

The emigration from Italy, between 1875 and 1915

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- From 1875 to 1915, 14 million of Italians emigrated.
- About 8 million went to America, 6 in northern Europe.
- Top destinations: Argentina (23%), Brazil and the United States.
- Since 1900, 4 out of 10 Italians went to New York.
- After a long journey by ship, migrants are held in quarantine on the Ellis Island, where they are subjected to a medical and police checks.
- In the first decade of XX Century in NY the Italian immigrants created "Little Italy", with shops, restaurants, pizzerias and bakeries.



The top destination: South and North America



- The first to leave were the men: they were later joined by their wives and children.
- The migrants were traveling on old steamers.
- Each ship could hold about 1,000 people, but they were loaded even with 1,200 (or more) people.
- Often the old ships sank.
- In 1891 during the sinking of the ship "Utopia", 550 Italians were killed. There were Italians also among the no casualties of the "Titanic."
- During the trip, the immigrants were locked in the hold, with no toilets.

The departure and the trip



Italian Bread Peddlers, Mulberry Street, New York Circa 1900



Italian immigrants in NY

- On December 6, 1907, in Monongah coal mine, in the U.S. State of West Virginia, there were two explosions.
- The victims were about 430, of which 171 Italian immigrants.
- They were unskilled workers, who were employed "in the day" and they worked illegally: for this reason it was not possible to identify the name of many of them.
- In San Giovanni in Fiore, a small town in Calabria region (in the South of Italy), there is a monument commemorating the 40 miners from Calabria dead in Monongah.



The Monongah disaster



- The main European destinations of Italian immigrants were: France, Austria, Switzerland and Germany.
- Men did menial jobs, such as unskilled workers in the factories of soap, glass, shipyards and mines.
- The women worked in the cotton mills, in the textile and paper mills.
- Italian immigrants came not only from the South of Italy, but also from the North: for example, between 1875 and 1900, about 360 people coming from Veneto region (today one of the most rich Region of Italy) emigrated to Germany.

To Northern Europe

- In the new Countries, Italians often lived in slums, packed in 5 and more persons in one room.
- Being dirty, illiterate and not knowing foreign language, they were regarded with contempt by Americans and Europeans.
- Frequently occurred incidents of racism and violence.
- For example in 1891, 11 Italians in New Orleans were lynched on the charge (false) of having killed the police chief. In 1893 at Agues-Mortes, Provence, the French workers killed 10 Italians accused of have stolen their work."



Difficult living conditions and xenophobia