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EMILIA
ROMAGNA

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ALLA CONQUISTA DELLA CINDIA

THE CONQUEST OF CHINDIA

Le aziende
emiliano-romagnole
investono nei mercati dell'Asia

Companies
in Emilia-Romagna
invest in Asian
markets

CULTURA CULTURE
L'Ermitage sbarca a Ferrara
The Hermitage comes to Ferrara

LETTURE LECTURES
L'Emilia secondo Björn Larsson
Emilia according to Björn Larsson



ER Emilia Romagna



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ALMOND-EYED MARKETS

by Stefano Vezzani

From Vm Motori to Arcotronics, from Vortex Hydra to Ducati Energia, the Brevini Group of Reggio Emilia and Bologna's Officine Maccaferri, Emilia-Romagna's companies leave on a long march to conquer Asian markets. Osservatorio Asia notes that Emilia-Romagna ranks third in Italian regions for its commerce and production in China and India, behind the Lombardy and Veneto regions. The added value offered by these emerging economies is mainly in advanced mechanics, high technology, chemistry, agro-industrial know-how and textiles.

If interest in China, although growing in overall value, has stabilized compared to the boom at the start of the year 2000, India is that country that Emilia-Romagna is betting on this year and it is considered a "priority" country for 2007 by the Ministry of International Commerce. The last time the relationship with the Asian sub-continent was consolidated was through the Italian entrepreneurial mission carried out in February, organized by Confindustria, ICE and ABI, following Prime Minister Romano Prodi. The aim: to investigate a little-explored market that is quickly expanding and to support agreements with companies and institutions. "Our region— says Sergio Sassi, president of the Internationalisation Commission of Confindustria Emilia-Romagna — is second in Italian exports to Asian countries (Liguria is the first, Ed.). Economic analysts predict that India's GDP will be greater than that of Italy within 5 years, while in 2040 it should overtake that of the United States". 40 companies and institutions of Emilia-Romagna took part in the visit, including Officine Maccaferri, the Bolognese world leader group in the geotechnical and soil erosion field that invested 6 million Euros in opening a new plant in Pune and buying Sargon Geosynthetics of New Delhi. "We expect — announces Officine Maccaferri's Managing Director Luigi Penzo — our business on the territory to increase between 10 and 15 million Euro in the next three years". It is a business that meets India's need for quality infrastructures and is certainly one of

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the ties that contributes to halting (for a short time) the local economic boom. On a parallel level, Maccaferri will finish building the new Pune plant (of 15 thousand square metres) by the end of 2007, which will be added to those of Mumbai and Delhi. This expansion will determine an employee increase in the Indian establishments that will go from the current total of 20 to 100 people.

While Cosepuri, the Bolognese consortium of enterprises active in people transport and tourism, will start a company in India this year through a partnership with local companies, February's mission was an occasion to subscribe to the Parma Cluster India project (20 participating companies), involved in the promotion of Italian machinery and the training of Indian staff on European hygiene standards in order to make Asian foodstuffs suitable for exportation to all international markets. The main point of the initiative was to give the ten companies from Parma (amongst which Protec, Zacmi, Melegari, Tropical Food Machinery), divided into five product groups, the opportunity to meet Indian entrepreneurs in 50 establishments. The Chinese market is relatively more mature (183 companies from Emilia-Romagna are present) and is targeted by Bonfiglioli of Bologna who has

opened a new affiliated company of 3 thousand square metres in Shanghai, 40 km from the city centre: the aim is to replicate the success obtained in India where, since 1999, the company has consistently increased its income by slowly taking important market shares, year after year, of mechanical reducers and electric motors.

This market offers extraordinary potential and is estimated at around 3.8 billion dollars within the large mechanics industry that is worth around 231 billion dollars with an annual growth of around 24 percent. VM Motori of Cento in the Ferrara area also seems set to plan more solid investments in China in the forthcoming years. Until now it has concentrated mainly on transferring licenses for the production of diesel motors.

Other successful cases from Emilia-Romagna can also be seen: cranes produced by Fantuzzi of Reggio Emilia (one of its plants has 2,000 employees) are dotted around various Chinese ports while Emilceramiche of Fiorano, which produces flooring materials, boasts a turnover of one million Euro with a sales network stretching from Shanghai to Peking. Brevini of Reggio Emilia also has good prospects. It has been present in China since 1994 in the field of construction and

earth-moving machinery as well as clean energy production: it intends to develop a partnership with a Chinese company and aims to have a factory 150 km from Shanghai up and running by September, able to produce 40 thousand industrial reducers.

SOFIA'S CHOICE

by Giorgio Savona

More energy needed for economic relations between Italy and Bulgaria following the "Country of Roses" entry to the European Union and more commitment to various aspects such as professional training and the support of Bulgaria's public administration system in relations with Brussels. These were the commitments made during the meeting that took place in January at the Italian Embassy in Sofia in the presence of Prime Minister Romano Prodi, Vice President of Emilia-Romagna Flavio Delbono, a delegation of the Bulgarian Government and representatives from over 70 Italian firms operating in Bulgaria, 15 of which are from Emilia-Romagna.

The main industries of import-export trade are textiles, fashion and clothing, footwear and accessories, the mechanical industry and precision components, agro-industrial and farming equipment, and automotive and information technology. "In Bulgaria — comments Delbono — there are great opportunities to strengthen current collaborations and begin new ones, also considering the prospect of significant structural funding being sent to this country. I believe there are important areas where collaboration is possible in professional training and in the support of Bulgaria's public administration in its technical relations with European Union structures, to seize each new opportunity made available at European level".

According to Unioncamere information, Emilia-Romagna is third in Italy (after Veneto and Lombardy) for exports to Bulgaria, whilst for imports it is in second place. The region has collaborated for some time with Sofia's Governorship and promotes the presence of companies and encourages production and economic collaboration agreements, direct investments and sales promotion.

From this viewpoint, agreements between Bulgarian institutions and the re-

gion – or between local development agencies and corresponding agencies in Emilia-Romagna, such as Ervet and Aster – and also projects co-financed by European funding were promoted, like the Twinning programme and inter-regional programmes. This situation has allowed for fruitful and effective inter-institutional relationships to be formed, as well as increasing knowledge of collaboration and economic and commercial exchange opportunities.

The direct promotion of small and medium-sized businesses in particular, has been based on specific co-financed projects presented to export consortiums or even temporary unions between businesses, through relevant competitions from 2004 to the present day.

Alongside projects carried out directly by business consortiums, other specific promotional projects were carried out in collaboration with, and supported economically by, the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE) – as provided for by national agreements – aimed at strengthening the presence of regional productions and institutions on these markets as a whole. These actions have been effectively supported, since 2002, by a service offering consultancy and accompaniment to businesses financed by the region, in accordance with ICE. This service is in operation at the Italian Embassy in Bulgaria, in Sofia. It has helped businesses to explore the Bulgarian market and has also helped institutions in establishing relationships and agreements with their Bulgarian counterparts. Up to today, the service has organized and accompanied 40-60 businesses each year in economic missions to Bulgaria, helping them with their initial evaluation of commercial and production opportunities.

In 2005 and 2006 alone, these missions led 44 businesses to invest in this country, in joint ventures and setting-up businesses that observe Bulgarian law but are entirely controlled by Italians, and to over 70 trade and production collaboration agreements between businesses from Emilia-Romagna and Bulgaria. 🍷

THE LANDS OF BACCHUS

by *Thomas Foschini*

The Vitis Lambrusca is Emilia's most famous grape and it has even been written about in texts as early as those of Pliny the Old and Virgil. Seeds were discovered that date the "ancestor" of viticulture in Emilia-Romagna, the Lambrusco vintage, to around 1000-2000 BC. The "nectar of Bacchus" is an ancient his-

tory in Emilia-Romagna, a history that has produced vintage wines and made the region second in Italy for export quotas, behind the Veneto region, with over 3 million hectolitres (almost 50% of the total production). On its own, the region exports a fifth of the national total. An area of 60,000 hectares of land has been cultivated for vineyards and these produce around 6 million hectolitres per year. These are stable figures that have been joined, over time, by an ever increasing will to qualify and promote wine "made in Emilia-Romagna", which has a strong heritage of agricultural traditions and wine know-how that currently has few rivals internationally.

When the Bacchus grape speaks the language of Emilia-Romagna, the journey just has to begin in the hills of Piacenza. These grapes produced the famous reds, Barbera and Bonarda Doc – the first is also available as a sparkling wine, the second as a champagne – delicate wines that are ideal for accompanying first courses, fish and white meats. Piacenza has an old wine-making tradition that is autonomous both in regards to the region and Emilia itself. The Bacchus grape usually prefers hillsides as it is here, where water doesn't stagnate in the earth, where the sun turns the grapes gold without burning them and snow covers the countryside without the ice hardening the soil, that many vines produce their best results. It is often these kinds of environments that boast of Registered Designation of Origin products in Emilia-Romagna, disciplinary in hand. We therefore have a subtle boundary that leads very gently from the hills of Piacenza down towards Parma, which is a point of reference for the European agro-industrial sector: Barbera and Bonarda are provided here but the disciplinary provides only for small quantities, maximum 15%, of Lambrusco grapes. The remarkable "reserve" version is aged at least 24 months. We come now to the whites produced in the hills of Scandiano and Canossa: straw-coloured, dry or sweet wine can be produced from the Sauvignon variety called Spergola, with various additions, from Pinot and Malvasia to Trebbiano di Romagna. The red Cabernet Sauvignon, obtained by the grape of the same name (at least 85%), is also of the same Registered Designation of Origin. Reggio Emilia, alongside Modena and west Bologna, is also Lambrusco territory, that great icon of Emilia. It is produced on the surrounding hills – we need only think of the full-bodied Lambrusco Grasparossa Castelvetro – but also on the vast lowland that stretches from Reggio Emilia to Bologna (particularly in Reggio Emilia and Sorbara varieties, that takes the name of the small prin-

cipal town of the same production area of Modena), up to the Salamino of Santa Croce, which must contain at least 90 percent of the vine it takes its name from, typical of lowland Modena, close to Mantova. Red or rosé, dry or sweet, Lambrusco is ideal for those products that have made Emilian cooking famous the world over: from mature cheese, cold meats and salami to meat-filled hand-made pasta. It is a Lambrusco-land that crosses the river Reno to the RDO varieties of the hills of Bologna where they drink the red wines Barbera and Barbera Reserve, the latter is aged for at least 3 years. Now for the sparkling white and Cabernet Sauvignon, proposed as a meditation wine in the "Reserve" variety, with particular reference to the "elite" wine bottled in small family-run wineries.

From the hills of Imola onwards – which give their name to RDO whites and, once again, to the Barbera – we enter the Romagna of wines, that historical region that adopted the grape bunch as its symbol, alongside the Passator Cortese and the Caveja Campanèna. Wine-making in Romagna has a complex history that has its diamond point in the Albana Passito with a Guaranteed Registered Designation of Origin – the only GRDO of the area – priceless for desserts; so, to continue with the theme of sweet wines, the Cagnina di Romagna is particularly agreeable when accompanied by roasted chestnuts.

If there was ever a wine synonymous with Romagna – although from a vine that is also widespread elsewhere – it has to be the Sangiovese, that, in some precise locations in the hills of Romagna that slope gently towards the sea, is called Sangiovese Superiore. It is produced in various areas, from the hills of Faenza – that lend their name to various RDO whites and reds too – to the Rubicon, where the most famous label comes from. There really are many RDO wines that are bottled between the Sillaro and Marecchia valleys: Trebbiano Doc – the blend that gives us the Bosco Eliceo is particularly attractive, available also as a red with a base of Fortana and Merlot grapes – Pagadebit, which comes from the Bombino Bianco grape. Wine experts assure us that this is the best wine to accompany another symbol of Romagna: piadina with squaquerone cheese and rocket. 🍷

THE HERMITAGE COMES TO FERRARA

by *Giorgio Soave*

The scientific and cultural "Ermitage Italia" centre comes to Ferrara. It is the fourth venue in the world, after Ams-

terdam, Las Vegas and London, of the famous Russian museum of St Petersburg that conserves one of the richest international collections of artworks.

The official signing of the memorandum of intent took place in March, in Bari, during the Italian and Russian summit attended by Presidents Romano Prodi and Vladimir Putin. The document was initialled by Michail Piotrovskij, Executive Director of the Hermitage Museum, Vasco Errani, president of the Emilia-Romagna region, Pier Giorgio Dall'Acqua president of the district of Ferrara and by Gaetano Sateriale, Mayor of Ferrara.

"The collaboration with the renowned Russian museum is an honour for our region – comments president Errani – and gives us the opportunity to build an international, cultural and scientific centre, able to relate to the main museum institutions of the world".

The centre of studies and the guest rooms, also at the disposal of foreign researchers, will be located at Palazzo Giglioli, where renovations are due to be finish in July. The representative headquarters will be located in the Estense Castle. It will cost around 350 to 400 thousand Euros a year to run, paid for by the town council, provincial administration, the Fondazione Carife and the Cassa di Risparmio di Ferrara.

The centre's opening celebration is due to take place in October and two exhibitions are already being planned in Ferrara. The first, planned for March 2008, will be on sixteenth-century Ferrarese paintings belonging to the Hermitage. "Our first exhibition will be on the great works of sixteenth-century Ferrarese artists: the Hermitage wanted to pay us this tribute and we're very happy about it", says Mayor of Ferrara Gaetano Sateriale. "This event is even more extraordinary as in autumn 2007 'Palazzo dei Diamanti' (Diamond Palace) will host an exhibition on Ferrarese art at the end of the fifteenth-century". The second important exhibition will be centred on the art of Islam and will take place in 2010.

A Cultural Foundation will be formed thanks to this agreement involving local bodies and the region, "Ermitage Italia", which will manage the centre with the aid of a science committee and a sponsor committee, open to contributions from regional societies, banks and foundations. The science committee will be led by Hermitage Director Michail Piotrovskij and will have two directors, one Russian (yet to be appointed) and one Italian, History of Art Professor Francesca Cappelletti of the Literature Faculty of the University of Ferrara. 🍷

THE STONES OF BOLOGNA

by *Anna Maria Martina*

Clay, sandstone, selenite, limestone, marble. The history of Bologna and its monuments can be rebuilt through its stones. An unusual but fascinating way to rediscover a city and its past is proposed in a map-guide called "Le pietre di Bologna: litologia di una città" (Stones of Bologna: lithology of a city) by the Geological Service of the Emilia-Romagna region in collaboration with the town council and University of Bologna.

As well as a 1:3500 scale map, the guide (provided free of charge to schools upon request and on sale at the regional Geology service) is richly illustrated with the main monuments of Bologna. It details four routes for churches, roads, porticoes and palazzos that are meaningful not only for their architectural and artistic characteristics but also for the materials in which they were built. Stonework can tell many stories indeed, firstly, the geological history of a territory through processes and phenomena that took place through the eras. It can also tell the story of old commercial routes, cultural exchanges, artistic tastes throughout history, and the development of extraction processes. It reminds us that, today, the surface patinas of stones and types of decay give information on the environmental conditions of the urban environment and its change over time.

Particularly, the stones provide information on the quality of the air in the city and its deterioration, which began in the years of the economic boom.

"The map solidly demonstrates how the hiatus between scientific and humanistic culture has no reason to exist and should indeed be overcome", explains Mariolugi Bruschini, regional councillor for the defence of land, coast and civil protection, "and of how, on the contrary, scientific research itself can help us gain a better knowledge and love of art history". The routes suggested unwind through the administrative and military quarters that, in the 14th Century, subdivided Bologna into four parts (hence the term "quarter"): Porta Stiera, Porta Ravegnana, Porta Piera and San Procolo. 🍷

CLOUDS ON THE PAMPAS

by *Claudio Bacilieri*

We couldn't celebrate the anniversary of Carosello without mentioning Paul Campani, master of comic strips

and animation. Before lending his graphic art to the famous black and white television sketches born fifty years ago during Italy's economic boom, Campani took part in the heroic season of Italian comic strips in Argentina: a strange phenomenon of intellectual immigration that saw our authors cross the ocean armed with colours, Indian ink, pencils and a taste for adventure.

But let's start at the beginning. Paolo Campani, pen name Paul, was born in Modena in 1923. He made his debut as a comic strip artist at only sixteen years of age in "Albi dell'Intrepido". His graphic style was already mature, thanks partly to the authors of American comics, mainly Milton Caniff. He worked intensely with Universo editors until November 1941. He studied as an accountant, got his diploma and began drawing again after the war. In 1946 he created Misterix, his most famous character, scripted by Max Massimino Garnier. Misterix is an all-Italian superhero but also has a strong American element that perhaps reflected the ideals of that time. From comic strip to comic strip, the character grew both in narrative imagination, after a series of episodes that were a little confusing, and graphic style, when Campani began to experiment freely. He mixed various styles, such as Caniff's 'splash' effect to styles like Flash Gordon; he even used a photographic spin. Published in the magazine La Più Bella Aventura, Misterix lasted 98 weeks before being dropped by the editor in 1948.

Fortune had it that Editorial Abril was up and running across the ocean in Buenos Aires, a publishing house founded in 1941 by Cesare Civita, an Italian Jew who immigrated there following racial laws. Civita, who was in charge of the comic strip department of Mondadori in Italy, needed material for the numerous magazines he had created.

The material bought from North America wasn't enough for him so he looked to Italy where, in recent years, the Venetian group Asso di Picche had been very successful.

The magazine was named after the masked avenger drawn by Hugo Pratt. Through his Italian agent, Matilde Finzi, Civita bought Asso di Picche's productions in bulk and also fell in love with the other avenging hero, Misterix, just as Campani, disheartened by the feeble Italian comic strip market was considering turning his attention to the new cartoon industry with Secondo Bignardi, another Modenese talent.

Editorial Abril asked Campani to restart the series full-time and so Misterix came

to Argentina, debuting in January 1948 in issue no. 33 of Salgari. Given its success, in September that very year Editorial Abril launched a new magazine entitled Misterix. Two other 'Made in Italy' characters appeared alongside Paul Campani's favourite hero. In October 1949 Civita brought out a new magazine, the first issue of Rayo Rojo, where Gianluigi Bonelli's Tex (translated as Colt el justiciero) and Alberto Ongaro and Hugo Pratt's Legion Extranjer appeared alongside other characters.

In 1950 Civita requested that the Italian comic strip talents, who could barely make a living from their art in Italy, move to Argentina. The Venetians of Asso di Picche arrived first: Pratt, Ongaro, Mario Faustinielli and Ivo Pavone. The call of the pampas didn't seduce Paul Campani, however, who preferred to continue drawing Misterix in Italy.

We will take a short detour here to remember what the Italian artists' immigration to Argentina meant for comic strip history. Their bohemian lifestyle in Acassuso's villa just outside Buenos Aires – young 24 year-olds who, as Ongaro recalls, lived on "comic-strips, art, love and debates on art and literature" – led them to produce extraordinary works that would go on to significantly influence the local environment. The first Argentinean to come to light was Héctor Oesterheld, a genius of writing, writer of the Bull Rockett stories illustrated by Campani (1952-56) and Sargento Kirk by Pratt (1953-59). Both were published in Misterix. Oesterheld later became a desaparecido in the years of military dictatorship, after his four daughters were killed.

Getting back to Campani, Misterix's adventures took on a new stability when Ongaro was called upon to script the drawings arriving from Italy. He worked on them until 1959. Campani scripted them until 1955, and then alternated with Eugenio Juan Zoppi. The Misterix series ended in April 1965. Campani's second most important paper hero was the aforementioned Bull Rockett, a modern adventurer modelled on the actor Burt Lancaster, who was then drawn by Francisco Solano López from 1955-1959, who then wrote L'Eternauta with Oesterheld, the first extraordinary story that was completely Argentinean. Other characters by the Modenese comic strip artist are Ted Patton, published in Rayo Rojo from 1950 to 1953; Lord Commando, scripted by Oesterheld, which came out in 1952 in the weekly magazine Cinemisterio; and Gey Cario-ca, a prototype of a sexy and audacious lady involved in police work, originating

in 1948 in collaboration with Max Massimino Garnier and published in Argentina with the name of Tita Dinamita from 1950 to 1953, also in Cinemisterio. Campani's latest strips highlighted a more dynamic, modern and fast style, almost as if he urgently wanted to leave the Argentinean comic-strip world, which had made him famous despite the fact he had never been there. In Misterix issue n. 575 of November 1959, Campani's comic-strip era came to an end and was replaced by his interest in cartoons. From then on, Campani made art exclusively for animation cinema.

In 1954 Campani founded his own production company called Paul Film, with Max Massimino Garnier. It was only with the advent of Carosello in 1957, however, that the Italian animation industry started to take hold. Here, Paul Film could play its hand. Campani drew and directed and Garnier wrote the texts and storylines. Secondo Bignardi dealt with the animation side and Angelo Benevelli was in charge of photography. Paul Film, the best overall, led to the creation of some great works of animation that were perfect for television's Carosello, which was clever in itself: a minute and a half of pure entertainment with 30 seconds of advertising. The children of those days – who would go to bed straight after Carosello – will dearly remember Toto and Tata, the two urchins that were on air from 1961 to 1965; the misfortunes of Angelino, from 1958 to 1965; Svanitella, the beautiful and vamp-like journalist; Stellino, the wood-sprite; Fido Bau; Il Merendero; and L'Omino Coi Baffi (the man with the moustache), who appeared in 1958 in the famous Moka Express advert, Bialetti's coffee machine that "makes a better espresso than the bar". L'Omino Coi Baffi is perhaps the best expression of Campani and Garnier's art, unmistakable for how his mouth formed every letter pronounced (voice by Raffaele Pisu). Having invented short television language, where convincing messages were delivered by complete stories condensed into two minutes, Carosello provided twenty years of opportunity for great authors to experiment. The sketches ended when the consumer world became more aggressive and began to look further than innocent cartoon advertising. Paul Film, however, fell apart much earlier: at the peak of its success, as often happens. Although still young at the time, Paul Campani stood aside and no longer wished to attempt any other editorial ventures following the crisis of his world. He died in 1991 at the age of 68. The seed never dies however. Just as one

of the best comics school in the world was founded in Argentina thanks to the creative ferment of the Italian authors (as well as Oesterheld and Solano López, think of Alberto Breccia, Arturo Del Castillo, Juan Zanotto, Copi, Quino, who created Mafalda in 1964, Horacio Altuna and Carlos Trillo with their sketches on Clarín beginning in 1975), we can also speak of a Modenese comic-strip trend that saw Campani as its founder. Secondo Bignardi came out of Paul Film; then Guido De Maria and lastly Bonvi arrived, author of the famous Sturmtruppen, a strip that represented the anti-militaristic vein that was already present in poor Oesterheld’s mind. It is therefore appropriate that Modena dedicates an exhibition to Campani on the anniversary of Carosello. It is to be held at the Foro Boario from September 1st to October 23rd 2007 and will exhibit drawings, photographs, animation machinery and animated advertisements. 🍷

SAVE THE ANIMALS

by *Monica Lugli*

Save the Cornella White. The appeal for the survival of the old ovine breed historically found in the districts of Reggio Emilia and Modena has been launched by GAL - Gruppo Azione Locale (Local Action Group), Antico Frignano and Appennino Reggiano, who have issued an announcement for the purchase of these rare white-fleeced sheep. The milk of these sheep is ideal for making ‘pecorino’ cheese and their fleece also provides high quality wool. A team of experts and enthusiasts have been working for months to prevent the extinction of one of the last few native breeds of Emilia-Romagna. Promoters tell us that the GAL project aims to uncover the historical origins of the Cornella, study and identify its genotype and phenotype, to ascertain that they have before them sheep nuclei that are resistant to Scrapie, a disease belonging to the BSE family. It also aims to identify breeders and help them to seek contributions foreseen in the region’s new rural development project for breeders of native breeds.

In order to protect the biodiversity of the Cornella White, Reggio Emilia will set up a registry and nominate breed experts. Research on sheep breeding will continue in order to characterize the DNA of this animal and create nuclei of Cornella White that are immune to Scrapie.

While in Emilia looks after its sheep, Romagna takes care of storks. For over 50 years, Faenza has had a colony of white European storks (ciconia ciconia) that survived thanks to the citizens who fed and raised them. A foundation has now been set up to improve their living conditions. “Since the fifties in Faenza – explain Paolo Cattani and Giuliano Zama, president and vice president of “Amici delle cicogne” (Friends of the stork) – baby storks have been taken from nests and raised, following the Swiss model of professor Max Bloesh. Human intervention is necessary in order to guarantee the survival of our colony’.

THE MOTOR COMPASS

by *Marino Baresani*

The “Motor Valley” information office has opened at the Ferrari Gallery in Maranello, in the Modena area, following an agreement stipulated between the region and the municipality within an inter-regional tourist development project called “Terra dei Motori” (Land of Motorcars).

A periodic newsletter also provides information on all events of a motor touring nature due to take place in the territory. To sign-up, simply log on to the website of the town of Maranello (www.comune.maranello.mo.it) and access the page dedicated to the newsletter subscription and select the “Motor Valley” subscription. You can also consult the updated website (www.terramotori.it) to see motor-tourist initiatives and news in Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Sicily and Tuscany. The office, which received IAT (Informazione e Accoglienza Turistica) recognition from the provincial administration of Modena, also provides information on Maranello and the surrounding area and on planned events. It also aids tourists in finding hotels and restaurants.

From the Ferrari Gallery to the circuit of Fiorano, not forgetting the Galleria Del Vento, the monuments of Enzo Ferrari and the Prancing Horse insignia, Maranello, is not only world famous for the Ferrari factory (where the cars have been built since 1943) but is also synonymous with the typical cuisine of Emilia with its speciality products and hospitality. Restaurants in the area offer great traditional cuisine and you can also visit commercial farms that produce Modenese food and wine specialties such as: balsamic vinegar, Parmigiano

Reggiano, cold meats and salami, Lambrusco and Nocino (walnut liqueur). In May, at the tourist office and at the URP, you can also take a guided tour of contemporary art sculptures belonging to the Severi Collection, displayed in the gardens of the Villa Rangoni Machiavelli in Pozza. 🍷

THE FORNI SAGA

by *Claudio Bacillieri*

March 1922. Alessandro Forni was born in the countryside surrounding Bologna, in Le Budrie, a hamlet of San Giovanni in Persiceto, a few months before the advent of Fascism. His life and those of his family members intertwined with the vicissitudes of lowland Emilia, Italy and Argentina of the last century, giving body to a rich tapestry on immigration.

Alessandro’s childhood took place in the rectory’s courtyard and in the church square, where he met and played with the other children. Between playing tricks on the postman in a stable and taking trips to Vignola to steal cherries, his early school years were soon over. It was the rural and innocent Italy of the 1920’s where a child’s dream was to ring the church bells, just as his father has done. The bells were the tie that linked Sandro to San Giovanni in Persiceto, so much so that in far-away Argentina, he sometimes awoke his family with their sound, having recorded it in Italy.

His family was poor: they were seven brothers in all; one died in the war in 1941, the same year in which his mother died. Sandro was also enrolled in the army. The armistice of September 8th 1943 found him in Pordenone, in the Friuli area. From there, travelling secretly under the cover of night, he followed the road for home. He got there to find that the Germans had occupied the town. However, it was the German Commander himself, with whom his bell-tolling father had established a relationship of mutual respect, who allowed him to re-embrace his family. The same Commander apparently saved the young men of the town from being rounded up by warning the families of this danger. Life began again when the war ends. Forni found work as a builder and set-up a theatre company and choir in his free time, with his parish friends. A friend with a truck ferried the actors and singer to nearby towns for shows. Sandro, meanwhile a staunch democrat, embraced the political ideals of De Gasperi. 1948, however, was a tense year for

Italy. This was sadly evident in the lowlands of Emilia especially, where there was a lot of bloodshed. In San Giovanni in Persiceto, in the November mist, three militant communists murdered Catholic trade unionist Giuseppe Fanin. The agrarian battle was raging and Sandro Forni received threats. In the town, the entrepreneur Parmegiani was signing up young men for a two-year project in Argentina. Upon his father’s advice, Sandro decided to leave Italy’s problems behind him for a while. His friends Mario and Giorgio also joined him on his adventure.

On a passenger-carrying oil tanker, on October 15th 1949, the three men from San Giovanni in Persiceto said their goodbyes to their tearful families and friends on the dock of Genoa’s port. They waved until Italy disappeared into the autumn mist. The ship boarded passengers at each stop along the Mediterranean. The three friends felt alienated in the midst of all these languages. They gathered at the prow to talk, sing and watch the clear and star-studded sky. They saw the twinkling ports of Rio, Santos, Montevideo, and finally Buenos Aires: a feverish, traffic-filled metropolis with wide, straight streets, so different to Italian cities.

Sandro and his friends thought they had been sent to build structures in San Nicolás, in the province of Buenos Aires. When they arrived, however, plans had changed: they were to build schools 1,300 kilometres from the capital in the Misiones area for Parmegiani, who was now in partnership with Bucci, another man from the Bologna area.

It took two days to get from Buenos Aires to Misiones by train. It didn’t matter that other Italians had warned them before leaving not to go to that far-away place in the midst of poisonous snakes ferocious beasts. Youth is courageous. The landscapes rushed past their eyes like an adventure film. Little by little, the cities gave way to ever-smaller towns until there were only solitary stations in the middle of the pampas. The railway sometimes ran beside the Paraná, a river that looks like a sea, then changed again to cross fields of wheat, unfarmed fields with grazing animals and the odd Guacho house, mud-dwellings with straw roofs. In the region of Entre Rios the pampas gave way to soft hillsides and forests alternated with endless pastures. Further north, the Corrientes region presented itself with marshlands and lagoons, while Misiones had many rivers and streams that unwound around hills topped with dense forests.

Posadas was the last stop on the train

journey: here the Italian consul awaited them. The three men from the lowlands travelled the final one hundred kilometres by bus to “corazón del monte misionero”, the small town of Oberá. Giovanni Belli, Bucci’s nephew, was there to welcome them and he warmly greeted them in the Bolognese dialect.

In 1949, Oberá was only 11 years old. Built in the forest, its dirt roads were dusty in the dry season and impracticable when it rained. On the first night, the friends stayed in a hotel where the bathrooms were located on the level below their rooms. All of a sudden, they were awoken by what seemed like an animal’s roar. Fear kept them hidden in their rooms, unable to go down to the bathrooms. The next morning they discovered that stray dogs were responsible for the noise, not beasts. They were watchful nonetheless. They began building schools in Sargento Cabral, a village five kilometres away from Oberá. A Swiss taxi-driver accompanied them the first few times. On returning home from work, seeing as it was summer, they would stop to bathe in one of the many forest streams. One afternoon, while Sandro was shaving and Mario was entering the water listening out for the noises of the forest, a series of roars caused them to gather their clothes in a hurry and flee. It was only a large frog, but they only discovered this later.

In the evenings they would gather on the veranda of the old school where they had found temporary lodgings. There they talked of the day’s happenings, of news arriving from Italy, of future plans. They nearly always ended the evening by singing Italian songs, operatic arias or reciting Latin texts: those that reminded them of when they were altar boys in the church of Le Budrie in San Giovanni in Persiceto. A middle-aged man with a violin emerged from the forest one evening. Speaking in Italian, he offered to accompany their songs on the violin. They later found out that this mysterious character was a slightly crazy Austrian nobleman. He had emigrated for political reasons and lived alone in the forest. The new schoolteacher arrived in Sargento Cabral on an April day in 1950, accompanied by the Swiss taxi-driver. She was 21 years old and fresh out of school. Her name was Maria Adelaida. Her first job was one hundred kilometres from home but she wasn’t frightened by her new life in the forest. She quickly becomes friends with the older teacher who put her up in a sort of pile-dwelling belonging to a Russian farmer. As lessons were due to start again, the builders had to vacate the old school

and move to a finished building. Meanwhile, they continued to work on the new school. One evening, the young men from San Giovanni in Persiceto paid a visit to the schoolteachers, arriving on a horse-drawn carriage: Mario and Giorgio drove while Sandro perched on a large branch of floripón, a wild flower similar to the campanulaceous.

On beautiful winter days, it was customary in this part of the world to sit in the sun under a citrus tree and eat oranges and tangerines together. Giorgio, who was a baker back home, made sheets of pastry: he prepared the dough and laid the tagliatelle out in the sun to dry. The two Argentinean teachers looked with curiosity at the yellow strips hanging in the open air. Sandro and Mario prepared the ragù sauce.

Love and friendships were born. After lunch on Sundays, they wandered into the forest with Mr Guevara, the school headmaster, to admire the flowers and plants and listen to birdsong. Sometimes they would go to the Japanese immigrant’s club to drink tea. It sometimes happened that they would come across a puma there, which would follow them home like a dog used to being in human company. To go to the cinema, they had to go to Oberá, where the Italian population was growing day by day.

Sandro Forni and Maria Adelaida settled in Oberá, after their wedding in October 1951. Four of Sandro’s siblings attended the wedding, the American dream pushing them to leave Italy. Giuditta and Maria brought a knitting machine with them and found more and more customers to satisfy each day. Raffaele and Francesco first found work as builders for Bucci and Belli, and then at the hardware store of the Morchio brothers.

Sandro, who still worked for Bucci, left to build houses and roads in the Buenos Aires region, a thousand miles to the South. In 1952 his first daughter was born. The family kept growing (until they had eight children, boys and girls, by 1975). Work was going well and, thanks to the people from San Giovanni in Persiceto, the Italian community had a choir and a basketball team. After the matches, everyone gathered on the Fornis’ patio to celebrate and enjoy pasta.

The political situation caused events to take a turn for the worst. The second peronist government already showed signs of dictatorship. You had to be a party member if you wanted to be left in peace. The Italians were asked to give up their nationality, something which Sandro and Giorgio refused to do. State

terrorism began following the death of Evita. Peronist hordes set fire to the churches of Buenos Aires, the Nunzio Apostolico Palace and the National Library. Catholics were targeted and the Fornis were blacklisted.

Life began again after the fall of Perón and the Forni family celebrated their new home in March 1958. Here they held the meetings of the Circolo Bossetti, the first Italian immigrant association in Oberá. Using the pasta machine Sandro’s brothers had brought him from Italy, they made pasta for two hundred people. With the experience gained working for Bucci, Sandro went into partnership with Mario to form MarSan, a construction business that had the honour building the cupola and bell tower of the new church of Oberá.

In 1960 Sandro’s sister Maria travelled to Italy to visit relatives with Vilelma, his eldest daughter. There was an economic boom in Italy at the time. Although she had a return ticket, Maria decided to remain in San Giovanni in Persiceto and organize the return of her other siblings. In ’62 Francesco and Giuditta returned; only Raffaele, who had gotten married in the meantime, stayed in Argentina. Vilelma on the other hand, after going to school in Italy, crossed the ocean again to return to her parents in 1967.

In Oberá, Sandro no longer had any siblings and opened his home to the children of friends, to members of the Circolo and to other Italians. Always filled with people, his home with its great patio and garden became a point of reference for the Italian community. By then a member of the Rotary Club, he got involved in planning a rest home for the elderly. Holidays were spent in the countryside, in the home of Maria Adelaida’s parents in Santa Maria, on the river Uruguay, near the Brazilian border. On the house of the river, surrounded by their children and many grandchildren, the Fornis spent their happiest days. In 1975 Sandro and Maria Adelaida were finally able to make that longed for trip to Italy. After meeting long-lost family and friends again, Sandro was overcome with emotion when he rang the bells of the church of Le Budrie. Their return, however, was tough: at Buenos Aires airport they discovered that for the price of their ticket to Italy they could now buy five kilos of apples.

Argentina had fallen into a political and economic slump. The era of military dictatorship and terrorism had begun. The business, which already had 24 stable employees and had trained many of the young men of Oberá as builders had to start producing construction materi-

als, as work on building sites was scarce. Maurizio, one of Forni’s sons and an architecture student, was imprisoned various times under suspicion of being “subversive”. All it took was a beard and long hair to be targeted by General Videla’s military. Sandro’s business was under surveillance for having given work to a boy accused of being a communist guerrilla. All over Argentina, students, priests and farmers disappeared: they were the desaparecidos.

In 1978 the Forni family started spending their summer holidays in Capao da Canoa, a quiet beach in Brazil, near Porto Alegre, accompanied by their tribe, which now boasted 9 grandchildren. They planned to hide their children there should they ever be drafted to fight in the Falklands. Luckily, the war ended and, with it, the military regime. The time arrived to make a second trip to Italy. Sandro and Maria Adelaida had 18 grandchildren at the time (now 22 with 4 great-grandchildren). They took their youngest daughter Paola with them and, free from commitments, they stayed in San Giovanni in Persiceto for 10 months, living like two pensioners from the lowlands. They returned to Italy in 1990, after inflation in Argentina eroded the profits of the construction business. Sandro was forced to keep on the factory solely for making construction materials. They planned to buy a pasta-making machine and undertake this activity in Oberá now that they really were pensioners. They decided to delay buying the machinery until March 1992 when they would make a further trip to Italy. At the end of January, however, Sandro died of a heart attack while in Capao da Canoa, beside the sea. His joyfulness and the beautiful voice that rang out in the multi-ethnic and multi-religion choir that he had recently formed with the immigrants of Oberá disappeared.

Vilelma later returned to buy the pasta-making machinery with her two daughters. She opened a shop with Maria Adelaida but Argentina began to fall into a crisis. This is present-day history. These are the memories of Maria Adelaida, lovingly recorded by her grandson Nettuno and their extended family, who participates in the Nettuno Association of Misiones.

In its name, the footprint of Bologna is found in the earth between the rivers of Paraná and Uruguay, where the “reducciones” of the Jesuits, whose communitarian organization was cut down by the Spanish, somehow created a social system that would have found a happy home in the territory of Emilia. 🍷



Nuove sulla PAMPA

SARGENTO KIRK en Ruta de Sangre
 Dibujos: H. PRATT
 Guión: OESTERHELD

Durante una pausa en la lucha contra los indios, los hombres del convoy asediado se reunieron para juzgar a "Lobo" Hammer, que había herido de un balazo al sargento Kirk enfrentado al acusado una palca cruel, a pulso limpio, de hombre a hombre.

Nel cinquantenario di Carosello, Modena rende omaggio a Paul Campani, maestro del fumetto e dell'animazione, che prese parte, senza mai muoversi dall'Italia, a un curioso fenomeno di emigrazione intellettuale verso l'Argentina. All'insegna di colori, chine, matite e desiderio di avventura.

CLOUDS ON THE PAMPAS Translation at page 49

On the fiftieth anniversary of Carosello, Modena pays tribute to Paul Campani, master of comic strips and animation, who was part of the strange intellectual immigration phenomenon from Italy to Argentina. Characterized by colours, Indian ink, pencils and a love of adventure.



Non si può celebrare l'anniversario di Carosello senza ricordare Paul Campani, uno dei maestri del fumetto e dell'animazione. Prima di prestare la sua arte grafica ai famosi siparietti televisivi nati cinquanta anni fa nell'Italia in bianco e nero del boom economico, Campani ha preso parte alla stagione eroica del fumetto italiano in Argentina: un curioso fenomeno di emigrazione intellettuale, che ha visto i nostri autori varcare l'Oceano armati di colori, chine, matite e desiderio d'avventura.



Ma iniziamo con ordine. Paolo Campani, in arte Paul, nasce a Modena nel 1923. Debutta come disegnatore di fumetti a soli 16 anni sugli *Albi dell'Intrepido*, con uno stile grafico già maturo, per quanto debitore verso gli autori americani di *comics*, in primo luogo Milton Caniff. Lavora intensamente con l'editore Universo fino al novembre 1941, studia da ragioniere, si diploma e dopo la guerra riprende a disegnare. Nel 1946 crea Misterix, il suo personaggio più famoso, su testo di Max Massimino Garnier. Misterix è un super-eroe tutto italiano ma con una forte impronta americana.

Di vignetta in vignetta, il personaggio cresce sia dal punto di vista dell'immaginazione narrativa, dopo una serie di episodi un po' confusi, sia dal punto di vista grafico, quando Campani comincia a sperimentare a tutto campo, fondendo vari stili, da quello a macchia di Caniff a quello tratteggiato di *Flash Gordon*, sino al taglio fotografico. Pubblicato sulla rivista *La Più Bella Avventura*, Misterix dura 98 settimane prima di essere eliminato dall'editore nel 1948.

Fortuna vuole che di là dall'Oceano, a Buenos Aires, operi la Editorial Abril, casa fondata nel '41 da un ebreo italiano, Cesare Civita, emigrato in seguito alle leggi razziali. Civita, che in Italia dirigeva il settore fumetti della Mondadori, ha bisogno di alimentare le numerose riviste cui ha dato vita. E poiché non gli basta il materiale che acquista dal Nord America, si rivolge alla sua Italia dove, in quegli anni, riscuote grande successo il lavoro del gruppo veneziano dell'Asso di Picche, la

rivista che prende nome dal giustiziere mascherato nato dalla matita di Hugo Pratt.

Tramite la sua agente italiana, Matilde Finzi, Civita compra in blocco la produzione dell'Asso di Picche e si entusiasma anche per l'altro eroe-giustiziere, Misterix, proprio mentre Campani, deluso dall'asfittico mercato italiano del fumetto, sta pensando di volgere i suoi interessi alla nascente industria del cartone animato, insieme con un altro talento modenese, Secondo Bignardi. L'Editorial Abril propone a Campani di riprendere la serie con una collaborazione a tempo pieno. Misterix rinasce così in Argentina, debuttando nel gennaio 1948 sul numero 33 della rivista *Salgari*. Visto il successo, nel settembre dello stesso anno l'Editorial Abril lancia una nuova rivista intitolata proprio *Misterix*. Accanto al celebre eroe di Paul Campani, compaiono altri personaggi made in Italy. Nell'ottobre 1949 Civita sforna un'altra novità, il primo numero di *Rayo Rojo*, dove tra gli altri fanno la loro apparizione il *Tex* di Gianluigi Bonelli (tradotto con *Colt el justiciero*) e *Legion Extranjera* di Alberto Ongaro e Hugo Pratt.

Nel 1950 Civita chiama in Argentina, a lavorare direttamente sul posto, i talenti italiani del fumetto che in patria stentano a vivere della loro arte. Arrivano i veneziani dell'Asso di Picche: Pratt, Ongaro, Mario Faustini e Ivo Pavone. Il richiamo della pampa non seduce invece Paul Campani, che preferisce continuare a disegnare Misterix dall'Italia.

Qui bisogna aprire una breve parentesi, per ricordare cosa ha rappresentato per la storia del fumetto l'emigrazione in Argentina degli autori italiani. La loro esistenza di bohème nella villa di Acassuso, alle porte di Buenos Aires, in cui si erano

sistemati – giovani 24enni che vivevano, come ricordava Ongaro, “di fumetti, d'arte, di amori e discussioni sull'arte e la letteratura” – ha prodotto lavori straordinari che avrebbero notevolmente influenzato l'ambiente locale. Il primo argentino a mettersi in luce fu Héctor Oesterheld, un genio della scrittura, sceneggiatore delle storie di *Bull Rockett* disegnate da Campani (1952-56) e del *Sergento Kirk* di Pratt (1953-59), entrambe pubblicate su *Misterix*. Oesterheld sarebbe poi *desaparecido* durante gli anni della dittatura militare, dopo l'assassinio delle sue quattro figlie.

Tornando a Campani, le avventure di Misterix acquistano stabilità quando a sceneggiarne i disegni che arrivano dall'Italia è chiamato Ongaro, che vi lavora fino al 1959. Campani se ne occupa invece fino al '55, per poi alternarsi con Eugenio Juan Zoppi. La serie di Misterix termina nell'aprile 1965.

Il secondo, per importanza, eroe di carta di Campani è il già citato Bull Rockett, un avventuriero moderno modellato sull'immagine dell'attore Burt Lancaster, che dal '55 al '59 sarà disegnato da Francisco Solano López, poi autore con Oesterheld de *L'Eternauta*, la prima straordinaria storia tutta argentina. Gli altri personaggi del fumettista modenese sono *Ted Patton*, pubblicato su *Rayo Rojo* dal '50 al '53; *Lord Commando*, su testo di Oesterheld, uscito nel '52 sul settimanale *Cinemisterio*; e *Gey Carioca*, prototipo della donna sexy e audace che si muove in ambito poliziesco, nato nel '48 in collaborazione con Max Massimino Garnier e pubblicato in Argentina con il nome di *Tita Dinamita* dal '50 al '53, sempre su *Cinemisterio*. Le ultime tavole di Campani evidenziano uno stile più dinamico, moderno, svelto, quasi avesse

urgenza di abbandonare il mondo del fumetto e l'Argentina, dove non era mai stato ma che gli aveva dato la fama. Con il numero 575 di *Misterix* del novembre '59 si chiude per lui l'epoca delle vignette, sostituita dall'interesse per i *cartoons*. D'ora in poi Campani metterà la sua arte grafica al servizio esclusivo del cinema d'animazione.

ARRIVA CAROSELLO

Nel 1954 Campani aveva fondato con Max Massimino Garnier la Paul Film, la sua casa di produzione. Ma è solo con l'avvento di Carosello, nel '57, che può svilupparsi l'industria italiana del disegno animato. È qui che la Paul Film può giocare le sue carte. Campani disegna e fa la regia, Garnier scrive i testi e le trame, Secondo Bignardi si occupa dell'animazione e Angelo Benevelli della fotografia. Dalla fucina della Paul Film, la migliore in assoluto, nascono alcuni capolavori dell'animazione, perfetti per la formula del Carosello televisivo, di per sé geniale: un minuto e mezzo di puro spettacolo più 30 secondi di coda pubblicitaria. I bambini di allora – quelli che andavano a nanna subito dopo Carosello – ricorderanno con emozione

Toto e Tata, i due monelli, in onda dal '61 al '65; le disavventure di Angelino, dal '58 al '65; Svanitella, la bella giornalista svampita; Stellino, il folletto del bosco; Fido Bau; il Merendero; e l'Omino coi baffi, apparso nel 1958 per pubblicizzare la mitica Moka Express, cioè la caffettiera Bialetti che fa “un espresso meglio che al bar”. L'Omino coi baffi è forse l'espressione più alta dell'arte di Campani e Garnier, inconfondibile per i movimenti della bocca (la voce era di Raffaele Pisu) che assume la forma delle lettere che pronuncia. Per vent'anni Carosello, con la sua invenzione del linguaggio televisivo bre-

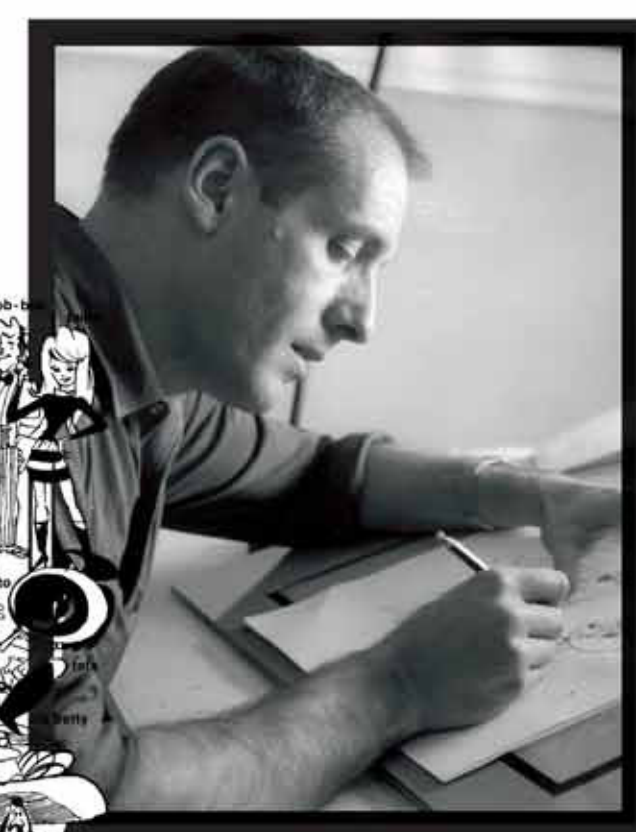
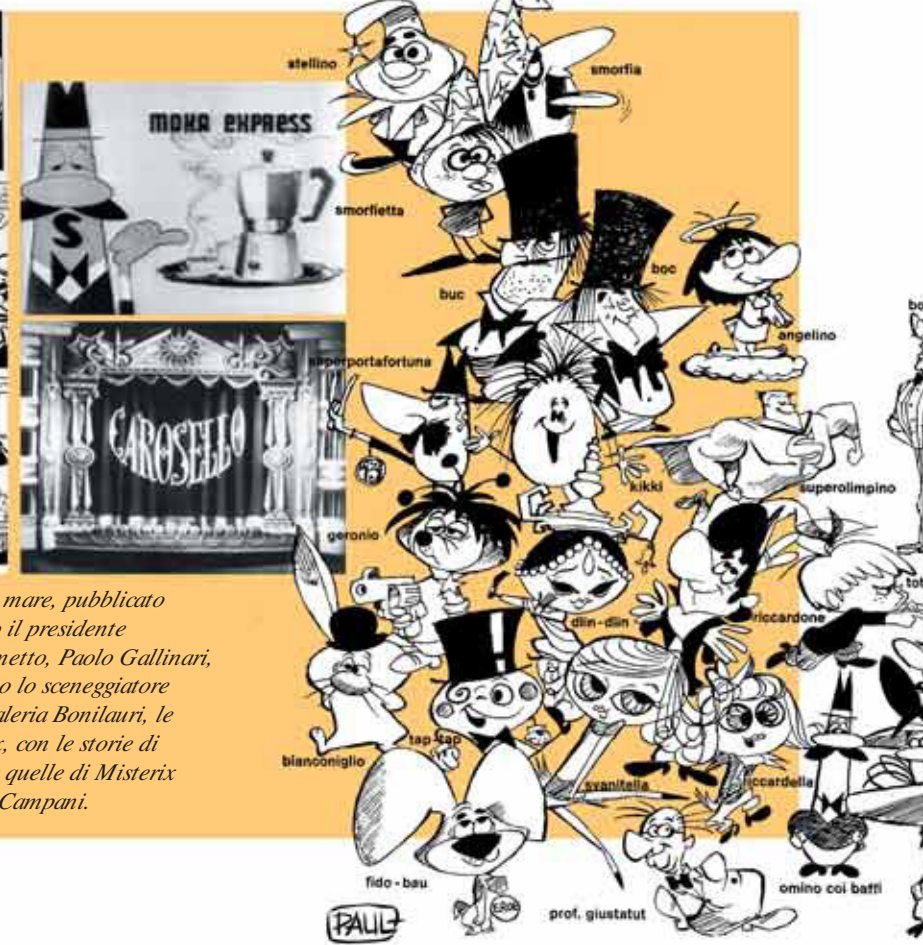
ve, dove in due minuti si condensano storie di senso compiuto fornendo messaggi convincenti, offre agli autori grandi possibilità di sperimentazione. I siparietti muoiono quando il mondo delle merci si fa più aggressivo e guarda oltre la pubblicità ingenua dei cartoni animati. La Paul Film, però, si era sfasciata molto tempo prima: all'apice del successo, come spesso accade. Benché ancora giovane all'epoca, Paul Campani dopo la crisi del suo mondo non vuole tentare altre avventure editoriali e si mette in disparte. Muore nel 1991 a 68 anni. Ma il seme non muore mai. Così come dal fermento creativo degli autori italiani si è sviluppata in Argentina una scuola di *comics* tra le migliori al mondo (oltre a Oesterheld e Solano López, si pensi solo a Alberto Breccia, Arturo Del Castillo, Juan Zanotto, Copi, Quino che crea la striscia di *Mafalda* nel '64, Horacio Altuna e Carlos Trillo con le loro vignette sul *Clarín* a partire dal '75), si può parlare di una “corrente” modenese del fumetto che ha avuto in Campani l'iniziatore. Dalla Paul Film è uscito Secondo Bignardi; poi nell'ambiente sono arrivati Guido De Maria e infine Bonvi, l'autore delle celebri *Sturmtruppen*, una striscia che è il manifesto dell'antimilitarismo già presente nella testa del povero Oesterheld. È giusto, allora, che Modena, nell'anniversario di Carosello, dedichi una mostra a Paul Campani. Si terrà al Foro Boario dal 1° settembre al 31 ottobre, e saranno esposti disegni, fotografie, macchinari di animazione e filmati di cartoni pubblicitari.

ABuenos Aires
l'Editorial
Abril rilancia
Misterix.

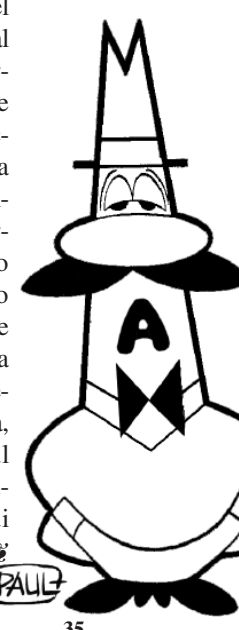
Editorial
Abril will relaunch
Misterix in
Buenos Aires.

Traglieroi
di Campani
l'avventuriero
Bull Rockett.

Bull Rockett
theadventurer
is one of Campani's
heroes.



Per l'albo *Misterix. L'insidia in fondo al mare*, pubblicato dall'Anafi di Reggio Emilia, ringraziamo il presidente dell'Associazione nazionale amici del fumetto, Paolo Gallinari, e la signora Bianca Campani. Ringraziamo lo sceneggiatore Carlos Trillo per aver fornito, tramite Valeria Bonilauri, le tavole dell'edizione argentina di *Misterix*, con le storie di *Sergento Kirk* disegnate da Hugo Pratt e quelle di *Misterix* e *Bull Rockett* nate dalla matita di Paul Campani.



LA SAGA DEI FORNI

Le vicende di una famiglia della bassa bolognese attraversano il '900 e si intrecciano con la storia dell'Italia e dell'Argentina offrendo un grande affresco dell'emigrazione verso il nuovo mondo.

Translation at page 50

THE FORNI SAGA

The trials and tribulations of a family from the lowlands of Bologna through the 1900s intertwine with the history of Italy and Argentina offering a rich tapestry on New World immigration.

M

arzo 1922. Alessandro

Forni nasce nella campagna bolognese, in una frazione di San Giovanni in Persiceto, Le Burdrie, pochi mesi prima dell'avvento del fascismo. La sua vita e quella della sua famiglia si intrecciano con le vicende della bassa emiliana, dell'Italia e dell'Argentina nel secolo scorso, dando corpo a un grande affresco dell'emigrazione. ►►

L'infanzia di Alessandro scorre tra il cortile della canonica e il piazzale della chiesa, dove si trova con gli altri bambini a giocare. Tra uno scherzo al postino preparato nella stalla e una spedizione a Vignola per rubare le ciliegie, il tempo delle scuole elementari passa veloce. È l'Italia rurale e ingenua degli anni Venti, dove il sogno di un bambino è quello di suonare le campane della chiesa del paese, come il padre. Le campane sono il filo che lega Sandro a San Giovanni in Persiceto, tanto che nella lontana Argentina si sarebbe poi divertito ogni tanto a svegliare la famiglia al loro suono, registrato in Italia.

La sua famiglia è povera: sono sette fratelli, uno dei quali muore in guerra nel 1941, lo stesso anno in cui viene a mancare la mamma. Anche Sandro è sotto le armi. L'armistizio dell'8 settembre 1943 lo sorprende a Pordenone, in Friuli. Da lì, viaggiando di notte per non farsi scoprire, prende la strada di casa. Quando arriva, trova il paese occupato dai tedeschi. Ma sarà proprio il comandante tedesco, con il quale il padre campanaro aveva instaurato un rapporto di rispetto, a permettergli di riabbracciare i familiari. Lo stesso comandante avrebbe poi salvato i giovani del paese dal rastrellamento, avvisando in tempo le famiglie.

MURATORE E CANTANTE

La vita ricomincia con la fine della guerra. Forni lavora come muratore e nel tempo libero organizza con gli amici della parrocchia una compagnia teatrale e un coro. Un amico con il camion si occupa di portare attori e cantanti nei paesi vicini per gli spettacoli. Intanto Sandro, convinto democratico, abbraccia le idee politiche di De Gasperi. Ma il 1948 è per l'Italia un anno attraversato da forti tensioni, scandito soprattutto nella bassa emiliana da un triste calendario di sangue. A San Giovanni in Persiceto, nella nebbia di novembre, il sindacalista cattolico Giuseppe Fanin è ucciso da tre militanti comunisti. Imperversa la lotta agraria e anche Sandro Forni riceve minacce. In paese c'è l'imprenditore Parmegiani che sta reclutando giovani per un lavoro di due anni in Argentina. Su consiglio del

padre, Sandro decide di allontanarsi per un po' dai problemi dell'Italia. Lo seguono in questa avventura gli amici Mario e Giorgio.

Da una petroliera adattata al trasporto passeggeri, il 15 ottobre 1949 i tre persicetani salutano amici e familiari in lacrime sulla banchina del porto di Genova. Si sbracciano a salutare finché l'Italia scompare nella nebbia di un giorno d'autunno. La nave imbarca passeggeri a ogni scalo nel Mediterraneo. In questa babele di lingue, i tre si sentono spaesati. Si ritrovano a prua per parlare, cantare, osservare il cielo che si fa sempre più limpido e pieno di stelle. Vedono luccicare i porti di Rio, Santos, Montevideo, e infine Buenos Aires: una metropoli febbrile e trafficata, con strade larghe e dritte, così diversa dalle città italiane. Sandro e i suoi amici pensavano di dover tirare su capannoni a San Nicolás, nella provincia di Buenos Aires. Ma all'arrivo il programma è cambiato: costruiranno scuole nella provincia di Misiones, a 1300 chilometri dalla capitale, per l'impresa di Parmegiani, ora in società con Bucci, un altro bolognese. Da Buenos Aires a Misiones sono due giorni di treno. E che importa, se prima di partire incontri altri italiani che ti sconsigliano di andare in quel luogo lontano, in mezzo a serpenti velenosi e belve feroci. Se sei giovane, non manca il coraggio. Ecco allora i paesaggi scorrere davanti agli occhi come in un film d'avventura. Via via le città sono rimpiazzate da paesi sempre più piccoli e poi da solitarie stazioni in mezzo alla pampa. A tratti la ferrovia si avvicina al Paraná, un fiume che sembra un mare, e di nuovo se ne discosta per attraversare campi di grano e prati incolti con bestie che pascolano e case sparse di gauchos, costruite con fango seccato al sole e con il tetto di paglia. Nella provincia di Entre Rios la pampa è sostituita da dolci colline e boschi alternati a sterminati pascoli. Ancora più a nord la provincia di Corrientes si annuncia con paludi e lagune, mentre quella di Misiones è ricca di fiumi e ruscelli che si snodano tra colline ammantate di fitte foreste.

Posadas è la fine del viaggio in treno: qui li aspetta il console italiano. I tre ragazzi della bassa percorrono poi in corriera gli ultimi cento chilometri fino al "corazón del monte misione-

ro", la cittadina di Oberá. Ad accoglierli trovano Giovanni Belli, nipote di Bucci, che li saluta calorosamente in dialetto bolognese.

IL RUGGITO DEI CANI

Oberá nel 1949 ha solo undici anni di vita. Costruita nella foresta, ha strade in terra battuta piene di polvere nella stagione secca e impraticabili con la pioggia. La prima notte i bolognesi alloggiano in un hotel con le stanze al piano e i bagni di sotto. All'improvviso li sveglia un rumore che somiglia a un ruggito. La paura li rintana in camera impedendo loro di scendere ai bagni. La mattina scoprono che non si tratta di belve, ma di cani randagi. Stanno in ogni modo sempre all'erta. Lavorano a Sargento Cabral, villaggio a cinque chilometri da Oberá, alla costruzione della scuola. Ad accompagnarli, nei primi tempi, è un taxista svizzero. Al ritorno dal lavoro, poiché è estate, si fermano a fare il bagno in uno dei tanti ruscelli nella foresta. Un pomeriggio, mentre Sandro si fa la barba e Mario scende in acqua con le orecchie tese ai rumori della selva, una serie di ruggiti li fa scappare a gambe levate, dopo aver raccolto i vestiti in tutta fretta. Era solo una grossa rana: ma questo l'avrebbero scoperto dopo.

La sera si mettono sotto il portico della vecchia scuola in cui hanno trovato provvisorio alloggio, a parlare dei fatti del giorno, delle notizie che arrivano dall'Italia, dei progetti per il futuro, e quasi sempre finiscono col cantare canzoni italiane, arie d'opera o anche brani in latino: quelli che ricordano della loro esperienza di chierichetti nella chiesa de Le Budrie a San Giovanni in Persiceto. Una sera dalla foresta sbuca un signore di mezz'età con un violino in mano. Parlando italiano, si offre di accompagnare al violino le loro canzoni. Scoprono in seguito che il misterioso personaggio è un nobile austriaco un po' svitato. Emigrato per motivi politici, vive da solo nella foresta.

Un giorno di aprile del 1950 arriva a Sargento Cabral, accompagnata dal taxista svizzero, la nuova maestra della scuola. Ha 21 anni ed è fresca di diploma. Si chiama Maria Adelaida. Il suo primo impiego è a cento chilometri da casa, ma la nuova vita nella selva non la spaventa. Fa subito amicizia con la maestra più anziana, che la ospita in una sorta di palafitta di

proprietà di un contadino russo. Poiché riprendono le lezioni, i muratori devono sgomberare la vecchia scuola e sistemarsi in un edificio già ultimato. Intanto continuano a lavorare alla nuova scuola. Una sera le due maestre ricevono la visita dei persicetani. Arrivano su un calesse trainato da un cavallo: Mario e Giorgio alla guida, Sandro seduto su un grosso ramo di *floripón*, un fiore selvatico simile alla campanula.

Nelle belle giornate d'inverno, è abitudine di queste parti sedersi al sole sotto una pianta d'agrumi e mangiare arance e mandarini in compagnia. Giorgio, che in patria era fornaio, fa la sfoglia: prepara l'impasto e poi mette le tagliatelle a seccare al sole. Le due maestre argentine guardano incuriosite quelle strisce gialle penzolanti all'aria aperta. Il ragù è opera di Sandro e Mario.

Nascono amicizie e amori. La domenica, dopo pranzo, ci si inoltra nella selva insieme al signor Guevara, il direttore della scuola, per ammirare fiori e piante e ascoltare i canti degli uccelli. Oppure si va al circolo degli emigrati giapponesi a bere il tè. Può capitare anche, in questo posto, di incrociare un puma che ti segue e ti accompagna a casa come un cagnolino, abituato com'è a frequentare gli umani. Per il cinema si va a Oberá, dove la comunità italiana cresce di giorno in giorno. E a Oberá si stabiliscono Sandro Forni e Maria Adelaida dopo il loro matrimonio, celebrato nell'ottobre 1951. Alle nozze sono presenti

quattro fratelli di Sandro, appena arrivati dall'Italia, spinti anche loro dal sogno americano. Giuditta e Maria hanno portato con sé una macchina per maglieria e con questa soddisfano una clientela che aumenta di giorno in giorno. Raffaele e Francesco trovano impiego dapprima nell'impresa di costruzioni di Bucci e Belli, poi nel negozio di ferramenta dei fratelli Morchio.

Sandro, sempre per conto di Bucci, va a costruire case e strade nella provincia di Buenos Aires, mille chilometri a sud. Nel '52 nasce la prima figlia, la famiglia cresce (fino ad arrivare a otto figli nel 1975, tre maschi e cinque femmine), il lavoro va bene, la comunità italiana grazie ai persicetani si arricchisce di un coro e di una squadra di basket, e dopo la partita si festeggia tutti insieme nel patio di casa Forni con una bella pastasciutta. ▶▶

Un giorno di aprile del 1950 arriva in taxi la nuova maestra. Ha 21 anni ed è fresca di diploma.

On an April day in 1950, the new teacher arrived by taxi. She was 21 years old and fresh out of school.

La famiglia Forni, cresciuta fino a contare otto figli, ventidue nipoti e quattro pronipoti, protagonista di un' appassionante vicenda tra Italia e Argentina. The Forni family, which grew to include eight children, twenty-two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, was the protagonist of a fascinating adventure that took place between Italy and Argentina.



A cambiare in peggio è invece la situazione politica. Il secondo governo peronista ha già in sé i germi della dittatura. Per stare tranquilli bisogna essere iscritti al partito. Agli italiani si chiede di rinunciare alla loro nazionalità, cosa che Sandro e Mario si rifiutano di fare. Dopo la morte di Evita comincia il terrorismo di Stato. Le orde peroniste incendiano le chiese di Buenos Aires, il palazzo del Nunzio Apostolico, la Biblioteca Nazionale. I cattolici sono nel mirino e i Forni finiscono nella lista nera.

IL CIRCOLO BOSSETTI

Alla caduta di Perón la vita riprende e la famiglia Forni nel marzo '58 inaugura la sua nuova casa. È qui che si tengono le riunioni del Circolo Bossetti, la prima associazione di emigrati italiani a Oberá. Con una macchina per fare la pasta portata dai fratelli di Sandro dall'Italia, si sfornano maccheroni per duecento persone. All'impresa di costruzioni di Sandro, che dopo l'esperienza con Bucci si mette in proprio fondando con Mario la MarSan, tocca l'onore di costruire la cupola e il campanile della nuova chiesa di Oberá.

Nel 1960 la sorella Maria fa un viaggio in Italia con la figlia maggiore di Sandro, Vilelma, per visitare i parenti. È l'Italia del boom economico. Nonostante il biglietto di andata e ritorno, Maria decide di restare a San Giovanni in Persiceto e di organizzare il rimpatrio degli altri fratelli. Nel '62 tornano anche Francesco e Giuditta; solo Raffaele, che nel frattempo si è sposato, rimane in Argentina. Vilelma invece, dopo aver frequentato le scuole in Italia, nel '67 riattraversa l'Oceano per tornare dai genitori.

Ad Oberá Sandro, rimasto senza i fratelli, apre la sua casa agli amici dei figli, ai soci del Circolo, agli altri italiani. Sempre piena di gente, la sua dimora con il grande patio e il giardino è un punto di riferimento per la comunità italiana. Entrato a far parte del Rotary Club, si impegna a realizzare un ricovero per gli anziani. Le vacanze si trascorrono in campagna, nella casa dei genitori di Maria Adelaida a Santa Maria, sul fiume Uru-

guay, al confine con il Brasile. Nella casa sul fiume, attorniti dai loro ragazzi e dai tanti nipoti, i Forni vivono i loro giorni più felici. Nel 1975, finalmente, Sandro e Maria Adelaida sono in grado di intraprendere il tanto sognato viaggio in Italia. L'emozione più grande, dopo l'incontro con i parenti e gli amici di un tempo, è per Sandro suonare le campane della chiesa de Le Budrie. Il ritorno, però, è durissimo: all'aeroporto di Buenos Aires scoprono che con il costo del biglietto per l'Italia possono ora comprarsi cinque chili di mele.

L'Argentina è precipitata nel caos economico e politico. Comincia l'epoca nera della dittatura militare e del terrorismo. L'impresa, che aveva già 24 operai stabili e aveva formato nella professione del muratore tanti giovani di Oberá, deve ora mettersi a produrre materiali di costruzione perché il lavoro nei cantieri langue. Uno dei figli dei Forni, Maurizio, studente di architettura, è più volte incarcerato perché sospettato di essere un "sovversivo". Basta avere la barba e i capelli lunghi per finire nel mirino dei militari del generale Videla. L'impresa di Sandro è messa sotto controllo per aver dato lavoro a un ragazzo accusato di essere un guerrigliero comunista. In tutta l'Argentina scompaiono studenti, preti, contadini: sono i *desaparecidos*.

Nel 1978 i Forni cominciano a passare le vacanze estive a Capao da Canoa, una spiaggia tranquilla in Brasile, vicino a Porto Alegre, sempre circondati dalla loro tribù, che ora conta nove nipoti. È qui che meditano di nascondere i figli in caso

di chiamata alle armi durante la guerra delle isole Falkland. Per fortuna la guerra finisce e, con essa, il regime dei militari. È giunto così il momento di un secondo viaggio in Italia. Sandro e Maria Adelaida hanno all'epoca 18 nipoti (ora sono 22 con quattro pronipoti). Si portano dietro la figlia più piccola, Paola, e, ormai quasi liberi da impegni, stanno dieci mesi a San Giovanni in Persiceto, a vivere come due pensionati della bassa. Tornano in Italia nel '90, dopo che l'inflazione ha eroso in Argentina i profitti dell'impresa di costruzioni, costringendo Sandro a mantenere in vita solo la fabbrica di materiali per l'edilizia. Progettano di comprare una macchina per fare la pasta e di dedicarsi in Oberá a questa nuova attività, ora che sono in pensione a tutti gli effetti. L'acquisto del macchinario è rimandato al marzo del 1992, con un ulteriore viaggio in Italia. Ma alla fine di gennaio Sandro muore d'infarto a Capao da Canoa, in riva al mare. Con la sua allegria, scompare anche la sua bella voce, quella che svettava nel coro multietnico e multireligioso che aveva organizzato da ultimo tra gli emigranti di Oberá. La macchina per la pasta, è poi venuta Vilelma a comprarla con le sue due figlie. Con Maria Adelaida hanno aperto un negozio, ma poi è cominciata la crisi in Argentina. E questa è storia dei nostri giorni.

Questi sono i ricordi di Maria Adelaida, raccolti amorevolmente dal nipote Nettuno e da tutta la famiglia allargata dei Forni che anima l'associazione Nettuno di Misiones. È - già nel nome - l'impronta di Bologna nella terra fra i fiumi Paraná e Uruguay, dove le "reducciones" dei gesuiti, con la loro organizzazione comunitaria poi stroncata dagli spagnoli, anticipavano in qualche modo un sistema sociale che avrebbe trovato felice applicazione nel territorio emiliano.

LArgentina precipita nel caos politico ed economico.

Argentina falls into political and economic chaos.