 he became director of the Institute of Nuclear Studies (now the Enrico Fermi Institute) at the University of Chicago. The exile of Fermi and the numerous other European scientists who found life under dictatorship intolerable was more than merely Italy's or Germany's loss and a gain for the United States. By stifling their scientists, black and brown totalitarian dictatorships lost the military superiority they enjoyed during the first phase of World War II and sealed the doom of the vast coalition aimed at destroying the democratic way of life.

#### ECONOMISTS

In Italy, scientific methods were not applied to social disciplines until recently, except in economics. The exception is not surprising, considering that Italian businessmen were the first, in the late Middle Ages and during the Renaissance, to develop some of the basic institutions from which capitalism developed. The first European university chair in economics (officially in "commerce and mechanics," the latter word meaning industry) was established in Italy in 1754 when Verri and Filangieri advocated free enterprise, Genovesi and Galiani stood for mercantilism, and Ortes began to formulate what later became the Catholic economic doctrine of corporatism, or neoguildism.

Pellegrino Rossi was the best-known Italian economist of the first half of the nineteenth century. An official in the short-lived administration set up in 1815 by Gioacchino Murat in liberated districts of central and northern Italy, Rossi went into exile after Murat's defeat by the Austrians. He taught political economy in Paris and was the author of, among other works, a lucid and successful treatise on economics. He returned to Italy as ambassador of France to the Holy See. In September 1848, Pope Pius IX asked him to head a liberal ministry. Two months later Rossi was assassinated. At that time, Italian economic problems were analyzed, and sound solutions were suggested, by—among others—Cavour and Cattaneo. Like Rossi, the Sicilian Francesco Ferrara, the most distinguished Italian economist during the second half of the nineteenth century, was a scholar and a liberal patriot. In 1848 he was sent to Turin to offer the crown of Sicily to the younger son of the king of Sardinia. The defeat of the Sicilian insurgency compelled him to remain in Piedmont where he taught economics and engaged in research. More perceptive than Engels, Marx, and their disciples, Ferrara maintained that increased productivity would lower the rate of profits and raise correspondingly the share of the product going to wage- and salary-earners.



*Pellegrino Rossi.* NYPL PC

Early in the twentieth century, Maffeo Pantaleoni, from Macerata, enjoyed the reputation of being the foremost living Italian economist. His economic synthesis included laws deduced mathematically from the postulate that man looks for the maximum advantage obtainable with the minimum effort. He shared the then widespread erroneous conviction that economic activities can be isolated and studied independently of other activities. His contemporary Antonio De Viti De Marco, an Apulian aristocrat, expounded with clarity and conviction the thesis that although free private enterprise is preferable to its alternatives, state action is required to correct the defects of a system based on the free market and the free use of the means of production. The most prominent, and the wisest, twentieth-century Italian economist was the Piedmontese Luigi Einaudi, to whom fell the lot of becoming a major leader of post-World War II Italian republican democracy. As a theorist and a statesman, Einaudi maintained that "our problem is not the abolition of regulations but the establishment of regulations within which the citizen can freely act." The Florentine Ernesto Rossi was the most brilliant of the disciples of De Viti De Marco and Einaudi. Another Tuscan, Amintore Fanfani, one of the most influential Christian Democratic leaders in post-World War II Italy, had made his reputation in the late 1930s as an articulate and convincing spokesman for Catholic economic thought.





Amintore Fanfani. Photoworld

#### POLITICAL SCIENTISTS

Political science lagged behind economics in Italy, despite the liveliness of original political formulations, the widespread discussion of political principles, and their impact on the nation's life. In the nineteenth century authoritarian traditionalism had had its major articulate spokesman in Pope Pius IX and reform Catholicism in Pope Leo XIII, progressive liberalism in Cavour, democratic nationalism in Mazzini, social revolutionarism in Costa and Caffero. In the twentieth century, with commitment bordering at times on religious faith, Croce and de Ruggiero extolled liberalism, Turati and Mondolfo socialism, Rosselli and Calogero the integration of liberalism and socialism, Labriola and Gramsci Marxism, Sturzo and Gonella political Catholicism, Gentile and Spirito fascism, Corradini integral nationalism, Malatesta anarchism, Lanzillo revolutionary syndicalism. But there was little scientific study of political structures and processes. Considerable reputation was achieved in Italy and abroad by the Sicilian Gaetano Mosca, whose *Ruling Class*, published in the United States in 1929, had a strong impact on academic circles of English-speaking nations. Mosca maintained that political structures are variations of only one dominant type: oligarchy. By this he rationalized the contempt for democracy and the tolerance toward dictatorships of the right and the left, then felt by large sections of the Italian and

world intelligentsia. He lived long enough to realize through experience that the difference between liberal Italy and the Fascist regime was a difference in kind and not simply in degree.

Partly under the stimulus of American scholarship, political science took its place among social disciplines after World War II, when a distinction was made between original and derivative political convictions and the analysis of political phenomena, the proper subject of scientific investigations.

#### SOCIOLOGISTS

The best-known Italian sociologist, the Genoese Vilfredo Pareto, spent much of his life abroad. With Nietzsche, Sorel, Corradini, and Gentile, Pareto forms the pentarchy of important contributors to the ideology of the Italian Fascist movement. Pareto was an opponent of the rational approach derived from Galileo, Locke, and the eighteenth-century French *philosophes*. The central theme of his work was the distinction in human nature between constant and varying elements. The former (instincts, feelings, interests, appetites) he called residues; the latter (everything pertaining to reason), derivations. What explains human actions, he argued, are the residues (the irrational) not the derivations (the rational). Pareto's contemporary, Filippo Carli, appointed to the first university chair in sociology in Italy, advocated the idea, later adopted by Fascism, that a large and expanding population promotes progress. Population expansion became in turn, for Italian and other fascists, the rationalization for imperialistic policies. Luigi Sturzo, known chiefly as the most influential leader of Italian political Catholicism in the post-World War I period, was also a prominent sociologist, and wrote copiously during his twenty years of exile in Great Britain and the United States. His sociological formulations were the demonstration of the correctness of social principles developed by progressive Catholic thinkers during the pontificate of Leo XIII. Sturzo conceived of society not "materialistically, as a biophysical organism or as an associative mechanism, but rather as a principle, will, force, spirit, which activates itself of itself and realizes itself in the various forms of human life." The penologist Cesare Lombroso, born

Cesare Lombroso,  
NYPL PC





in Verona, achieved wide reputation in Italy and abroad during his lifetime. His conclusions (based on a wealth of factual evidence) that punishment should be mitigated and that prevention is better than repression, derived from the postulate that heredity and environment are mainly responsible for the development of criminal tendencies and for the rate of criminality in a society, and that, contrary to basic juridical principles, there is therefore little room for individual responsibility.

#### PSYCHOLOGISTS AND ANTHROPOLOGISTS

Experimental (or scientific) psychology had among its founders in Italy Roberto Ardigò, who rejected the traditional dualism between body and soul and "maintained the complex character of consciousness and its intimate connection with physiological phenomena." The best-known Italian psychologist in the first half of the twentieth century was Agostino Gemelli, a member of the Franciscan order, founder and president of the Catholic University in Milan and an articulate exponent of neo-Thomist thought. His research and experiments strengthened his conviction that the soul is the form of the physical body potentially possessing life. In his published works he dealt primarily with the effects of industrialization on the personality of the wage earners.

The foremost cultural anthropologists were the Sicilian Giuseppe Sergi, who engaged in studies leading to the correct classification of races and cultures, and the Emilian Enrico Morselli who in his *General Anthropology* (the last volume of which appeared in 1911) dealt with the complexity of human societies, their differences, and the difficulty of conciliating the actuality of existing human types with the generally accepted hypothesis of a common origin.

Maria Montessori acquired world-wide reputation as a foremost educator. Actually she was a teacher of cultural anthropology for many years at the University of Rome. Born at Chiaravalle near Ancona in 1870, she took a medical degree and had the distinction of being one of the first women physicians in Italy. Through her own original thinking becoming a leading psychologist, Maria Montessori was a pioneer of progressive education in the twentieth century. Montessori method has become a synonym for the education that had as first advocate Vittorino da Feltre in the fifteenth century: education in which the primary concern is the development of the individual human personality.

#### ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXPLORATION OF AFRICA

In modern times, most Italian explorers intent on bringing back information about unknown or little known lands and peoples to Western nations did not travel as far as those who in previous centuries had visited the Far East or reached the Americas. In the



Enrico Morselli. NYPL PC

Maria Montessori. Photoworld



second half of the nineteenth century they nonetheless contributed to the better knowledge of Africa, a continent whose coasts had been accurately mapped earlier than those of Asia, the Americas, or Australia, but the interior of which was less known around 1850





Montessori classroom,  
New York City, 1916.  
Brown Brothers

than that of Antarctica in 1950. They contributed particularly to the growing understanding of African peoples, their cultures and their problems.

The starting point for journeys in the interior of Africa was provided by the Italian communities then flourishing in the main cities of Egypt. It seemed natural for adventurous Italian travelers to sail up the Nile (its sources, a prime goal of explorers, were not ascertained until the 1860s) and, from the upper Nile Valley, to go either west in the savannahs of the Sudan and the great equatorial forest of the Congo basin, or east in the countries of the Horn of Africa; of these, Ethiopia (then still the traditional territory inhabited by Christian Copts, about one-fourth of the present Ethiopian Empire) held the greatest fascination.

An early pioneer explorer had been the Paduan Giovanni Battista Belzoni who, in the course of an adventurous life, reached Cairo in 1815. He spent four years in Egypt exploring and excavating Egyptian antiquities. He removed and sent to London the head of Rameses II, excavated the great temple of Karnak, and discovered in the Valley of the Kings the tomb of Seti I. He published in London a book about his findings, which went rapidly through several editions. In 1823 he went to Nigeria in order to map the exact course of the Niger River, but died before achieving his goal.

The Tuscan Carlo Piaggia, in a series of journeys undertaken from 1852 to 1882, went south of the borders of the present republic of Sudan, traveled through districts inhabited by Negro tribes later conquered by Ethiopia, and in 1876 reached the vast and swampy Lake Kyoga in Uganda. Giovanni Miani, of Rovigo, sailed up the Nile in 1859-1861 and again in 1867-1872, and visited territories now included in the Central African and Congo republics, then peopled by independent tribes victimized by Arab slave raiders searching deeper and deeper in the continent for

Giovanni Battista  
Belzoni. NYPL PC



children, women, and men to enslave. Orazio Antinori, of Perugia, a patriot who had taken part in the revolutionary events of 1848/49, and a scientist already well acquainted with the Near East, was fascinated by tales of African explorations. As secretary-general of the Italian Geographical Society founded in 1867, he prepared an expedition for the scientific exploration of the less-known districts of Ethiopia and those between Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean. He spent five years in Ethiopia (1877-1882), sharing the view of many Italians who favored the establishment there of Italy's influence. Antinori's younger collaborators Giovanni Chiarini and Antonio Cecchi traveled in 1877-1881 from Zeila on the Gulf of Aden to the borders of the Kingdom of Kaffa.

Romolo Gessi, of Romagna, an experienced trav-



eler who had visited the most remote districts of the Ottoman Empire, was asked in 1873 by the governor of the Egyptian Sudan to join in administering the vast territory. A major function entrusted to him was the suppression of the infamous slave trade carried out by Arabs and Arabized Sudanese, creating havoc among the defenseless Negro peoples of the upper Nile regions, sold by the hundreds of thousands in Near and Middle Eastern countries. Head of the administration in the Bahr-el-Ghazal province, Gessi defeated al-Zubayr, the foremost slave raider in the area, in 1879. He also visited the Lake Albert district farther south and the valley of the Uele River, a major tributary of the Congo. Accompanying Gessi in 1880 was the Lombard Gaetano Casati who explored the Ruwenzori Range between Lake Albert and Lake Edward—the fabled Mountains of the Moon, and according to the ancients the location of the sources of the Nile. A revolt of religious fanatics spurred by slave traders against Egyptian rule in the Sudan compelled Casati, with surviving members of the Sudanese administration, to withdraw to the Lake Albert area, where he remained until 1889. Giulietti, Sacconi, Bianchi, and Porro, between 1881 and 1886 led four expeditions in the desert area east of the Ethiopian highlands. Vittorio Bottego, in two journeys undertaken in 1892/93 and 1895–1897, mapped the courses of the Juba and the Omo, the major rivers of western Somalia and southwestern Ethiopia. Of these thirteen explorers, only Casati ended his days in Italy. The others died in Africa, if not by violence then of disease and exhaustion.

#### TWENTIETH-CENTURY EXPLORERS

In the twentieth century, Luigi of Savoy, duke of Abruzzi (a cousin of King Victor Emanuel III), added

*Luigi of Savoy, Duke of Abruzzi.* UPI



considerably to geographical knowledge. He traveled widely in the arctic and subarctic area, and later in East Africa where he spent many years before his death in 1933. General Umberto Nobile, an enthusiastic and successful designer of dirigibles, led a series of air expeditions in the Arctic between 1926 and 1931. He tried but failed to land at the North Pole which he had reached by air. On the return trip from the North Pole in 1928, his dirigible crashed in a storm. Several relief expeditions were organized to locate the wreck and save the survivors. The Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen died in one of the attempts to reach Nobile, later rescued together with six other members of the expedition. Giuseppe Tucci, a distinguished orientalist, in the 1930s explored little known areas of the Himalayas and of Tibet particularly, and gained a reputation as a foremost expert in Tibetan and kindred cultures.



*Umberto Nobile.* EPA

*Nobile's dirigible, the "Italia."* EPA





# BEYOND THE BORDERS



Roman relief showing the founding of a colony in Aquileia. Museo Civiltà Romana, Rome

*Through migration peoples become a nation in Roman Italy – Effects of Italian migrations in the Roman Mediterranean state – An eight-century interval – Italian expansion, eleventh to fifteenth century – Pisa, Genoa, and Venice – Sicily and Naples – Merchants and bankers – Political and economic retrenchment – A four-century interval – Italian queens and ministers of foreign kingdoms – Military leaders abroad – Growing mobility but emigration still a trickle – A century of mass migration – The flight from poverty – The poor of the South – Five million Italian citizens abroad – Tens of millions are citizens of other countries – Italians in the Western Hemisphere – Italians in Brazil – Italians in Argentina.*

## THROUGH MIGRATION PEOPLES BECOME A NATION IN ROMAN ITALY

THREE or four million people inhabited the Italian peninsula when the Romans gave it political unity. The Romanization of many different peoples, which led to the centuries-long identification of Romans with Italians (*see* Chapters 2 and 3), was not only the result of conquests, alliances, and the attraction Rome held for less advanced or less energetic communities, it was also the result of thousands of colonists from Rome and Latium settling in all areas of the peninsula. The same thing happened in northern or continental Italy, whose merger with the peninsula in the second half of the first century B.C., plus natural increase, brought the population of the country to about seven million. The scores of thousands of colonists, who, starting in 218 B.C. and continuing at a growing rate for several generations, settled in the area between the Apennines and the Alps, came mostly from Rome and Latium. Distributed in large formally incorporated agricultural and urban communities, they rapidly assimilated Mediterranean Ligurians, Illyrian Veneti, and Cisalpine Gauls.

Conquests, migrations, and assimilation south of the Alps were all part of the process that led to the

formation of a nation in Italy. They also made for the expansion, outlined in this chapter, of the nation whose home was Italy, beyond the borders of the country. In ancient times the expansion combined large-scale emigration with conquest. After an eight-century interval expansion occurred again in the eleventh to fifteenth century, but only as political control. After a four-hundred-year interlude, the expansion took the form of a mass exodus that by now has lasted over one hundred years, and—with the exception of feeble attempts in the 1890s and during the fascist period—has had no political overtones. In this chapter mention is also made of a few Italians who achieved positions of influence abroad from the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth when most of their own nation was under direct or indirect foreign rule.

## EFFECTS OF ITALIAN MIGRATIONS IN THE ROMAN MEDITERRANEAN STATE

Hundreds of thousands of Italian colonists, in the wake of conquests and annexations in the Mediterranean area and beyond from the third century B.C. on, and before Caesar overthrew the Republic, settled outside Italy. According to their legal status, they were still called Romans or Latins. Actually they did not come only from Rome and Latium: most were Latin-speaking Romanized Italians from the eleven regions into which Augustus later divided Italy. Italica in southern Spain (near Seville) was the first colony or settlement outside Italy. It was founded by Scipio Major with veterans from the Second Punic War. Other settlements—some very large—followed in the Iberian peninsula, and, starting in 122 B.C., in southern Gaul and in the African Carthaginian territory. There were also incorporated settlements in Sicily and Corsica. Nonincorporated Italian settlements existed in all these territories as well as in Sardinia and the western Balkans (Dalmatia and Epirus). After the Macedonian wars and the Syrian war of 192–189 B.C., many Italians migrated on their own to the wealthy countries of the eastern Mediterranean. They must





*Roman aqueduct near Tarragona, Spain. EPA*

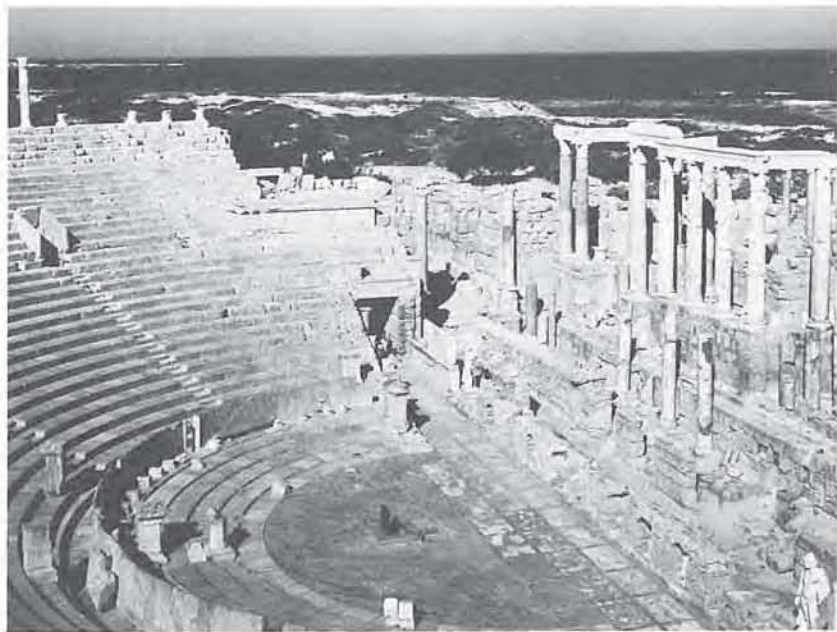


*The Forum, Jerash, Jordan. EPA*

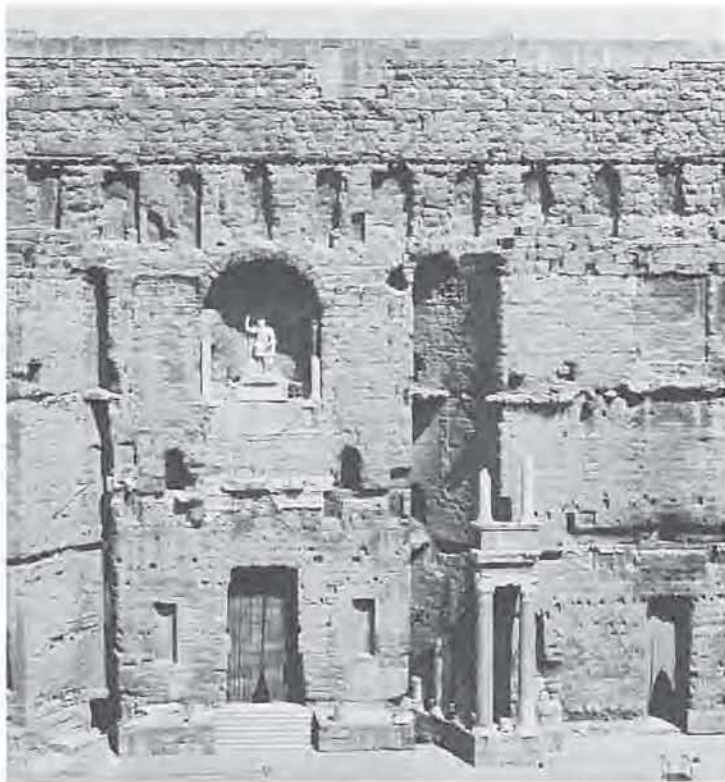
*Roman amphitheatre, El Djem, Tunisia. EPA*



*Roman theatre, Leptis Magna (modern Lebda), Libya. EPA*







Roman theatre, Orange, France. EPA

have been numerous if, as reported by Valerius Maximus, tens of thousands were killed in one day by order of Mithridates in 88 B.C.

Government-sponsored Italian migration, accompanied by free grants of public lands, reached its climax under Caesar and Augustus. Historians have recorded the laws establishing agricultural and urban settlements and the approximate number of settlers assigned to each. According to Suetonius, in one swoop the city of Rome lost about eighty thousand people who emigrated as colonists. For the Iberian peninsula alone are known the names of twenty-six settlements established during this period, each made up of several thousand colonists. Italian settlers were the main factor in the Romanization of peoples from whom, in part, derive the European nations today speaking Latin languages.

During the three hundred years or so of the Principate—from Augustus to Diocletian—many Italians migrated on their own to other parts of the Roman state, settling, often permanently, wherever they found economic or other opportunities. Under Augustus' successors there still was government-sponsored colonization. However, under the Principate, the Italian migration linked to the military organization created by Augustus and perfected by his successors was more sizable, in the long run, than the migration of individual emigrants and of government-sponsored colonists. Until the beginning of the third century, a large

percentage of the soldiers (estimated at not less than a fourth of the total) and a majority of the officers in the permanent military establishment were Roman citizens of Italian origin, or descendants of Italian colonists who had settled outside Italy. The army garrisoning the Empire and protecting the borders grew from about three hundred thousand men under Augustus to nearly half a million later. Of the total number of legions, a little over half were stationed along the northern border in Europe. Soldiers served for twenty years. Many who were assigned to a border legion married local girls and made their permanent home in the area in which they had served. Along the Rhine and the Danube, or not far from the imposing *calla* and *limes* (fortifications built where natural barriers did not protect Roman territory), were the encampments of the legions. Next to the encampments cities often grew. Some still exist: Regina Castra (Regensburg), Colonia Agrippina (Cologne), Mogontiacum (Mainz) in Germany; Vindobona (Vienna) in Austria. Others (Ulpia Traiana and Apulum in Romania, Sirmium in Yugoslavia) were later destroyed by invaders. During the first and second centuries, Italian soldiers were a main element in the assimilation of Germanic and Illyrian peoples in European border provinces.

The steady stream of Italians westward and eastward, as colonists, individual emigrants, and soldiers, lasted for over four hundred years. This large-scale Italian migration helped to create the homogeneous culture that existed in the third century in much of the Roman state, and influenced the Hellenistic East. It prepared the ground for the Edict of 212 granting Roman citizenship to all inhabitants of the empire.

Mogontiacum Castle, (site of modern Mainz) and the bridge over the Rhine, ca. 300. NYPL





## AN EIGHT-CENTURY INTERVAL

Then, for nearly eight hundred years, the trend was reversed. There was no more Italian emigration beyond the Alps or across the Mediterranean. Instead, invaders by the hundreds of thousands (perhaps half a million altogether) settled in Italy. Most were of Germanic stock and the remainder Berbers, Arabs, Illyrians. All the Italians could do was to attempt to assimilate the foreigners settling in their midst.

## ITALIAN EXPANSION, ELEVENTH TO FIFTEENTH CENTURY

A new era in the relations between Italians and other peoples began at the turn of the millennium. The beginning was the result of the adventurous initiatives of citizens of the three most important northern maritime cities which nominally recognized the superior authority of distant emperors of West or East, but, in reality, were independent republics. Beginning in 998 or 999, when Pietro Orseolo II was *doge*, Venetians decided to make the Adriatic—their lifeline—safe by attacking Slavic marauders in their well-protected Dalmatian refuges. It was a successful but limited undertaking. Not until four centuries later did most of Dalmatia become a Venetian dependency. However, the early Venetian intervention, apart from repressing piracy, helped the “Latin” (Italian) communities in the cities and islands of Dalmatia hold their own against the Slavic kingdoms of Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia, and later against the Hungarians and the Turks. Many of these Italian communities lasted well into the nineteenth century; two of them—those of Zara and Lagosta—survived until World War II.

## PISA, GENOA, AND VENICE

From the turn of the millennium to the end of the twelfth century, the deeds of the Pisans had a wider range and greater impact on non-Italian peoples than those of the Venetians. The Pisans, repeatedly attacked by Moslem raiders, decided that security lay in expelling the Moslems from their nearest bases. The expeditions carried out during several decades, sometimes by the Pisans alone, sometimes jointly with the Genoese, led to the liberation of Corsica and Sardinia. Other expeditions that began in the 1060s helped the Normans to conquer Sicily. To the history of expansion outside Italy belong the expeditions against the Moslems of North Africa which began in 1034 with an attack against Bona (now Annaba), and which, after the capture of Mahdija on the Tunisian coast in 1087, for a while made the western Mediterranean safe for trade. To the same history belong the dispatching of a fleet of 120 ships to the Levant as part of the First Crusade (as a result Pisa’s archbishop became the first Catholic archbishop of Jerusalem), and the conquest in 1113–1115 of the Balearic Islands.



A Venetian castle, Port of Heraklion, Crete. EPA.

Rector's Palace, Ragusa (now Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia) EPA





Pisa's naval power was accompanied by the growth of maritime trade. Concessions from governments of western and eastern Mediterranean states led to the creation of fortified or semifortified trading posts in a number of coastal cities (from a few houses and warehouses to a whole borough) enjoying extraterritorial privileges. Security of persons and goods was an important element in the rapidly growing volume of trade between Italy and the Near East in the twelfth century. Pisan trading posts existed in Alexandria and other cities of the North African coast; in Constantinople, and in the cities of the Levant held by the Crusaders. Pisan trading communities in half a dozen coastal cities of the counties of Provence and of Toulouse contributed to, and benefited from, the revival of culture, which in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries was creating a distinctive civilization in what today is Mediterranean France.

The Genoese had cooperated with the Pisans in some of their eleventh-century expeditions, including the one against Mahdija. As a naval power and a maritime trading community, they achieved parity with the Pisans at the time of the First Crusade. One Genoese fleet was instrumental in the capture of Antioch in 1098; another in the conquest of Jaffa (now a suburb of Tel Aviv) in 1101. Genoese merchants had their own trading posts in the Levant and in many ports of the Byzantine Empire. In the twelfth century there were Genoese trading communities on the African coast of the western Mediterranean, in Bougie (Bejaia) and Ceuta. The Genoese captured, and for a while held, Almeria in southern Spain and Tortosa in the lower Ebro Valley.

Pisan fortunes declined in the thirteenth century. At that time were formed the so-called Venetian and Genoese colonial empires in the eastern Mediterranean: so called because even at the time of their greatest expansion, the Venetians never held more than ten to twelve thousand square miles of foreign lands (slightly larger than the area of Maryland), and the Genoese even less. As the result of the establishment of a Latin empire in Constantinople in 1204, Venice occupied Crete and most of the western islands in the Aegean Sea. By adding the Ionian islands, Cyprus (acquired in 1489 and lost in 1571), and districts on the mainland (held at one time or another in Albania, Epirus, Morea, Thrace, etc.), one has the sum total of the medieval and Renaissance Venetian maritime empire. The Genoese had the opportunity to expand when they helped the Byzantine ruler of Nicaea to overthrow the Latin regime in Constantinople (1261). Besides extraterritorial privileges in cities of the reestablished Byzantine Empire, the Genoese held some of the eastern islands in the Aegean Sea, two cities on the southern shore of the Black Sea, a narrow strip about two hundred miles long on the southern coast of Crimea (which included the cities of Kaffa and Sudaya), the eastern shore of the Sea of Azov, and the city of Tana at the mouth of the Don.

Venetians and Genoese lost the Aegean islands which were conquered by the Turks between 1456 and 1566. Turks and Crimean Tatars captured Tana in 1471, and Kaffa with the rest of the Genoese possessions in the area in 1475. After the loss of Crete in 1664, only the Ionian islands remained under Venice, whose colonial fortunes revived briefly with the occupation of Morea (Peloponnesus), 1685-1717.

#### SICILY AND NAPLES

The Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese followed a common practice when, acting on the principle that offense is the best defense, they occupied territories used as bases by their enemies in foreign countries. Rulers of the South were also following a common practice when, after amalgamating a multitude of small weak states into one strong unit, they embarked on a policy of territorial expansion to the detriment of neighboring peoples. The expansionist southern drive, begun late in the eleventh century, lasted about three centuries. It was never successful for any length of time. It was more military and frankly imperialistic, more political and less economic, than the expansionist drives of the northern maritime republics. It fomented tensions. It also brought valuable interchange between the Italian civilization of the South and the Byzantine and Islamic civilizations of the Near East and North Africa.

The conquest of Sicily had not yet been completed when, in 1081, an expedition led by Robert Guiscard duke of Apulia crossed the fewer than fifty miles separating Italy from the Balkans at the Strait of Otranto. The energetic and ambitious Norman was aiming at Constantinople, where he planned to put his own nominee on the throne. Durazzo, the main fortress in Albania, was captured in 1082. The rest of Albania, and Macedonia as far as the Vardar River, were conquered in 1083.

Helped by the Venetian fleet, the death of Guiscard and dissensions among his successors, the Byzantines repelled the invaders in 1085. It was only the first of a series of attempts to establish on the eastern Adriatic and Ionian shores a beachhead for further expansion in the Balkans, which were made by the dukes of Apulia, their successors the kings of Sicily (when Sicily meant the southern half of the peninsula as well as the island), and later by kings of Naples. The rulers, some Italianized and some not, were of Norman, German, or French origin: the expeditions they sent into the Balkans aimed at the expansion of an Italian state, and most of the soldiers and crews of the ships ferrying them across the sea were Italian.

Also largely a southern Italian affair was the expedition that resulted in establishing the principality of Antioch, north of Palestine. Of the three main Crusaders' armies that converged in northern Syria in 1098,



one was led by the Normans Bohemund (eldest son of Robert Guiscard, and prince of Taranto) and Tancred (the gallant hero in Tasso's epic *Gerusalemme Liberata*). The joint effort of Bohemund's own troops and the Genoese fleet led to the capture of Antioch, which became the capital of the principality ruled by the main branch of the Hautevilles until it became extinct with the death of Bohemund III. The occupation of much of Tunisia and Tripoli under Roger II, at the middle of the twelfth century, was as ephemeral as the occupation of Balkan territories. It was also only the first of several attempts made by kings of Sicily to bring North African territories under their rule.

Dynastic incidents contributed, through the kings of Naples, to the diffusion of Italian cultural influence in Hungary in the fourteenth century. Fear of another Mongol invasion had led the king of Hungary to seek the support of the Angevins, whose kingdom in southern Italy was then one of the wealthiest and most powerful in the Catholic commonwealth. The friendship between Hungarian Arpacsids and Neapolitan Angevins was sealed by the marriage of the daughter of Stephen V of Hungary to the son of Charles I of Naples. On the death of the last Arpacid, Charles Robert (great-grandson of Stephen and Charles) became the successful claimant to the throne and was elected king of Hungary. His reign and that of his son Louis the Great lasted most of the fourteenth century (1308–1382). Together with western political institutions, Italian customs were introduced, considerably affecting the Hungarian way of life. As courtiers, scholars, craftsmen, traders, or simply as adventurers looking for opportunities, many southern Italians found their way to Hungary. Ties between the two kingdoms were maintained through the marriage of Louis' brother Andrew with his cousin Joanna, queen of Naples, and later through the claims and counter-claims of members of the Angevin family to both the Hungarian and Neapolitan thrones.

As temporary residence of the popes, and as a papal possession until 1791, Avignon in southern France was another center of Italian cultural influence resulting from close political ties.

#### MERCHANTS AND BANKERS

During these centuries and also through the Renaissance period, Italian presence was not limited to Mediterranean and Danubian areas. It was felt by the nations of western and central Europe, where it was the outcome of Italian trading activities. It does not take much imagination to figure out how small then was the amount of trade, compared to later times when banditry and extortionist practices were eliminated, tariffs and taxes reduced, roads and waterways improved. Because of the obstructions making trade both difficult and dangerous, the position of Medieval and Renaissance traders was one of prestige and re-

sponsibility. Italians were conspicuous in the European trading community for their numbers and the volume of their business. Italians produced more manufactured goods than anyone else at that time. The Italian market was rich enough to absorb quantities of foreign goods. Until the end of the fifteenth century, Italians had practically a monopoly on costly and sought-after luxury goods coming from the East. They had numerous ships and could afford the expense of an escort when traveling by land. Banking had been an Italian invention; checks and letters of credit bearing the signatures of known Milanese, Florentine, Genoese, and Venetian businessmen were as good as currency beyond the Alps. Genoese traders were particularly active in both Catholic and Islamic Iberian states. Venetian galleys plied the ocean beyond the Strait of Gibraltar, going to Flanders, England, the ports of the Baltic sea. Milanese and Florentine firms had branches or correspondents in Lyons and Paris, in Augsburg and Basel, in Ghent and London. Lombard Street in London is a reminder of the role once played by Milanese and other Italian businessmen. (In 1345, when Edward III of England defaulted on the loan he had received, the Peruzzi, Bardi, and Spini firms of Florence lost one and a third million florins—a sum equivalent to tens of millions of dollars today.) Italian traders stimulated the economy of foreign countries: their communities were also a channel for cultural interchange, in which for a long time Italy was the main giver.

#### POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RETRENCHMENT

The ebbing of Italian expansionist drives was a slow process. Political and economic retrenchment (not yet accompanied by decline of cultural influence) had started in the second half of the fifteenth century, before Italy became the battlefield between foreigners all bent on ruling the country. Retrenchment became withdrawal, and then confinement within the borders of the small states of which Italians were subjects, when the Italian people lost the dynamism that had carried them forward since the eleventh century. With retrenchment went the loss of cultural influence abroad, and the decline of contributions to Western civilization. Barriers erected by absolutist states reduced freedom of movement. Governments were more and more suspicious of foreigners. Mercantilist policies limited trade. Exports of Italian manufactured goods fell off. The Turks—whose empire now extended from the borders of Poland to those of the Sudan and from Morocco to Persia—were more rigid in excluding Italians from the Balkans, the Near East, North Africa, than their Byzantine and Arab predecessors had been. The Portuguese monopolized the Eastern trade, and Spaniards that with the New World (later, Dutch, English, and French would break the monopolies, but not Italians). Galleys became obsolete. Dutch, German, and English banking firms replaced the Ital-



ian ones. More important than any political and economic loss was the fact that Italians had little to offer culturally to the developing nations of northwestern Europe, which brought to new heights the achievements of the Renaissance and soon became the major dynamic element in Western civilization. The Mediterranean colonial empires of Genoa and Venice shrank and disappeared. The once large and flourishing Italian communities abroad, from Alexandria to London, dwindled and faded away.

#### A FOUR-CENTURY INTERVAL

From the end of the fifteenth century on, there was no longer a massive Italian contribution to the way of life of other peoples, as had been the case since the eleventh century. There remained only the contribution of individual Italians who moved temporarily or permanently to other countries. Mention has been made (*see* Chapters 14, 15, 16) of Italian artists, writers, missionaries, scientists, explorers, who spent part of their lives abroad, sometimes becoming citizens of the country where they had settled. Monte Corvino, archbishop of Peking early in the fourteenth century, and Lulli, the composer ennobled by Louis XIV, were not more exceptional cases than Modigliani, Borgese, and Fermi in the twentieth century.

Italian Protestants who in the sixteenth century settled in Geneva (as Sismondi and many others did), went to England like Vermigli, or migrated to Hungary, Transylvania, Poland like Fausto Socini and his followers during those countries' brief periods of religious toleration, brought their cultural heritage with them. So did Catholic missionaries, who from Matteo Ricci in the sixteenth century to Cardinal Massaja in the nineteenth went to distant lands among peoples who had never heard of Italy or even of Europe. The fact that during most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Republic of Genoa was a Spanish protectorate, enabled hundreds of Genoese to play an important role, as officials and as private businessmen, in the economic life of Spain and her far-flung possessions.

#### ITALIAN QUEENS AND MINISTERS OF FOREIGN KINGDOMS

During the four-century interval there were Italians who achieved positions of dominant political power abroad and whose actions either promoted Italian influence in a foreign country or affected Italy. Some continued to think of themselves as Italians. Others identified with the nation they led or over which they ruled.

Through the normal course of everyday domestic life (marriages, births, deaths) several Italian women—not necessarily of princely blood—became powerful in countries whose kings they had married. Because she was a Venetian, Catherine Cornaro, the widow



*Pietro (Peter Martyr) Vermigli.* NYPL PC

of James II de Lusignan whose family had reigned in Cyprus for nearly two hundred years, became a pawn in the diplomatic game that resulted in the establishment of the rule of the *Serenissima* over the island. This occurred in 1489 and was nothing more than a footnote in the history of the time. Younger than Catherine was Bianca Maria Sforza who was married for sixteen years to Emperor Maximilian and for sixteen years was ignored. But marriage with Bianca Maria involved the emperor in the complicated quarrels between Italian states, and her considerable dowry paid for troops dispatched to Italy against Charles VIII of France and later against the Venetian Republic. Bona Sforza, a niece of Bianca Maria, was instead a major influence in Poland for thirty-one years. Granddaughter of a duke of Milan and a king of Naples, Bona was married in 1517 to Sigismund Jagiello, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania. She brought gaiety and excitement to the Polish court. As had happened two centuries earlier in Hungary when a Neapolitan Anjou was elected king, there went from Italy to Poland not only a large retinue of courtiers, but also lay and religious men of learning, artists, craftsmen, businessmen, soldiers of fortune, and assorted adventurers. Writing in 1523, Erasmus praised the Poles for their rapid progress; Bona had had a good deal to do with it! After her husband's death Bona retired to the duchy of Bari, inherited from her mother.

Catherine de' Medici, queen of France, was born, lived, and died, in tragedy. Intelligent and willful, she proved herself able to cope with events, in defeat as well as in success. She was the last legitimate descendant of Lorenzo the Magnificent, her great-grand-





Catherine de' Medici, Queen of France. EPA

father. Born in 1519, she lost her mother within a few weeks, her father within a few months. A pawn in the tortuous political dealings of her uncle, Pope Clement VII, she was married at fourteen to Henry, a younger son of Francis I of France. A brother's untimely death made Henry dauphin and then king. At the end of 1560 Catherine, who had led a retired life and was then a widow, was appointed regent by the States General. (She, not her sons, ruled until her death in 1589.) Her rule coincided with one of the most tragic periods in French history. The bloody French religious wars began in 1562. In the wake of the final decision of the Council of Trent, and of the election of Pius V to the Holy See, under the stimulus of Spanish-Italian *rigorismo*, the Catholic counteroffensive against Protestantism was launched in earnest. Catherine sided with the Catholic faction. She shared the responsibility for the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Also, her energy was a major factor in maintaining the unity of the French as a predominantly Catholic nation.

Less adroit was Catherine's relative Marie de' Medici. It had seemed a good policy for the Bourbon Henry IV, an ex-Protestant still friendly to Huguenots and not trusted by Catholics, to marry into the premier family of Italy, closer than any to the Holy See. After her husband's assassination in 1610, Marie tried for twenty years to influence French policies. As regent for Louis XIII, she gave power and wealth to her Florentine cronies, one of whom, Concino Concini, she made a marshal of France. At the royal court of France, Concini and his wife created the same kind of storm that half a century earlier was created at the

court of Scotland by another unsavory character, David Rizzio, favorite of Queen Mary Stuart. Concini (like Rizzio) was assassinated, and his wife was executed as a witch. Richelieu compelled Marie de' Medici to go into exile in 1630. The same year Richelieu had become acquainted with young Giulio Mazarino, born in Abruzzi of Sicilian parents. A few years later Mazarino returned to Paris as papal envoy; he became a cardinal subsequently but was never a priest. Shortly after the death of Richelieu's personal assistant, the feared *Eminence grise*, Mazarino was given French citizenship and worked for two years as right-hand man of Richelieu whom he succeeded as all-powerful minister in 1641. There was soon a long regency accompanied by wars and civil wars, by external and internal threats against the monarchy. When Mazarino died in 1661, he left to Louis XIV a country stronger and more powerful than it had ever been, enjoying the leading position in Europe that France was to keep well into the nineteenth century. During Mazarino's twenty-year rule, the Duchy of Savoy was in effect a French protectorate, and unsuccessful attempts were made to put a French prince on the thrones of Naples and Sicily. (Of Mazarino's three beautiful nieces, one was Olimpia Mancini, the mother of Prince Eugene of Savoy.)

The role played in France by two queens and a minister was played later in Spain by another queen and minister. In 1710, a shrewd and energetic cleric, Giulio Alberoni, the son of a Piacenza market gardener, followed the French General Vendôme in Spain. The general's mission was to secure the Spanish throne for Philip, grandson of Louis XIV. Vendôme won his battles, Philip had his throne, and Alberoni stayed. In 1714 he arranged Philip's marriage with Elizabeth Farnese, a niece of the duke of Parma. In 1716 he was chief minister in Madrid. Now a cardinal, he disappeared from the political scene after the failure of his attempts to return Sardinia and Sicily to Spanish allegiance. The major result of those attempts was the establishment of Austrian rule in Sicily, while the Savoyards had to content themselves with Sardinia.

For over half a century, except during the reigns of her stepsons, Elizabeth was a major power in Spain. Her personal goal—the advancement of her children—was identified with the Spanish national goal of recovering the lost Italian possessions. In 1731 she secured the succession of Parma for her son Charles. Shortly after, the fortunes of war—in a conflict pitting Spain, France, and Sardinia against Austria and Russia—enabled young Charles to exchange the ducal crown for the royal crowns of Naples and Sicily. The War of the Austrian Succession gave Elizabeth the opportunity, in 1748, to make her younger son Philip duke of Parma. Spaniards had the illusion that much of Italy had returned to the Spanish allegiance: but it was the Bourbon-Farnese family which had the real power in Italian states.





*The Massacre of St. Bartholomew.*  
NYPL PC



*Marie de' Medici. Rubens. Prado, Madrid.*  
Anderson



*Cardinal Mazarin. NYPL*



## MILITARY LEADERS ABROAD

Several Italians served foreign monarchs with distinction as military leaders. One of the best known was Andrea Doria, the greatest admiral of his time in the commonwealth of Catholic states, and a worthy opponent of Khaireddin and Dragut who commanded powerful Ottoman fleets. Doria's ancestors had led Genoese ships to victory at the battles of Meloria and Curzola. Most of his life he was a *condottiero* who served kings and popes (and saved relatives of Cardinal della Rovere, the future Julius II, from Caesar Borgia). In 1527/28, already over sixty, Doria decided to throw in his lot with the emperor and king of Spain, serving Charles V and Philip II loyally until his death in 1560. He commanded the fleets which, in the course of the wars between Charles V and Suleiman the Magnificent, captured Tunis in 1535, fought at Prevesa in 1538, and failed to capture Algiers in 1541. The last military action of Doria, when he was nearly ninety, was the expulsion of the French from Corsica in the 1550s.

Alessandro Farnese, who achieved a reputation as the most brilliant strategist of his time, was also in the service of Spain. The great-grandson of Pope Paul III, grandson of Charles V, a close friend of Don John of Austria (the victor at Lepanto, and illegitimate brother of Philip II), for more than a decade and a half Alessandro Farnese commanded Spanish troops fighting Calvinist insurgents in the Low Countries. On the death of Don John in 1578, he was appointed governor. Through the capture between 1581 and 1585 of Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp and the wholesale massacres of opponents, he saved the ten southern provinces of the Low Countries (Flanders, the Walloon districts, and Luxembourg) for Spain and Catholicism. In the late 1580s, when the French religious wars were reaching their climax, Farnese fought in France for the Catholic League. Duke of Parma from 1586 to 1592, he entrusted the government of the duchy to his son.

During the Thirty Years' War, imperial armies were led against Protestants and French by Ambrogio Spinola of Genoa, Rambaldo Collalto from Friuli, and Ottavio Piccolomini of the Sienese family that gave the Catholic church two popes and many cardinals. The best known of the Italian imperial generals at that time was Raimondo Montecuccoli, born near Modena, a field marshal and a prince of the empire when he died in Austria in 1680. He commanded imperial armies during the closing phase of the Thirty Years' War. In the war of 1663/64 between Austria and the Ottoman Empire, Montecuccoli defeated the Turks at the battle of Saint Gotthard, thus preserving the autonomy of Transylvania. In the wars of 1667/78 between Austria and France, he was the foremost opponent of the great French generals Condé and Turenne. A scholar as well as a general, Montecuccoli wrote military treatises and a history of the war in Hungary against the Turks.

Eugene of Savoy was the greatest Austrian general, also a statesman and an able administrator. He has been thought of often as first and foremost a European. The son of a prince of the cadet branch of Savoy-Carignan and Olimpia Mancini, Eugene of Savoy was Italian by descent, French by birth and education, Austrian by loyalty. He was also an admirer of Great Britain. The antipathy of Louis XIV led the young prince to abandon France in 1683. Ten years later, at thirty, already an Austrian field marshal, he commanded imperial troops in Italy fighting against the French. Italians have known him as the general who in 1705, during the War of the Spanish Succession, rescued his cousin Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy, hard pressed by the French. His victory of Turin the following year freed Piedmont from the French and Milan from the Spaniards. Yet this was only a minor part of his career. His reputation had been made in 1697 when, at Zenta, he defeated a Turkish army considerably larger than the one he commanded, ending nearly two centuries of Ottoman control over Hungary. He shared with his close friend the Duke of Marlborough the victory of Blenheim. In 1717 he captured Belgrade, the main Turkish stronghold on the Danube, liberating parts of Romania and Serbia from Ottoman despotism. He was a successful diplomat, an efficient administrator of the Austrian Netherlands and of territories wrested from the Turks, a patron of the arts, a friend of Jansenists, and a deist. When he died in 1737, Prince Eugene was the main spokesman for the Enlightenment in Austria.

Whatever the geographical, historical, and cultural status of Corsica, Napoleon Bonaparte, born in 1768, was no more Italian than Charlemagne had been French or Kublai Khan Chinese. He was described by one of his teachers at the military academy of Brienne "Corsican by nation and by character"; but his con-

*Equestrian statue of Eugene of Savoy, Vienna. EPA*







*Napoleon in his study, by David.* National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection

nection with Italy was more than that of a Germanic Frank to France or of a Mongol to China. For his Italian contemporaries he was not the foreigner Charles of Anjou had been when he conquered the Kingdom of Sicily, or Louis XII and Francis I when they made themselves dukes of Milan. Nor did Napoleon put Italy in the same category as other lands he conquered and ruled for France. His origin counted when, in 1796, he was given command of the army of the Alps. He took it into account himself when creating the Kingdom of Italy of which he made himself king.

Napoleon's family originally had come from Tuscany where their name was Buonaparte. In 1757, the grand duke accepted the claim of Napoleon's grandfather to be considered a member of the lower Tuscan nobility. Active in the anti-Genoese insurgency, Napoleon's father welcomed the French in 1768, and later obtained scholarships enabling some of his five sons to study in France. Not yet ten, Napoleon was sent to Autun to learn French, and then to military academies. Friendless and much of the time homesick, the boy studied furiously. Mathematics, history, and geography were the disciplines in which he excelled. He

read, listened, and observed the turbulent and dynamic French scene. He assimilated what he learned, and formulated his own ideas. In 1785 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the French army. He spent much of the next eight years in Corsica. Having sided with the Jacobins, and having broken with the patriot Pasquale Paoli, Napoleon was compelled to flee to France in May 1793. His involvement in the epic and tragic events during the crucial period of the French Revolution, 1793-1795, made him French. To the history of Italy belong not only the campaigns of 1796/97 and of 1800, but what Napoleon did for Italy: the establishment of democratic republics which replaced obsolete monarchical and oligarchical regimes; the annexations to France, which made Italians share in French dynamism; the creation of an Italian state, the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples, the abolition of papal temporal power; the radical transformation of institutions, a first step toward a radical transformation of the way of life; the newly acquired dignity; the emancipation of minds; the economic revival. It was just a beginning. Through his despotism Napoleon would have prevented the fulfillment of the revolutionary upheaval that had begun in Italy in 1796. The collapse of his empire was a good thing for the Italian nation, but there was nevertheless reason for many Italians, the best, to grieve when Napoleon—to them not a foreign despot—died in 1821.

Dynastic, revolutionary, and Napoleonic wars all contributed to the changing way of life in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A no less important contribution to this was greater mobility. Restrictions inherited by mercantilistic policies still obstructed the movement of goods, but the borders of countries west of the Russian and Ottoman empires were not as rigidly sealed against people as they usually had been. As the eighteenth century progressed, administrative efficiency created order and relative security. Transportation by land and sea was rapidly improving. Though not yet to a great extent, Italians shared in the new mobility.

#### GROWING MOBILITY BUT EMIGRATION STILL A TRICKLE

There are no statistics for the number of Italians who went abroad in the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth before unification. Little is known of the largest groups: craftsmen, small vendors, sailors, and unskilled laborers. They wrote no books and no books were written about them, but they could be found all the way from Ireland to Russia. More is known about members of the upper and middle classes such as the patriot poet Alfieri, the painter Canaletto, the economist and *philosophe* Galiani, who spent considerable time abroad, absorbing new ideas and learning about different ways of life. A good deal is known about some unsavory characters: the swindler Giuseppe



Balsamo who gave himself a title and adopted the name of Cagliostro; Giovanni Battista Boetti who began his adult life as a Dominican friar, founded in the Near East a new religion, and led in the Caucasus an insurgency against the Russians; Giovanni Casanova who made a successful career of his sex obsession.

After the Napoleonic wars political conditions drove many Italians into exile. Most went to France, smaller groups to Switzerland, Belgium, Great Britain, and the Americas (particularly Brazil and Argentina). For most of the exiles Italy was still home and the foreign land merely a base for activities aimed at expelling the Austrians and at overthrowing tyrannies. However, a few did participate in the life of the nation that offered them hospitality. Luigi Rossetti died in the unsuccessful war of liberation of Rio Grande do Sul (and launched Garibaldi on his career as a *guerrillero*); Daniele Cerri was a general in the Argentinian army; Filippo Buonarroti, in France, was the link between Babeuf's communist conspirators of the late 1790s and the French socialist agitators in the early 1830s; Antonio Panizzi, a friend of leading British statesmen, became the respected and influential director of the library of the British Museum in London. Approximate estimates put the number of Italians abroad in 1861 at no more than a quarter of a million. There were about 70,000 in France, 50,000 in Latin America and as many in the United States, 14,000 each in Germany and Switzerland, 12,000 in Egypt, 6,000 in Tunisia, 4,000 in Great Britain, etc. (The quarter of a million is exclusive of Italian-speaking citizens of Switzerland, subjects of the Austrian and French empires, and inhabitants of Malta.)

#### A CENTURY OF MASS MIGRATION

For millions of uneducated or semieducated Italians unification meant a broadening of horizons. It meant the realization that a wider world existed beyond the narrow limits of now obsolete traditional boundaries, and that the wider world presented opportunities lacking at home. It is reckoned that in the 1860s nearly one million Italians left the country, the overwhelming majority of them northerners (Lombards, Piedmontese, Venetians) looking for work in neighboring foreign countries (France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland). They were temporary emigrants who returned as soon as they had saved some money. In the 1870s over a million emigrants, still overwhelmingly northerners, left Italy. Many, about one-fourth of those who left at the end of the decade, were crossing the Atlantic. The majority went to Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay; a minority to the United States. Most intended to return to Italy, but many settled permanently abroad.

In the 1880s and 1890s what was already a large current became a tidal wave. In twenty years, nearly five million Italians emigrated. In 1900, half of the



Giovanni Casanova. EPA

emigrants came from the North of Italy, nearly half from the South (mainly Sicily and Campania) and a few from the Center. Half of the total still went to European countries. The other half crossed the Atlantic, about equal numbers going to Latin America (which meant in practice only the area south of Rio de Janeiro) and to the United States. Ten million migrated between 1901 and 1920, very few of course during World War I. During this period the percentage of emigrants from the South increased sharply, as did the percentage of those whose destination was the United States. Emigrants' remittances were then a significant part of the Italian balance of payments, making up most of the deficit in import-export trade. Restrictive policies adopted by foreign countries and by the Fascist regime in Italy, together with economic depressions, kept the number of departures down to about three million from 1920 to 1940. (By the time World War II broke out, about three-hundred thousand Italians had gone to colonial dependencies in North and East Africa, where most lived on incomes provided by the taxpayers at home.) Seven million emigrants left Italy during the quarter century following the end of World War II.

These are all approximate and somewhat deceptive figures: what mattered to the Italian people and to foreign nations was not so much how many Italians left but how many made their homes and raised their children in a new country; how many were, in time, absorbed into other nations and ceased to be Italians. The total is staggering: in the one hundred years since statistical records of emigration began to be kept in Italy, the number of Italians who did not return (ex-



cept as visitors and tourists) has been between thirteen and fifteen million. Not counting the enforced exodus of millions of Germans after World War II, only the British, among Europeans, have had as large a volume of emigration.

#### THE FLIGHT FROM POVERTY

There were those who migrated simply because they wanted a different kind of life; or because of the lure of adventure; or to join a husband, a father, a son; or even to flee from justice. But for the overwhelming majority of the thirteen to fifteen million who did not return, there was one simple, all-powerful reason for leaving: poverty. When centuries-old divisions ended and the Italian nation was united, most of Italy was a depressed area. There was no economic takeoff for a third of a century after unification. The limited expansion early in the twentieth century barely kept abreast of population increase and was interrupted for over thirty years by World War I, by dictatorial repression, by smaller wars, and by World War II. Only since the late 1940s has there been massive and rapid economic expansion, and the backlog of poverty was such that it took years for people to realize that some improvement in living conditions was being made. Until quite recently, poverty was a terribly heavy cross borne by millions of Italians.

A good deal has been written about the sufferings of the Italian immigrants and the discrimination against them in the countries to which they went, but suffering abroad must be seen against the background of suffering at home, discrimination abroad against the background of discrimination at home. At home there was unemployment and underemployment, pitifully small remuneration for work, semistarvation, dilapidated housing, absence of medical care, a high mortality rate, poor or no schooling, squalor, hopelessness. At home there was a rigid class structure, exploitation and humiliation of the poor, arrogance and cruel selfishness on the part of the so-called better classes, the tyranny of the privileged few. However bad the conditions abroad (and they were very bad indeed), for the overwhelming majority of those who migrated before World War II they were much better than conditions at home. For most, emigration was liberation.

#### THE POOR OF THE SOUTH

Now that seven or eight decades have gone by, it is difficult even for Italians to visualize the way of life in the *Mezzogiorno* at the end of the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth, when ship after ship left with its human cargo, carrying suffering and hope. There was some economic dynamism in the large cities such as Naples, Bari, Palermo, Catania. Elsewhere, a deadly immobility reigned. From Chieti in Abruzzi to Lecce in Apulia and Caltanissetta in

Sicily, small cities were sleepy provincial centers in which a minuscule minority of arrogant well-to-do families led comfortable lives and lorded it over all others, most of whom existed in abject poverty with no hope of betterment. Most southerners lived in the two thousand rural *comuni*, or townships, whose urban center—"il paese"—even when peopled by tens of thousands, was merely a large village with a few taverns and fewer stores. In many townships even water was a luxury. Mud made the dirt roads nearly impassable during the rainy season. Winter was short but in the barren mountains covering most of the South it was extremely harsh. Heating was unheard of. There was no relief from the fierce summer sun. The Ionian coastal plains were malarial, the Murge and Tavoliere often devastated by drought.

Damp one-room dwellings served both as living quarters and stables. They had little light, less ventilation, and often a single piece of furniture—the bed in which everyone slept. From Matera to Ponza thousands of families lived in caves, a major cause of tuberculosis. Shoes and socks were luxuries. A survey made as recently as the middle of the twentieth century showed that half of all families in Calabria and Basilicata never ate meat or olive oil (the staple fat in the South), and a third never had any sugar. (A Neapolitan craftsman who earned twice the average income bought only twenty-five pounds of meat and fish for his family in one year.) Stomachs may adjust to a meager diet but energy is drained and resistance to disease is lowered. Teachers, priests, and pharmacists—the intelligentsia of the rural townships who usually lived on a pittance—struggled bravely to fulfill their functions. They could not do much: schools and churches (the schools more than the churches) lacked nearly all facilities; little could be found in the pharmacies—for the simple reason that no one could buy necessary but expensive drugs. There was no exaggeration in the books of Silone and Levi, describing the life of the poor—of most—in the South thirty or forty years ago. Depressing as that life was, it was slightly better than it had been in 1900. It would be a mistake to think that poverty was always accepted with resignation. The large-scale banditry of the 1870s was as much economic as Bourbonic; the criminal activities of the Camorra in Naples and the Mafia in western Sicily had been bred by poverty; the bloody strikes of peasants and miners in Sicily in the 1890s, and Apulia later, were a protest against unemployment and hunger.

Agriculture—everywhere a lower-income activity than industry and services—was the foundation of the economy of the *Mezzogiorno*. Between 1860 and 1900 the agricultural output had not kept pace with the population increase (which in Sicily had been about 50 percent). Statistically, three-fifths of the labor force was engaged in agriculture, but the supply of labor was about twice as large as the demand; hence unemployment and general underemployment. Landless la-



borers, one-fourth of all the people engaged in agriculture, could not expect to work more than 150 days a year, often no more than 90 or 100.

While thirteen thousand families of the aristocracy and the upper middle class held eleven million acres in their estates, nearly half of the total area of the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, two and a half million landowning peasants shared a total of one million acres. No amount of ingenuity and hard work could make a quarter, or even half an acre, feed a family. Yields in the South were exceptionally low, often no more than a third or even a fifth of what they were in the North. Little was known about crop rotation and fertilizers, and less was done. Agricultural machinery was unheard of. Good cattle were rare, most mules and donkeys lived on a starvation diet, and overgrazing by too many sheep and goats kept pastures barren.

Fishing helped somewhat along the coast of Italy's South but the overexploited Mediterranean can yield little to fishermen. The economy could support only a small number of artisans (saddlemakers, carpenters, barbers, etc.). Traditional crafts had no market. Mechanized modern industry was represented by a few state enterprises (navy shipyards, railroad repair shops, cigarette factories) and little else; it was not in a position to absorb the ever-growing surplus of agricultural labor. When the merging of the South into Italy broadened horizons and developed awareness of a different and better life, millions of southerners decided that they had had enough of hunger and exploitation. They left, most of them never to return.

Besides poverty and ignorance, for southerners there was a further handicap in adjusting to new environments. In the North of Italy there had been some seasonal migration to neighboring countries since before unification, so for northerners the outside world was not the unknown it had remained for southerners. Because they had been cut off from contacts with the outside world for centuries, southerners were badly handicapped in their relations with other people. The stagnant and stratified society of the South provided little preparation for the turmoil of the dynamic, highly competitive and (at least among so-called Caucasians) basically egalitarian culture of the United States, which became the home for millions who fled the *Mezzogiorno*.

#### FIVE MILLION ITALIAN CITIZENS ABROAD

Italian authorities keep an accurate count of the number of citizens resident abroad. In 1970 there were about five million of them. Over two million lived and worked in the industrialized countries of Western Europe: nearly one-third each in France and Switzerland and the rest in the German Federal Republic, Belgium, Great Britain. Of the nearly two million in Latin America, almost three-fourths had settled in Argentina, the rest mainly in Brazil and Venezuela,

with large communities in Uruguay and Chile also. Half a million Italian citizens were equally divided between the United States and Canada. Most of those who had gone to Australia waited for the moment when they could become Australian citizens. Fewer than twenty thousand Italians remained in former dependencies in North and East Africa. In the late 1960s the largest number of temporary emigrants went to the German Federal Republic, Switzerland, or France, while the largest number of permanent emigrants went to the United States, Australia, and Canada. Emigrants' remittances benefitted the Italian economy to the tune of about one billion dollars a year.

#### TENS OF MILLIONS ARE CITIZENS OF OTHER COUNTRIES

In 1970 the number of citizens of overseas countries born in Italy, or entirely or mostly of Italian descent, was close to thirty million. Nearly 90 percent of the total were in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil, most of the remaining 10 percent in Canada, Australia, and Uruguay. Percentages and round figures of course have little meaning in nations where ethnic lines are not rigid, where intermarriages are frequent (the adverb "mostly" indicates that an individual is claimed by more than one ethnic group) and where cultural assimilation is a national goal.

It is often with a sense of pride that Italians mention the name of Fiorello La Guardia, the former mayor of New York whose father came from Foggia and mother from Trieste; or of Arturo Frondizi, the former Democratic president of Argentina, whose family home is in Gubbio, not far from Perugia; or of General Medici who became dictatorial president of Brazil in 1969; or of successful entrepreneurs like Giannini in San Francisco and Matarazzo in São Paulo. Insofar as awareness of Italian origin remains, and, more than that, as far as the awareness plays a role among Americans, Argentinians, and Brazilians born in Italy or of Italian descent, their history is still linked to that of the Italian people. Once that awareness is gone, or once the switch is made from one national identity to another (as it once was by Ticinesi who decided to be Swiss and by Corsicans who decided to be French), then the history of descendants of emigrants from Italy merges with that of the people of the other country.

#### ITALIANS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

The United States, Argentina, and Brazil are the countries in which citizens of Italian origin are most numerous. There is a difference, however, between the United States on the one hand (see Chapter 18) and Argentina and Brazil on the other. In the United States there is still (as there has been for nearly a hundred years) a large community of hyphenated Italo-Americans, that is to say Americans of Italian





*Argentine President Arturo Frondizi (with President Giovanni Gronchi, left) reviewing the presidential guard while on a state visit to Italy, June 14, 1960. UPI*

*An Italian banana vendor in Montevideo, Uruguay. EPA*



*Argentine President Frondizi taking aim with a crossbow, a relic of medieval Gubbio, the birthplace of his parents. UPI*

*Italian advertisements in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Photoworld*





origin whose attitudes and actions show an awareness of a distinction between themselves and all other Americans. Except for small, loose, and rapidly dwindling groupings, such hyphenated communities no longer exist in Argentina and Brazil. One speaks of course of Argentinians and Brazilians of Italian origin, but most of them—even those who have not yet taken citizenship—consider themselves first and foremost Argentinians and Brazilians. In the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Catholic South of the Western Hemisphere, where the way of life and economic levels are not very different from the Italian ones, assimilation into the society has been a speedier process than in English-speaking, predominantly Protestant North America, which has developed its own unique, essentially non-European way of life.

#### ITALIANS IN BRAZIL

There are more Argentinians than Brazilians of prevalently Italian origin (about seven million as against five), but Italian migration to Brazil began earlier than to Argentina. There were several thousand Italians in various capacities in Brazil when the fortunes of European wars led to the severance of ties between Brazil and the mother country, Portugal, at first de facto (1808) and then formally through the proclamation of Brazilian independence in 1822. Italian ships traded with ports of the Brazilian southern provinces where the climate did not differ much from that of southern Italy, and where the population was then sparse. After the political upheavals in Italy of 1820/21 a few Italian patriots went to Brazil. Among them were Count Livio Zambecari (who later returned to Italy where he organized the defense of Ancona, Adriatic outpost of the Republic proclaimed in Rome early in 1849), Giovanni Battista Cuneo, for

*Delivering Italian coffee cakes in Buenos Aires, Argentina.*  
Photoworld



many years a loyal collaborator of Mazzini, and the already mentioned Rossetti. The Mazzinian Young Italy group organized in Brazil in 1836 included eighteen members, among them Garibaldi, who had reached the country in January. In 1836 also, Nova Italia was established. It was a settlement of nearly two hundred Italians (mostly Piedmontese and Ligurians), sponsored by the Brazilian government and located not far from the Atlantic coast in the southern province of Santa Catarina.

Italian migration to Brazil remained numerically modest for nearly two generations. Then it exploded. It is reckoned that during the last quarter of the nineteenth century nearly one million Europeans migrated to Brazil, three-fifths of them Italians. Even larger was immigration from overseas during the first decade and a half of the twentieth century. Altogether, of the nearly six million Europeans who came to Brazil since independence, over two million were Italian. They formed the largest contingent and their descendants form the third largest ethnic element in the Brazilian population, after the Portuguese and the Africans.

The mid-1880s were the time of the opening of the interior of the southern Brazilian provinces—states, after the Empire was replaced in 1889 by a Federal Republic. Soon the most populous and advanced section of the country was no longer the tropical northeast but the South, from Minas Gerais to the border of Uruguay. Replacing the seminomadic *bandeirantes* of previous generations, hundreds of thousands of pioneers cleared the soil and established coffee plantations, particularly in the state of São Paulo. Soon southern Brazil became the chief supplier of coffee in the world. Newly established cattle ranches covered much of the rest of the land. Existing cities expanded; new ones were founded. Railroads were linking the interior to the coast.

Before World War I most Italian immigrants found employment at first as laborers on coffee plantations. Soon their activities became diversified: some laborers became share-tenants in large plantations; others bought their own small coffee groves; still others devoted themselves to other less costly forms of farming. An increasing number of Italian artisans settled in the cities, where they were joined by many who engaged in retail trade and by a few professional people. Italian immigrants were esteemed for their industry as well as for their frugality and the strength of their family ties. In 1917 there were nearly one million people of Italian origin in São Paulo (fast becoming the most important state in the federation), and half a million elsewhere in Brazil (most of them in the coastal states of Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, and in Minas Gerais). The process of assimilation was aided by the fact that Brazilians had little racial and ethnic prejudice; by the common religious heritage; by the facility with which Italians learned Portuguese, and the impact of public education on their children; by the numerous marriages be-



tween Italians and women of Portuguese or mixed ancestry.

Discrimination did exist at first, but being the result of economic rather than ethnic differences it could be (and was) easily overcome. Italians were quick to take advantage of the opportunities that existed in Brazil. The combination of hard work and frugality enabled many immigrants to accumulate savings. Their spirit of initiative transformed savings into new enterprises in agriculture, commerce, and industry. The enterprises were small—often tiny—but they were a beginning, and by dint of hard work they were expanded. The economic achievements of these immigrants meant better education for their children, many of whom studied at universities and became physicians, engineers, lawyers, teachers, civil servants, or career officers in the armed forces. Brazil also provided opportunities for Italian artists and athletes. Rising economic and educational levels meant passing from working-class to middle-class status. Italians and children of Italians most successful in business and the professions acquired nationwide influence. Economically, intellectually, and politically, São Paulo sets the tone for Brazil, and São Paulo is the metropolis and state in which Brazilians of Italian origin are dominant.

#### ITALIANS IN ARGENTINA

In the late 1820s, when borders were finally settled between Argentina and her neighbors, there was already a community of about six thousand Italians in Buenos Aires. Italian political exiles who reached Argentina were not many, but there were enough of them to establish a Mazzinian Young Italy group in 1838. Italian republican patriots who went into exile after the revolutionary upheavals of 1848/49 established Nova Roma, an agricultural settlement which met with little success. Economic or political in its motivation, Italian migration to Argentina before unification was only a small trickle. [It is possible that Juan Perón, military dictator in Argentina in 1943–1955, was the great-grandson of an Italian immigrant, Peroni, one of the few who settled in Argentina during the first half of the nineteenth century.]

Italian migration to Argentina increased gradually in the 1860s and 1870s. In the thirty years preceding Italy's entry into World War I, it was a veritable flood, which accompanied the considerable investments of foreign (largely British) capital and the rapid economic growth of the country, then the most advanced in Latin America. The overwhelming majority of the more than two and a half million Italians who settled in Argentina reached the southern Republic during those three decades. Numerous as they were, they represented less than half of the total number of Italians who crossed the Atlantic destined for Buenos Aires and its hinterland. These were the decades of the *golondrinas* (swallows), as they were called by Argentines, migrant workers who came in time for



Juan Perón (right) with his wife welcomes Italians to Argentina, 1947. UPI

harvesting the wheat, worked hard for a few months, moved from north to south as the wheat ripened, and then, in May, returned to Italy to attend to the harvest and the *vendemmia* at home. Ships carrying *golondrinas* were overcrowded and sanitary conditions were primitive; steerage passengers provided their own food. But the migrant workers were young, gregarious, and cheerful: the more uncomfortable the passage, the less the expense, the larger the amount of money one could take home. In 1913, of over one hundred thousand Italians who had gone to Argentina, only little more than a third stayed. Most of those who stayed were families with one or two children.

Northerners were the most numerous of the Italian immigrants, hence the saying that northern Italian blood is one-third of the blood of all Argentines. By the time immigration reached its peak, Italians could be found everywhere in the republic, though the area of maximum concentration was enclosed within a radius of two to three hundred miles around Buenos Aires. Rosario to the northwest of Buenos Aires and Bahía Blanca to the southwest were at times predominantly Italian cities. For the immigrants who stayed, assimilation came easily: not only were Argentines the most European of all American nations, but also, in many ways, the Argentinian way of life most closely resembled that of Latin Mediterranean nations. Because Italians and Spanish-speaking people can understand each other if they speak slowly, language was no barrier. The high rate of mixed marriages accelerated the integration process, as in Brazil. There was little or no conflict in becoming Argentinian while remaining loyal to Italian customs and traditions. This explains why large numbers of Italians kept their original citizenship even though they had settled permanently in Argentina. It also explains the large number (at least five hundred in 1970) of flour-





Italian residents of South America en route to war front in Ethiopia, 1935. Photoworld

ishing associations formed with the aim of preserving *italianità*.

Together with other Europeans (most of them Spaniards from northern Spain) who settled in Argentina from the end of the nineteenth century on, Italian immigrants affected the class structure of the Argentinian nation profoundly. Before large-scale migration began in the 1880s, the middle class of medium and small business people, of professional people and employees, was small; farmers working their own land were an unimportant group; manufacturing played a minimal role in the economy: there was little outside an upper middle class of European-oriented landowners constituting the *oligarchia* and a working class of mostly illiterate dependents. European immigration contributed to the expansion of industrial and commercial activities (in 1900, four-fifths of all industrial and commercial enterprises were owned and operated by "foreigners," i.e., immigrants, many of them Italian); it also contributed to the expansion of the professional middle range of the middle classes, and the lower middle class of shopkeepers, clerks, artisans; to the creation of a class of small farmer-owners in rural areas (many Italians engaged in farming in the provinces of Santa Fé and Entre Ríos), and a class of industrial workers in the cities.

Italian immigrants also brought with them ideas that profoundly shook Argentinian traditionalism, basically authoritarian and inherited from colonial times. Immigrants and their descendants comprised the dominant element in the democratic Radical party whose principles and platforms are close to those of American New Deal Democrats. The Radical party deprived the *oligarchia* of its political power temporarily in the immediate post-World War I period. Under the leadership of José Tamborini (of Italian ex-

Italian immigrants arrive in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1947. UPI



traction) the Radical party was the main opponent of Perón's near-fascist *justicialismo* in the 1940s. During the brief democratic interlude of 1958–1966 it counted among its leaders two presidents of the republic, Frondizi and Illia, whose names attest their Italian origin. Italian rightist authoritarianism inspired directly the kindred Argentinian movement led by Colonel (later General) Perón, who found valuable collaborators among army officers of Italian descent, such as Colonel Mercanti and General Pistarini (first a supporter of Perón, later an opponent). Italian leftist authoritarianism inspired Américo Ghioldi, founder of the first Communist party in the western hemisphere and for a long time an influential spokesman for international communism. Angel Borlenghi and Juan Bramuglia had considerable power as labor lead-





Arturo Illia. UPI

ers. Antonio Solari and Nicolàs Repetto were among the founders and leaders of Argentinian democratic socialism, a thorn in the side of the conservative *oligarchia* and of military dictatorships.

Naturalized or not, Italians who have settled in Argentina share the way of life, the aspirations, and the problems of a Latin American nation with which the Italian people have more in common than with any other.

President Arturo Illia in conference with Italian Defense Minister Dr. Giulio Andreotti (right). Buenos Aires, January 19, 1971. UPI





# AMERICA! AMERICA!

*Mass exodus – Early times – The eve of mass migration – Mass migration – Regional composition – Southerners – Awakening – The exodus begins – The hopes of the hardworking poor – Recruiters – Failures and successes – Size of the Italian-American community – Italian Americans in New York – Distribution of Italian Americans – Apartness – Immigrants in the books of Italian-American authors – Parasites – Mafia – Mother Cabrini – Political awareness – Conservatism – Between the wars: italianità – Democrats – Revolutionaries – The crisis of World War II – Integration – La Guardia – Other Italian Americans in public life – Artists, critics, scholars – From stage to diamond – Italian Americans in business – The unnamed millions.*

## MASS EXODUS

**M**ORE than five million Italians have migrated to the United States in the past hundred years. Most of this mass exodus took place between the 1890s and early 1920s, when at least one out of ten Italians who reached maturity during that time crossed the North Atlantic Ocean. From these immigrants are descended millions of loyal citizens of the United States who are conscious of their Italian heritage. They have contributed to the progress of the American nation. Many of them have achieved distinction.

## EARLY TIMES

There were Italians several centuries ago in what is now the United States. They had come as individuals or, occasionally, in small groups. Some had been men of God. The Franciscan missionary Fra Marco da Nizza reached Mexico in 1531 shortly after the Spanish Conquest; he traveled north as far as the Grand Canyon and returned with tales of fabulous riches. Two years after the obliteration of New Sweden by the Dutch in what is now Delaware, a group of Piedmontese Waldensians, fleeing religious persecution at home, settled there. Probably the first



Father Giovanni Grassi. Peter Carter

European to describe Niagara Falls was Father Francesco Bressani who was captured by the Iroquois in 1644. Some missionaries were killed by the Indians: Mengozzi in 1671 and Father Saverio Saetta in 1678 in the Southeast, Father Gesù de Lombardi in 1679 in the Southwest. Fra Eusebio Chino, born near Trent, left Genoa for the New World in 1678. Together with Father Salvaterra of Milan he was a missionary in northern New Spain—the American Southwest—and he proved that Lower California was a peninsula. Early in the nineteenth century the bishops of St. Louis, Savannah, and New Orleans—Giuseppe Rosati, Ignazio Persico, and Francesco Porro respectively—were Italians. In 1812, Father Giovanni Grassi of the Society of Jesus headed the newly established Georgetown College near Washington, D.C.

Some had been men of the sword. Three Italian military engineers (one of them the Genoese Maestro Francesco) accompanied Fernando De Soto in his adventurous exploration of the American Southeast in 1539–1543. In 1679, Enrico Tonti (Tonty), in the service of the king of France, built the first large vessel ever to ply the waters of the Great Lakes. He was second-in-command to La Salle, reached Louisiana in 1682, and founded the first European settlement in Arkansas. Colonel Francesco Vigo, from Mondovì in Piedmont, came to North America in 1774 and distinguished himself in the War of Independence, contributing to the victory at Vincennes in 1779, which gave the fledgling republic control of the Old Northwest as far as the Upper Mississippi. Bracco, Finizzi, and three members of the Tagliaferro family were officers in the Continental army. Three Italians received the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War, three others became generals. John Belli was Deputy Quartermaster General of the United States Army from 1892 to 1894.

Birthplaces and names indicate that there were Italians among the settlers of the colonial period: Stephano Grady hailed from Ragusa and Cornelius Cannmoor from Lucca; Torrisany derives from Torrigiani, Bonvis from Bonvisi, Grimoald from Grimaldi. Pace or Paci had probably been the original family





*Enrico Tonti.* Phoenix Museum, Mobile, Ala.



*William Paca.* LC

*Philip Mazzei.* University of Virginia



name of William Paca, governor of Maryland and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Philip Mazzei, born in Poggio a Caiano near Florence, came to Virginia in 1773 after a sixteen-year residence in Great Britain. He returned to Europe shortly afterward as agent for the Commonwealth, doing for Virginia what Benjamin Franklin was doing for the Continental Congress. (Mazzei was instrumental in inducing Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany to issue a statement supporting the cause of American independence.) Italians composed a large part of three regiments in the expeditionary force sent by the king of France to aid the Americans against the British. When the war ended, many chose to settle in the United States. Salvatore Catalano, from Syracuse in Sicily, was Stephen Decatur's pilot in 1804 during the United States' war against pirates based in Tripoli. He spent the rest of his life in the United States.

Mazzei was asked by Jefferson to find in Italy





REV. C. A. TRON, FOUNDER OF THE COLONY.



WALDENSIAN AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS



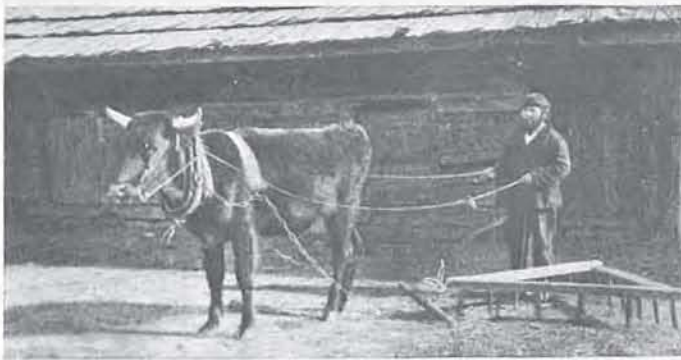
IN THE HOSEY MILL.



COLONISTS FROM PIEDMONT, ITALY.



WALDENSIAN SCHOOL AT VALDEESE.



HOME-MADE HARDWARE



WALDENSIAN TYPES



WALDENSIAN WOMEN.



CUTTING TIMBER ON WALDENSIAN TRACT.

Italian Waldensian settlers in North Carolina. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.



competent artists to work in Washington. The painters Giuseppe Franzoni and Giovanni Andrei reached the United States in 1806, as the result of Mazzei's endeavors. Within a few years they were followed by others: Carlo Franzoni (Giuseppe's brother), Luigi Persico, Giuseppe Valaperta, Canova's pupil Antonio Capellano. Later in the century, the fresco painting in the Capitol was entrusted to Constantino Brumidi. Those acquainted with the name of Antonio Meucci know him as the enterprising immigrant who, in 1850, befriended Garibaldi and gave him a job in his little factory in Staten Island. Meucci's claim as the inventor of the telephone was validated by the Supreme Court. A remarkable man in many ways, he spent nearly half of his long life in the United States.

"Car of History," by Carlo Franzoni, Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. National Geographic Photographer George F. Mobley, courtesy of U.S. Capitol Historical Society



#### THE EVE OF MASS MIGRATION

Of the estimated 50,000 Italians in the United States in 1860 (*see* Chapter 17), most of the recent arrivals could be found in the New York area. A few had already been attracted to California by the lure of gold and fertile land. In 1870, the year when Rome once again became the capital of a united Italian state, out of a total of about half a million Italians abroad (including children of emigrants) a little more than a fifth were in the United States. Transatlantic migration, particularly from the *Mezzogiorno*, was still a thin trickle. From 1876 to 1878 about 1,500 immigrants arrived from Campania (Naples and the surrounding area), 150 from Abruzzi, 50 from Sicily. 1880 is a meaningful date: in that year over 12,000 Italian immigrants reached the United States, more than twice as many as in 1879. Most of the 12,000 came from Italy's North, a few from the Center, and, significantly, about 5,000 from the South. The trickle was becoming a stream and would soon be a mighty river.

#### MASS MIGRATION

In 1900 American statistics gave the number of residents born in Italy as nearly half a million; ten years later nearly a million and a half. The peak of immigration was reached in 1907 with a total of 285,731. The figures for the years until 1914 were similar. It is reported that on one day 15,000 Italians landed from many ships. World War I brought the migratory movement to a near halt, but in 1921, 142,514 Italian immigrants reached the United States. By the time migration was checked—by restrictive poli-



Ellis Island, showing immigrants with baggage and an immigration official (1907). Museum of the City of New York





*A group of Italians in the railroad waiting room, Ellis Island, 1905. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*

cies introduced by the Republican administration in 1921 and 1924 under the pressure of organized labor aroused by an economic depression, and by the Italian Fascist regime using population increase as a lever for imperialistic demands—nearly five million Italians had migrated to the United States. Except during World War II the migration never completely stopped. Each year a few thousand Italians were admitted under the quota system and a few more with special dispensations. In recent years the liberalization of immigration laws has led to an increase in the numbers admitted. In all, since the end of World War II about 300,000 Italians have entered the United States as immigrants.

According to American records, by 1970 over 5.1 million immigrants had come from Italy—about 11 percent of all who came from Europe during the 150 years from 1820 to 1970. Of these over two-thirds settled permanently, became American citizens and raised their children as Americans.

#### REGIONAL COMPOSITION

When migration across the North Atlantic was still relatively modest, Piedmontese, Ligurians, and other northerners predominated. When the migratory flow swelled, southerners were the overwhelming majority: between 1906 and 1916, for instance, nearly two million arrived, 85 percent of the total Italian immigration. In view of the cultural differences between Italian regions and of the Italian Americans' emotional attachments, the regional composition of the migratory movement played a large part in giving the Italian-American community its characteristic features. Of the three and a half to four million Italians who settled permanently in the United States, only about one-fifth were from the North and regions of the Center and South (Sardinia) that had not been part of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies: from areas containing nearly two-thirds of Italy's population. The



*Italian immigrants at Ellis Island, 1905. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*





Mother and child, Ellis Island, 1905. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations



Part of a group of 1,000 emigrant tailors and seamstresses jointly sponsored by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the Catholic Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference. All were assured jobs in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. UPI

American Ambassador Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce issuing visas to new emigrants at the U.S. Consulate in Naples. UPI



other four-fifths came from what had for centuries been called *Il Reame*, The Kingdom.

SOUTHERNERS

Approximately one-fifth of Italian permanent immigrants were born in Sicily; another fifth in Campania (the Neapolitans); a little less than one-seventh each came from Abruzzi and Molise, from Calabria, and from Apulia and Basilicata. The exodus of the southerners was an exodus of men (four out of five); of young and vigorous adults (seven out of eight were between the age of fourteen and forty-four); of the disinherited (between 1902 and 1907, 52 percent of immigrants from the *Mezzogiorno* were virtually penniless, described as paupers by the American authorities); of the educationally deprived (the majority were illiterate). Of the one million six hundred thousand Italian immigrants who entered the United States during the first ten years of the century, only 9,000 had the equivalent of a college diploma. About 300,000 possessed some vocational or professional skills. The rest were totally unskilled. Of this last group, most had been agricultural laborers and came from the rural hinterland of the *Mezzogiorno*. The mass emigration to the United States meant a steady decline in the population of Basilicata between 1880 and 1920, and of Molise between 1890 and 1920. During the first decade of the century the population of Abruzzi, as



well as the population of three of the five provinces of Campania, and two of the seven provinces in which Sicily was then divided, also declined.

Figures can show the size of the emigration, but they must be translated into what they represent—human beings. Figures can scarcely measure the extent of the sufferings endured by those who decided to leave, of the hopes that gave them strength to combat hardships in the New World, of the success most had in improving their lives and providing their descendants with opportunities they had never had themselves. Achievements are usually measured in terms of goals attained; they should instead be measured in terms of distance covered. The economic level at which Italian southerners lived was exceptionally low; the difficulties they had to overcome exceptionally great. There were Irish and Jewish immigrants as poor as most Italians of the 1880s and 1900s. However, the Irishman could speak the language of his new country, and he had not lived in the isolation that had been the lot of most inhabitants of Italy's South; he was less alien than anyone coming from the non-English-speaking world. The Jews had had centuries of experience in living among people belonging to a different culture, speaking a different language, and their emotional and intellectual horizons had never been limited to the local community in which they were born; and although they met with discrimination in the United States, it was less severe than it had been in the areas of Europe where they were then most numerous.

#### AWAKENING

After unification, conscription—introduced in Italy as much for social as for military reasons—helped to lessen the isolation in which thousands of communities in the South lived. As soldiers performing their military service, the sons of peasants, shepherds, fishermen, and craftsmen had traveled to Milan or Rome or Turin and had seen a different and a more attractive world. As isolation decreased so did ignorance, the closest ally of resignation. Many schools had unplastered walls and windows without glass and there were not enough blackboards or exercise books; but many teachers tried to tell the children and their parents about the world outside, in Italy, and beyond her boundaries. Garibaldi was a household word for decades after unification, *L'eroe dei due mondi*—the hero of two worlds, Europe and America—had fought in Brazil and Uruguay, and had lived in New York: he had blazed a trail. Seafaring Neapolitans were the first to become aware of potentialities in the United States. When the Civil War ended, American entrepreneurs took the road that was to make the United States the industrial leader of the world. Labor was scarce. Mechanization was still limited and there were plenty of opportunities for unskilled workers, for laborers. Jobs were what appealed to the Italian immi-

grant, too poor and ignorant to think—as so many Scandinavians and Germans did—in terms of a home-  
stead, a farm. Jobs meant wages, wages meant cash; cash meant putting money aside and the hope of a better future.

#### THE EXODUS BEGINS

From Naples and its vicinity came the first large contingents of southern immigrants. At first a few young people, soon hundreds, then thousands, selling what little they had, borrowing from relatives and friends, bought steerage passage to New York. In Messina and Palermo a few young Sicilians boarded the ships going to America. In the United States they got jobs—for Americans poorly paid ones, not so for Italians, for whom one dollar a day was a scudo (the five-lire piece). Who had ever earned a scudo, a whole scudo, in one day? In the inland communities, who had even seen a scudo? Poverty had made sober living a habit in Italy. To save on rent, immigrants roomed together. Their food was simple. Their only luxury was decent Sunday clothing. Indifferent at first to the lowliness of his job, the immigrant went on living soberly. He saved. Remittances began to be sent to the families in Italy. Wasn't that marvelous? In America one could earn enough to save and to send money home! After two, three, five, or ten years, emigrants began to return, most of them not to stay but to visit, with enough money to buy a passage to New York for wife, brother, or son.

#### THE HOPES OF THE HARDWORKING POOR

In the 1880s, in the marketplaces of cities and towns and villages, at the fairs to which people from distant communities came to buy and sell livestock, tools, housewares, the talk was of the *americani*: the relative, friend, or acquaintance who had left for America, whose letter (usually written by a scribe in his own hyperbolic style) had recently arrived, who had sent money with which to buy a plot of land, a goat or a sheep, warm clothing, shoes. The talk was of *americani* who had come back with a couple of big suitcases and a new suit, who had told of an astounding world in which there was work for all and in which instead of a few cents earned from time to time one could earn a scudo, a whole scudo, every day, where one had enough to eat.

Barons and dukes owning thousands of mismanaged acres, frittering away their incomes on decadent city living and plunging more and more heavily into debt, knew less about America than their peasants and servants. A few young people of the small educated classes, fascinated by the ideas and ideals of democracy, socialism, and anarchism, saw in America the freedom to do what could not be done at home, and some of them went to the United States. A few young professional people also decided to emigrate.





An Italian woman with her baby, Jersey Street. Photograph by Jacob A. Riis, The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York

Italian family at dinner. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations



They were the exceptions: most members of the so-called educated classes knew little about the United States and cared less. Like other Europeans, the Italian intelligentsia repeated commonplaces about America's cultural backwardness, political corruption, and materialism, about a nation which to them was not a nation. The idle rich and the presumptuous intellectuals did not know what the poor and the illiterate knew: that in America one could go forward, could aspire to live decently and gain the dignity denied at home; one could look to the future and not be repressed by the past.

America was the land for the hardworking poor,

not for *baroni* and *borghesi*. For a long time America remained the dream of the southern proletariat and of those close to the poor—the elementary school teacher, the parish priest, the radical agitator.

#### RECRUITERS

In the 1880s recruiters began to get to work. Some were agents of shipping companies, whose only income often was a percentage of tickets sold. They visited distant towns and villages, explaining about the United States, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina. They painted unreal rosy pictures. They exaggerated.



They told lies. They also helped people to sell the little plot of land most peasants owned somewhere; to sell the donkey, mule, cow, sheep, goat, and pig, which were many people's chief asset; to sell the bed and whatever else was in the hovel called home. Shipping agents helped people get to Naples and Palermo, put them on board the ships with their bundles and the food supply they carried. They did not know what would happen to the emigrant when he reached American shores and did not care.

The position and function of *padroni*, who appeared a little later and by 1900 had become a common institution, was different. The term was a misnomer; they were not bosses but labor brokers. The *padrone* was usually a former emigrant who came back to recruit cheap labor needed primarily in the New York area by contractors building houses, factories and the New York subway. Farther away, cheap labor was wanted by railroad builders, and by owners of coal and iron mines. *Padroni* were more efficient than shipping agents in realizing meager assets and in making arrangements for the journey. Sometimes they advanced money. Immigrants who came with a *padrone* had jobs waiting for them, were settled in squalid tenements, and were introduced to already established immigrants. To repay loans and in compensation for services rendered, immigrants paid *padroni* a *bossatura*, a percentage of the wages earned in jobs obtained through them. Sometimes arrangements for passage, including raising money for tickets, were made by the immigrant himself who, having met with some success, persuaded his relatives and friends to join him; also by schoolteachers and priests who had decided to emigrate and who acted as natural leaders of the migrant group, preserving its cohesion and protecting its members from exploitation.

#### FAILURES AND SUCCESSES

For some the journey overseas and the quest for a job was an exciting and satisfying adventure. For many others it was a torment, usually endured stoically. The forty-year mass exodus from the Italian South meant a good deal of suffering. There were cruel abuses and cheating by *padroni*, shipping companies, American employers, and bloodsucking petty criminals—mafiosi and others—preying on those poorer than themselves. Along with the deception and frustration there were heartbreaking failures. Some could not cope with the alien environment, or were unable to persevere. Some became sick, or were simply lost and found no one to help them. But for most, the United States meant an improvement in their conditions, for many it meant success, and for the millions of their descendants a better life than they would have had in the Old Country.

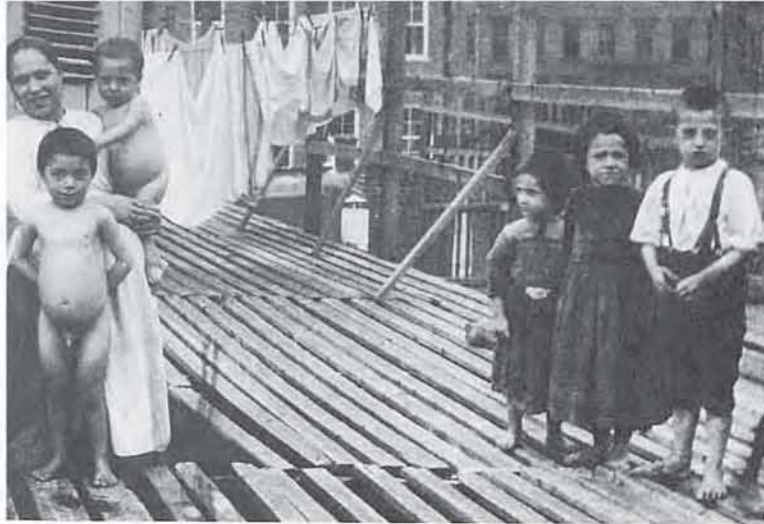


The bedroom of an Italian family in a rear tenement on New York's East Side, 1910. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Yard, Jersey Street tenement. Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York







Scene on the roof of the Barracks, Mott Street. Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York



A labor agency on the lower West Side, New York City, 1910. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

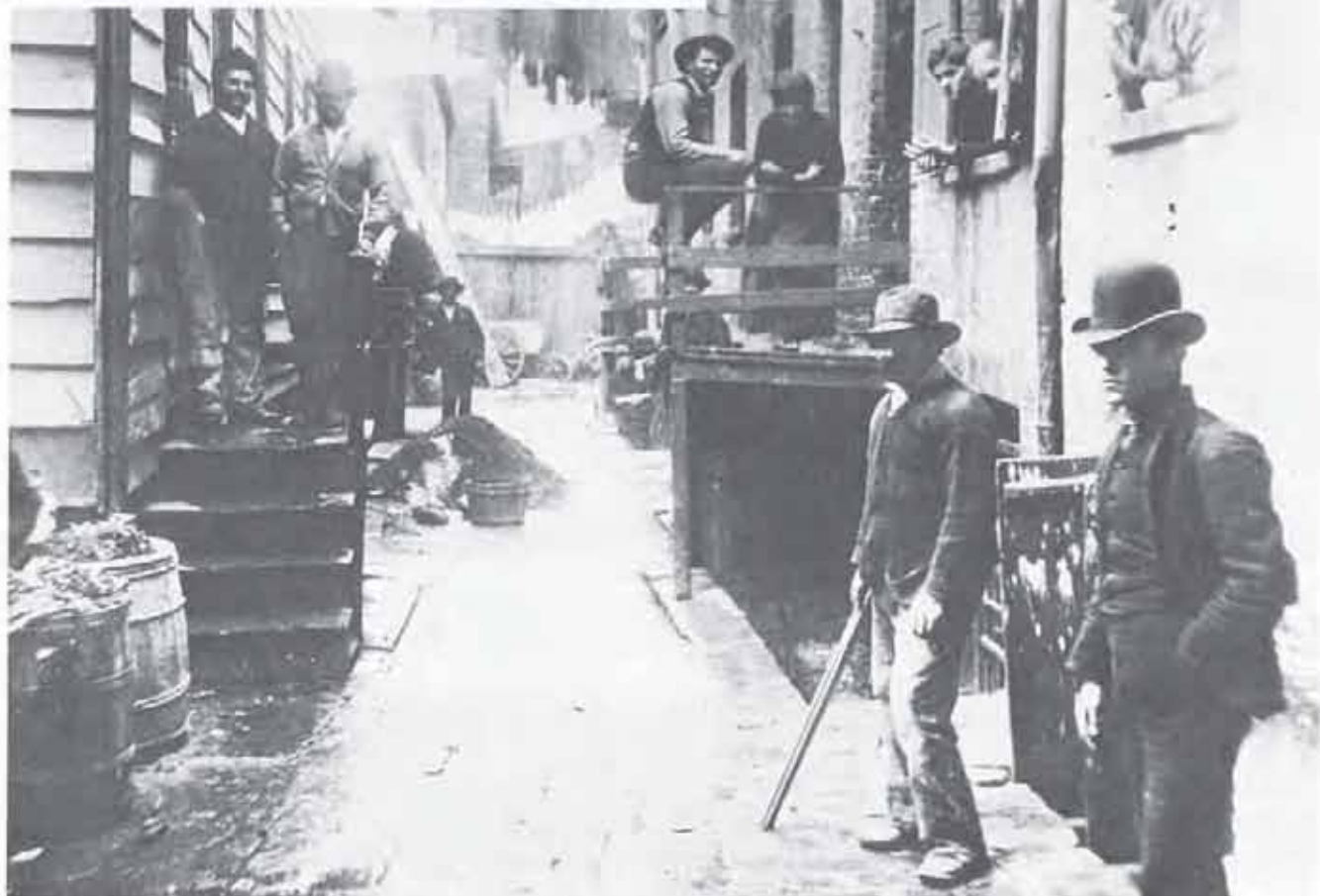
Construction of the Fort George IRT Tunnel, 1904. Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York City







A group of Italian street laborers working under the Sixth Avenue El, New York City, 1910. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations



39½ Mulberry Street, known as Bandit's Roost. Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York

#### SIZE OF THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

In proportion to their homeland population, fewer Italians migrated to the United States than Irish, Jews, Scandinavians, or Canadians. But in the whole migratory movement which has brought tens of millions of Europeans to North America during the last century and a half, only the Germans, who migrated in large numbers over a considerably longer period, were more

numerous. There are various estimates of the size of the Italian-American community which includes the foreign-born (still more than a million), first-generation Americans who sometimes retain emotional links with their ancestral land and understand Italian, or at least their parents' dialect, and later-generation Americans to whom Italian origin becomes less and less relevant as time goes on. The late Commissioner of Immigration, Edward Corsi, put the number of



Italian Americans forty years ago at about five million. In recent years some authors have put the figure at twenty-one million. Taking into account the number of Italian immigrants who made their permanent home in the United States (3½ to 4 million), the size and natural increase of the American population at the time of the mass Italian migration, and the size of other immigrant groups, the number of Italian Americans can be roughly estimated at ten to twelve million. Nearly as many are descendants of marriages between Italians and non-Italians, most often Irish or Jews. Some of these descendants think of themselves as Italian Americans, others as Irish Americans or Jewish Americans, as the case may be. Probably most think of themselves simply as Americans.

#### ITALIAN AMERICANS IN NEW YORK

Even before mass migration gained its greatest momentum, the largest concentration of Italians in the United States was in New York City. The overwhelming majority of immigrants had come to find jobs—any jobs—not to engage in independent careers in business, farming, vocational or professional activities. Moreover, they nearly all lacked funds for traveling farther.



*Edward Corsi.* The University of the State of New York, State Education Department

*The Mulberry Bend, ca. 1888–89.* Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York





In New York they found work, at first mainly in construction, on the waterfront, and in menial municipal functions like street cleaning. Soon they became active in the fast-developing garment, shoe, cigar, and food industries. In New York, barbering and shoeshining seemed for a while to be Italian specialties. Lowly jobs could be obtained in restaurants and hotels. Some enterprising immigrants opened food stores for their countrymen and a few began to manufacture pasta. Besides priests and schoolteachers, there were some professional people who earned a living by serving Italian immigrants—mostly young law graduates who had little hope of building their own practice in the Old Country already burdened with a surfeit of lawyers. A few musicians who had joined the migratory current found pupils to teach and bands to play in. New York's Little Italy was not so little, and for decades it formed a close-knit, largely self-sufficient community. It had its own way of life, which certainly was not American and was considerably less Italian (or southern Italian) than most people thought. It was Italian without the stifling repressiveness, the rigidity and immobility that were striking features of southern Italian culture. In 1917 one-seventh of the city's population was either born in Italy or born in New York of Italian parents; the percentage did not change appreciably for many years. This distinctive and fairly cohesive Italian-American community soon began to have an impact on a city in which ethnic divisions played an important role. It was first felt in public life: in participation in political machines, in the election of city councilmen, state assemblymen, and finally Congressmen. An Italian American was elected mayor of New York in 1933.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF ITALIAN AMERICANS

At present about a third of the Italian Americans live in New York State. They form a large segment of

*Italian women sewing pants in a Gotham Court sweatshop.*  
Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York



*An Italian cheese store on Bleecker Street.* Photograph by Bernice Abbott for the Federal Art Project "Changing New York." Museum of the City of New York

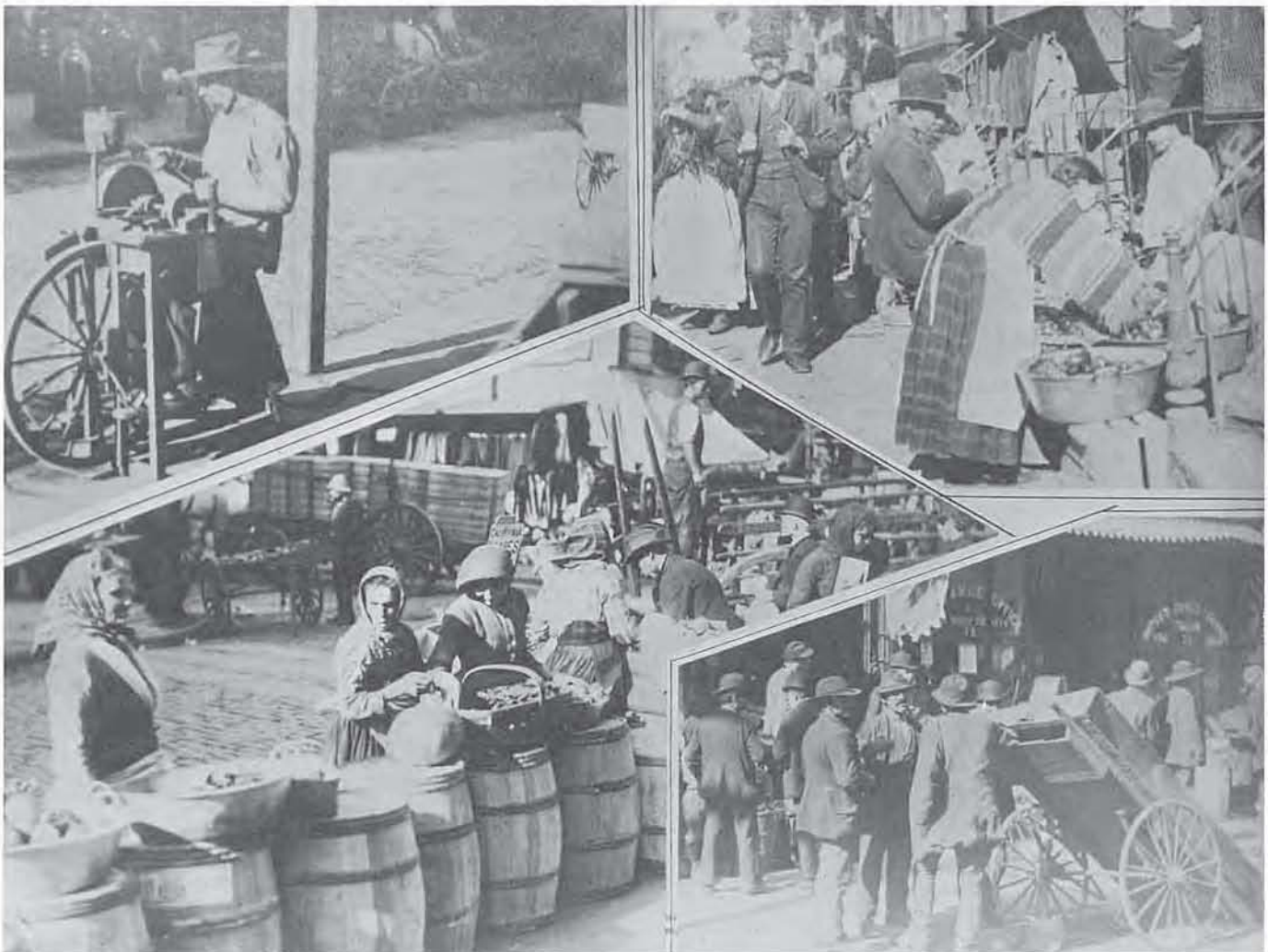




*An Italian track-walker on the Pennsylvania Railroad, 1930. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*

the population in all urban communities. The few who have ventured into rural areas are engaged in truck farming or retail trade. Another third of the Italian-American population is to be found in the neighboring states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania to the south, in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts to the east. In the megalopolis in the making which extends for two hundred miles from each side of New York along the Atlantic seaboard, there is the largest urban concentration of people of Italian origin, larger than in any of Italy's metropolitan areas. About an eighth of the Italian Americans live in the Midwestern belt between Cleveland and Chicago. In the cities of the Midwest, Italian Americans are nowhere as large a proportion of the population as in the East, nor are Italian-American communities so closely integrated. Another twelfth or so live in California, where descendants of immigrants from the North of Italy are relatively more numerous than anywhere else in the United States. Most immigrants to California came as individuals and not as members of groups transplanted from Italy. Many have attained financial success, received recognition in cultural activities, or played an influential role in public life. The names of the banker Amadeo Giannini, the film director Frank Capra, the

*Little Italy in Harlem. Photograph by Joseph Byron. The Byron Collection, Museum of the City of New York*







An Italian clothing worker in a factory in Rochester, N.Y., 1915. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Italian vine grower near Humboldt, Tennessee. The Italian in America by Eliot Lord, John J. D. Trenor, and Samuel J. Barrows, 1905.



Angelo J. Rossi. San Francisco Public Library

Italian peach orchard laborers near Centralia, Illinois. The Italian in America by Eliot Lord, John J. D. Trenor, and Samuel J. Barrows, 1905





mayors of San Francisco Angelo Rossi and Joseph Alioto suffice. Sizable Italian-American communities are to be found in Florida, Louisiana, and Colorado.

#### APARTNESS

Relations between the immigrants and their children, and the people in whose midst they settled, remained distant for quite a while. It took time to narrow the gulf between them. There were several impediments to the quick integration of immigrants and, particularly where they were most numerous, first-generation Italian Americans. The heavy concentration in relatively restricted areas not only minimized opportunities for exchange, it also lessened the newcomers' desire for integration. Many had arrived in groups held together by family, friendship, and local community ties, and those groups strove to retain their identity. Those who had come as isolated individuals gravitated toward groups formed by *paesani*, people from the same *paese*—village or town. They could do without Americans when *paesani* were there to provide friendship and, when needed, aid and protection. Since few immigrants had developed any aptitude for learning foreign tongues, there was also a language barrier. The cohesiveness fostered by the ever-present and all-pervading Italian Catholic clergy and the church-organized clubs and schools held the community together, as did a large number of associations (hundreds by the 1920s) and Italian-language newspapers. Slowly the obstacles to integration were removed by contact with people of different cultural backgrounds, in factories, mills, mines, by marriages outside the community (made necessary because of the relatively small number of women among the immigrants) and, most important, by attendance in public



Joseph Alioto. Photo by Proctor Jones



Frank Capra. Photoworld

schools, which fulfilled the function of absorbing immigrants' children into the American way of life.

#### IMMIGRANTS IN THE BOOKS OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN AUTHORS

The life of the immigrant and of the first-generation Italian American has been described by writers who lived it. Their books reflect the emotions of millions who went—cheerfully, or tearfully, but for the most part stolidly—through the harsh experience of being uprooted, of trying to find their bearings in a new and alien environment, of slowly and painfully putting down new roots. In the 1890s Bernardino Ciambelli published several novels, highly readable and highly unrealistic, in the melodramatic style then fashionable in Italian literary circles. The action of Ciambelli's novels was usually in New York's Little Italy, as was that of the writings of another popular author, Eduardo Migliaccio. World War I had not yet ended when Angelo Patri, a distinguished educator, wrote of his experiences and those of young and not so young immigrants in *A Schoolmaster in the Great City*. Later another educator proud of his Italian heritage, Angelo Pellegrini, wrote wittily and gratefully about the immigrant's life in the United States in *The Unprejudiced Palate* (and recorded joys and disappointments of a trip back to the Old Country in *Immigrant's Return*). Jo Fanti in *Ask the Dusk*, Mari Tomasi in *Deep Grow the Roots*, Jo Pagano in *Paesanos*, Pascal D'Angelo in his autobiographical *Son of Italy*, Guido D'Agostino in *Olives on the Apple Tree*, Pietro Di Donato in *Christ in Concrete* and





*Pietro learning to write.* Photograph by Jacob A. Riis. The Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York

*Three Circles of Light*, Jerry Mangione in *Mount Allegro* and *The Sheep and the Flame*, down to Mario Puzo in *Fortunate Pilgrim* and the best seller *The Godfather* (typical American novel with an Italian-American theme), and Raymond De Capite in *The Coming of Fabrizio*, are some whose topics were one or another aspect of Italian-American communities, and at times themselves: the immigrant and the child of the immigrant.

The poet and labor agitator Arturo Giovannitti wrote movingly and effectively in Italian and English of the efforts of Italian-American wage-earners to achieve the equality which in the United States was their right, to have a better life, to end exploitation. Alessandro Sisca was another prolific poet. Rodolfo Pucelli's *Anthology of Italian and Italian-American Poetry* includes writings of several immigrant authors. Frederico Amato wrote plays focused on the immigrant's difficulty in adjusting to a strange, at times hostile, environment. Baldo Aquilano, Antonio Manganò, Enrico Sartorio, Leonard Covello, Constantine Panunzio, Edward Corsi, Giovanni Schiavo were some of the nonfiction writers who recorded aspects of Italian-American experiences.

Literary merit and success in terms of popularity and sales varied, of course, but most of the books mentioned here vividly described people who worked hard, led sober lives, and often suffered humiliation; who were caught between two cultures so different

as to be antagonistic; who in becoming Americans felt greater love for the country of which they were now citizens than many whose roots went back several generations or even centuries; who discovered that in American society poverty and ignorance were drawbacks as great as in Italian society, but that in the United States there were opportunities for overcoming them.

These books speak of men of flesh and blood whose main concern was their families, whose first goal—when they had decided to settle—was to bring brothers and sisters, cousins, nephews, perhaps the old parents to join them. The next goal was to do in the New World what had been an impossible dream



Arturo Giovannitti. Brown Brothers



in the Old Country; to send their children to school, not just to learn the three Rs, but to have an education that would enable them to leave the ranks of the poor and ignorant and to enter the affluent classes of entrepreneurs, executives and professional people. The simple program of the immigrants was to find a job and to work hard at it, to live soberly, to save, to help relatives, and send their sons to college. Many, having saved a little money, engaged in independent economic activities. It is astonishing how many, starting from nothing, did fulfill their goals. Through the fulfillment came integration and assimilation.

#### PARASITES

There were of course exceptions. Besides the failures, those who could not cope, who found no helping hand, there were also the parasites: the thieves, the swindlers, the exploiters—those whose shortcut to success was dishonesty.

Plenty of petty criminals had preyed on the immigrants in the ports of Naples, Palermo, Genoa, and on board ship. More of them preyed on those who were not met by relatives or friends on arrival, did not know where to turn to find a bed and a job, and could not make themselves understood. Confidence tricksters, small-time thieves, quacks, and imposters comprised the immigrants' underworld. There were groups of criminals which, on arriving in the United States, continued the unsavory activities that had provided them with a living in Italy. One such group—the Sicilian Mafia—was better organized than the others and had a structure that guaranteed discipline

and continuity. In the United States, it became more efficient and flourished. For several decades the Mafia operated almost exclusively within Italian-American communities, particularly in the Sicilian sections. It specialized in extortion by threat. The scale of the operation, at first, was modest. Then prohibition provided the mafiosi—experts in smuggling, “protection,” and fencing—with the opportunity to become a significant element in the American underworld.

#### MAFIA

Little is known of the Mafia's origins; even the meaning of the word is uncertain. At the time of the unification of Italy the Mafia existed in rural districts of western Sicily (an island large enough to be differentiated culturally as well as geographically)—the area *al di là del Salso*, beyond the Salso River, occupied by the provinces of Palermo, Girgenti (now Agrigento), and Trapani, and by part of the province of Caltanissetta. Sicily had been ineffectually ruled for centuries by weak or distant central governments. In the western section the medieval concept that the dignity of the individual requires him to administer his own law had survived. Landowners and their agents maintained their own version of law and order in the landed estates—the total subjection of peasants and villagers—by hiring members of clandestine groups as guards, the mafiosi, whose efficacy was increased by the fact that no one knew, or was supposed to know, about their membership, and whose immunity from punishment (through corruption of public officials) was guaranteed. Landowners contended that cattle

*The Italian State represses the Sicilian Mafia. Photoworld*





and horse stealing was a major crime punishable by death. They feared that vindictive peasants might burn the crops, and there was always the possibility of farm produce being stolen on the way to market or warehouse. Guards were needed. Mafiosi were organized in small groups (*cosche*, Sicilian for "tufts") of from ten to fifteen carefully picked and trained members whose leaders exacted total obedience and loyalty. There was no general organization, but each *cosca* had its own territory, and intrusion was dealt with by ambush and assassination. In time, mafiosi became a law for themselves, exacting tribute from landowners as well as from peasants. The Italian government's repeated attempts to eradicate the Mafia from western Sicily failed. The chaos in Sicily during World War II helped the mafiosi to extend their activities to the cities. There black marketeering and large-scale smuggling were added to the extortion practiced in the rural areas.

There were mafiosi among the Sicilians who settled in Tunisia. In the 1880s there were mafiosi among the Sicilian immigrants who came to the United States. They made a living by selling "protection" to shopkeepers, by smuggling, and by organizing prostitution rings. Exaggerated accounts of the Mafia (at the time often referred to as the *Mano Nera*, the Black Hand) led to the lynching of eleven Sicilian workers in New Orleans in 1891 (they had been arrested in connection with the murder of a superintendent of police and pronounced innocent by the court). Early in the twentieth century, a New York policeman of Italian origin, Giuseppe Petrosino, devoted himself to eradicating the Mafia. He was assassinated in Palermo where he had gone to uncover links between criminals in Sicily and those in the United States. His work was carried on by Mario Biaggi, another member of the New York police force. In recent years the Mafia has been dealt some serious blows by the deportation of Lucky Luciano and others, the denunciations of Joseph Valachi, the arrest of Vito Genovese, the murder of Albert Anastasia, and mass arrests such as those at Apalachin, New York, in 1957.

As often happens with organizations that are in the public eye but about which little is known, the power, influence, and diffusion of the Mafia in the United States have been exaggerated. Mafia and mafiosi portrayed in fiction and on the screen have little in common with the squalid reality of social rejects moved by primitive instincts and unfit to live as civilized individuals, who make a living from extortion, prostitution, drug addiction, gambling, and theft.

One criminal whose name was for years a household word on both sides of the North Atlantic Ocean was not a mafioso. Al (Alfonso) Capone was born in Naples in 1899. In Chicago he associated with criminals of various ethnic origins before launching on his own with his own gang, preying on the demoralization brought about by prohibition. He was supposed to have been responsible for the so-called Saint Valen-

tine's Day massacre, the murder of eight rival gangsters in 1929. He spent most of the thirties in jail and died in 1947.

Italian Americans have usually ignored ethnic stereotypes identifying a numerically small fringe group with a whole community. However, in recent years a few have resented the tendency to exaggerate the place the Mafia in particular and criminality in general occupy among Italian Americans. Following the example of initiatives taken by members of other ethnic communities, an Italian-American Anti-Defamation League was organized. It was followed in 1970 by the Italian-American Civil Rights League created with the aim of publicizing positive contributions to American culture and of eliminating stereotypes from the communications media. Headed by Natale Marcone and Anthony Colombo, the League established chapters in various states and received the support of tens of thousands of Italian Americans, particularly in the New York area.

#### MOTHER CABRINI

Since evil-doing is a popular topic and receives a good deal of publicity, the public often remains under the impression that the exception is the rule. In view of the many serious handicaps under which southern Italian immigrants labored, Italian Americans would not have advanced as they did if social responsibility had not prevailed over irresponsible criminality. A helping hand was extended to the newcomer by the settled immigrant, to the jobless *paesano* by the man with a job, to the weak and sick by the strong and healthy. There was fraternal sharing and mutual help on board ship, on arrival, in tenements, in neighborhoods, and in factories. A few physicians, and some teachers, priests, and labor organizers came to the United States to help their fellow immigrants with selfless devotion. The good done, for example, with the help of thousands, by Francesca Cabrini outweighs the evil perpetrated by organized crime.

Francesca (Saint Frances Xavier) Cabrini, founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Italy in 1880, was nearly forty when she came to the United States in 1889. In spite of ill health she founded sixty-seven houses of her order, and when she died in 1917 there were fifteen hundred sisters staffing orphanages, nurseries, hospitals, and schools. The Sisters of the Sacred Heart brought hope where there had been despair, confidence where there had been suffering. At first they worked only among Italian immigrants, and later they also took care of non-Italians. Half a century after the death of Mother Cabrini (canonized in 1946), Father James Groppi, the civil rights leader and spokesman for the poor in Wisconsin, walked in her footsteps, bringing aid to those in need.

Mass migration, from abroad or within a country, is often accompanied by an increase in antisocial behavior. There is a twilight zone in the passage from





*Mother Cabrini. Photoworld*

one culture to another in which individuals, no longer restrained by the old culture, are not yet restrained by the new one. In that twilight zone the helping hand of people of goodwill is particularly needed. The twilight ends when integration comes. For the reasons already mentioned, it was a long twilight for many Italian immigrants, and for many of their children who were born in the United States. For southerners especially, the passage from a static hierarchical culture to a dynamic egalitarian one was often a painful process.

#### *POLITICAL AWARENESS*

Politicization was the first important sign that integration was proceeding. It meant a new awareness, the broadening of horizons, ideas and interests, the end of the separateness between Italian-American communities and the rest of the nation. On the whole, except for small antagonistic groups of nationalists

and revolutionaries mostly belonging to the middle classes, Italian immigrants were not politically minded during the period of mass immigration. Whatever the changes in the institutional structure, life in most of the South, and many areas of the Center and North, had remained as it was for decades after unification. The institutional structure of united Italy was keyed to free elections, which stimulate awareness and interest and create a desire for change; but everywhere in the South the local notables saw to it that elections were rigged, that there would be no debate, that dissidents were kept out, that voting was perfunctory and thus meaningless. This situation was beginning to change in the South, as it had in the Center and North, when the fascist dictatorship swept away all the gains achieved before 1922.

In the United States, through their own leaders working hand in hand with local politicians intent on increasing their electoral strength, immigrants who had become citizens drifted into the powerful urban Democratic party machines of the era. The filing of first papers, the acquisition of citizenship, voting, became acts that were more and more meaningful. For many immigrants, political awareness was stimulated by the need and the opportunity to participate in the labor movement in order to obtain higher wages and better working conditions. The American standard of living was having an impact on the minds of the immigrants. The scudo, which to the newly arrived immigrant had seemed a fortune, shrank to modest proportions when the now established immigrant and his family developed a taste for better clothing, good food, decent housing, vacations, and when sons and daughters began to ask for what their already assimilated contemporaries had. What membership in labor unions and strikes did for many, World War I did for others. Hundreds of thousands of Italian immigrants returned to Italy to join the armed forces, or went overseas with the American Expeditionary Force. Those who stayed behind anxiously followed European developments during the war and at the peace conferences, and their interest in foreign affairs led to more active participation in internal politics. The arrival on a larger scale than before of Italians who had completed their higher education also helped to rouse awareness. Journalists, lawyers, and physicians, whose public or clients were Italian Americans, discovered the United States about a generation later than the laborers of the South.

#### *CONSERVATISM*

Growing political awareness brought a gradual shift in position in the political spectrum. Most Italian immigrants, in search of status and property, did not mind, of course, being helped in their pursuit but strongly resented being hindered. On the whole they preferred to be left alone. Their attitudes in the twentieth century were those of the individualism domi-



nant in progressive nations on both sides of the North Atlantic after the revolutions of 1776 and 1789: in American terms, conservatism. Most Italian Americans continued to vote for the Democratic party, even if their economic conditions had improved considerably; but often they strengthened its most conservative wing. Quite a few, partly because of their conservatism, partly because of antagonism toward the Irish Americans who controlled Democratic political machines (and monopolized the most prestigious positions in the hierarchy of the Catholic church), switched to the Republican party or, where it existed, to a Conservative party.

#### BETWEEN THE WARS: ITALIANITÀ

Another development that lasted from before World War I to the beginning of World War II, was an intensification of the immigrants' feeling of allegiance to Italy. Italian Americans did not play the role in Italy's internal affairs that the Irish Americans played in Ireland or the Jewish Americans in Israel, but the attachment was there. The immigrant who in the Old Country had thought of himself primarily as a Neapolitan, a Sicilian, or a Calabrese, now discovered Italy. It was partly a reaction to the discrimination of which most Italian Americans were convinced (sometimes wrongly) they were victims. The newfound pride in Italian origin goes a long way to explain the sympathy most Italian Americans had in the 1920s and 1930s for Fascism—not because it was an imperialistic totalitarian dictatorship but because it was patriotism and nationalism, because "it had put Italy on the map." Italian-language newspapers and radio broadcasts extolled the achievements of the dictatorship. The Italian correspondents of reputable American newspapers praised Mussolini and admired his initiative. In church, sermons stressed *italianità*, the Italian heritage, and Italy's supposed new greatness under fascist rule.

There were waves of enthusiasm among Italian Americans when in 1929 the Lateran Treaties ended the estrangement between the Italian state and the papacy; when in 1933, twenty-four Italian-made airplanes under the command of the prominent Fascist leader Italo Balbo crossed the Atlantic, and the crews visited North American cities; when, in 1936, Italian troops entered Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was annexed to Italy, the League of Nations and Great Britain were humiliated. What to superficial observers seemed to be political and economic stability in the fascist corporate state were compared favorably with the ravages of the great depression of 1929 and the turmoil of the early thirties in the United States. During the Spanish civil war, most Italian-Americans were on the side of the fascist-supported nationalists. The attitude toward President Roosevelt was ambivalent; he was liked because he was on the side of the ethnic minorities, disliked because of his (and his wife's) articulate criti-

cism of fascist totalitarianism. The lodges of the Sons of Italy and other fraternal Italian-American associations, the chapters of the Dante Alighieri Society, cultural clubs linked to Italian consulates, hundreds of small organized groups founded on the solidarity of *paesani*, were the vehicles through which Italian Fascism managed to reach Italian Americans everywhere. Prominent Italians known as "notables" extolled Fascism. Most of the Italian language press in the United States was a vehicle for Fascist propaganda. Lecturers sent by the Ministry of Popular Education in Rome presented Fascist achievements in glowing terms. Until the crisis caused by Italy's intervention in World War II in 1940 and by the Italian declaration of war against the United States in 1941, pro-Fascist notables reflected the sentiments of most members of Italian-American communities.

#### DEMOCRATS

There were other Italian Americans. Long before mass migration began, some Italians had come to the United States because, among other reasons, they resented the lack of democracy in Italy. Some were democrats without qualification, some were Mazzinian democrats, some were socialists convinced that there was more fertile ground for socialism in the United States than in Italy. More democrats arrived after the Fascist dictatorship was established. Many of the latter came not as exiles waiting for the collapse of the dictatorship, which would allow them to return to the Old Country, but to settle, to become citizens, and to contribute to American life. There were those who like Arturo Toscanini and Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, had already made their reputation in Italy. Younger people made reputations for themselves in the United States. Two of these are Max Ascoli, teacher and writer, who for twenty years was the editor of *The Reporter*, an influential opinion magazine of the 1950s and 1960s, and the political scientist Mario Einaudi.

It was natural for socialists to become active in the labor movement and to devote themselves to organizing Italian-American wage earners. August Bellanca and Luigi Antonini (born in Sicily and Campania respectively), the most prominent Italian-American labor leaders from the 1920s to the 1960s and founders of the Italian American Labor Council, described themselves as socialists but—like many other AFL-CIO leaders who were also socialists—they never departed from the basic policy of American organized labor, which aimed at improving the conditions of the wage earners within the context of a free-enterprise economy, and at strengthening the democratic process. Another Italian-American socialist, Serafino Romualdi, played a considerable role immediately after World War II in organizing an international labor movement free of Soviet influence.

Deeply committed to democracy, also, were the numerous immigrants who in the United States be-





Arturo Toscanini. EPA

Luigi Antonini. International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, AFL-CIO



came converts to Protestantism. Often more than religious belief was involved in the conversion. It meant alienation from the mainstream of Italian-American communities (channeled by Catholicism and also for a long period by *italianità*), renunciation of what most Italian Americans considered their traditional way of life, and rapid assimilation through the acceptance of American values and American behavior.

#### REVOLUTIONARIES

There had also been some revolutionaries among Italian immigrants: left-wing socialists, syndicalists, anarchists. Italians were among those who joined the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the syndicalist organization founded in 1905, and led the strikes in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Paterson, New Jersey, in 1912 and 1913 respectively. The anarchist Gaetano Bresci had lived in the United States before his successful attempt on the life of King Humbert I. Edmondo Rossoni, later a prominent Fascist and collaborator of Mussolini's, was a militant syndicalist and an agitator in the United States. Most left-wing socialists (after 1918, Communists) of Italian origin either changed their minds as time went on or left the United States. There were groups of anarchists of Italian origin in the large cities of the East; in Chicago; in smaller places like Barre, Vermont, settled by marble workers from an area of Italy in which anarchists were numerous; and as far as Colorado and California.

Anarchism was a term covering a number of different and often conflicting ideologies. There was little in common between the groups formed around the publications *Il Martello*, *Controcorrente*, *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, or their editors, Carlo Tresca (whose murder in 1943 is still an unsolved mystery), Aldino Felicani, and Armando Borghi. The two anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, accused of murder in a payroll holdup in 1920 but never convincingly proved guilty, would not have been executed in 1927 if juries, judges, and the public had not lumped together all leftist radicals. The excesses of Russian Bolsheviki had caused a deep emotional wave of revulsion among Americans, but anarchists had nothing in common with Leninist Communists. Among anarchists there were differences between individualists, collectivists, anarco-syndicalists, between the advocates of terroristic violence and those who were moved by humanitarian compassion for the oppressed. The execution of Sacco and Vanzetti made martyrs of the two anarchists.

#### THE CRISIS OF WORLD WAR II

The year 1940 was one of crisis for Italian Americans who had been in sympathy with Mussolini's dictatorship. Their *italianità* had been deeply influenced by the emotions and the aspirations of the *Risorgimento* and of World War I, when Austrians were the





*Lawrence, Massachusetts, strikers, led by members of the IWW, on their way to attack the mills. Photoworld*



*Carlo Tresca. Photoworld*

*Sacco and Vanzetti (center). Photoworld*



enemy. In the minds of most Italian Americans, yesterday's Austrians were today's Germans—Italy's permanent enemy. Little notice had been paid to similarities between the Italian and the German dictatorships, to what the latter owed to the former, or to the transition from ideological affinity to a military alliance. Mussolini's decision to enter the war on Germany's side in June 1940 was a shock to Italian Americans. The shock had not been foreseen. The attraction of fascism and the influence of fascist propaganda waned. They disappeared completely in December 1941 when, in the

wake of Pearl Harbor, Mussolini declared war on the United States. Any previous conflict of loyalties dissolved—the only loyalty was to the American flag. When in the summer of 1943 American divisions landed in Sicily and then on the mainland, Italian-American GIs and officers saw themselves as liberators of the country of their parents and grandparents. The pro-Fascist "notables" were spokesmen for Italian Americans no longer.

During the war years, considerable aid was given by Italian-American democrats, democratic socialists, former revolutionaries and, especially, Italian-American organized labor to refugees from racial persecution in Italy. After the fall of France, they extended help to exiles compelled to leave the German-occupied countries of the Continent. New York replaced Paris as the main center of the activities of anti-fascist exiles. There, exiles and Italian-American friends founded the Mazzini Society, which, linked to Free Italy organizations established in other countries where Italians and their descendants were numerous, stimulated the development of a vast movement working for the establishment of republican democracy in Italy. Leaders of the Mazzini Society had clandestine channels of communication with Italy. They provided evidence that among Italians there was a democratic alternative to Fascism, and thus helped to shape the American administration's policies in relation to Italy. Italian Americans filled positions in the Allied Military Government (AMG) of Italy and helped to create conditions that made free elections and a free constitutional referendum in 1946 possible. In the immediate postwar period, Italian-American labor supported the efforts of Italian democratic socialists to check the influence of Communists and fellow travelers. In 1948, through a campaign of letters sent to relatives and friends in Italy, Italian Americans con-



tributed to the electoral success of the center coalition led by the Christian Democratic party.

#### INTEGRATION

The integration of Italian Americans into the mainstream of American life had begun before World War I. Largely because of the Fascist-sponsored stress on Italian national heritage as alien to the American way of life, and rejection of the idea that ethnic identity is compatible with American democratic pluralism, integration proceeded more slowly between the two world wars than would otherwise have been the case. It did, however, progress rapidly in the post-World War II period. Integration meant participation in all aspects of American life. It meant that Italian Americans had opportunity for success and distinction.

#### LA GUARDIA

The first major achievements were in public life. The politicization of immigrants and first-generation Italian Americans became meaningful with election to office. In 1917 Fiorello La Guardia, born of Italian parents in New York in 1882, was elected to Congress. For thirty years he remained the most prominent American of Italian descent in public life. A former Foreign Service official who had helped European emigrants at ports of departure, a flier in World War I when he served for a while as American liaison officer on the Italian front, a self-made man with a warm heart and a brilliant mind, La Guardia was elected mayor of New York City on the Republican-Fusion ticket in 1933. Reelected several times, he was mayor until 1945. As a congressman he had had the votes of a largely Italian-American constituency; as mayor he had the enthusiastic support of organized labor and of all New Yorkers who resented the long reign and political corruption of Tammany Hall (which never entirely recovered from the 1933 defeat). A statesman as well as a politician, a man with wide interests and broad views, and a committed New

Dealer even when a registered Republican, La Guardia (nicknamed "The Little Flower"—the translation of *Fiorello*) was a close friend of President Roosevelt, with whom he had much in common. Dynamic and tireless, La Guardia served as director of the Office of Civilian Defense in 1941/42. In 1946 he headed UNRRA, the organization sponsored by the United Nations and financed primarily by the United States, which played a major role in alleviating suffering in war-devastated areas in the period immediately following World War II.

#### OTHER ITALIAN AMERICANS IN PUBLIC LIFE

La Guardia was not the first Italian American to become mayor of a large American city. Angelo Rossi, his senior by a few years, who was also born in the United States of Italian parents and was also a progressive Republican, served as mayor of San Francisco from 1931 to 1944. A businessman, and an active participant in Italian-American organizations in California, Rossi was known and liked by Italian Americans everywhere in the West. Ferdinand Pecora, a politician turned judge, was born in Sicily in 1882 and brought to the United States at the age of three. He was first appointed, and then elected, a justice of the Supreme Court of New York State. Three other Italian Americans who were prominent in public life before World War II were younger than La Guardia, Rossi, and Pecora. Edward Corsi was an Abruzzese who had come to the United States at the age of ten. A lawyer and a writer, he was, like La Guardia and Rossi, a progressive Republican. He served as Immigration Commissioner at Ellis Island, then the chief port of entry for immigrants from Europe. Later, he was appointed Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, and Industrial Commissioner for New York State. The theme of his book *In the Shadow of Liberty* (1935) was the people he knew best, the immigrants. Charles Poletti, a brilliant lawyer who was born in Vermont of Italian parents, was appointed to the Supreme Court of the state of New York when still a young man. He was elected lieutenant governor

Fiorello H. La Guardia. Photoworld



Ferdinand Pecora. Photoworld







Frank Rizzo. UPI



Vito Marcantonio. Photoworld

of New York in 1939, and served briefly as governor in 1942. In 1943–1946, as an officer of the Allied Military Government, he was entrusted with the administration of major Italian cities. Vito Marcantonio was elected to Congress in the district of New York City that had been La Guardia's constituency. Closely connected with the Labor party, Marcantonio had the reputation among politicians of being a fellow traveler. The voters, however, knew him as an observing Catholic and a man proud of his Italian ancestry, always willing and able to help those in need.

Most Italian Americans in public life in the post-World War II period still had a base in the ethnic solidarity of Little Italys but—as was to be expected with growing integration—the ethnic base became less and less important. In New York City and San Francisco, La Guardia and Rossi were succeeded, after considerable time lags, by other Italian-American mayors, the Sicilian-born Vincent Impellitteri in New York, and, in San Francisco, Joseph Alioto who was born in the United States and shared hardly any of the hyphenated American characteristics of the previous generation. The continuation of ethnic solidarity in New York City and in New York State gave spokesmen of Italian-American groups considerable influence in city organizations and in the state legislature. In 1969, both the Republican and Democratic parties nominated Italian-American candidates in the New York mayoral elections. Thomas D'Alesandro, a successful businessman who was several times elected to Congress, served as mayor of Baltimore for twelve years, 1947–1959. The mayor of Cleveland during most of the 1950s was Anthony Celebrezze, born in Anzi in Basilicata. Before becoming mayor, Celebrezze had been state senator; from 1962 to 1965 he served under President Lyndon B. Johnson as Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In the late 1960s Miss Antonina Uccello was mayor of Hartford, Connecticut. As an American she achieved what no woman had yet achieved in Italy: she became the elected mayor of an important city. Frank L. Rizzo



Vincent R. Impellitteri. New York City Public Works Department. Annual Report 1952

Miss Antonia Uccello. Photo by R. W. Sutcliffe





became mayor of Philadelphia in 1971. Several Italian Americans were elected governors. John Pastore, born in the United States of parents from Teano in southern Italy, served for five years as governor of Rhode Island before being elected to the United States Senate in 1950. First Foster Furcolo and then John Volpe were governors of Massachusetts. Volpe resigned his position in 1969 after his appointment as Secretary of Transportation by President Nixon. At the end of the 1950s, Albert Rossellini was governor of the state of Washington.

In 1970 the Republican Silvio Conte was one of the Italian-American members of the House of Representatives: he had been elected in an area of Massachusetts where only a small number of Italian Americans live. Former Representative Emilio Q. Daddario (who served with distinction as an OSS officer in Italy during World War II, and later in Korea) had a large Italian-American base in his constituency. The Italian-American vote was influential in electing various other Representatives from Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, New York State, and Pennsylvania, all Democrats. Vincent Massari, president of the Columbian Federation, became a distinguished member of the Legislature in Colorado. Michael Angelo Musmanno was elected to the Supreme Court of the state of Pennsylvania in 1952. A jurist who had been the defense lawyer for Sacco and Vanzetti, in whose innocence he deeply believed, and who had served as judge at the Nuremberg trials of German war criminals, Musmanno was a prolific writer on a variety of topics and he kept close links with all things Italian. Judge George Quilici of Illinois was another distinguished member of the judiciary of the postwar period. Nearly half a century after the end of mass Italian immigration, the Italian-American vote was an important element in six Eastern states with 115 electoral votes; also significant in three Midwestern states and California, with another 113 electoral votes.

Glamorous for some and drab routine for others in nations which have gone beyond the authoritarian stage, public life—conventionally the historian's main concern—accounts for only a small fraction of a people's activities. This is particularly true in the United States where the range of private activities within which citizens can act on their own is wide, where, too, means available to do what one decides to do are, even if unevenly distributed, more abundant than elsewhere. What Italian Americans have done in their private capacities matters considerably more, and is more significant for the Italian-American community, than their achievements in public life. However, the field is so vast that it can only be glimpsed here.

#### ARTISTS, CRITICS, SCHOLARS

The architect Pietro Belluschi, the composer Gian Carlo Menotti, the film director Frank Capra, the



*John Pastore*

*Gian Carlo Menotti, Photoworld*



sculptors Mirko Basaldella and Paolo Soleri were born in Italy but made the United States their home. As Americans they created and produced. Poet, poetry critic, distinguished translator of Dante, and teacher, John Ciardi is the son of immigrants who improved



their lot through hard work, as millions of others did. Among Italian-born scholars who contributed to the American development of their disciplines are the literary critics Rodolfo Altrocchi and Renato Poggioli, the sociologist Constantine Panunzio, the historians Giorgio La Piana, Giorgio di Santillana, and William Salomone. Joseph La Palombara, political scientist, economist, and sociologist, was born in the United States of Italian parentage, as was Eugene Genovese, the history teacher whose right to teach was upheld by the governor of New Jersey in a dispute with legislators contending that a committed Marxist should not be on the payroll of a state university.

#### FROM STAGE TO DIAMOND

American tours were a welcome and financially rewarding must for nineteenth-century Italian opera singers. In the twentieth century, many singers came to stay or divided their time between the United States and Italy: Enrico Caruso, Giovanni Martinelli, Ezio Pinza, Licia Albanese, Ferruccio Tagliavini, Gabriella Tucci, Renata Tebaldi, Cesare Siepi, Franco Corelli, Anna Maria Alberghetti are just a few. Rudolph Valentino (born Guglielmi), who came to the United States when he was not yet twenty and became a star of silent films, was followed by many others. Among the post-World War II crop of Italian film actors and actresses it became customary to work as much in American as in Italian movies, and to spend long periods of time in the United States. The band leader Guy Lombardo was born in Canada of Italian

Enrico Caruso. EPA



parents. Among first-generation Italian-American popular comedians and singers are Jimmy Durante, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Vic Damone. The Italian-born Primo Carnera and the first-generation Americans Joe DiMaggio and Rocky Marciano won great popular acclaim for their athletic prowess.



Ezio Pinza. Photoworld

Renata Tebaldi. Photoworld



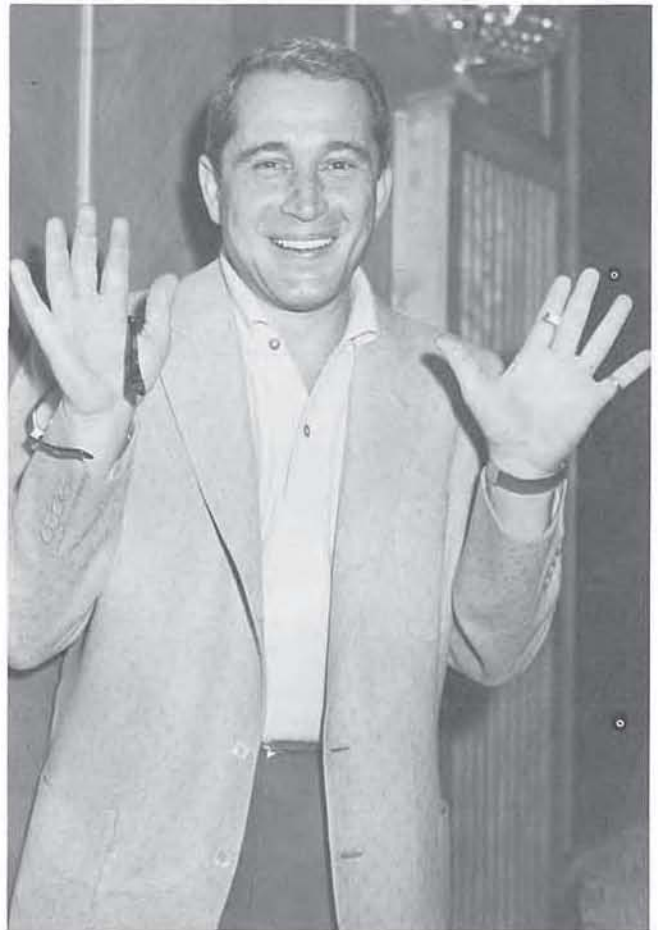




*Anna Maria Alberghetti. TWA*



*Jimmy Durante. Photoworld*



*Perry Como. Photoworld*



*Rudolph Valentino. Photoworld*





*Frank Sinatra. Photoworld*



*Joe DiMaggio (right) with Allie Reynolds. Photoworld*



*Dean Martin. Photoworld*



*Rocky Marciano. Photoworld*

*Primo Carnera (left) with Ray Impellittere. Photoworld*



*Amadeo P. Giannini. Bank of America*





*ITALIAN AMERICANS IN BUSINESS*

The best-known Italian-American name in the business world is that of the California-born Amadeo Giannini. In 1904 he founded the Bank of Italy, which prospered through the economic success of California's Italian-American community. In 1929 he bought the Bank of America and developed it into one of the largest financial institutions in the world. Another Californian, Edmund Rossi, was at one time the largest producer of wine in the world. Successful entrepreneurs in the East were Generoso Pope, an immigrant born near Naples who settled in New York, and a first-generation Italian American of Boston, John Volpe. The Sicilian Giuseppe Bellanca was an inventor and pioneer aircraft manufacturer. Neither a financier nor an industrialist, the Piedmontese Melchiorre Sardi made his restaurant a social center in New York.

*THE UNNAMED MILLIONS*

Names matter, not only because achievements belong to individuals but also because the few whose names are known help give the many unnamed a sense of identity. The few, however, are not a separate

breed, they are part of the many. In evaluating the achievements, contributions, and progress (and also failures) of Italian Americans, those whose names do not appear in any *Who's Who* are the most important.

Except for a minuscule minority, the millions of Italian Americans came from the disinherited of Italy at a time when the pressure of population on scant resources was greatest, and little could be done for the poor, the illiterate, the isolated. Emigration meant the chance to achieve what could not be achieved in the Old Country. In the United States, as wage- and salary-earners, as businessmen and professionals, most have achieved the immigrants' goal: a middle-class status which is simply a decent standard of living and a decent education.

As Italian Americans, the immigrants, their children, and grandchildren are Italians no longer, even if, for a while at least, many are not yet Americans. However, the time is near when in the United States there will be no Italian Americans but simply Americans of Italian descent and with Italian names. At this point, their history will cease to be linked with that of the Italian people and will merge into the history of the American people.



*Giuseppe Bellanca. UPI*



*Melchiorre Sardi with his wife and son. Photoworld*





*Recent immigrants. UPI*



*Rally of Italian Americans during the 1970 Italian American Day Parade, New York City. UPI*

*Italian family en route to Ellis Island. Lewis W. Hine Collection, Local History and Genealogy Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*





## GLOSSARY

- Age of Princes: in Italy, approximately the fifteenth century and early sixteenth; starting with Gian Galeazzo Visconti in 1395, *signori* received hereditary titles from either the emperor or the pope; the Age of Princes ends with the consolidation of Spanish control over much of Italy.
- Aventino*: the 1924 parliamentary opposition to the Fascist regime; symbolically called *Aventino* after the 494(?) withdrawal of plebeians to Mount Aventine (one of the seven hills of Rome).
- Axis, Rome-Berlin: the alliance between Italian Fascism and German National Socialism, 1936–1945.
- Babylonian Captivity: the period (1305–1376) when popes resided in France, mostly in Avignon, and the prestige of the papacy declined.
- Blackshirts: members of Fascist Action squads which began to be organized in 1919; later Fascist Militiamen.
- Carbonari* (charcoal burners): members of the *carboneria*.
- Carboneria*: clandestine revolutionary society aiming at creating a unified constitutional state in Italy during the immediate post-Napoleonic era; the 1820s were the years of its greatest activity; liberals, democrats, and other patriots joined the *carboneria* but most democrats (republicans) seceded when Mazzini established the Young Italy clandestine society.
- Carroccio*: the ox-drawn cart on which Mass was celebrated before citizen-soldiers of Italian *comuni* went into battle; first used in Milan around 1040.
- Christian Democracy: Italian political Catholicism which favors democratic procedure; the secession of Christian democrats from traditional authoritarian clericalism began in the 1890s; the Popular Party founded in 1919 was reorganized and named Christian Democratic party at the end of World War II (it is supported by from one-third to two-fifths or more of the electorate).
- Clericalism: the policy of Italian Catholics favorable to the subordination of the state to the Catholic church.
- Committee of National Liberation (CNL): the coalition of anti-Fascist parties that led the Italian Resistance against Germans and Fascists in 1943–1945.
- Communism: the political movement founded on Marxist-Leninist principles and goals; the Italian Communist party is supported by from one-fourth to one-third of the electorate.
- Comuni*: medieval self-governing local communities (city-states), democratic or semidemocratic and de facto independent; there were already *comuni* in the eighth century in southern Italy, but they flourished particularly in northern and central Italy from the eleventh to the early fourteenth century; the Republic of San Marino is a relic of Italy's communal age.
- Conciliar movement: the attempt made by some Catholic clergy in 1409–1449 to make the Councils (of bishops) the supreme authority in the Catholic church.
- Conciliatoristi*: in the 1530s and 1540s the faction among Catholic cardinals favorable to a compromise with Protestantism; eliminated at the Council of Trent (1545–1564), the tendency was revived at Council Vatican II (1962–1965).
- Condottiero*: an organizer and commander of mercenary troops; the early 14th-century *condottieri* in Italy were foreigners; the first great Italian *condottiero* was Alberico da Barbiano, the last Giovanni de' Medici.
- Corporatism: Catholic formula for the organization of the economy, evolved at the end of the nineteenth century, adopted by Italian Fascism in the early 1920s; in corporatism the means of production and exchange are owned mainly by private interests but the use of them is determined by the state.
- Counter-Reformation, or Catholic Reformation: the reform of the Catholic church effected by *rigoristi*, leading to the reestablishment of Catholic control in areas which had been lost to Protestantism.
- Destra* (Right): constitutional conservatives in post-unification Italy; in power 1861–1876, many later merged as Liberals with the *Sinistra*.
- Doge*: Venetian corruption of the Latin *dux* (from which duke also comes); title of the chief executive officer and head of state in the Venetian Republic (also, later, in the Genoese Republic).
- Dominate: the late and autocratic phase of the Roman Empire, from Diocletian on.
- Duce* (leader): from the Latin *dux*, the designation of Benito Mussolini as Fascist leader.
- Estrema* (Extreme Left): pre-World War I Republican and Socialist deputies opposed to the parliamentary monarchical regime established in 1861.
- Fasci*: from the Latin *fascēs* (bundles, symbols of union); the terms *fasci* and *fascisti* were first used at the end of the nineteenth century by groups of revolutionary socialists; later by groups favoring Italy's active participation in World War I; the *Fasci di Combattimento* (Fighting Unions) founded in 1919 later became the Italian Fascist party.
- Fascio di Combattimento*: see *Fasci*.
- Fascism*: movement in which radical nationalism and revolutionary socialism merged; key elements were



- the one-party dictatorship, economic autarchy, nationalistic frenzy, violence, and intolerance; in power in Italy 1922–1943.
- Fiancheggiatori* (flankers): conservatives of a variety of divergent attitudes who supported the Fascist dictatorship without sharing Fascist convictions and emotions.
- Ghibellines: supporters of imperial (secular) against papal (clerical) authority in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; name derives from Waiblingen, headquarters of a faction in the German civil wars that followed the death of Emperor Henry V (1125).
- Giudici*: title of governors of the four districts (*giudicature*) into which medieval Sardinia was divided.
- Great Interregnum: the period (1254–1273) when no central authority functioned in Germany and in the (Holy) Roman Empire; the Interregnum made final the weakening of medieval imperial authority, and led to the political fragmentation of Germany.
- Guelphs: supporters of papal (clerical) against imperial (secular) authority in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; name derives from Welf, family leading one faction in the German civil wars that followed the death of Emperor Henry V (1125).
- Humanism: cultural movement during the Renaissance period, more concerned with human affairs than with theological problems; the dignity of man, respect for the individual, tolerance, moderation, and reasonableness were key elements in humanism; to medieval thought, which was dogmatic and theocratic, it represented ancient secular thought.
- Index: list of books and other publications forbidden by Catholic authorities; preceded by partial lists, the first comprehensive Index was issued in 1559.
- Italy, Kingdom: (a) of the Goths in (489–554); (b) of the Lombards in (568–774); (c) of, linked to the (Holy) Roman Empire (781–1530) but purely nominal after 1176; (d) of, Napoleonic (1805–1814); (e) of (1861–1946).
- Liberalism: (a) after the end of French domination (1814) the movement that aimed at creating a united constitutional Italian state; (b) (1848–1922) the movement of advocates of a unitary monarchical Italian state founded on free representative institutions; (c) (1943–) movement advocating separation between church and state, and free enterprise, within a democratic frame.
- Maecenasism: generosity toward artists and writers from rulers and wealthy people; from the name of Augustus' friend Maecenas.
- Magna Graecia, or Great Greece: the section of southern Italy settled by Greek colonists.
- March on Rome: the seizure of power in Italy by Fascists through a show of force, October 28, 1922.
- Massimalisti*: pre-Fascist Italian Marxists rejecting democracy as equal rights of all (socialists and non-socialists) but advocating democracy among socialists.
- Naples, Kingdom of: (a) the peninsular state of which Naples was the capital (1282–1721 and again 1806–1815); (b) the mainland part of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1721–1806 and 1815–1860).
- National Society: the organization formed by Italian patriots in 1856 with the aim of expelling foreigners (Austrians), ending the separation of independent regional states, and establishing a constitutional unitary kingdom; in the National Society progressive moderates (Liberals) and nonrepublican Democrats merged.
- Neo-Guelphs: expression used in the 1840s to denote liberal-minded, nationalist Catholics, forerunners of twentieth-century Christian Democrats.
- Non expedit*: instruction officially given in February 1968 by ecclesiastical authorities to Italian Catholics not to participate in the political life of the Kingdom of Italy; the *non expedit* was rescinded when World War I ended.
- Nuraghi*: Sardinian towerlike structures built in pre-Roman times.
- OVRA: the Fascist secret police, patterned on Lenin's Cheka.
- Papal States: since Leo I (fifth century) popes were de facto rulers of Rome and its district; the Papal States came into existence when in 756 Pepin III donated to Pope Stephen II former Byzantine territories in central and northern Italy, and ended with the annexation of Rome and Latium by Italy in 1870.
- Patavia*: the evangelical movement which began at the middle of the eleventh century in Milan; *patarini* was the name later given to all heretics.
- Pax Romana: the period beginning in 31 B.C. and lasting nearly three centuries when the Roman Mediterranean world was internally at peace.
- Petrine principle: the doctrine according to which the bishop of Rome, successor of Saint Peter, is bishop of bishops, i.e., has supremacy in the Catholic church.
- Podestà*: chief executive in Italian medieval city-states during the period of transition from democratic to dictatorial regimes (thirteenth-fourteenth century); under the Fascist regime the government-appointed heads of municipal administrations were called *podestà*.
- Pontifex maximus*: the highest religious official in the ancient Roman Republic; from Augustus to Gratian, emperors held the title and fulfilled the functions; in 382 title and functions were transferred to the bishop of Rome (pontiff, or pope).
- Principate: the early and semiconstitutional phase of the Roman Empire when the Senate still retained some authority.
- Principati*: in becoming hereditary, *signorie* (dictatorships) were changed into *principati*; the change was usually sanctioned by the concession, by emperors or popes, of titles such as duke, prince, marquis. (See *Signorie*.)
- Provinciae*: the dependencies of the Roman Republic



- (third to first century B.C.); later subdivisions of the Roman Empire.
- Reame*: Kingdom of Naples, and Kingdom of Two Sicilies.
- Redshirts: volunteers led by Garibaldi; the most famous Redshirts were The Thousand (*I Mille*) whom Garibaldi led in 1860 in the conquest of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.
- Reformists: socialists convinced that their goals should be achieved within a democratic institutional frame, and accepting the concept of equality between socialists and nonsocialists.
- Renaissance: the rebirth of intellectual life in Italy from the fourteenth to middle of the sixteenth century, best known for its artistic manifestations.
- Resistance: the anti-Fascist and anti-German insurrection in German-occupied Italy in 1943–1945.
- Revolutionary socialists: before 1914 a term applied to (a) the minority revolutionary wing of Italian Marxism, (b) the syndicalists, (c) the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists; after World War I (a) became the Italian Communist party (1921), (b) provided (together with the Nationalist party) Fascism with much of its early membership, (c) dwindled to negligible numbers; Marxist revolutionary socialists were for integral collectivism and total dictatorship, both to be set up through violence.
- Rigoristi*: faction among Catholic cardinals in the 1530s and 1540s opposed to any compromise with Protestantism; it triumphed with the Council of Trent (1545–1564), the Roman Inquisition (1542), the Index (1559), the *Confessio Fidei Tridentina* (1564).
- Risorgimento*: post-Napoleonic movement aiming at the establishment of an independent Italian state founded on free institutions; conventionally it covers the years 1815–1870.
- Roman Republic: (a) ancient (sixth to first century B.C.); (b) medieval (middle of fourteenth century); (c) of 1798–1799; (d) of 1849.
- Sardinia, Kingdom of: (a) 1242, under a Hohenstaufen-Altavilla prince; (b) 1322–1708, linked to the Kingdom of Aragon, later Spain; (c) 1720–1860, the state ruled by the house of Savoy including, besides the islands, much of northwestern Italy and districts in southeastern France.
- Savoy: (a) region in southeastern France; (b) the state ruled by the house of Savoy including districts in southeastern France and northwestern Italy (Piedmont); (c) family that ruled the county, later Duchy, of Savoy, becoming kings of Sicily (1713) and of Sardinia (1720) with Victor Amadeus II, of Italy (1861) with Victor Emmanuel II.
- Scudo: the five-lire piece, corresponding to one dollar.
- Serenissima* (or *Serenissima Signoria*): name by which the Republic of Venice was known.
- Sicilian Vespers: the revolt of Easter Monday, 1282, by Sicilians against the French who had ruled the island since 1266; it led to the separation of the insular and peninsular sections of the united southern state created two centuries earlier by the Normans. (See Sicily.)
- Sicily, Kingdom of: (a) the state including the island and the southern part of the Italian peninsula (1130–1282); (b) the island (1282–1713); (c) the state ruled by the house of Savoy including the island, much of northwestern Italy and districts in southeastern France (1713–1720).
- Signore*: the authoritarian ruler of Italian city-states in the late Middle Ages and during the Renaissance; the fourteenth century was the age of *signori* in northern and central Italy.
- Signorie*: dictatorships which from the thirteenth century on gradually replaced the democratic or semi-democratic regimes of medieval Italian city-states (see *Comuni*); some dictatorships were oligarchic, most were monarchic and in the fifteenth century were transformed into *principati*; the Principality of Monaco is a relic of Italy's age of *signorie*.
- Sinistra* (Left): constitutional democrats in postunification Italy; in power 1876–1891, many later merged as Liberals with the *Destra*.
- Social Democrats: see Reformists.
- Stati*: Papal States.
- Thousand, The: see Redshirts.
- Trasformismo*: the process of political realignment in postunification Italy, aimed at widening support for free representative institutions; the merging of right-of-center and left-of-center groups and the secession of Radicals from Mazzinian Republicans in the 1890s, and the formation of a left-of-center coalition in the 1960s, were major examples of *trasformismo*.
- Trulli*: conical stone dwellings found in parts of Apulia.
- Two Sicilies, Kingdom of the: the state including the former kingdoms of Sicily and of Naples (1720–1860 with interruptions in 1799 and 1806–1815).
- Vatican: (a) vast medieval and Renaissance palace in Rome which at times was residence of the popes; (b) as papal residence since 1870 Vatican came to mean papacy; (c) as headquarters of the papal administration since 1870 Vatican came to denote the central authority of the Catholic church; (d) the palace gives its name to the independent *Città del Vaticano* (Vatican City), established in 1929.
- Young Italy: a clandestine society, nationalist and democratic, founded by Giuseppe Mazzini in 1831; Mazzini was also the founder of Young Europe of which, among others, Young Italy, Young Ireland, and Young Hungary were members.



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