



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TRIESTE

Sede amministrativa del Dottorato di Ricerca

Sedi consorziate (IUIES)

Università degli Studi di Udine - Università di Klagenfurt - Università MGIMO di Mosca
Università di Nova Gorica - Università Jagiellonica di Cracovia - Università Eotvos
Lorand di Budapest - Università Babes-Bolyai di Cluj Napoca - Università Comenius di
Bratislava - Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia

XXV CICLO DEL
DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

POLITICHE TRANSFRONTALIERE PER LA VITA QUOTIDIANA
TRANSBORDER POLICIES FOR DAILY LIFE

The Impact of Migrations on Ethnically Connotted Areas A Case Study

Settore scientifico-disciplinare: SOCIOLOGIA DELL'AMBIENTE E DEL TERRITORIO (SPS/10)

DOTTORANDA
ANGELA ALESSIO

COORDINATORE
PROF. LUIGI PELLIZZONI

Firma 

SUPERVISORE DI TESI
PROF. GIORGIO OSTI

Firma 

ANNO ACCADEMICO 2011 / 2012

Index

Index	Pag. 2
Acknowledgements	Pag. 4
Foreword	Pag. 7
Introduction	Pag. 10
Chapter 1. The methodological approach	Pag. 12
1.1 Methodology	12
1.2 The hypothesis	14
Chapter 2. A theoretical framework	Pag. 16
2.1 A definition of minority	16
2.2 New minorities	20
2.3 Peculiar aspects of migration	24
2.3.1 Amenity migration	25
2.3.1.1 Retirement migration	26
2.3.1.2 Counterurbanization	27
2.3.1.3 Migrating to the mountain	28
2.3.2 Return migration	32
2.3.3 The commuting politician	35
Chapter 3. A historical framework	Pag. 37
3.1 A History of Slavia: the pre-Italian period	37
3.2 Slavia and Italy: the beginning of a tormented relation	40
3.3 The post-war period: a slow normalization	46
3.4 The protection law and the present time	50
Chapter 4. Abandon and underdevelopment	Pag. 56
4.1 Some statistics	59
4.1.1 1871-1921. A period of growth	61
4.1.1.1 Torre Valleys	61
4.1.1.2 Natisone Valleys	62
4.1.1.3 Resia	62
4.1.2 1921-1951. The warning signs of collapse	63
4.1.2.1 Torre Valleys	64
4.1.2.2 Natisone Valleys	64
4.1.2.3 Resia	64
4.1.3. 1951-2011. The collapse	65
4.1.3.1 Torre Valleys	66
4.1.3.2 Natisone Valleys	66
4.2 About the economic situation	66
4.2.1 1871-1921. The development of the Udine lowland and the post war reconstruction	69
4.2.2 1921-1951. From the world crisis to another post war period	72

4.2.3 1951-2011. The Udine province on a crossroads: the abandon of the mountain and the miracle of North-Eastern development	73
Chapter 5. Taipana. A case study.	Pag. 83
5.1 Population	84
5.2 Services	85
5.3 Meeting places	88
5.4 Tourism	89
5.5 Economic activities	90
5.6 The Berra project	92
5.6.1 The mayor	94
5.6.2 Diversity and development policy	95
5.6.3 Pull factors	96
5.6.4 Weak points	98
5.6.5 Some statistics	99
Chapter 6. Taipana today: a community?	Pag. 105
6.1 Social structure	109
6.2 The hamlets communities	110
6.3 The new inhabitants	111
6.4 The economic impact on the territory	115
6.5 The school	116
6.5.1 A bilingual school?	120
6.6 Over the school	121
Chapter 7 – Conclusions	Pag. 123
7.1 The future of Taipana	125
Annex 1. Voices from Taipana	Pag. 127
1.	127
2.	134
3.	137
Annex 2. Interview guidelines	Pag. 139
Bibliography	Pag. 143
Web sites	Pag. 151

Acknowledgements

I owe gratitude to many persons, who made this PhD path possible and accompanied me through it. I declare nothing new if I say that prof. Giorgio Osti is a great sociologist. But he proved to be also a sensitive person, and I thank him for his patience and his great competence.

Thanks to prof. Gasparini, who made this study period possible and encouraged me to do it, and to prof. Blasutig, whose advices were very helpful in taking my choice about the research topic.

Thanks to prof.ssa Boileau: when she taught us her first lesson, I realized I would never become a sociologist. Later, her pragmatic approach helped me out of most of my doubts.

Thanks to all my PhD colleagues, who turned this study period into a life experience, beyond its possible academic results. Being a member of our group equalled a long experience in field research.

Thanks to the colleagues of the University of Trieste whose patient and silent work is behind every research, without being ever recognized: above all, the staff of the Biblioteca sociopolitica and the staff of the Ripartizione dottorati, especially Elena Benedetti and Fabio Strechelli.

Thanks to the staff of the Slovenski raziskovalni inštitut of Trieste, and especially Devan Jagodic and Zaira Vidali, who helped me so much at the beginning of my research and let me discover their institution. SloRi is a wonderful example of where the support to minority culture can lead to.

Thanks to Laila Wadia for her patience in reviewing the Foreword, with the deepest admiration and respect towards a person who can wonderfully write in her own mother tongue and also in mine, without any sign of arrogance.

Special thanks to Giulia Lendaro, a research colleague and a friend: she could be a great scholar, but since in Italy research doesn't pay a living, she will be great in whatever she decides to become.

Thanks to Alessandro Sfrecola and to my colleague Michele Ianni: without your kick off, I wouldn't have dared trying.

Thanks to my colleagues Anna Brumat for her help in working around bureaucracy and Luciano Acquavita for his one-question-a-day help.

Thanks to the mayor of Taipana, Mr. Elio Berra, for spending some of his precious time explaining me the deepest meaning of life in his village. There would be so much more to say about it, but a town researcher is probably not able to understand it all.

Thanks to the deputy director of the Istituto Comprensivo of Tarcento, Elena Romano, who found the time to answer our questions and solve our doubts. Her competence, passion and involvement in her job are astonishing, and are an example of how much public administrations owe to their staff.

Thanks to all the people of Taipana who were so kind to accept being interviewed by an inexperienced fieldworker.

Finally, my most wholehearted thanks to my family, who raised me exhorting me never to stop learning: maybe now even they have enough of it. And thanks to Ma., who in the last 15 years has taught I should always use my brain, and keep on doing what I want to do, in spite of any hindrance.

In an interview to the daily newspaper “La Repubblica”, published on April 16th, 2006, Rita Levi Montalcini said: “The brain (...) is a wonderful organ. If you nurture it, it works. If you let it go and you let it retire, it grows weak. Its plasticity is amazing. Therefore we must keep on thinking”¹.

I started this PhD when I was afraid my brain was slowly becoming a fossil. But fortunately Dr. Levi Montalcini was right.

¹ L. Bentivoglio: “Rita Levi Montalcini, vita da Nobel. “Il pensiero, se lo coltivi, funziona””, in *La Repubblica*, April 16th, 2006. “...quell'organo magnifico che è il cervello. Se lo coltivi funziona. Se lo lasci andare e lo metti in pensione si indebolisce. La sua plasticità è formidabile. Per questo bisogna continuare a pensare.”

To Rita, Gianfranco,
Luisa & Serena

Foreword

Let me take you for a drive.

Udine. The highway exit leads to a straight warehouse and shopping centre lined road. It's one and the same as the outskirts of many other modern towns. A glimpse of mountains on the horizon. But this is not where we stop.

Tricesimo. Towns blending into one another. The very same warehouse and shopping centre lined road. A few hand made furniture stores. Now we see the mountains getting bigger. Let's drive on.

Qualso. Still skirting Udine, but without shopping centres this time. It is an old fashioned dormitory town with plain detached houses. The mountains are closer but still make up an indefinite skyline. And our road is further yet.

Nimis. The landscape starts warming your heart. The road gets narrower and steers through vineyards: this is where Ramandolo wine is produced. Smarter looking single houses appear. We are just a few kilometres from the nearest big town. So it's almost countryside. The mountains start looking real. But our road goes on.

Torlano. And, countryside, finally. And the smell of it - the smoky scent of fireplaces, the cleaner air, farm implements resting on the side of the road. Dark tree-cloaked mountains, so thick with forest that one would have to fight to make his way through them. But let's head further.

Kilometre 17 from Udine. On exiting Torlano, the landscape changes radically. Now a steep narrow hairpin mountain road. Tall, dark green trees flanking it, almost embracing one another. Here and there, an opening in the woods. The road offers a glimpse of the river Cornappo thundering wildly at the bottom of a narrow lichen covered canyon. From time to time the river calms down to rest in deep green pools, where one can hardly resist taking a quick dip. The mountains are out of view now, as we are in the midst of their green heart. Our car climbs further up the slope, and we're almost there.

An eight-post crossroads. Eight places to go to, eight choices to make, eight roads to take. Where will they lead us to? Eight towns, or villages maybe? Over the ages, these woods were chosen by a number of people big enough to populate eight different settlements. (Well, no, not all villages, since one sign says "Slovenia/Slovenija". A foreign country thus lies just around the corner, the borderline being just 15 kilometres further ahead). The road signs bear two names: one in Italian, and the other foreign sounding. Debellis/Debeleš, Cornappo/Karnahta and Monteperta/Viškorša on the left; Taipana/Tipana, Montemaggiore/Brezje, Platischis/Plestišča, Prossenico/Prosnid and Slovenia/Slovenija on the right. Here's where we turn right and drive on.

Just before the bridge, we encounter a single house along the road. Kids' bikes and linen hanging in the courtyard. How can someone possibly live here in the middle of nowhere? Our road climbs up...

Two more narrow hairpin bends, a quick turn left, the woods give way to the sky and, then, most unexpectedly, here we are at last.

Taipana (/Tipana). A few white buildings blend into the landscape perfectly. The village is located in the heart of the Julian Pre-Alps. The lowest point of the municipal territory lies only 295 meters above sea level, the highest point is 1,636 metres. The Julian Pre Alps are the forerunners of the Julian Alps, the easternmost located and also the lowest peaks of the Alps. Their humble height does not entail a simple morphology. Julian Pre Alps are as craggy and wild as their more renowned western sisters. The environment is rather hostile to any human settlement. Agriculture has never been an easy task. It was made possible by means of narrow terraces carved into the mountain sides by the sweat of many a farmer's brow. Breeding used to be the most remunerative activity, but it was always subsistence level. One might be tempted to think that the only lucrative activity in such an environment could be smuggling: and indeed, being on the border place, exchange between the two sides of the mountain always thrived. Today, the border divides Italy from Slovenia, both member states of the European Union, but in the past it divided the Latin and Slav world, and western civilization from communism. Indeed, the Slovene-speaking minority that still inhabits these mountain villages has never had an easy life, their very identity being a thorny issue.

In the last ten years, after half a century of abandon and emigration, thanks to a municipality policy aimed at bringing the village to life again, Taipana has become the Friuli municipality counting the highest percentage of foreigners against the total amount of residents. This makes it an ideal case study for a number of sociological disciplines.

The role of sociology is to let us think about things that are apparently simple, unveiling aspects and motivations we just never thought about. But sometimes the result can be to make simple reality heavier with unrequested –or useless- superstructures.

Therefore, applying sociological theories to such a primitive, natural place as Taipana might sound like an oxymoron.

But this small mountain village, which was point of departure for many migrants in the past, but is inhabited mostly by the elderly in the present day, and has been undergoing an experiment of repopulation in the last ten years, has become the ideal field to test the most modern theories of the sociology of borders, migrations, ethnic relations, territory and so on.

Yet, I prefer to think of Taipana as the result of the centuries-old interaction of thousands of human lives with one of the most wonderful and uncontaminated natural landscapes I have ever seen.

Thousands of faces, characters, personalities, skills have lent to Taipana something of their uniqueness, and made it a place so special that no scientific theory will ever be able to fully unravel.

Introduction

Meeting this case study was a chance. I was busy with projecting my PhD thesis in Transborder policies for the daily life about Senegalese migrants, when prof. Osti suggested I had a look to the flyer for a conference he was organizing, about migrations in fragile areas. The call for papers included a list of municipalities characterized by a number of inhabitants lower than 1.000 and a percentage of foreign residents higher than 10%. The list included Taipana.

I had already visited Taipana a few times: I am a trekker and a speleologist, and I had spent some amazing days in this wonderful, uncontaminated natural environment. Due to my interest in the social field, I had noticed an evolution in the regard to the linguistic minority living there – the bilingual road signs that appeared after 2001 were the most evident symptom of it. But what had struck me most, apart from the environment, was the presence of so many cars with a foreign license plate: Taipana, during summer, seemed to be full with Frenchmen, Belgians, Swiss.

I was thus misled to conceive an easy presentation for the conference: possibly, the high percentage of migrants in Taipana was only due to return migrants. I was completely wrong.

My research started then, and it was so involving that it led me to be unfaithful to my Senegalese vocation.

The results are introduced in the next chapters.

Chapter one introduces the methodological approach to the case study and the hypothesis which was the point of departure of the research.

Chapter two presents the theoretical framework which is after minority and migration studies. Since this would mean doing a corny review of a great part of the sociological theories, only peculiar cases were dealt with, strictly related with the case study.

Chapter three presents the historical framework of the considered territory, enlarging the analysis to the whole part of Friuli which is inhabited by Slovene minority members.

Chapter four presents the economic framework. Demographic data are related with the economic outcomes.

Chapter five presents the case study context: Taipana is firstly introduced from an objective point of view: its population, services, meeting places, economic activities and tourism. The second part of the chapter deals with the so called “Berra project”, after the name of Taipana mayor. This is the reason why so many foreigners live there.

Chapter six deals testing the initial hypothesis, and starts thus with a difficult question: can Taipana be considered as a community? Some sociological theories of community are briefly introduced. The village social structure is then analyzed according to the mentioned theories.

Chapter seven presents the conclusions of this research, and some reflexions about the future of Taipana.

Annex 1 reports the transcription of some interviews, which are quite significant in representing different points of view about life in Taipana.

Annex 2 reports the guidelines for the interviews.

Chapter 1

The methodological approach

1.1 Methodology

The present dissertation is the result of a theoretical analysis of the considered territory, combined with an empirical research carried on the field.

A theoretical review of the existing literature was necessary in order to focus the sociological theories involved in this case study.

The case study is characterized by several peculiarities:

1. The village is inhabited by a linguistic minority, whose survival was heavily threatened in the past by an invasive assimilation policy. Through a process which made its speakers feel guilty for it, such policy almost succeeded in leading this linguistic variation to extinction.
2. The village is a part of an economically underdeveloped area.
3. In the decennium between 1961 and 1971, the village lost the half of its inhabitants because of migration.
4. Since some ten years, the new municipal administration is trying to stop the abandon and the economic decline.
5. The result of the municipal administration policy is that the village, whose ethnic identity was quite complicated by itself, has welcomed the arrival of new inhabitants, mostly coming from foreign countries.

The theoretical approach results consequently from this frame.

Minority studies are involved, and especially the contemporary approach considering migrants as a new minority.

Also migration studies are involved, with a double connotation. The village, in fact, was a departure point for migrants in the past and is an arrival point in the present time. Moreover, its social structure is at the moment composed by several peculiar cases of migrants.

Finally, community studies are also involved, in order to let us understand the outcomes of the municipal administration policy.

The above quoted points required a neat theoretical speculation. But a research in the history of the considered territory was also necessary.

Point 3, next to a theoretical approach, also required a review of statistical and demographic data.

Points 4 and 5 required, next to the theoretical review, also an empirical investigation, which was carried on analyzing data by the involved institutions: the municipality, the school and the Ambito Socio-assistenziale, which is responsible for the social services.

Finally, point 5 required some real field research, through interviews to the involved persons. The original plan envisaged the interviews would be carried on by the phenomenological research method.

Originating from Edmund Husserl's work, Phenomenological research allows understanding the deepest meanings behind a human experience. It is usually employed to search histories of life with a strong background of past experiences. It is carried on a limited group of persons, who were chosen because of their peculiar background. During the interview, the fieldworker must put aside his/her own experiences, knowledge and preconceptions. The interviewee must be allowed to express freely his/her memories, opinions, desires. The interviews are not structured. The fieldworker should only step in to encourage a more detailed presentation, and should make his deductions on the bases of what he hears and sees.

This method is often employed in intercultural situations, when the interviewed persons are carriers of a mostly various background. It had thus appeared to be the most suitable method to consult, in particular, the foreigner interviewees.

After some attempts, unfortunately, the method showed its main weakness. In order to carry on a successful interview, in fact, beside an interesting background, the interviewee should be willing to tell, and should also be a talkative person. Moreover, there shouldn't be any communication problem between the interviewee and the fieldworker.

In the present case study, apart from a few persons, most of the foreigner interviewees didn't consider their experience as worth telling. Most of the Italian interviewees, instead, were afraid their opinion could be misunderstood as biased. Only the institutional representatives were so prepared and self confident that they perceived no hindrance in expressing their opinions. But, for them, the interview didn't envisage a life history and the approach was thus necessarily different.

The empirical methodology had thus to be adjusted while in progress, and, considering the past experience, semi structured interviews seemed to be the most appropriate.

This methodology allows a certain freedom to the interviewee, who is free to express what he wishes to and to tell it how he wishes to. But the interviewer decides a pattern, including the information he considers more important and necessary to receive. The pattern can be easily adjusted while the interview is being carried on, in case that the discussion takes a more interesting direction. And the risk is low that the interviewee will remain speechless.

This method was employed to interview Italian and foreign inhabitants of the searched village, and also the institutional delegates.

The interviews required several trips to the analyzed village. This allowed some considerations about the road system and the effort involved in living in an off centred place.

The mayor of Taipana was interviewed several times, in his office in the municipality building. A municipality employee was interviewed on the telephone. A deputy school director was interviewed in her office within the main seat of the school, and also on the telephone. A school teacher was interviewed in the meeting room of the school, at the end of the lessons. Italian and foreign inhabitants of the village were interviewed at home, in the enterprise they work for and on the telephone.

The interviews were carried on between January 2011 and October 2012 by the author of the present dissertation, usually alone. Some of them were carried on in collaboration with Ms. Giulia Lendaro, who was at that time a BA candidate in Sociology of territory and development at the University of Trieste, and thereafter wrote a thesis about the migration flows within the considered territory.

1.2 The hypothesis

What is the impact of migration on a territory, if the migration flow was stimulated by the municipality's administration and the territory is ethnically connoted by the presence of a linguistic minority? And what are its outcomes on the receiving community?

The hypothesis was raised by the discovery that the municipality of Taipana, located in the Alta Valle del Torre, hosts the highest percentage of foreigners on the total amount of residents - if the province of Udine is examined. This is due to a repopulation project carried on by the municipal administration.

The hypothesis is temporally and spatially limited: it considers the mandate of the present municipal administration and the extremely limited municipal territory. It could potentially be applied to other territories, homogeneously characterized from a geographical and ethnical point of view.

The hypothesis is ideologically neutral. Great care was reserved to an unbiased approach to the municipal administration policy.

The research includes a review of the existing theories of sociology of migrations dealing with the considered case.

The hypothesis will be elaborated as a case study research, starting from its historical, social and economic framework. Later, the possible modifications performed by immigration will be analyzed.

The dependent variable is the outcome of migration on the territory, from an economic and social point of view. The independent variables are the historical, social and economic characteristics of the territory, considered as the wider space of the South-Eastern part of the province of Udine, bordering Slovenia and inhabited by the Slovene minority.

The hypothesis was tested through the analysis of empirical indicators and by interviews with the involved institutions and with some leading actors of migration and reception.

“Le scienze possono mettere in luce cause, effetti ed interdipendenze tra i fenomeni sociali; possono chiarire le relazioni tra le finalità e i mezzi dell’azione sociale, i rapporti di incompatibilità o compatibilità tra le diverse finalità e valori; possono anche offrire argomentazioni a sostegno razionale dell’una o l’altra finalità politica. Ma non possono sostituire le scelte morali e politiche.”

Science can highlight causes, effects and interdependencies between social phenomena; it can explain the relationship between goals and means of the social action, the incompatibility or compatibility between different goals and values, it can even offer argumentations rationally supporting one or another political goal. But it cannot substitute moral and political choices.

A. M. Boileau, in *Temi di sociologia delle relaz etniche*, p. 16

Chapter 2

A theoretical framework

Several different sociological disciplines are involved in the study of the case of Taipana, that will be introduced in the next chapters.

The existing literature can only try to explain the peculiar situation of this small mountain village, isolated, situated along a borderline, abandoned by emigrants in the past, where presently a native ethnic minority lives together with a considerable amount of newcomers from other countries, brought up there by a municipality attempt of repopulation.

2.1 A definition of minority

In order to identify what traditionally is considered a minority (a “native” minority), the United Nations declaration dated 1992¹ will be taken into account. The declaration aims at providing a set of rules for the States in order to let them protect minorities as based on their “national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic” identity.

An important document underlies the 1992 UN declaration: the so called Capotorti definition.

The 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had stated, in art. 27, that “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their

¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, 1992.

own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language².” The Covenant entered into force on March 23rd, 1976, but it was immediately clear that the implications of art. 27 had to be further deepened. An apposite Commission was set up for that purpose: the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Commission was not asked to produce a definition, and recognized that an exhausting definition of minority was almost impossible to find³. Yet, the final report that was published as a result of the work of the Commission quotes that the term *minority* can be used to refer to “A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members—being nationals of the State—possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language”⁴. This can actually be considered as a real definition and is still known with the name of the Commission Special Rapporteur, the Italian professor Francesco Capotorti. It does not, at any point, mention immigrants.

The 1992 UN declaration itself admits that numerical inferiority cannot actually be a main factor to define a minority, since history has lots of examples of dominant minorities, that is, minorities being considered as such because of their non-dominant position, despite their being a numerical majority. The declaration quotes the example of the Blacks in apartheid South Africa, but many other cases of dominant minorities can be quoted, such as the Alawites in nowadays Syria, or the Sunnis in Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. These few examples are to stress that the main factor distinguishing a minority is its non-dominant position. The opposite for “minority”, in fact, is not “majority” but “dominant group”⁵. And, if only a numeric dimension is taken into account, a minority can actually constitute the numerical majority in a circumscribed region, but still be a minority within the nation state (like for example the German speaking minority in Italian South Tyrol, the Arabs in East Jerusalem or the Uighurs in Chinese Xinjiang). The UN declaration highlights anyway the importance of the belonging of a minority to the nationality of the State, excluding thus ethnic groups that moved into the State in a recent period or that, due to political decisions, were never allowed to fully belong to the nationality of the State they live in.

The UN declaration classifies native minorities as national or ethnic and, further, as linguistic, religious and cultural.

² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 1966.

³ B. Vukas: “Protection of Minorities”, in *The United Nations at Work*, edited by M. I. Glassner. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998, p. 75-102.

⁴ F. Capotorti: *Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*. UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/384/Rev.1, para. 568, 1979.

⁵ A. M. Boileau, R. Strassoldo, E. Sussi: *Temi di sociologia delle relazioni etniche*. Gorizia: Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia, 1975, pp. 36-37.

As in the United Nations' style, the convention does not give a definition of national minority, in order to keep the doors open to any possible future inclusion. However, traditionally, a minority is considered as national if it can refer to a motherland – a foreign nation that could be considered as the natural “mother” nation of a minority living abroad. On the other side, an ethnic minority could not refer to any mother nation. But since the concept of nation is not universally accepted as synonym of State⁶, a solution can be found by distinguishing native minorities on the basis of objective factors as religious, linguistic, cultural, but also age, gender or disabled minorities. Nowadays, a minority is each “emarginated, discriminated, underprivileged, persecuted, oppressed” group⁷, “being in a subordinated position in the political system and in an inferior position in the social stratification system”⁸. All of these concepts can be collected and united in the single term “disadvantage”⁹ or even “oppression”¹⁰.

Minority rights are usually considered as a part of the human rights. Even the treaty on European Union¹¹ states that “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.” More specifically, minority rights belong to the branch of collective human rights¹². Minority rights can be summarized as:

- the right of equal treatment in comparison with the national dominant group and, at the same time,
- the right to preserve their peculiar identity, with a specific protection of their language, traditions, religion, culture and any other ethnic characteristic;
- the right to autonomy in the management of their peculiarity.

But the long list of minority rights in the 1992 UN declaration, binding states to protect “the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities” who live within their territory, prescribes that human rights that are to be applied to “Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities”, considering them thus as individual rights:

- Right to freely live their culture, religion, language both in private and public situations (art. 2.1)

⁶ See for example A. Melucci, M. Diani: *Nazioni senza Stato : i movimenti etnico-nazionali in Occidentei*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 1992.

⁷ A. M. Boileau, R. Strassoldo, E. Sussi, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ W. Kymlicka: *Multicultural citizenship: A liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

¹⁰ I. M. Young: “Five faces of oppression”, in I. M. Young: *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 39

¹¹ Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, title 1, art. 2.

¹² See Y. Dinstein: “Collective Human Rights of Peoples and Minorities”, in *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Volume 25, Issue 01, January 1976, pp 102-120.

- Right to take part to the cultural, religious, social, economic and public life (art. 2.2)
- Right to take part equally to the national and regional policy making about their own minority (art. 2.3)
- Right to have their own associations (art. 2.4)
- Right to have contact with any other person, be it belonging to the same minority, or to a different minority, or belonging to the “mother state” (art. 2.5)
- Right to exercise all these rights individually or as a community (art. 3.1)
- Right not to be disadvantaged because of the minority membership (art. 3.2)

States will therefore have to take measures in order to:

- Ensure the exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by minority members, equally and without discriminations (art. 4.1)
- Create the conditions to allow minority members to express and develop their peculiar characteristics, “except where specific practices are in violation of national law and contrary to international standards” (art. 4.2)
- Endow, if possible, minority members with instruction in their own language (4.3)
- Encourage education in the history, tradition, language and culture of their minorities and at the same time grant minority members the possibility of being instructed on “the society as a whole” (art. 4.4)
- Let minority members take part to the economic development of the country (art. 4.5)
- Preserve the legitimate interests of minority members (art. 5.1)
- Plan cooperation and assistance with other states with attention to the interests of minority members (art. 5.2)
- Cooperate with other states about minority questions. (art. 6)
- Cooperate with other states to raise respect for the present declaration rights. (art. 7)

But the 2010 UN paper on Minority rights¹³ goes further, stating that “Central to the rights of minorities are the *promotion* and protection of their identity”, in order to prevent forced assimilation.

All the classical literature quoted above only deals with autochthonous minorities: those groups that have always lived in their territory and ended up being a minority as a result of major political changes, like the redefinition of international borders after conflicts or treaties, or colonization, like in the case of the indigenous peoples, or due to the effect of historical migrations, seldom in

¹³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation*, p. 8.

connection with important cultural changes. Very often the literature concentrates on case studies coming from single countries, and reflects therefore the attitude of each State towards minorities, which, in the same way, depends on each State's policy. It can aim at protecting and preserving their survival, or to assimilate them in different ways, or even segregate them.

2.2 New minorities

The term “new minority” indicates minority groups that are a result of the recent migrations. In a recommendation¹⁴ dated 2001, the Council of Europe recognized that “immigrant populations whose members are citizens of the state in which they reside constitute special categories of minorities”. The declaration thus marks off its influence to immigrants possessing the citizenship of their host country.

American scholars have mostly dealt with new minorities, being the so called *melting pot* the main characteristic of the USA society – and the goal of its authorities - and being immigration a pillar strategy of US nation building. The study of new minorities was actually born in the US in the 1920s of the XX century, when the American society had to face the emergency caused by a new important immigration from the European countryside to American towns¹⁵. The aim of American studies was to complete the fulfilment of the perfect melting pot, by assimilating the new minorities. Curiously, in the US ethnic studies about immigrants anticipated ethnic studies about Native Americans and other American minorities, that only appeared in the 1950s-1960s as a consequence of the civil rights movement. Even the fulfilment of the most basic human rights for Native Americans had succeeded only through –and after- the recognition of human rights for black Americans (even if black Americans are a very particular kind of immigrants, being their first arrival on the US soil absolutely not voluntary). An example of this is the trial against the Ponca chief Standing Bear in 1879. Standing Bear had been charged with unauthorized exit from his reservation. He was denied the chance to appear in a *habeas corpus* since, according to the law, an Indian was neither a person nor a citizen. His lawyer eventually succeeded in letting him and all Indians be declared “persons” by pleading the 14th amendment. This amendment, dated 1868, first granted black people citizenship and protection. But the Citizenship Act, which definitively conferred citizenship to all Indians, was only adopted by the US Congress in 1924.

¹⁴ Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe: *Recommendation 1492 Rights of national minorities*, art. 11.

¹⁵ R. Gubert: “Minoranze autoctone e minoranze immigrate: continuità/discontinuità negli approcci dell’analisi sociologica”, in L. Bergnach e E. Sussi (edited by): *Minoranze etniche ed immigrazione: La sfida del pluralismo culturale*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1993, p. 17-22.

Most of the studies that deal with both old and new minorities together, only consider them as different carriers of comparable claims for rights. Therefore, most of the scholars proceed with a comparative study of the quest for rights of old native minorities and new immigrant minorities. Most of the case studies only deal with only one of the two, and in specific places and periods¹⁶.

R. Koopmans and P. Statham, in their study dated 2000¹⁷, observe how a state immigration policy is strictly connected with its management of ethnic relations. Reviewing the most recent studies about ethnicity and migrations, they soon realize that the three main research topics they identified (migration studies and integration policy approaches, minority/migrant associations and collective action, extreme-right politics and xenophobic mobilization) “have remained largely distinct from one another”¹⁸. As a possible outcome, they find a possible field where ethnic and migration studies can merge in the studies about citizenship and multiculturalism.

Kymlicka¹⁹ has a more structural approach to the study of ethnic and migration studies as both aspects of the nowadays concept of citizenship. He adopts an original classification, distinguishing what he calls national minorities (cultures that were incorporated in a different state – called by him therefore “multinational state”) from ethnic groups (new minorities created by the effect of migrations, contributing to create what he calls “polyethnic state”). He considers them both as demanders of different sorts of minority rights. Nonetheless, he always treats them as different aspects of what he calls “cultural diversity” or “cultural difference”. He states that an important difference between ethnic groups and migrants is the way they became incorporate in a state. For immigrants, usually, entering a new society is a choice. This should influence their demand for rights. But the point with immigrants’ demand for rights is that they often have to front discrimination and prejudice, thus positive actions must be made to avoid them. But aren’t minorities also often victims of discrimination and prejudice? In a long quoting²⁰ of the work of Glazer and Walzer, he reports that immigrants should be more inclined to cultural change and thus to integration, since moving to a different country and encountering a new culture was their own choice. Immigrants would be therefore not even willing to see any ethnic right recognized to themselves. Kymlicka’s critic to this position is that the only consequence of the voluntariness of immigration on the quest for minority rights is that immigrants should not require any right to self government - nor, in case, should they be allowed to obtain it. But eventually²¹ he states that national minorities have the right to have their societal culture protected, while immigrants do not,

¹⁶ The book by L. Bergnach e E. Sussi, *op. cit.*, is a good example of that.

¹⁷ R. Koopmans and P. Statham (edited by): *Challenging immigration and ethnic relations politics: comparative European perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

¹⁸ R. Koopmans and P. Statham, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

¹⁹ W. Kymlicka, *op. cit.*

²⁰ W. Kymlicka, *op. cit.*, p. 63 and following.

²¹ W. Kymlicka, *op. cit.*, p. 94

since they voluntarily wish to integrate. Therefore the role of immigrants is to enrich the hosting culture. And his final reflection²² on societal culture leads to a recommendation: “If people have a deep bond with their own culture, as I have suggested, should we not allow immigrants to re-create their own societal cultures (and thereby effectively become a national minority)?”

To switch from pure speculation to reality, many countries have to deal simultaneously with the management of old and new minorities, and face situations where a new minority occupies the space of an old one. Again, each of these cases is peculiar and research about it has much to do with the different policies of the State itself.

Significantly, Canadian studies (and specifically Québec) focus more than others on the impact of migrations on an ethnically differentiated environment. Multiculturalism, in fact, was included as a founding element of Canadian constitution since 1971, as a result of both a will to protect traditional minorities and a huge presence of immigrants from a number of different nationalities²³. And Canada has gained a large part of its population through immigration, thus its policy is aimed at creating the best conditions for cooperation between his old and new inhabitants.

Canada is a federal state and law about minority protection and immigration is established on a State level. Yet some demographic emergency has recently increased the need for a so-called “regionalization of immigration”, a deployment of financial and human resources by the regions in order to improve immigrants’ arrival and settlement.

Thomas Denton²⁴, for example, deals with the case of Manitoba, a Canadian Anglophone region historically also inhabited by the Aboriginals and Métis minorities. He states thus that one of Manitoba characteristics is multiculturalism. Manitoba strongly needs to encourage immigration, in order to stop demographic meltdown and cover job vacancies. Thus Manitoba needs to attract new inhabitants, no matter their origin. Denton states that the Manitobans’ attitude to multiculturalism, along with the demographic emergency, should simplify their agreement to repopulation policies. He thus introduces a project that should allow the region to attract immigrants and then also retain them. His first suggestion to Manitobans policy makers is that they should “think “population strategy”, not “immigration strategy””²⁵. The state should therefore work to meet its goal (repopulation) by granting equal treatment to all its inhabitants. Rioux’s study reports the Canadian Brunswick region to be in a similar situation²⁶.

²² W. Kymlicka, *op. cit.* p. 95.

²³ B. Levin: “How much diversity in our schools?” in *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2008, vol. 89, no. 5, pp. 394-395.

²⁴ T. Denton: “Overcoming barriers and challenges to immigrants: the Manitoba model”, in “*Rendez-vous Immigration 2004: Proceedings of a conference held in St. Andrew’s, New Brunswick August 2004*”, pp. 455-469.

²⁵ T. Denton, *op. cit.*, p. 460.

²⁶ J.-G. Rioux: “Immigration in Acadia” in “*Rendez-vous Immigration 2004: Proceedings of a conference held in St. Andrew’s, New Brunswick August 2004*”, pp. 255-262.

Israeli studies have also dealt with the interaction of old and new minority, from their peculiar point of view. The State of Israel was born by incorporating one single but significant minority: the Palestinian Arabs. If Palestine was mostly Arab at the time of the birth of the Israeli State, nowadays Arabs constitute approximately 20% of Israeli citizens. Israeli majority and dominant group is constituted by Jews, who immigrated in Palestine in different historical periods, but mostly after World War II. The Law of Return, dated 1950, and the Law of nationality, dated 1952, grant immediate citizenship to every Jew who settles in Israel. Israeli Arabs were granted Israeli citizenship already in 1948, upon the birth of the State of Israel. But their citizenship rights were *de facto* suspended by their subjection to military administration until 1966. Up to today, the acquisition of Israeli citizenship by Arabs is strongly discouraged. The 1987 Intifada and the later institution of the Palestinian State in the Gaza strip and the West Bank let the borders close and transformed Gaza and West Bank Arabs in real immigrants, whose commuting to the Israeli workplaces was more and more hindered. Therefore Israel was forced to encourage labour immigration from different countries, on the condition that immigrants would always be kept apart in order to avoid a “contamination” of the homogeneous Jew society. But many old-comer Israelis also consider as a threat to Israeli homogeneity the consistent new minority of Eastern European and Russian Jews that massively entered in the country as a consequence of the USSR implosion: almost one million of persons entered Israel in a very short time (400.000 between 1989 and 1991) and were immediately granted citizenship and all facilities, thanks to the Law of return. A recent, extremely restrictive policy, trying to stem the arrival of new immigrants and asylum seekers, has caused riots in Israel among settled immigrants. R. Raijman’s review of Israeli research about ethnic rights²⁷ stresses the fact that Israeli ethnic studies are conditioned by the fear of many Israeli citizens to see their identity and the preservation of their religious and cultural characteristics threatened by any intrusion of “different” people. A kind of refusal of taking into any consideration the Arab minority, whose permanency is mostly unwanted, and a similar but less complicated approach to immigrants of other nationalities apparently causes a higher concentration of researchers about Eastern European Jew immigrants and Jew who migrated abroad than on other ethnic immigrants. What should be a social emergency is not considered yet as important as an everlasting reflection on the evolution of the Jew society itself.

Examining the two cases quoted above (the Canadian and the Israeli), the evidence is that immigrants can be or not considered as a (new) minority depending on the different legislation of each country, but also on the approach towards population and ethnic management. Possibly, the biggest hindrance in treating immigrants as a minority is the fact that they can seldom be considered

²⁷ R. Raijman: “Citizenship Status, Ethno-National Origin and Entitlement to Rights: Majority Attitudes towards Minorities and Immigrants in Israel”, in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36:1, pp. 87-106.

as the unique and compact group that is one of the main characteristics of a minority. There are few, if any, cases where a country immigrants are bearer of a unique culture, or language, or religion, or any other characteristic that would in theory allow them to claim for collective rights. Their ethnic differentiation relegates them on a level which is even lower than that of a minority. If from the point of view of the receiving country they can be correctly identified as different, not homogenous with the dominant group, we can state that there is not something that can be considered as their own, generic, common point of view. What is left is the respect of each individual's personal rights, which is granted by most constitutions of the countries of the world and world-widely stated by a number of international treaties and conventions.

Also within minority groups, anyway, limit situations of interference in a person's rights are not excluded. The need of a minority group to protect its own stability is, in fact, to fight internal dissent²⁸. Internal dissent appears when a minority member evaluates his personal rights as more important than the collective rights of the group and decides therefore not to follow the group traditions or precepts. What might sound as an abuse of the group towards an individual's fundamental rights can instead be considered as the base of each group survival, if we consider, together with Kymlicka, that every society is enrooted on the rules it gives to its own members. From that point of view, the minority group which sanctions its member for not following the group rules cannot be necessarily considered as guiltily limiting his or her fundamental rights. The limit is of course extremely slight between legitimate protection ad abuse, and the matter raises lawyers' income, especially in liberal countries which are highly evaluating personal rights, as the United States or the Netherlands.

2.3 Peculiar aspects of migration

Much has been written about migrations, about migrants and about what a foreigner is. This dissertation deals with a territory that is bearer of several peculiarities, as will be demonstrated below. Also migrations acquire here peculiar traits, which need to be expressly elaborated.

2.3.1 Amenity migration

A peculiar discipline involved in this case study is the one dealing with the recent phenomenon of people escaping the feverish life of big towns in search for a higher quality standard of life, moving to the outskirts or to more extreme environments such as the countryside or the mountain. The

²⁸ W. Kymlicka, *op. cit.*, p. 35-37.

phenomenon has been variously labelled as amenity migration²⁹, lifestyle migration³⁰, lifestyle mobility³¹ or leisure migration³² and is increasingly diversifying³³.

When we think about migrants, we usually picture ourselves the image of a more or less dark skinned (or eastern), low skilled young male. It sounds therefore strange to define as migrants people who voluntarily leave their home places for reasons that are different from the economical ones, and whose choice of the destination is the core of the decision itself, and that are motivated uniquely by increasing their quality of life.

The modern world innovations like faster communication thanks to the web and rather cheap international movements thanks to low cost air companies have caused a perception of distances as smaller than they used to be. Moving to another country, or to a far away place not perfectly connected to the rest of the world by technically advanced infrastructures, is not perceived as such a great challenge anymore. Although moving, one can still stay connected with family, friends and, in some situations, even with his job.

Amenity migrants usually quit their normal life as a consequence of a reflection about the quality of their life, but also about their dreams and their ideals. They can be retirees that dispose of a small capital, that they sometimes consider not to be sufficient to live comfortably in their home country but enough to live properly in a country where the cost of life is cheaper. They can be young families who wish to quit an urban life they don't feel to fit with anymore, often looking for a better place to grow their children.

The destination they chose is usually a place they have already visited as tourists. It can be a warm location (usually a coastal resort, a tropical country, or anyway a country with a better climate in comparison with their own, or a faraway island) or a nature surrounded place (countryside, or mountain) or a cultural place, which is chosen for the artistic, cultural or spiritual chances it offers³⁴.

The duration of the permanence in such a place can vary, without necessarily changing the belonging of the flow to this peculiar kind of migration, but it is anyway longer than just a holiday.

²⁹ L. A. G. Moss (edited by): *The Amenity Migrants: Seeking And Sustaining Mountains And Their Cultures*. Wallingford: CABI, 2006.

³⁰ M. Benson and K. O'Reilly: "Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration", in *The sociological review*, 57:4 (2009), pp. 608-625.

³¹ N. McIntyre: "Rethinking Amenity Migration: Integrating Mobility, Lifestyle and Social-Ecological Systems", in *Die Erde* 140 2009 (3), pp. 229-250.

³² M. Benson and K. O'Reilly, *op. cit.*

³³ For an in depth study of the different terminology connected with this kind of migration, see H. Gosnell, J. Abrams: "Amenity migration: diverse conceptualizations of drivers, socioeconomic dimensions, and emerging challenges", in *GeoJournal* (2011) 76, pp. 303-322.

³⁴ M. Benson and K. O'Reilly, *op. cit.*

It can also be seasonal. The destination can be a second home. Cognard indicates it as “sédentarisation d’anciens résidents secondaires”, sedentarization of former secondary residents³⁵. After moving, the decision to start a new activity is usually motivated by the choice to follow one’s aspiration rather than by need. After making such a radical change of life, there is no reason to keep on doing a job that was already considered as frustrating. If a new activity is started, it is usually something creative or something that is considered as fitting with one’s aspirations³⁶.

2.3.1.1 Retirement migration

Lifestyle migration is a label that includes many different aspects. The use of the term “lifestyle” shows that the main characteristic of this flow is the motivation that leads to move as a personal choice to privilege the quest for a specific way of life. Originally, the study branch was devoted to the movement of mostly old people from western rich countries who moved from the North to southern exotic resorts after retiring. Their permanence could be seasonal or stable, they could also own second houses in place, but it was anyway repeated in time. Their level of integration with the autochthonous community was usually minimum: they seldom could speak the host country’s language better than for mere survival, lived in separate resorts made expressly for them and had relationships only with other people of the same kind³⁷. The study of this praxis forms nowadays a particular branch of the amenity migration studies and is called retirement migration³⁸, elderly migration or later life migration³⁹. Its only difference with simple tourism is the duration of the residence and its recurrence in time. The economical aspect has a role as pull factor in only that, in the destination place, life and property are cheaper⁴⁰.

2.3.1.2 Counterurbanization

The so called counterurbanization is another peculiar branch of amenity migration and has more to do with this dissertation case study. Counterurbanization can be defined as “the pull of the countryside as a way of life”⁴¹. Having started as the study of a more simple phenomenon of

³⁵ Françoise Cognard: “Le rôle des recompositions sociodémographiques dans les nouvelles dynamiques rurales: l’exemple du Diois”, in *Méditerranée* 107 (2006), pp. 5-12.

³⁶ B. A. Hoey: “From Pi to Pie: Moral Narratives of Noneconomic Migration and Starting Over in the Postindustrial Midwest”, in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2005; vol. 34, no. 5, October 2005, pp. 586-624.

³⁷ K. Torkington: “Defining lifestyle migration”, in *Dos Algarves*, 19, 2010, pp. 99-111.

³⁸ A. M. Warnes & A. Williams: “Older Migrants in Europe: A New Focus for Migration Studies”, in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32:8, pp. 1257-1281.

³⁹ K. O’Reilly: “The Rural Idyll, Residential Tourism, and the Spirit of Lifestyle Migration” in *Conference Proceedings of Thinking Through Tourism*. London Metropolitan University: ASA, 2007.

⁴⁰ K. O’Reilly (*op. cit.*) uses the term “residential tourism” in order to distinguish it from a real migration, but at the same time to point out its stability.

⁴¹ K. O’Reilly, *op. cit.*

deconcentration⁴², or redistribution⁴³, it now defines the movement towards the countryside of people looking for a better quality (or way) of life, somehow idealizing an environment where life is considered to be more authentic, healthier, safer, slower and where modern society can still be considered as a community. Its core is the rejecting of city life, being cities considered as the collection of every evil: pollution, criminality, frenetic rhythms, alienation of human relationship, overcrowd. Ultimately, counterurbanization differs from the rural idyll of amenity migrants in having a strong connotation of reject of the urban life, thus in the push factor that persuades to leave the city. Counterurbanization actors are usually more disposed to forgo technological facilities, being their goal a revert to a more simple and uncontaminated life. The distances they are willing to cover in order to meet their goals are not so long as for a real migration and counterurbanization has usually a connotation of suburbanization rather than of migration. Yet the close distance from a city centre is not one of counterurbanization main characteristics. What makes counterurbanization similar to migration is just the approach to it, that is usually a kind of break with the previous life. This flow, in fact, does not necessarily involve a border crossing (it seldom does) and requires thus also a different approach from the point of view of a country policy. What must be taken into account in this case is not the number of inhabitants who cancel their residence to move somewhere else, but the decrease of population in the city centres and the simultaneous increase of population in the countryside, and its motivations. What policy makers should reflect on is thus the quality of life in the city centres, rather than economic impoverishment.

Without using the term counterurbanization in itself, Romita and Nuñez⁴⁴ have deeply studied this phenomenon, identifying three different typologies of people who move for a short or long time from the city to rural areas. They call *rural users* people, usually tourists, that temporarily move to rural areas looking for relaxing activities, or for a stricter contact with nature. There, they usually possess a second house, or a family house, or enjoy farm hosting (what in Italian is called “agriturismo”). Transhumants (*transumanti*), similarly with the ancient breeding custom of moving herds and flocks in spring from a village-placed cattle shed to alpine grasslands, and then back in fall, are young male foreigners who temporarily dedicate themselves to seasonal agriculture just as a halfway step before moving to the town. This is their ultimate goal, as it can offer a safer, more remunerative and long term job. New inhabitants (*nuovi abitanti*), finally, are people who move with a definitive project, looking for a more natural way of life. If they are young, they usually try

⁴² B. J. L. Berry: “Urbanization and Counterurbanization in the United States”, in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 451, (Sep., 1980), pp. 13-20.

⁴³ J. Halliday and M. Coombes: “In Search of Counterurbanisation: Some Evidence from Devon on the Relationship between Patterns of Migration and Motivation”, in *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1995, pp. 433-446.

⁴⁴ T. Romita, S. Nuñez: “Nuove popolazioni rurali: Rural Users, Transumanti, Nuovi Abitanti”, in *Convegno di studi rurali, Ripensare il rurale: nuovi bisogni, innovazioni e opportunità per lo sviluppo sostenibile del territorio*. Altomonte, 25-27 giugno 2009.

to start a business compatible with rural life. If they are old, they will often come up against the lack of services whose need is connected with their age.

2.3.1.3 Migrating to the mountain

Migration to mountain areas, be it amenity migration or counterurbanization or, simply, labour migration is a peculiar phenomenon inside other situations that are already peculiar themselves. The mountain in fact represents a concentrate of all that is usually considered as traditional, wrapped-up in itself, conservative and reluctant to change or innovation. If considered from the point of view of in-migrants (people who move to a mountain place), in fact, migrating to the mountain is just one specific pattern in the big wave of amenity migration or counterurbanization. But if considered from the point of view of mountain inhabitants, it can also have a connotation of hardly tolerated intrusion.

Yet, the mountain, and more specifically the Alps, is at the moment the landscape for an interesting movement of populations.

Alps are surely not a homogeneous territory. They belong to eight different countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland), include different landscapes and host many different populations, also segmented in different minorities, and each country has its different policy about them. In order to smooth as much as possible the outcomes of different economical and social policies and to promote the management of the Alps as a homogeneous and undivided territory, the Alpine Convention was established in March 1995. It aims at improving cooperation between the Alpine States, so that the Alps become subject to a unique policy in the fields of population and culture, spatial planning, prevention of pollution, soil conservation, water management, conservation of nature and the countryside, mountain farming, mountain forests, tourism and recreation, transport, prevention of geological instability, energy and waste management.

But up to a certain moment, corresponding more or less with the modern era, Alps have shared a similar social history.

The Alps have not always been a disadvantaged region. The first alpine settlements date back to the pre-historic era. Within an economic system based on the village, the support of agricultural production and breeding could be sufficient to food independence. During the Middle Ages, both valleys and high altitudes were actively inhabited. And movements from the mountain were already present. The surplus production was carried down to the city centres in exchange for manufactory products that were not available in the mountain. Movements were usually seasonal and coincided

with the cycle of field work. The improvement of agricultural techniques even caused a demographic increase during the 17th and 18th century.

Only since the industrial revolution the production ceased being centred in agriculture and breeding and rapidly became industrial. This process also caused a redefinition of European society from many points of view. The aspect that most deals with this dissertation is the progressive abandonment of rural and mountain areas corresponding to the expansion of urban centres. If compared with the lowlands, industrialization only reached the mountain in a later period, when communications improved. But it was never so cost-effective and only promoted alpine towns, while less accessible valleys remained neglected. This led to economic decline, and made lowlands more and more attractive. Commuting from the mountain to the job-rich lowland became a quite common practice, if not a rule.

Only tourism seems to have partially inverted this trend. At the end of the 19th century, healthy holidays in the mountain started to be considered fashionable by the European (mostly German and British) élite. The first touristic infrastructures date back to that period. Subsequently, alpinism having become the new attraction for fluent urban males, also higher altitudes started contributing economically to the living of mountain communities.

Being the Alps a borderline region, their economic development was also temporarily stunted by the two World Wars. The devaluation of most of the economic activities based on the mountain increased the disappearing of working places. In order to avoid unemployment, the mountain's best labour force was compelled to move or commuting.

According to Bätzing⁴⁵, not all of the Alpine region was affected by the same trends in population and the labour market. Economic underdevelopment and loss of population after World War II affected mostly –and definitively- the Italian Alps, and hit heavily their most oriental part. French Alps, thanks to a massive urbanization, are still facing the opposite and Austrian Alps are also developing, even if on a lesser rate. In Swiss, instead, both the situations coexist, with all their intermediate graduations.

Anyway, the loss of places causes loss of population, that, in turn, increases the economic impoverishment, since services close for lack of customers, in a vicious circle that keeps on killing more and more small villages and whole regions of the Italian Alps.

Bätzing⁴⁶ also analyzes the consequences this evolution has on the social structure of the Alpine region. In the industrialized part of the mountain, an economical crisis might have also cultural implications. Where tourism is present, the whole society could become subjugated to it. And

⁴⁵ W. Bätzing: *Die Alpen. Geschichte und Zukunft einer europäischen Kulturlandschaft*. München: Beck, 1984.

⁴⁶ W. Bätzing: *I processi di trasformazioni di ambiente, economia, società e popolazione attualmente in corso nelle Alpi*. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit, 2002, p. 19.

regions that are mostly affected by depopulation tend to cling onto their traditions and their centuries-old social structure, avoiding any possibility of change.

Since the last 20 years, something appears to have changed within the Alps' population. A report published in 2007 by CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps⁴⁷, noticed that, since 1981, the sensitive population increase in the Alps is not due to the positive balance of births among permanent mountain residents, but to an increasing migratory movement: the birth rate of mountain residents was found to be the half of the migration rate. As F. Corrado⁴⁸ reports, most of this flow is directed to the Alpine towns, but some is also directed to the areas that used to be most affected by out-migration, like valleys that are not so well connected by communications or areas that were usually considered as fragile or in danger of complete depopulation. This is the effect of a choice made by people who elect the mountain as their home place.

Movements like amenity migration and counterurbanization were already treated in this chapter from the point of view of their own actors. But as the flow starts growing, also its impact on the receiving territory must be analyzed, especially if considering the peculiarity of the Alpine territory and environment.

If the arrival of new inhabitants has little influence on mountain towns, it can have remarkable consequences on the socio-cultural, economic and biological life of small mountain villages.

New inhabitants, in fact, when autonomously moving into the mountain without a previous connection with relatives or any other stable contact, need to rebuild in the mountain all the infrastructures and services they were used to. This means that their arrival causes property renovation of old or abandoned buildings, opening of new business, organization of cultural and leisure activities. If considered on a long term, building renovations can slowly lead to a revival of the building market, with possible price raise. But it surely contributes to the upkeep and update of old buildings complying with safety, health and environmental regulations.

New business are opened, that can bring to the village for the first time new technologies. The chance of maintaining a faraway placed job can stimulate the setting of internet connections. But new inhabitants can also dedicate themselves to the revival of traditional activities like breeding or farming, possibly by using new techniques or respecting organic protocols.

Often, people that are used to a more articulated and various social life will bring to the mountain needs that are typical of an urban context, like for leisure activities (cinemas, theatres, sports) but also for more cultural kinds of gatherings, like art associations, or charities. Newcomers could also

⁴⁷ CIPRA: *Noi Alpi! Uomini e donne costruiscono il futuro*. 3° Rapporto sullo stato delle Alpi. Torino: CDA & Vivalda, 2007, p. 266.

⁴⁸ F. Corrado: *Ri-Abitare le Alpi. Nuovi abitanti e politiche di sviluppo*. Genova: Eidon, 2010, p. 90.

revitalize already existing associations dedicated to the protection and hand down of local traditions, giving propulsion to new initiatives and activities.

But the most important aspect is that the arrival of new inhabitants can sometimes allow the survival of declining communities, avoiding the complete abandon of small villages. Public services, like post offices, pharmacies, medical consulting rooms and even municipality offices or schools will have the chance not to close, or will be reopened. But also basic private services like shops (grocery, bakery), tank stations, coffee bars or restaurants will keep on.

Often who is moving away from big towns is also escaping from a kind of society he doesn't identify in anymore. But this does not necessarily mean he will accept to identify with the more traditional mountain society, nor that he will find it easy, in case he wants to.

And, more significantly, the impact on the receiving society must also be considered.

The presence of newly arrived people with different backgrounds can be perceived by the mountain inhabitants as an invasion for a number of reasons. This people are carriers of different values, different needs, different expectations, a different approach to landscape, different rhythms. They are dynamic and motivated by a strong urge to achieve their goals – so strong that they quitted their place of origin. They can be younger, better educated and also more affluent than the receiving community. The autochthonous inhabitants might feel to be threatened of losing control on their own homeland. The risk is high that, as time goes by, they find themselves being at the bottom of the social scale in their own territory. And if the newly arrived succeed in meeting their goal, from a diachronic point of view we can say that the future of the territory belongs to them, while the autochthonous inhabitants only represent the past⁴⁹. We can thus consider as an attempt of protecting the territory – and their own identity within it – the quite common situation of autochthonous inhabitants still naming as “foreigners” people who settled in their village even many years before: a foreign is not necessarily someone coming from abroad, but often just someone that might belong to the same nationality, but is not yet perceived to belong to the same community. He can just be born somewhere else. Or have been raised somewhere else. Or be born and raised there, but have moved away some time ago and only seldom come back⁵⁰.

As a result of this kind of reject, the new inhabitants might be frustrated in reaching their goal of living in a more genuine society, ending up being neglected by it and maybe having to refuge in an isolated community, only composed by people with a similar background and re-creating the value system they had escaped from.

⁴⁹ M.-C. Fourny: “Nuovi abitanti in una zona di media montagna”, in F. Corrado, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

⁵⁰ See the meaningful example reported by I. Borgna in “L'occhio del forestiero”, in F. Corrado and V. Porcellana (edited by): *Alpi e ricerca: Proposte e progetti per i territori alpini*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 2010, p. 149.

Finally, from the point of view of the environment, a more intensive use of the landscape can cause an impoverishment of the rural resources (wood, land, water). The land can be wasted by the building of new houses, maybe not even corresponding to the traditional architecture of the place. An increased production of waste can cause pollution and the need to undertake measures of waste management and disposal. But also noise pollution could appear in previously quiet places. Anyway, a kind of migration that is characterized by moral motivations like the search for a better way of life should in theory be more careful towards the landscape than economically motivated migrations⁵¹.

2.3.2. Return migration

Return migration has only recently been studied as a part of the migration flow. It can be decomposed in many aspects; each of them can raise discussion.

A return migrant is someone who returns back to his home place after a period of migration abroad. This simple definition hides more facets and pitfalls.

First of all, domestic return, that is the internal movement that does not include a border crossing, is usually not defined as a return migration⁵². Thus an old Calabrian that has been working –and living– in Milano for 40 years and returns back to his village in the middle of the Sila cannot be considered a return migrant, even if, as we will see later, the whole history of his migration experience could let us think so.

And return migration is considered voluntary: no forced repatriation of refugees and displaced persons can create return migration.

Nor is usually considered a return migrant one who comes back to his home country after a period in a poorer or less developed country, like missionaries or cooperation to development workers, or diplomats, or people who worked in a former colony⁵³.

Moreover, the duration of migration is essential for distinguishing a return migration from a simple coming back. Seasonal workers who yearly spend some limited time abroad, keeping their main residence in the home country cannot be defined as return migrants. Gmelch⁵⁴ calls it *circular migration*. Nor can someone who yearly returns to his home country to spend his holiday be defined each time as a return migrant.

⁵¹ R. S. Glorioso and L. A. G. Moss: “Amenity Migration to Mountain Regions: Current Knowledge and Strategic Construct for Sustainable Management”, in *Social Change*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2007, pp. 140.

⁵² G. Gmelch: “Return Migration”, in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 9 (1980), p. 136.

⁵³ R. King: “Generalizations from the History of Return Migration”, in B. Ghosh (edited by): *Return Migration: Journey of Hope or Despair?* Geneva: United Nations –IOM, 2000, pp. 7-55.

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 136.

A return migrant is someone who, at any time of his life, takes the decision to end his migration experience and go back home. Since decisions can seldom foresee future outcomes, the return can even be interrupted – and the actor can eventually decide to return back to the country he had already migrated to some years before, or to another country.

Also defining what the home country is can be complicated. The home country can be a place one hasn't visited for decades, and he has therefore little if any connection with. He will therefore hardly feel at home upon return. The migrant can have given up his original citizenship in the meantime. The nation he belongs to can therefore not be anymore the one he was born in. And return migration (if it can so be defined) can happen after the flow of some generations: can the grandchildren of a migrant who go back to their grandfather's country be defined as return migrants? The question is not to be undervalued, since Italian citizenship is granted to such descendants by law (while curiously it is not granted to the in-migrants' children who are born in Italy!). Italian out-migrants' progeny, therefore, have extremely easy procedures to face when deciding to move to Italy, but probably their adaptation to the Italian environment will be difficult as it would be moving to any other country.

Different social and economic reasons can push the migrant to move back to where he came from. Together with the possible success he reached abroad, it has an important influence on the outcomes of the return.

If the migrant sees his experience as a failure, he can be more willing to go back, and his decision can be influenced by the perspective of facing the failure and to have his countrymen hold his failure against him. Later, his return will possibly have no positive outcome on his destination territory.

But if the migrant reached any kind of success while abroad, his decision to go back can be taken more peacefully. It can be motivated by the will of starting a new activity using the wealth he accumulated abroad. In this case, the decision can often be anticipated by the regular sending of remittances, evidence of the will of investing in the home territory. In most of the cases, the first goal of migrants' remittances is building a house for the whole family and, eventually, for the migrant himself. The territory he moves into will gain economically from his emigration and return. Small villages can actually be kept alive by the investments of migrants and former migrants. But on the other side, one who reached some kind of success abroad could be reluctant to leave the benefits and welfare he was able to build in his host country. Thus failure can even be the reason

itself for returning (Cerese⁵⁵ names it the *Return of failure*), while success could be a reason for staying in the country that allowed it.

Gmelch⁵⁶ assumes that, from the point of view of success, the returnees are not complete failures nor great success. Who returns has not much to lose, nor much to gain if remaining in the host country.

Considering success not only from the point of view of wealth, but also of integration, social capital and acquired skills, once again the migrant's return can have an influence on the territory he moves into (but, on the other side, migrant workers are often relegated to low-profile, unskilled jobs). One who has failed in integrating in the receiving society can hardly have assimilated anything positive to pour. He will probably think about his emigration experience with a feeling of lost opportunity. But one who has lived positively his integration in the new society can be able and willing to export the models he has learnt (Cerese⁵⁷ names it the *Return of innovation*).

Cerese focuses on the returnee of innovation as one who is willing (and able) to give a real contribution to the community he goes back to (a "carrier of social change"⁵⁸). He states that such a kind of return migrant carries with him a number of new values, traits and ideas, efficiency-aimed and free of any oppressive and all-embracing traditional bond. In Cerese's experience, such an attempt would be destined to frustration because of the power relations that rule a traditional community, which would surely disagree to any effort of weakening the structure they are based upon. This is surely true if we consider that Cerese examined cases of return migration to the South of Italy, where the social structure is still connoted by the presence of strong, and seldom even criminal, traditional powers. In more serene environments, a returnee of innovation can be someone who, due to the new efficiency-aimed values, traits and ideas he experienced during migration, is quickly involved in any kind of management, by old and exhausted powers that seek fresh forces or by opponents to old powers that have actually the same goal. While a "normal" in-migrant would be perceived as alien and thus possibly mistrusted, a return migrant has more chances to be considered as "one of us", a member of the community, thus someone to rely on. A resourceful return migrant is thus likely to find himself promoted to a position of leader, be it of cultural associations, or of economic initiatives, or even as mayor. His personal penchant for action has a role in that, but he is also requested to take a position by his old (or new?) fellow citizens. He can be an educated and/or affluent person, but possibly his main characteristic is his impatience towards the steadiness of situations he finds unchanged since his departure, and his willingness to be useful to his

⁵⁵ F. P. Cerese: "Expectations and Reality: A Case Study of Return Migration from the United States to Southern Italy", in *International Migration Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer, 1974, p. 249.

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 258.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

community. The decision to become involved is usually not previous to his return, but is inspired short after his arrival by a sum of situations and personal contacts.

Return can also be motivated by family reasons. If the condition abroad is of disagreement with the society model, one can decide to go back to raise his children in his traditional society. Or the return can be motivated by some family planning, like taking over the family's business or some other task. Or it can be necessary in order to take care for old parents. Or, finally, it can be encouraged by the inheriting of a property in land or real estate⁵⁹.

Finally, one can move back after retirement, to spend his old age in the place he was born. (Cerase⁶⁰ names it the *Return of retirement*). In this case, return is perceived as the beginning of a new (and last) step in life. This return can be frustrating because of facing the disappear of the idealized world of youth; the former migrant can have accumulated wealth that can allow a comfortable aging (that maybe wouldn't have been enough in the country he had been working in); he can also move into a place that is his birthplace, but where he actually doesn't know anybody anymore. Rarely is he accompanied by his offspring, especially if born abroad. This kind of return has little if any positive influence on the territory he moves into, since his old age brings him to use in a self referent (or egoistic) way the possible accumulated wealth.

For the Italian case, it is important to notice that return migrants often face a better social situation in comparison to the one they left years before. Social and health security, and more generally, the standard of living in nowadays Italy cannot be compared with the "work in progress" welfare of post-war Italy. But the cost of living in nowadays Italy can still be lower to the US, France or Belgium. Of course, much depends on the local characteristics of the abroad point of departure and of the Italian destination.

All of this suggests that returning is, just like emigrating, never a light-heartedly taken decision. Both are usually influenced by more than one single reason.

2.3.3. The migrant politician (or commuting politician)

The migrant politician is a peculiar kind of migrant, and also a peculiar kind of politician. No reported literature has ever dealt with him specifically. A migrant politician is someone who has a political position in a community without permanently living within it. The community in which he practices his position is usually small, peripheral, and marginal or disadvantaged. The place where

⁵⁹ M. Byron and S. Condon: "A Comparative Study of Caribbean Return Migration from Britain and France: Towards a Context-Dependent Explanation", in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1996, p. 98.

⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 251.

he spends most of his time and has his main interests is somewhere else, instead, in a big town, an administrative centre or anyway a place where services are not a problem.

He can be a member of the municipality council, but usually his position is relevant – mayor, for example – so that his migration is meaningful. He can be a commuter, who only reaches the community he was elected by in order to take part to the council sessions, or to meet his citizens on an established time pace (e.g. once a week). Or he can be a seasonal migrant, who resides in the community in summer and during holidays. He can be the owner of a second house in the community, usually inherited by family hailing from there, but also bought as a holiday destination. He is usually an affluent or successful person, and these qualities of him might be what raises his voters admiration. His success in the local politics has been made possible by the lack of relevant politicians within the community, or also by the mere lack of representatives of a certain party.

Such party is usually a major party in the national scene and has a solid and well organized structure. It can be of some importance within the community, but lacking of a solid internal candidate. Thanks to its structure, it can afford the economic and organizational efforts of the propaganda which is necessary to grant a victory.

Being a foreigner to the community, he can be chosen because of his unbiased point of view, or for his innovative position towards some of the community problems. Or he can be chosen in order to destabilize a stuck situation. On the other hand, what seemed to be his strong points can turn out to be his weakness: he will most obviously be accused of misunderstanding the local problems, of ignoring the local situation, of being unable to solve anything since he does not really live there. Moreover, his “big town” approach can convince his voters during the campaign, but end up being out of place when really operating.

Trieste was an example of the opposite of all that has been written up to here. Mayor Roberto Di Piazza, in office between 2001 and 2011, had previously been the mayor of his residence and business place Muggia, between 1996 and 2001. Muggia is one of the municipalities of the province of Trieste. Mr. Di Piazza was indeed the affluent owner of a supermarket chain, but in this case the migration flow was opposite, and a peripheral municipality mayor became the mayor of the main administrative centre. A flow from a minor to a major centre is seldom of any interest, but a success in politics starting to a hamlet to be later promoted as a big town mayor has some relevance. Unfortunately, in Italy politics nowadays, this doesn't necessarily mean that Di Piazza was preferred by the citizens to another representative of the same party. It just means that the party chose him as its representative.

Chapter 3

A historical framework

This case study deals with the inhabitants of the mountains of the easternmost part of Italy. In the region Friuli – Venezia Giulia, in the province of Udine, the territory including the municipalities of Drenchia/Dreka*, Grimacco/Grmak*, Pulfero/Podbuniesak*, S. Leonardo/Svet Lienart*, S. Pietro al Natisone/Špietar*, Savogna/Sauodnja*, Stregna/Srednje*, Lusevera/Bardo*, Taipana/Tipana* and Resia/Rezija*¹ is inhabited by a Slovene speaking minority. This simple list of geographical name faces the linguistic and cultural variety of these valleys. This territory is called, in Italian, Slavia. But even this simple name is complicated by the meanings that history, scholars and its daily employment have given to it over time. Slavia can thus be called Italiana, or Friulana, or Veneta. The Slovene term is much more concise and reveals the Slovene approach to it: this territory is in fact called Beneška Slovenija or, quickly, Benečija. Beneška Slovenija means “the Venetian part of Slovenia”. The Friulian name is even as precise: Sclavonìe, which means “land of the Slavs”.

A Slovene minority is also present in Friuli within the Canale Valley/Kanalska Dolina*/Kanaltal, but this territory doesn't belong to Slavia for geographical, social and historical reasons. For its position, in fact, the Canale valley gives Slovenia and Austria a merge into Italy. Its autochthonous inhabitants are a singular case of quadrilingualism, as they speak Italian, Friulian, Slovene and German. The history of the Canale Valley differs from the history of Slavia. It only became Italian in 1919.

And, finally, the Slovene minority is also present in some valley bottom centres, at the base of the quoted valleys, like for example Cividale, recently included in the UNESCO World heritage.

3.1 A History of Slavia: the pre-Italian period

The main source about the history of Slavia is an essay by the historian Carlo Podrecca. “La Slavia italiana” was published in 1884 and focuses on the Natisone Valleys territory, especially the district of S. Pietro. The Torre Valleys were unfortunately not considered by historians and their past remains mostly neglected.

In the first part of the essay, Podrecca reviews several previous sources and eventually agrees that Slavic populations were present in the valleys around Cividale already in the 6th century. When the

¹ Being the first time that these places are quoted, their full name with the Slovene equivalent is quoted. * = Slovene name. Hereinafter, and only for a question of quickness, only the Italian name will be quoted. Having the language spoken in Resia a peculiar paleoslavic origin, its inclusion in Slavia is not universally accepted.

Longobards invaded the Italian North-Eastern regions, the Slavs had to retreat on the mountains. But the Longobards' arrival had brought war and sicknesses, causing depopulation. Therefore the Slavs could later occupy again the grounds that had been left uncultivated.

The Slavs were thus farmers and breeders, but unfortunately we lack of real historical sources about how they earned their living. Sources reported by Podrecca mention the fact that the land property was extremely fragmented and therefore its profit was hardly cost-effective. Moreover, due to the territory geography, agriculture was only possible in narrow terraces dug into the mountain.

The Slavs were organized at the level of municipality in autonomous political institutions². A certain equality between the families was recognized within it. Each family was in fact represented by its head of household within the municipality council, called *vicinia* or *sosednja*, which voted a representative, called *decano* or *župan*. The councils gathered outdoors, in the main public square of each village, usually under a linden tree, around the big stone plate that was the symbol of the valley union and autonomy. The municipalities of each of the two main valleys (the so called *convalli* of Antro³ and Merso⁴) were represented in two more important councils, the so called *vicinanze grandi* or *velika sosednja*, which were led by two *decani grandi* or *velik župan*. These councils used to gather in the main square of Biacis, and later Tarcetta for the Val d'Antro and in Merso di Sopra for the *convalle* of Merso. Finally, the main institution was a kind of parliament called *Arengo grande*, which included all the *decani* of both the valleys and met once a year – or by necessity - in the square of S. Quirino. Where the feudal system was present, the highest positions were usually validated by the feudal lord.

Some plots, called *comugne*, were managed by the community as a whole for collective activities like breeding or wood collecting.

During the patriarchate of Aquileia domination, the Natisone Valleys were submitted to its feudal system, but a certain balance was present between the feudal lords' authority and the autonomy of the traditional local institutions. Around 1420, the Natisone Valleys voluntarily joined the Venetian Republic. Due to the isolation of the deepest valleys, and to their scarce economic rent, Venice mostly ignored them and granted them the tax exemption, together with the possibility of maintaining their autonomous institutions, in exchange for their control and safeguard of the crossing places along the borderline and the upkeep of the roads connecting to them. Incursions of the Turks were in fact quite common in the 15th century Friuli. Venice had also granted the Valleys inhabitants to solve autonomously their judicial disputes: the two valleys could elect among

² C. Podrecca quotes a document of the Venetian Republic, including the names of 36 municipalities.

³ Valley of the Natisone river.

⁴ Valleys of the tributaries of the Natisone river: Alberone, Cosizza and Erbezzo.

themselves their own twelve judges⁵; a Venetian administration representative, usually the feudal lord, took part to their meetings, but with a restricted jurisdiction.

The geographical conformation of the Torri valleys is instead such that no real pass point connects it with the territory over the mountains. They were thus completely neglected by the Venetian administration and never enjoyed of any rewarding autonomy⁶.

Some of the scarce sources about the Torre valleys inhabitants during the Venetian domination are quoted by F. Musoni in his essay included in O. Marinelli's *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie*⁷. Musoni quotes the reports of some Venetian officers, who pointed out the substantial misery of the "Schiavonia" people, notwithstanding the fecundity of their land. The reason of their extreme poverty was ascribed by these officers to the feudal bondages.

After the defeat of the Venetian republic by the French, in 1797, the new rulers did not confirm the Slavia privileges and autonomy. The same happened when, in the same year, as a consequence of the treaty of Campoformido, the Austrian government replaced the French⁸. The last *Arengo grande* was held in 1804.

A new alternation between the Austrian and the French happened in 1805, when the third Napoleonic campaign in Italy restored the French supremacy. After Napoleon definitive defeat, Friuli and Slavia were consigned again to the Austrian empire in 1815 and included in the Lombardo Veneto province.

During the following years, Slavia population was afflicted by a severe famine.

In 1816 the *sosednje* were officially abolished, and the territory was divided into eight municipalities (San Pietro, Savogna, Rodda, Tarcetta, S. Leonardo, Stregna, Grimacco, Drenchia), that formed the canton of S. Pietro degli Slavi, included in the district of Cividale. The *sosednje* survived for a short time in a kind of meeting of the heads of the household, but lacking of a real authority they finally disappeared. The *comugne* were abolished in 1852 and the plots were shared between the inhabitants.

While the territories of Gorizia and Trieste were highly valued by the Austrian government, Slavia was mostly neglected by Austrian investments. Yet, it was heavily oppressed by the Austrian fiscal system, which considered it equal to a fully productive territory. Moreover, the military service was institutionalized. It kept young people far from the fields work for eight long years, so that many conscripts decided to fail to report for military service.

⁵ The judges were twelve for each valley. This judicial institution was named *dvanajstija*.

⁶ G. Barbina: "Le comunità etnico linguistiche in rapporto al territorio", in Provincia di Udine: *Atti conferenza sui gruppi etnico-linguistici della provincia di Udine*. Udine: 5-6 maggio 1968. UD: Chiandetti ed, 1969, p. 33.

⁷ F. Musoni: "Gli abitanti. Il loro numero e la loro distribuzione", in O. Marinelli: *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie. Distretti di Gemona, Tarcento, S. Daniele e S. Pietro con Cormòns, Gorizia e la valle dell'Isonzo*. Udine: Società Alpina Friulana, 1912, p. 109.

⁸ G. Valussi: *Gli Sloveni in Italia*. Trieste: Lint, 1974, pp. 76-77

The Austrian period remained for a long time in the memory of the Slavia inhabitants as connected to the loss of their independence and the starting point of the decadence of their territory, while the previous period under the Venetian supremacy was mythicized as a kind of golden age.

Therefore the annexation to Italy was happily welcomed. In 1866, as a consequence of the treaty of Vienna, the Lombardo Veneto region was ceded by the Austrian empire to the Italian kingdom, upon agreement of its inhabitants by way of a plebiscite⁹. The agreement of the valleys inhabitants was unanimous. Italy was maybe considered as a natural successor of the Venetian republic, and a country which had fought against the invader to gain its independence.

3.2 Slavia and Italy: the beginning of a tormented relation

Podrecca reports several documents dating back to the 19th century proving the devotion of the Friuli Slavs to Italy. They are even reported to have taken arms by the side of the Italians against Austrian soldiers in several situations, and to have celebrated Italian independence in 1861 by lighting some bonfires. Episodes of reluctance to the military service are also reported, but it is difficult to state if such choices were due to a national affiliation rather than to the difficulty of staying away from fields work for a very long time. Italy anyway was considered as the land of freedom, if compared with the Austrian oppression. Therefore the result of the plebiscite was also a choice of devotion to a nation they felt connected with, although they surely didn't mean to give up their culture and identity.

They soon had to face the approach of a newborn nation, whose main concern was to build up the cohesion of its own inhabitants as a single, unite, newborn community and to protect its freshly established borderline. The Italian state project in that moment was therefore of a highly centralized nation. The newly acquired territory of Slavia was thus the field of an intense militarization, by the establishment of military bases and facilities almost everywhere¹⁰. The administration was completely entrusted to public officials coming from Piedmont. But investments were also undertaken in order to improve the economic situation.

At the same time, the Italian government didn't really trust this people speaking another language, a language whose barycentre was beyond the freshly built borderline. All of these aspects together can help us understanding a kind of civilization project that was published on the newspaper "Il Giornale di Udine" in 1866, on November 22nd, just a few months after the plebiscite:

⁹ The plebiscite ballot didn't provide a real choice: the text was just a declaration of adhesion to the Italian kingdom. "Dichiariamo la nostra unione al regno d'Italia sotto il governo monarchico costituzionale del re Vittorio Emanuele II e dei suoi successori": "We declare our union to the Italian kingdom under the monarchic constitutional government of King Vittorio Emanuele II and his successors".

¹⁰ G. Valussi, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

“I Baschi nella Spagna, i Celti nella Gran Bretagna, i Celti e Tedeschi della Francia, i Francesi e Slavi nella Germania, i Greci, Albanesi, Tedeschi, Francesi e Slavi che sono un piccolo numero in Italia non possono cangiare il carattere rispettivo della nazionalità spagnola, inglese, francese, tedesca, italiana. Gli stranieri di origine e di lingua non sogliono mai parlare della distinta loro provenienza quando sono nel mezzo di una nazionalità compatta; ma ai confini d’un’altra nazionalità può essere questa che accampi delle pretese, come avvenne della Francia che ci portò via Nizza. (...) Bisogna insomma che coll’agricoltura, coll’istruzione delle scuole e de’ libri, con ogni mezzo più adatto trasformiamo quelle poche popolazioni (...) Questi Slavi bisogna eliminarli col beneficio, col progresso, colla civiltà... Non faremo nessuna violenza, ma adopereremo la lingua e la coltura di una civiltà prevalente quale è l’Italiana per italianizzare gli Slavi d’Italia. Useremo speciali premure per migliorare le sorti economiche e sociali, per educarli, per attirarli a questa civiltà italiana che deve brillare ai confini, tra quegli stessi che sono piuttosto ospiti nostri”

“The Basques in Spain, the Celts in Great Britain, the Celts and the Germans of France, the French and the Slavs in Germany, the Greeks, Albanians, Germans, French and Slavs who are a little number in Italy cannot change, respectively, the character of the Spanish, British, French, German, Italian nationality. The foreigners for origin and language do not have the habit of speaking about their different origin when they are in the middle of a compact nationality, but bordering another nationality, the latter can stake claims, so as France, that took Nice away from us. (...) In other words those few people must be transformed, by education of schools and books, by any more appropriate mean. These Slavs must be removed, by assistance, development, civilization (...) We won’t use violence, but we will use the language and culture of a prevalent civilization, as the Italian is, to make the Slavs of Italy become Italians. We will use special attention to improve the economic and social situation, to educate them, to attract them to this Italian civilization that must shine on the borderline, among those same people that are rather our guests”.

The first point that should be noticed is that *Il Giornale di Udine* was an eminent newspaper. It claimed to be the official press service for legal and administrative acts within the province of Udine. It was thus considered as the official “spokesperson” of the Italian authorities and its information was always seriously taken. The article reveals how the Slavs of Friuli were considered as foreigners, affected by a different origin, and, eventually, even “guests”. Moreover, it shows one of the concerns of the Italian administration: that the Slavic presence can be an excuse for a foreign country to stake claims upon the territory. The Italian civilization should be even more brilliant next to the borderline, instead. But the article also admits that the Slavs of Friuli usually don’t have the habit of stressing their difference. In a previous part, it reported the Slavs’ devotion to Italy. Anyway, they are reported to be but a little number, their presence of little significance. All the measures to be taken towards them should thus be quickly successful and not expensive. But what strikes more the attention of a reader is the final proclaim of what should be done to them. The superior (“prevalent”) Italian civilization should be brought to them: Italian culture, Italian books, Italian language, so that they succeed in becoming Italian. Clearly their present social, cultural and economic situation is considered to be lacking of dignity. When reading these few lines, one could make a comparison with the Spanish colonizers of America in the 15th century. Without sinking in excessive evaluations, the article approach to Friuli Slavs can at least be considered inconveniently paternalistic. Much has been written about this article, even in the present essay, because it describes shortly and clearly an approach that influenced the Italian policy in East Friuli for the next decades and possibly also its economic development. As one of the first acts in this direction, in 1867 the original name of S. Pietro degli Slavi (Šempeter Slovencev, in Slovene) was changed in S. Pietro al Natisone. After an administrative reorganization, the functions that were previously based in S. Pietro were moved to Cividale and Slavia definitively lost its autonomy.

The first and most important investments of the Italian administration dealt with schooling. Even if the Austrian administration had created schools in the valleys, most of the population was still illiterate when Slavia was annexed to Italy and an intervention was thus necessary. But the progressive abandon of the Slovene language was one of the goals of Italian education. Schools of any level were opened in every village, so that education was close and affordable for every family. A teacher training school was opened in S. Pietro, to educate Slovene young girls to teach in Italian. Going to a school where only Italian was spoken, with Italian teachers usually coming from other regions, caused some disorientation to the Slovene children, who could hardly understand Italian and could not speak it. But as time went by, the pressures on abandoning the Slovene language were so intense that the new generations grew up feeling almost ashamed of their familiar language. Anyway, at the beginning this first attempt to replace the Slovene language seems to have failed if

we consider that, curiously, the decrease of illiteracy caused a raise of the number of Slavia inhabitants who took out a subscription to the publications of the Svetega Mohorja Družba of Klagenfurt, a publisher of easy books in Slovene about agriculture, religion, history and medicine¹¹. Thus people who learnt how to read chose to read in Slovene. Moreover, Slovene kept being the language of the church. While the language of the Holy Mass was still Latin, catechism was held in Slovene, so that it could reach every member of the community. And this was the vehicle for literary standard Slovene, while at home, in the families, a dialect variant was spoken.

Another important intervention of the Italian government was about development. Agriculture was rationalized and improved by using fertilizers that succeeded in eradicating endemic parasites. Thanks to that, the soil performance improved and this allowed some population increase. But further improvements, like for example the introduction of agricultural machinery, were impossible or too expensive because of the environment steep and craggy nature, thus agriculture never really crossed the limit of subsistence. And the excessive fragmentation of the properties remained a major problem.

Regrettably, an unequal fiscal system considered all of Slavia as a productive territory. Taxes were therefore hardly affordable, if we consider the geographical nature of this territory¹². Many and heavy taxes afflicted the farmers and breeders of a poor soil: on milled seeds, on salt, on sugar, on coffee.

Investments were made also in infrastructures like rails and roads, but involved essentially the valley bottom centres.

During the first World War, the mountains of Slavia were crossed by the frontline. The public buildings had to interrupt their activities to host the troops. The high school of S. Pietro became a hospital. The defeat of the Italian army in Caporetto / Kobarid in October 1917 forced thousands people to escape disorderly from their villages, carrying all their households furnishing and animals, stuck between the invading Austrian enemy and the Italian withdrawal. Many of them were displaced in faraway places in the South of Italy, where the cohabitation with the autochthonous people was not always easy. All of them returned back to their home places as soon as they were allowed to.

After the war end, the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes raised the Italian Slovenes' awareness of their identity and consciousness of their national belonging. The awakening was significant for the Slovenes of the newly Italian territories of Trieste and Gorizia, who had since years enjoyed the recognition by the Austrian empire and, for example, could already attend

¹¹ F. Clavora, R. Ruttar: *La comunità senza nome : la Slavia alle soglie del 2000*. Zveva slovenskih Izseltencev Furlanije Julijske Krajine = Unione Emigranti Sloveni del Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1990, pp. 21-22.

¹² C. Podrecca, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

schools with Slovene teaching language¹³. It hardly touched the Slovenes of Friuli, instead. Yet, this caused some concern in the Italian authorities, that were afraid of having to face the growth within Italian borders of a self-conscious and compact minority, and even supported by a foreign country. The attempt of italianising the Slovene speaking populations became thus more intense, often bursting into violence. With the coming of the fascist period, Italy became exasperatedly nationalist and could hardly tolerate the presence on its territory of minorities speaking another language and referring to a different culture. Several prohibitions affected then the Slovene minority¹⁴, like the ban of Slovene names, both for people and places, the abolition of all the minority cultural, economic, religious and even sport institution, the prohibition to use Slovene in the relations with authorities and even within the Church, etc. Thus giving a baby a foreign name was forbidden¹⁵. And people who had a foreign name were forced to change it with an Italian one: fascism could not admit the presence of anything foreign on the holy Italian territory, thus who had a foreign surname was considered a traitor, who had changed an originally Italian surname with a foreign one, in order to show his agreement with some enemy political idea. Or one could have had his Italian name mangled because of some biased hick priest when baptised.

The goal was of eradicating the possibility of any Slovene national conscience, but also to change a person's perception of her own identity. Propaganda within Slavia was aimed at persuading the Slovenes that their language was something inconvenient, barbaric, underdeveloped, a remainder of the past and an insult to the superior Italian culture. Slovenes were forced to feel ashamed of their own identity, so that they quickly forget their mother language and their traditional culture.

In Slavia, the italianisation process had started earlier, thus it had already gained some success before the fascist period. As a consequence, the fascist discrimination in Slavia was somehow milder than in Venezia Giulia¹⁶. After the complete italianisation of schools, the main source keeping the Slovene language, traditions and culture alive was still the Church. The fascist attacks directed thus towards those priests that used Slovene as the language of catechism, worship and church songs. In many reported episodes, priests were intimidated to stop using Slovene. The use of Slovene by the Church was finally formally prohibited in 1933. From then on, it only survived as a family language, whose use was confined within the home walls.

Coming from such a peculiar situation Slavia entered the second World War. Differently from the first World War, this time the combats which took place in this region of Italy didn't involve two

¹³ A Slovene connoted list put in for the elections of 1921 in Trieste, Gorizia and Istria.

¹⁴ Historic literature is overloaded with examples of different forms of oppression the Slovenes had to suffer. See, for example the contribution of L. Čermelj in *AA.VV.: Passato e presente degli Sloveni in Italia*, Trieste, EST-ZTT, 1974, pp. 23-25.

¹⁵ The rule, dated 1939, was only abolished in 1966. In Trieste, a municipality rule stating the same is dated 1923.

¹⁶ G. Valussi, *op. cit.*, p.80.

regular armies facing each other. The fight between the German army and the various partisan brigades was even bloody, and involved the whole civil population. In September 1943, in fact, Friuli was annexed to Germany, together with Venezia Giulia, Istria and the province of Ljubljana. The German invader was opposed in this region only by the guerrilla operations of partisans. Italian partisans were divided in two brigades: the communist Garibaldi brigade and the socialist and catholic Osoppo brigade, which had been created in Udine, in the archiepiscopal seminar, in 1943 and was therefore a Friuli autochthonous brigade. Moreover, Yugoslav partisans of the Osvobodilna Fronta¹⁷ were also active on the territory, and some Slavia inhabitants had created a local brigade, named Beneška Ceta, that fought together with Yugoslav partisans.

Yugoslav partisans made propaganda in favour of the annexation to Yugoslavia after the war end, stating that Slovene people should naturally belong to a Slavic state. Even among the Italian partisan brigades there wasn't a complete agreement about what would happen to Slavia after the war end. The Garibaldi brigade partisans, in fact, were in favour of the Yugoslav solution. The Osoppo partisans, instead, were in favour of a reunion to Italy and had some reserve about the survival of a Slovene identity. The same Yugoslav partisans also made mistakes with the autochthonous population, for example forcing young people to join them under threat.

The civil population was stuck between invaders and partisans and ended being the final victim of the revenge of the German soldiers for each partisans' successful action. Some people joined the partisan brigades, but even this had distressing consequences on the community cohesion: some joined the Garibaldi brigades, some joined the Osoppo brigades, and some joined the Yugoslav brigades.

The latter had even started giving some education in Slovene, usually on the mountains in appropriate hidden places. Yet the lessons were not so popular as expected, maybe because of the fear of being caught, or of suffering of a revenge in case that they would eventually rejoin Italy. The Yugoslav propaganda was hard to accept for the people of Slavia: first of all, the communist ideology was extremely distant from this religious people, who in the recent period had found in clergy the only defender of their Slovene identity. Moreover, the farmers of Slavia had been for a long time the owners of their small properties and could not accept an ideology imposing collective property. Finally, a future annexation to Yugoslavia was not included in their own aspirations from an ideological point of view: even if belonging to Italy had required some sacrifice and a threat to their Slovene identity, they kept feeling more Italians than Yugoslavs and could not forget having gravitated for centuries on the Friuli lowland for their commerce and exchanges. Even their geographical position was in favour of a belonging to Italy: the valleys opened to the Friuli lowland,

¹⁷ Z. Vidali: *La tutela globale e gli Sloveni della provincia di Udine*. Slovenski raziskovalni institut, 2002, p. 17.

while high and craggy mountains divided them from Yugoslavia. And, surely, eighty years of Italian propaganda had had an influence on the perception of their personal identity.

Since July 1944, the situation of Slavia was even worsened by the arrival of thousands of Cossacks, who had been promised by the Germans that they could create a new homeland in Friuli¹⁸, in exchange for their support on the Russian frontline and in order to help fighting the partisans. Therefore they had moved from their homeland together with their families, furnishing, and animals. At their arrival in Friuli, they had to settle in the area between Amaro and Venzona, where they were mostly abandoned by their German hosts, who possibly hadn't expected the arrival of a whole population, with women, children and the most various animals, including a few camels and dromedaries. Riding their horses and variously armed, the Cossacks thus started plundering all the neighbouring villages. They settled also in the Natisone valleys, in the villages of S. Leonardo, S. Pietro, Biacis, Vernasso, Azzida and others, and in Nimis and even in some smaller villages of the Torre valleys¹⁹. In few situations, a kind of relation arose between the invading Cossacks and the Slavia inhabitants, thanks to the common origin of their Slavic languages²⁰. But in general the Cossacks behaved as a real occupying troop, resorting to violence to get what they wanted. The fire of Nimis, between September 29th and October 1st, 1944, razed the whole village. At the end of April 1945, when the war was almost over, the retiring Germans let the Cossacks move to Carinthia. Most of them were eventually repatriated to the USSR after the war ended.

3.3 The post-war period: a slow normalization

In the post war period, the presence of an enemy state over the border heavily conditioned the minority policy of the Italian government. Furthermore, the borderline soon changed into the iron curtain that divided two civilizations for forty years. At the same time, certain mistrust also remained in the perception of Italian citizens towards a minority that was definitively perceived as foreign. And such mistrust was proficiently manipulated by the propaganda of certain political parties, including the governing Democrazia Cristiana.

For decades the prejudice survived that identified anything Slavic with communism. Anyone who openly manifested his Slovene identity was therefore considered an anti-Italian enemy. Episodes of violence are reported, carried out by members of extreme right wing paramilitaries, against normal

¹⁸ P. Stefanutti: "I cosacchi sotto le Alpi", in *Millenovecento*, n. 29, march 2005.

¹⁹ Nothing has been written about the presence of the Cossacks in the Torre valleys. News about it was found in the oral tradition. The author owes special thanks to the Lendaro family, hailing from Taipana, for sharing their memories with her.

²⁰ See for example R. Firmani: *Lidia e il cosacco*. Camposampiero: Edizioni del noce, 2009. The book is actually a short novel, but it is based on historical facts and includes a short annex reporting the voices of people who experienced that period.

people who were maybe only speaking Slovene in public, or sending their children to the Slovene schools in the province of Gorizia²¹.

Since the first free elections in 1946, the population of Slavia, so as the majority of the population of Udine, compactly voted for the centrist catholic party Democrazia Cristiana. Democrazia Cristiana seemed to be a natural choice for the religious people of Slavia, who meant to keep equally the distance from right wing parties and communists. Almost all the new municipality administrations were affiliated to Democrazia Cristiana. According to their political party, the Slavia administrators chose to put the national interest above the peculiar needs of their Slovene citizens and in many occasion avoided attempts that would lead to an acknowledgement of the existence, and the rights, of the Slovene minority in Friuli. All the administrations, in other words, agreed about the fact that Slovene had to remain confined as the language of family relations, while the only language for public life had to be Italian.

Moreover, there was no real agreement about the nature of such spoken Slovene itself. Its identification with modern standard Slovene was not unanimous, as well as its being one of its variants or dialects. The fact that this language had evolved for centuries in quite isolated valleys, in fact, had made of it a peculiar language – or dialect, with linguistic variants that were not to be found anywhere else. It was thus easy for pro-Italian administrators to state that there was no real connection between the dialect that was spoken in the valleys and the modern standard Slovene spoken in Slovenia, thus cutting any possible connection with a foreign (and enemy) country²². Even nowadays, we can state that the debate is not over yet, as many dialect speakers feel to be carriers of an identity which goes far beyond being simply Slovene.

The Memorandum of Understanding, signed in London in 1954 and aimed at definitively solving the belonging of the A and B zones around Trieste, is considered to be the basis for the future protection of the Slovene minority in Italy. Its geographical focus was clearly limited, and surely it didn't deal with Friuli. Yet it is amazing to note that, when dealing with the question of the Slovene minority in Italy, and with the Italian minority in Yugoslavia, it makes no mention of the existence of a Slovene minority also in Friuli, just a few kilometres far from Trieste, also needing for some form of protection. As a consequence, in the next two decades the Slovene minority of the province of Udine was neglected by any draft protection law.

The context of post war Slavia was thus not the most quiet and free of tension. The political situation at a national and at an international level, even if maybe ignoring the same existence of

²¹ P. Stranj, *La comunità sommersa. Gli Sloveni in Italia dalla A alla Z*. Trieste, Juliagraf, 1992, pp. 107-108.

²² G. Valussi, *op. cit.*, p. 81-82.

Slavia, seemed to charge it with the worse effects of the cold war. In the Natisone and Torre Valleys, the secret paramilitary organization known as Gladio²³ was also present.

Moreover, the economic situation was not easy. Agriculture was affected since centuries by endemic problems, such as the excessive fragmentation of properties, the insufficient employment of agricultural machinery, the fact that field works were still performed with traditional methods. This nipped in the bud the possibility of developing a land that for natural reasons was rather unproductive. Apart from natural and traditional problems, the productivity was also hindered by the several easements for military purposes, the distance from the production centres, and a lack of real and incisive investments by the regional and local administrations. This led to a progressive abandon of the best man power of Slavia, that chose for emigration in a quantity similar to a real exodus. As in all the migration flows, also in Slavia the ones who left were the youngest, most active and strongest part of the population, and their departure weakened forever the social structure of their villages. Seasonal migration for peddling commerce had always been present in Slavia, and definitive migration had already improved during the fascist period. Daily and weekly commuting was as well present. But in the post war period, many people lost any hope to see an improvement of the socio-economic conditions of their home places and the abandonment of the mountain became a definitive choice. Between 1961 and 1971, the population of many villages of Slavia halved. Migration was mostly directed to the industrial towns of the Friuli lowland (Udine, Manzano, Cividale, Buttrio) and, at a minor level, also abroad. France, Canada, Argentina and the Belgian mines were the preferred destinations.

Interestingly, since the '70s, migration somehow contributed on a long term to the awakening of the ethnic conscience of the Slovenes of Friuli. While abroad, they had the chance to freely elaborate their identity. Abroad, they also experienced a more serene and balanced management of ethnic relations and minority rights. As a consequence of their need to reproduce their traditions, they organized ethnic based associations. When they returned to their villages for the summer holidays, they carried with them a need to live again the experiences of their past, and a mood for associational life. The first cultural and artistic ethnic based associations were created by return migrants, who maybe needed the most to see their traditions maintained and protected²⁴.

The earthquake of may 6th 1976 shook Slavia not only from a geological point of view. The victims in Friuli were almost thousand on the whole. The Torre valleys were included between the disaster

²³ F. Nazzi: *Alle origini della "Gladio": la questione della lingua slovena nella vita religiosa della Slavia Friulana nel secondo dopoguerra*. Udine: La Patrie dal Friul, 1997; N. Zuanella: *Gli anni bui della Slavia: attività delle organizzazioni segrete nel Friuli orientale*. Cividale del Friuli: Società Cooperativa Editrice Dom, 1996. The book by Faustino Nazzi is extremely biased by the origin of the author. Yet it is an interesting document, which allows understanding the climate of the second post war in Slavia.

²⁴ F. Fornasaro: "Le valli del Natisone: una peculiarità geo-etnica alle soglie del 2000", in *Letterature di frontiera* (1999) 2/IX, p. 173.

area: the hamlet of Monteperta, in the municipality of Taipana, for example, was one of the worst damaged – it was completely razed, even if none died. 79% of the Taipana population remained homeless. In Lusevera, 9 persons died and the village was razed as well. The Natisone valleys were included in the damaged or seriously damaged area, yet none died. The whole area remained without electricity, water supply and telephone connection. From an economic point of view, the earthquake struck the most an area which was the less productive within the province of Udine, hosting only small and medium enterprises. Yet the whole production of the region Friuli-Venezia Giulia was affected by the damages to the distribution system and the infrastructures.

The reconstruction was efficient and quite fast: the territory was already well controlled by the institutions –also thanks to the military facilities- thus the reaction was immediate. The people's reaction was also remarkable for its alacrity and effectiveness. Friuli still remains renown for that.

Many people who had emigrated from Slavia in the previous years came back to take part to the reconstruction. Specific regional laws were issued in order to promote the returns: financial contributions were granted by the law no. 63 of 1977²⁵ to those migrants who committed to settle in Friuli again.

As a consequence of the earthquake, new relations were established with Yugoslavia and the Socialist Republic of Slovenia. The central government of Beograd helped financially with 2.800.000.000 Lire and the government of Ljubljana sent prefabricated buildings and caravans²⁶. Investments were also made in shared capital enterprises. This is remarkable, if we consider that also Slovenia suffered the destruction caused by the earthquake. It is also symptomatic of the fact that the relations between the people living on both sides of the iron curtain had actually never stopped, notwithstanding the political situation.

The reconstruction investments anyway involved the areas where development was more likely to have a chance, thus it mostly neglected the mountain - and Slavia in particular. In order to rationalize the investments, great socio-economic areas were created. Slavia was included in the same area of Udine and Manzano. The investments reached thus only those productive centres, while the periphery didn't benefit of any improvement of its already depressed economy. The mountain villages became increasingly connoted as labour force reserves, whose inhabitants were intended to survive thanks to commuting. Even the creation, with the regional law no. 29/1973, of the *Comunità montane*, that were meant to be aimed at the development of the mountain, didn't

²⁵ Norme procedurali e primi interventi per l'avvio dell'opera di risanamento e di ricostruzione delle zone colpite dal sisma, nei settori dell'urbanistica, dell'edilizia e delle opere pubbliche – Procedural rules and first interventions for the starting of the renewal and reconstruction works of the zones which were struck by the earthquake, in the urbanistic, building and public works sector.

²⁶ R. Strassoldo and B. Cattarinussi (edited by): *Friuli: la prova del terremoto*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1978, pp. 199-200.

have significant positive outcomes for the economy of Slavia. The two *comunità montane* that included the Torre and Natisone valleys, in fact, also included valley bottomed centres; these centres always received more attention from the regional sponsor, while the mountain was relegated to a function in tourism and small traditional craftsmanship. Mountain agriculture and breeding were not sponsored, so as there was never an intention to create any small or medium industry.

From the point of view of the territory management, the earthquake allowed rebuilding the destroyed villages on the basis of modern planning criteria. Unfortunately, this approach denatured the traditional setting of those villages: for example, broad roads were opened where previously the houses were leaning on each other, only separated by narrow lanes. Residential areas were kept separated from craftsmanship and industrial areas, and so the traditional integration between a family and its own productive activity went missing. Often, the survivors felt like the village spirit had gone lost. An example of this is the church of S. Michele Arcangelo and S. Lorenzo, in Monteperta, in the municipality of Taipana, placed right in the centre of the village and dating back to the XVI century, which was torn down by the earthquake and then completely rebuilt with modern architectural standards and painted rose. Around it, some small yellow terrace houses were built, to host the earthquake victims. According to the project manager, this setting should have allowed the upkeep of the village community, since the survivors had the chance to gather together around their church. The terrace houses were given the name of “Centro Sociale”, which means Community Centre. The new building complex was immediately perceived as extraneous by the village inhabitants, who do not really neglect it, but keep feeling until now a deeper belonging to the church of Santissima Trinità, placed further from the village centre, and restored after the earthquake as well, but not denatured by any modern imposition.

3.4 The protection law and the present time

After the core moments of the reconstruction, in 1978, the Communist party fostered the organization of a big conference about the ethno-linguistic groups of the province of Udine. During the conference, different aspects of the history, culture and economy of the province of Udine were analyzed, whose causes or consequences had something to do with the presence of minorities. The conference was maybe the first serious evidence of the interest of the province administration towards its Slovene minority – the Friulian presence had never been questioned. The conference also gave the chance of highlighting the needs of the Slovene minority of Friuli, and of giving an input to some projects to protect them.

Also the Church played its part for the normalization of the Slovene question. In 1976, just one month before the earthquake, the bishop of Udine Mgr. Alfredo Battisti made an announcement in

which he officially approved the use of liturgical books in Slovene. That was the turning point of the relations between Church and the Friuli Slovenes after the second World War. In 1977, during the celebrations of the Migrant's day in Cividale, the same Mgr. Battisti apologized in the name of the Church for not having been sympathetic enough towards the feelings of the Slovenes, who might have been forced to choose between their devotion to the Church and their loyalty to their community. He also reassured them that their community would never be considered as foreigner within the diocese family²⁷. The apologize maybe meant to fix the faults of Democrazia Cristiana rather than of the Church itself: the Church, in fact, had always fought for the use of Slovene, even if this was aimed at granting the comprehension of the preaching rather than to the maintenance of an ethnic identity. During the fascist period, the government forbid to the use of Slovene for preaching was maybe not strongly enough hindered by the highest Vatican hierarchies. But we should also mention the fact that in Trieste part of the Slovene clergy had accused the bishop Mgr. Santin of having supported the Italians against the Slovenes during the post war events.

Since the '80s, anyway, thanks to the improved climate at an international level and also to the more concrete realization of the dreams of the European Union, the relationship between the Italian government and the Slovene minority slowly started to normalize. The first project of a special protection law dated 1970 and was an idea of the Communist Party. Other attempts followed, coming from left wing parties and from Slovene associations, all of them envisaging a global protection, thus including the Slovenes of Trieste, Gorizia and also Udine.

This represented quite an innovation: in the two past decades, the same belonging of the people of Slavia to the Slovene minority had been under discussion in some cultural circles. Their peculiar dialect, in fact, can be appropriately manipulated to deny its derivation from Slovene. Even nowadays, and even inside Slavia, some people consider the "po našin" dialect as an original expression of the local culture, completely separated from any Slovene identity²⁸. This was also the position of the Italian government: the inhabitants of Slavia were not considered Slovenes, but Italians with a Slavic origin.

An agreement, anyway, was mostly difficult: while the proposals included a global protection for the Slovenes of the three provinces, the Italian government kept on considering the protection as a duty stated by the peace treaties, thus limited to the territories which had been the object of those treaties – that is, only the province of Trieste. The Slovenes of Udine and Gorizia, after all, were still protected by the Italian constitution, which makes clear statements about minority defence. Who instead fostered global protection could not accept a division of the Slovene minority in two categories, one privileged and one neglected. Moreover, the hypothesis of a census of the Slovene

²⁷ P. Stranj, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

²⁸ *Po našin* is the name Slavia people give to their own dialect. In Slovene, it means "in our own way".

minority was always refused by the representatives of the minority itself, as forcing persons to declare their identity can bring to biased results, heavily depending on the political contest.

Due to this discord, the realization of a special law for the protection of the Slovene minority was long and contorted.

The requests of the Slovene part dealt with the use of Slovene in the public administration, schooling in Slovene, financing of the Slovene cultural associations, investments in the areas inhabited by Slovenes²⁹.

An agreement was eventually reached only in 2001, with the law no. 38 dated February 23rd. Its first innovation is the acknowledgement of the Slovenes of Udine as “real” Slovenes, members of the one Slovene minority so as the Slovenes of Trieste and Gorizia³⁰. The law determines a number of rights that might have seemed to be obvious, like the right to give children Slovene names.

The law grants the right to use Slovene in the relations with public administrations and within the elective institutions. Slovene toponymy is also granted, so as Slovene road signs. The law also states that Slovene cultural, artistic, sport, recreation, science, educational, information and publishing initiatives must be supported by the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

The paragraph no. 11 deals with Slovene schooling, but Slovene education within the province of Udine needed a different and more specific protection and is therefore included in paragraph no. 12. The differentiation was necessary, due to the fact that Slovene schooling was already present in the provinces of Gorizia and Trieste, while it was something new since more than one century in the province of Udine. The first step was the official recognition of the bilingual private school of S. Pietro al Natisone as a national school³¹. The paragraph also includes the possibility of creating courses of Slovene language and of local history and traditions within the already existing Italian schools, on request of the families.

Finally, the paragraph no. 21 includes a specific economic investment of the State, through the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia, in the territories of the province of Udine which are historically inhabited by the Slovene minority (Canal del Ferro – Canale valley, Torre and Natisone Valleys). The contribution is not such to revitalize the stagnating economy of this mountain territory, yet it has a symbolic value to show the involvement of the institutions in the territory development.

²⁹ Z. Vidali, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-46.

³⁰ Art. 1: “La Repubblica riconosce e tutela i diritti dei cittadini italiani appartenenti alla minoranza linguistica slovena presente nelle province di Trieste, Gorizia e Udine” – “The Republic recognizes and protects the rights of the Italian citizens belonging to the linguistic Slovene minority, present in the provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine.”

³¹ The school was created in 1984 by a group of associations and families as a result of the vitality of the Natisone Slovene community. It includes a pre-school, a primary school and a junior high school. The teaching languages are Slovene and Italian, at an equal level. There is thus a great difference with the Slovene schools of Trieste and Gorizia, where Slovene is the only teaching language – apart from the lessons of Italian or other foreign languages.

A key issue which risked to slow the law application is the effective territory where it had to be implemented. The matter is treated in paragraph no. 4. It states that “the law (...) will concern the territory where the minority is traditionally present. Such territory includes the municipalities or their hamlets that are included in a table prepared, on request of at least 15% of the citizens enrolled in the electoral rolls, or on request of one third of the council members of the interested municipalities, by the Committee within 18 months since its creation, and approved by a decree of the President of the Republic. If the Committee is not able to prepare the table within the expected time, the table is prepared within the next 6 months by the premiership, once heard the interested administrations and considering the work done by the Committee”³². The table implementation took 6 years: it was approved by a decree of the President of the Italian Republic on September 12th, 2007. The municipalities had completed their duty on time, even if in an extremely nervous political climate. In some peculiar situations, like Resia and Cividale, the belonging of some inhabitants to the Slovene minority had been heavily questioned by centre-right connected contests. They stated the belonging to an autochthonous minority, whose link with the Slavic culture dated back to centuries ago and couldn't thus be referred to as Slovene. The definitive table includes 32 municipalities. Six belong to the province of Trieste – all the province municipalities thus. Eight belong to the province of Gorizia. Eighteen municipalities belong to the province of Udine, which could thus become the barycentre of the Slovene minority for the number of its members. The list includes municipalities placed in the Natisone valleys, in the Torre valleys, in the Resia valley and in the Canale valley, but also valley bottom centres like Cividale and Torreano.

For Cividale, as a result of the intense discussion about it, a milder protection is granted. Just like the centre of Trieste and Gorizia, it becomes, in fact, the seat of special desks for its Slovene speaking inhabitants, while the other forms of protection are not included. The presence of Slovenes in Cividale is thus acknowledged, but their number is not considered such as to need the same complete protection of the other centres. At the same time, Cividale is recognized as an important centre for the Slovenes of its surroundings: it is, in fact, treated so as the centres of Trieste and Gorizia and becomes the reference point for all the services that have no autonomous seat in the valleys. The administration of Cividale didn't really agree with this new role, being concerned of a possible opening to bilingualism.

³² “Le misure di tutela della minoranza slovena previste dalla presente legge si applicano alle condizioni e con le modalita' indicate nella legge stessa, nel territorio in cui la minoranza e' tradizionalmente presente. In tale territorio sono considerati inclusi i comuni o le frazioni di essi indicati in una tabella predisposta, su richiesta di almeno il 15 per cento dei cittadini iscritti nelle liste elettorali o su proposta di un terzo dei consiglieri dei comuni interessati, dal Comitato entro diciotto mesi dalla sua costituzione, ed approvata con decreto del Presidente della Repubblica. Qualora il Comitato non sia in grado di predisporre nel termine previsto la tabella di cui al comma 1, la tabella stessa e' predisposta nei successivi sei mesi dalla Presidenza del Consiglio dei ministri, sentite le amministrazioni interessate e tenendo conto del lavoro svolto dal Comitato”

Tensions about the belonging or not to the Slovene minority actually last until the present time, in many different municipalities of Slavia, and especially in Resia and Cividale. The people of Resia, in particular, are concerned about the future of their peculiar dialect: the fear is great that, if only modern standard Slovene is protected, Resian could be sentenced to oblivion. It is important to note that the debate is usually – but not always – manipulated by members of political parties.

The law is maybe also a result of the epochal change that brought in the '90s to the collapse of Yugoslavia. Tito was al long dead. The big enemy didn't exist anymore. It has become difficult to keep on treating the newborn nation over the border as a communist threat. In 1996 Slovenia officially asked to enter the European Union. It entered European Union in 2004, adopted Euro in 2007 and endorsed the Schengen treaty in the same year.

The fall of the borderline has made every kind of cross border relation easier. Cross border cooperation is present at an international and interregional level, but also cross border cultural events are not rare anymore and are organized at a level of municipality or even of cultural association.

The most important institutions of the Slovene minority, originally born in Trieste or Gorizia, are represented with a seat in Cividale: SKGZ (*Slovenska kulturno-gospodarska zveza*, Cultural-economic Slovene union), SSO (*Svet Slovenskih organizacij*, Confederation of the Slovene organizations), ZSKD (*Zveza slovenskih kulturnih društev*, union of the Slovene cultural associations), SDGZ (*Slovensko deželno gospodarsko združenje*, Regional economic Slovene Union), *Kmečka zveza* (Farmers association). Cividale also hosts the oldest and most important cultural association born in Friuli, the *Kulturno Društvo Ivan Trinko* (Cultural association Ivan Trinko³³), created in 1954 and hosting a library of Slovene books. The association is also a publisher and hosts exhibitions and cultural events. It has an important role in supporting the smaller cultural associations scattered along the mountain. Moreover, Cividale is the seat of many Slovene cultural initiatives and publishers, like the weekly paper *Novi Matajur*, which publishes current news in standard Slovene, Italian and also in the local dialects, and also publishes *Galeb*, a monthly newspaper for kids and the fortnightly catholic paper *Dom*, in Italian and Slovene, which also publishes *Slovit*, a press review in Italian about current news connected with the Slovene minority. In spite of its administration, Cividale has thus really become a reference point for the Slovene community.

Another important centre for the diffusion of Slovene culture is San Pietro al Natisone, where the nationalization of the school has fostered a new cultural revival and given new power to already existing initiatives. S. Pietro hosts the *Centro studi Nediža*, which promotes divulgation and

³³ The association takes the name of Mgr. Ivan Trinko, a very beloved priest and scholar who defended the ethnic and linguistic rights of his devoted during the fascist period.

education initiatives directed to the youth. A seat of the *Glasbena Matica* is also present, granting professional education in music.

Being music very important in the Slovene tradition, many Slavia villages have their own choir or band. And many villages host a cultural centre, dealing with Slovene or local traditions³⁴. These associations care for the survival of traditional public performances and events, like Carnival above all.

Even if the population of Slavia has been seriously afflicted by emigration and underdevelopment, it still appears to be full of life and projects.

³⁴ Inštitut za Slovensko kulturo/Istituto per la cultura slovena: *Mi smo tu ... tuka, ... izdë, ... kle, ... tle*, Špeter/S. Pietro al Natisone: Inštitut za Slovensko kulturo/Istituto per la cultura slovena.

Chapter 4

Abandon and Underdevelopment

Slavia is renowned for being affected by deep underdevelopment. Its economic distress can be summarized by the data about some socioeconomic indicators as the mean income per head or the percentage of tax payers, which find within Slavia their lowest values if compared with the rest of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region. The literature about such an interesting phenomenon is surprisingly scarce and often biased. If the decline of the Carnia mountain was rather deeply analyzed in several essays, also at an institutional level, the peculiarity of Slavia is seldom mentioned and always connected to its specific ethnic connotation. Maybe because of its intermediate geographical position of connection area between the lowland and the highest mountain, many serious publications do not take Slavia into account, but concentrate rather on Carnia, the Gemona area or Val Canale. And maybe because of its peripheral position of borderline area, Slavia is mostly dealt with in essays about war events or the outcomes of the peace treaties, thus highlighting the minority management problem and taking for granted its underdevelopment without investigating about the reasons that caused it. All the essays that try to connect the different aspects behind Slavia underdevelopment, and also its consequences, are the result of research within the Slovene community and are therefore affected by its rightful claims and need of visibility.

The history of Friuli industry anyway is merely a history of its lowlands. Many aspects of Slavia underdevelopment are in fact common to the rest of the Friuli mountain, but have more devastating consequences on an ethnically connoted borderline area.

It is difficult to find in the existing literature concrete indicators of Slavia economy in the past, in order to give a historical framework to its present deprivation. One possible way is to connect its demographic data to the economic history of Friuli mountain and lowland. Some information about Slavia social situation will emerge as a result of demographic movements in the past.

Thus, in the next pages, the trend of Slavia population will be connected to its economic situation.

The demographic evolution of a population is of course not only due to economic factors. Birth and mortality rates have much to do with it, for example. But in case of broad fluctuations within a short period of time, it is advisable to check if any major social, political or economic change has occurred.

Census data will be analyzed at a municipality level and then aggregated at area level. An aggregation according to institutional units, in fact, seems not to be convenient. If we take the

province of Udine as analysis unit, the problem is that the unit is not homogeneous at all. It includes municipalities and areas that are mostly different from one another, like the Marano lagoon, the industrial area of Udine, the mountain area of Sauris and the ski resort of Sella Nevea.

Another chance could be analyzing the *Comunità Montane*¹. The mountain area of the Udine province used to be divided in five *Comunità Montane* (Torre Valleys, Natisone Valleys, Carnia, Gemonese, Valcanale/Canal del Ferro), which were reduced to 3 as a consequence of the fusion between Torre and Natisone Valleys in 2003 and Gemonese and Valcanale/Canal del Ferro in 2005. Such units are thus already quite patchy from the start, since they aggregate territories which had been kept distinguished in the past.

A study of census data at the level of *Comunità Montana* seems thus not to be appropriate to this research. The *Comunità Montana delle Valli del Natisone*, in fact, included the municipalities of Cividale/Cividât°/Čedad* (only its mountain hamlet), Drenchia, Grimacco, Prepotto/Prepòt°/Prapotno*, Pulfero, S. Leonardo, S. Pietro al Natisone, Savogna, Stregna and Torreano di Cividale/Toreàn°/Tavorjana*². While Cividale, Prepotto and Torreano are placed in the valley bottom and lowlands, the other villages are placed on the mountains.

Moreover, Cividale, Prepotto and Torreano belong to the territory where the Slovene minority is protected by the Italian Law, since they used to be inhabited also by Slovene speakers. At the present day, Slovene speakers are still present, but they are strictly combined with Italian and Friulian speakers, and the debate about the application of the Law of protection is still biting, as seen in the previous chapter. The other seven villages formed the historical core of Slavia and are still compactly inhabited by a Slovene speaking minority. Even the *Comunità Montana delle Valli del Natisone*, thus, cannot be considered as a homogeneous entity from a morphological nor from an ethnic point of view.

The *Comunità Montana delle Valli del Torre* included the municipalities of Attimis/Atimis°/Ahten*, Faedis/Faedis°/Fojda*, Lusevera, Nimis/Nimis°/Neme*, Povoletto/Paulêt°, Taipana and Tarcento/Tarcint°/Čenta*. While Lusevera and Taipana are placed on the mountain, have a breeding and agricultural vocation and are Slovene speaking, the other villages are placed on the lowland, have an industrial and crafts vocation and, if they were also inhabited by Slovene speakers in the past, they nowadays speak mostly Friulian. Attimis, Faedis and Nimis belong to the territory where the Slovene minority is protected, but in Attimis and Nimis

¹ The *Comunità Montane* (in English Mountain Communities) are public administrations that should improve the development of the mountain regions and aggregate the functions of different mountain municipalities.

² ° = Friulian name; * = Slovene name. Hereinafter, and only for a question of quickness, only the Italian name will be quoted.

the protection is limited only to a part of the hamlets. Thus also the Comunità Montana delle Valli del Torre cannot be considered as a homogeneous entity.

Nowadays, the freshly created Comunità Montana del Torre, Natisone e Collio mixes up the above mentioned diversities, even including another different territory like Collio, morphologically characterized by hills, devoted to a world-famous wine production and equally speaking Slovene, Friulian and Italian.

To avoid a not homogeneous set of data and only investigate the municipalities which are the object of this dissertation, which are placed on the mountain and are included in the Slovene Minority Protection law dated 2001, a homogeneous aggregation was decided in order to create an area of the Torre Valleys, including the municipalities of Lusevera and Taipana, and an area of the Natisone Valleys, including the municipalities of Drenchia, Grimacco, Pulfero, San Leonardo, San Pietro al Natisone, Savogna and Stregna. These two aggregations allow painting a picture of the demographic evolution of Slavia, still maintaining a distinction between the two territories of Torre and Natisone.

The case of Resia municipality will be treated aside from the others: Resia belonging to Slavia is in fact a still discussed matter, as this territory is extremely peculiar from an ethnic point of view. Resia population and language, in fact, have a paleoslavic origin. The complete isolation of its valleys preserved its ethnic homogeneity and granted its society an autonomous evolution. Even if Resia is included in the Slovene minority protection law, many of its inhabitants feel it like a threat to their peculiar identity and fear it might lead to a vanishing of the Resian dialect.

In order to make a comparison between the considered area and the bordering mountain municipalities and lowlands, the scarce existing literature will be taken into account.

Many essays have dealt with peculiar aspects of Friuli economy, of Carnia mountain and of emigration. Scientific essays about Friuli as a whole, considering all the areas of the province of Udine and all its economic factors are unfortunately scarce.

One important research connecting demographic data with an analysis of the economic evolution in the provinces of Udine and Pordenone was published by C. Barazzutti in 1993. The essay *“Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura: il degrado dell’economia e della società montana del Friuli”*³ also considers the abandon of the mountain. A possible limit of this extremely serious work is that demographic analysis is made at the level of Comunità Montana, thus considering institutional aggregations that are far from being homogeneous. It is anyway a very important source about Friuli development and the most exhausting and accurate existing work.

³ Udine: IRES FVG, 1993.

Census data, from the Italian Institute for Statistics website, will also be taken into account. The database includes all census data since 1961⁴.

4.1 Some statistics

The first census in Italy was held in 1861, short after the birth of the Italian kingdom on most of the Italian peninsula. The Veneto region, including the town of Udine and Slavia, although, only joined Italy in 1866. Since census in Italy is decennial, Slavia took part to it for the first time in 1871.

In the Friuli mountain territory, depopulation went along with the economic decline, in a cause-and-effect relationship whose first input can be discussed. Depopulation and economic decline affected even harder the territory of Slavia, which is more fragile due to its ethnic peculiarity, but also to its morphological characteristics.

Three periods can be distinguished in this process. The first period, dating between 1871 and 1921, corresponds in the entire Friuli - Venezia Giulia region to the starting of industrial development. The second period, dating between 1921 and 1951, corresponds to stagnation, also due to the outcomes on a borderline territory of the political events that led to the second World War and, later, to the outcomes of the war itself. The third period, from 1951 up to the present day, corresponds to a period of major industrial growth in the lowland, and definitive abandon of the mountain.

On the next page, two graphs display the trend of the population of Valli del Torre and Valli del Natisone from the first Census of 1987 to the last Census of 2011.

We should remind that Census data always diverge from data about the resident population, as Census only includes people that were present within the municipality at the chosen date. Thus, some residents might not be included in the Census data of their residing municipality because they were not present in their residence at the chosen date. And some other persons might be included, who do not reside in the municipality but were within it at the chosen date. This consideration is important if we consider that some of the observed municipalities have a very number of residents and differences between Census data and residents data can originate great percent variations.

⁴ www.istat.it; <http://seriestoriche.istat.it/>.

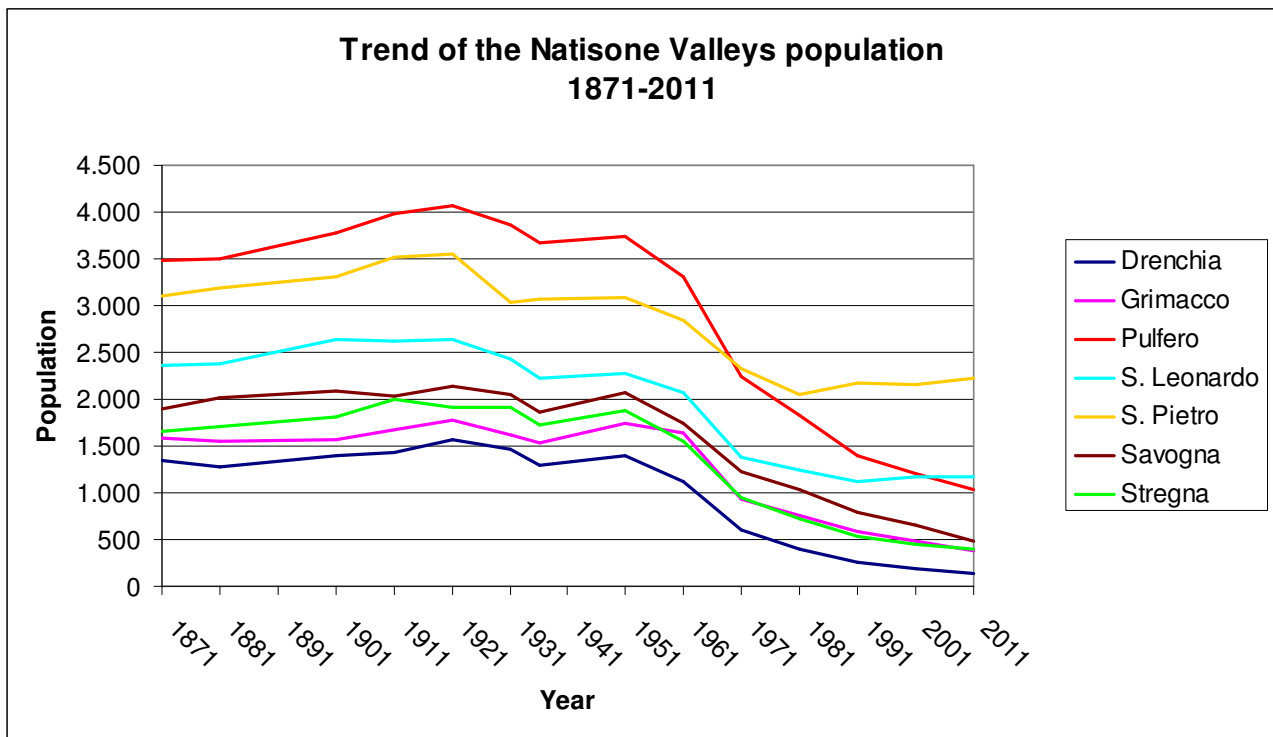


Table 1: Trend of the Natisone Valleys population

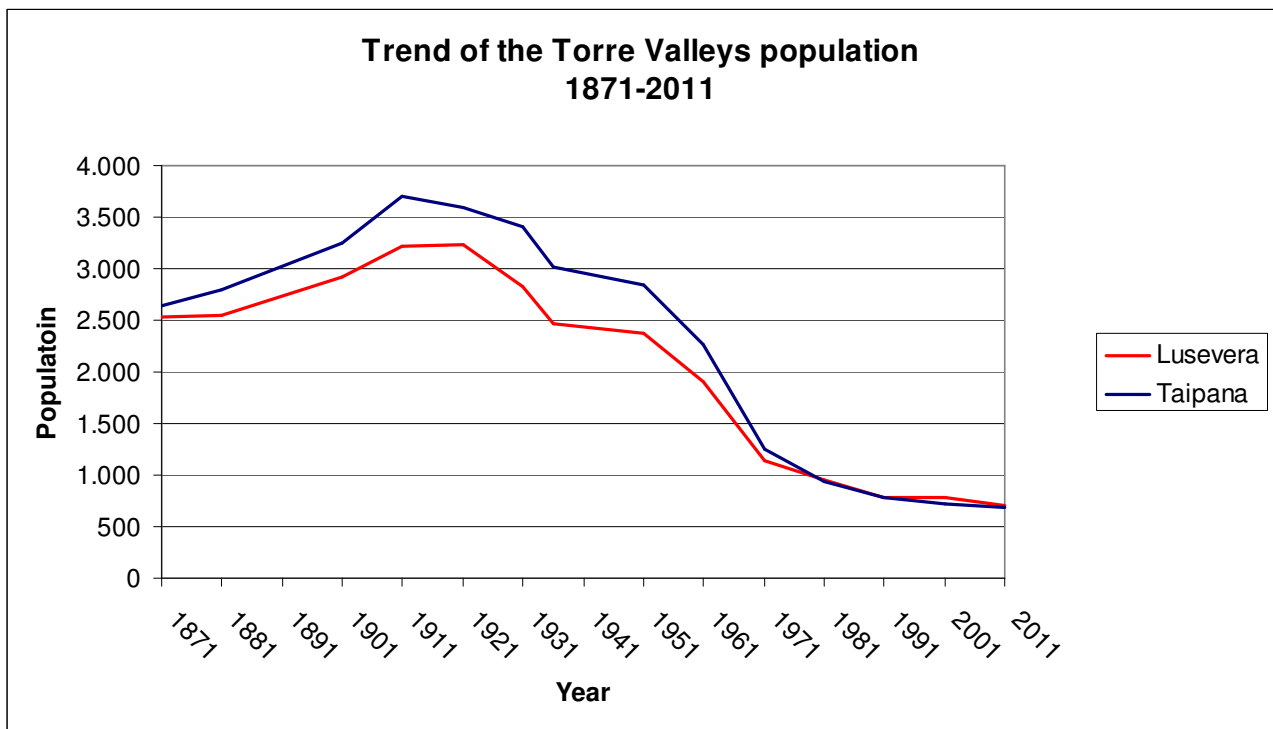


Table 2: Trend of the Torre Valleys population

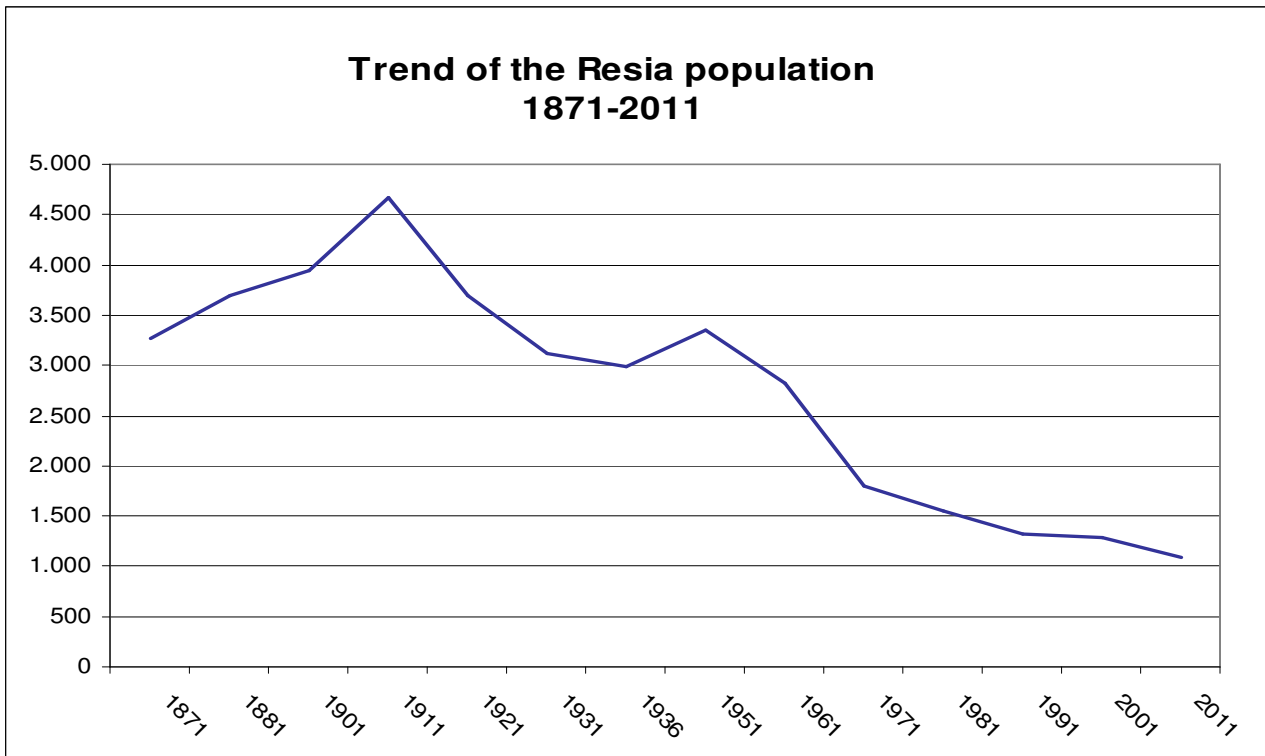


Table 3: Trend of the Resia population

4.1.1: 1871-1921. A period of growth

During the first considered period, between 1871 and 1921, the population of Valli del Natisone and Valli del Torre grows remarkably. The growth of the mountain villages is quite homogeneous within the considered territory and is also homogeneous with the contemporaneous growth of the bordering lowland territory. During the considered period, in fact, also the population of the lowland surrounding Udine grows significantly, almost doubling. The result is thus heavier in the lowland than it is on the mountain. The mountain can already be considered as a weaker region, where life is generically more difficult.

4.1.1.1. Torre Valleys:

The population growth in the municipality Lusevera is slight between 1871 and 1881, and then it becomes significant between 1881 and 1921. In 1871 Lusevera counts 2.526 persons and in 1921 it reaches its maximum ever since the institution of Census surveys, counting 3.232 persons.

The trend is similar for the population of Taipana, with one difference. The population of Taipana grows slightly between 1871 and 1881, and then starts to grow significantly until 1911. In 1911 it reaches its maximum ever, counting 3.700 inhabitants. The slight but constant decline begins in Taipana already in 1911, even if the loss is of only 103 persons in ten years.

4.1.1.2. Natisone Valleys

The population trend between 1871 and 1921 is similar in all the considered municipalities but Stregna.

In the municipality of Drenchia, after a slight decrease between 1871 and 1881 (67 persons less), the population grows slightly but regularly from 1881 to 1921.

In the municipality of Grimacco, the population is more or less stable between 1871 and 1901: it counts 1587 inhabitants in 1871, decreasing to 1560 in 1881 and growing again to 1570 in 1891. Even if one could say that the differences are significant for such small numbers, the trend can anyway be considered as constant, especially if compared with what would happen in the following years, as will be later analyzed. Subsequently, the growth is not really significant but constant until 1921, when Grimacco reaches its maximum population with 1780 inhabitants.

The population trend of the municipality of Pulfero is easier to describe: the population, in fact, grows slightly and constantly between 1871 and 1921, reaching in 1921 its record number of 4066 persons.

The population of S. Leonardo appears to be constant between 1871 and 1881, with a growth of only 12 persons in ten years. Between 1881 and 1901 it grows more remarkably, but the lack of the Census of 1891 might mislead a barely visual analysis. The population becomes rather stable again between 1901 and 1921. The record number, nevertheless, is reached in 1901 with 2.639 persons. In 1921, there were 2 persons less.

Also for the population of S. Pietro al Natisone the trend between 1871 and 1921 is of a slight and constant grow. The record number of inhabitants is reached in 1921 with 3.544 persons.

The same can be said for the population trend of Savogna: the growth is slight and constant between 1871 and 1921. A small difference is noted in the 1911 Census, when the population resulted to be slightly decreased (52 persons less) if compared with 1901. The maximum population, also in Savogna, is reached in 1921 with 2143 inhabitants.

The population trend of Stregna is mildly different: as for the other Natisone municipalities, the growth is slight and constant since 1887, but it presents a little stop in 1911, when the maximum population of 2.000 inhabitants is reached. The slow but constant decrease of population, thus, begins in Stregna already in 1911.

4.1.1.3. Resia

The population of the peculiar municipality of Resia grows rather significantly between 1871 and 1911, when it reaches its record number of 4.671 inhabitants. After that, the decrease is as significant as the growth. Decrease, thus, starts in Resia (so as in Taipana and Stregna) earlier than

in the other municipalities, but immediately appears to be akin to a collapse, such as the one that happens later, after 1951 – as will be later analyzed.

Some mild differences appear thus to affect the population trend of Valli del Torre and Valli del Natisone: while in Valli del Torre, in fact, the population growth between 1881 and 1911 is significant, in Valli del Natisone it is slight and constant for all the considered period. For almost all the considered municipalities, the maximum number of inhabitants is reached in 1921. Three municipalities present a different trend, reaching their maximum already in 1911: Taipana, Stregna and Resia. While the decrease between 1911 and 1921 is for Taipana and Stregna not so significant, it is really violent for Resia.

An important event must be taken into account when analyzing data regarding the decennium between 1911 and 1921: World War 1st began in Italy in 1915 and hit this region with extreme violence, due to the proximity with the front line. The devastating defeat of the Italian army in Caporetto/Kobarid in 1917 caused hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, who had to leave their home places carrying with them everything they could. Most of the inhabitants of Valli del Torre and Valli del Natisone had to escape, pressed both by the invading Austro-Hungarian and German enemy and by the retreat of the Italian army. Most of them were displaced in faraway cities in the south of Italy. Still, if comparing the Census data of 1911 (before the war) and 1921 (after the war), no significant difference is noted but for the municipality of Resia: in most of the villages, the population had even grown. Apparently, all the refugees that had been forced to abandon their villages during the war had soon decided to go back after the war ended. But they came back to a devastated zone.

4.1.2. 1921-1951. The warning signs of collapse

The second period goes from 1921 to 1951 for most of the considered villages, but reaches 1961 in some of them. During this period, the population of Slavia starts decreasing, maybe as a physiological result of the growth of the previous years. The decrease is slow and is homogeneous with the other areas of the Friuli mountain. But decline affects Slavia some harder, and, within Slavia, Valli del Torre in particular. The decrease corresponds to a population growth in the valley bottomed centres, like Cividale.

In the lowland as a whole, instead, the population grows; but there is a remarkable difference between the villages whose economy is still based on agriculture, that see their population decreasing, and the municipalities that face the starting of industrial enterprises, that are

geographically placed in the centre of the region and whose population grows. For some of them, that are all placed around Udine and characterized by an industrial and handicraft economy, the growth even reaches 50%⁵. And in some of them, like the municipality of Torviscosa, where a chemical factory was started in the '30s, the population doubles.

4.1.2.1. Torre Valleys

The decrease reflects quantitatively as a mirror the trend of the growth during the previous period. Between 1921 and 1951, Lusevera loses all the inhabitants it had gained, and even some more (2.526 inhabitants in 1871, 3.232 in 1921 and 2.377 in 1951).

In Taipana, the decrease had already begun in 1911. In 1951 the population had not yet reached the values of 1871 again, but also in this case the trend mirrors the growth of the previous period.

4.1.2.2. Natisone Valleys

In four of the villages of Valli del Natisone (Drenchia, Grimacco, Pulfero, S. Leonardo), the slow decrease trend starts in 1921 and ends in 1961. For S Pietro, Savogna and Stregna it ends in 1951.

The period is characterized by a decrease in its first decennia, mildly balanced by a slight growth in the second part. On the whole, the result is a slight decrease if comparing the inhabitants of 1951 (or 1961) with those of 1921.

In the municipalities of Drenchia, Grimacco, Pulfero and S. Leonardo, the population slightly decreases between 1921 and 1936⁶ and it slightly grows again between 1936 and 1951. In the following decennium, the population decreases again, but not so significantly as from 1961 on. On the whole, in these four municipalities the period can be considered of substantial balance.

In the municipality of S. Pietro, the population decrease stops already in 1931 and is followed by a slow and constant growth until 1951.

In Savogna and Stregna, the period can be considered of substantial balance as a whole. The slight decrease between 1921 and 1936 corresponds to a slight increase between 1936 and 1951.

4.1.2.3. Resia

In the municipality of Resia, a significant decrease begins already in 1911 and goes on until 1931. A short period of balance follows, until 1936. In the next decennium, the population slightly grows again, and it is the last growth up to now for this municipality.

⁵ *Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura*, p. 32-33.

⁶ After 1931, the Italian government had decided that Census had to be held every five years. A Census was thus held in 1936. The one that had to be held in 1941 was cancelled because of the war. After that, the government realized that holding a Census every five years was too expensive and the previous decennial pace was thus reintroduced.

It is important to note that the considered period includes the fascist period, with its oppression of the Slovene minority, and World War II, when these valleys were strategic and hosted fights between the Nazi-fascist army and the partisan fighters, with hard consequences for the population like searches and requisitions. After the war, this borderline region also suffers the effects of neighbouring the cold war enemy.

On the whole, the period can be considered of substantial balance in Valli del Natisone, where the population at the end of the period is barely decreased if compared with the beginning. The decrease is more significant in Valli del Torre and Resia, and can be considered as physiological if compared with the growth of the previous decennia in such a small territory. But the decline is anyway milder than the following period, which will now be analyzed.

4.1.3. 1951-2011. The collapse

1951 marks a turning point in the trend of Slavia population. Since 1951, the mild decline of the previous decennia turns to be a real collapse. The fall affects heavier the municipalities whose geographical position is nearer to the borderline and on higher altitudes.

Such decrease is in general homogeneous with the rest of the Friuli mountain. Only the villages placed on the valley bottoms keep a kind of balance, and few bigger centres of Carnia (Tolmezzo, Villa Santina) and Val Canale (Tarvisio) even grow, acquiring a role of attraction and aggregating centre for the mountains surrounding them.

In the meantime, the population of the Friuli lowland grows as a whole. The trend anyway is similar to the one introduced for the previous period: the municipalities that still had agriculture as their main sustenance see their population decreasing. The municipalities where any kind of industry had been started, instead, see their population growing⁷.

The reopening of the emigration flows after the end of World War II show another possible destination for the people who decided to quit.

It is clear that, for villages that lose the half (or more) of their population in only two decennia, the chance of future development are probably lost forever, at least if we consider a classical economic model where production consists in elaborating material goods. Nowadays, the so called “new economy” can possibly offer a chance also for this places, instead.

⁷ *Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura*, p. 43-45,

4.1.3.1. Torre Valleys

Between 1951 and 1971, the population of Lusevera and Taipana halves. The inhabitants of Lusevera are 2.377 in 1951 and end up being only 1.140 in 1971. After such a crash, the trend slows down and the decrease becomes milder; there is even an extremely slight growth (0,9%) between 1991 and 2001. According to the 2011 Census, Lusevera counts 706 inhabitants.

A similar trend affects Taipana: 2.841 inhabitants in 1951 and only 1.251 in 1971. According to the 2011 Census, Taipana counts 680 inhabitants.

4.1.3.2. Natisone Valleys

In all the municipalities of Valli del Natisone but S. Pietro, the worse decennium ever for the population trend is the one between 1961 and 1971. The population of Drenchia almost halves. In the municipality of Grimacco, the decrease goes beyond 40%. In Pulfero, S. Leonardo and Stregna it goes beyond 30%. Savogna almost reaches 30%.

Only S. Pietro seems to escape such a disruptive trend, with a decrease of only 18%, which is heavier than the following decennia, but anyway coherent. In 1981, S. Pietro even starts growing again, quite constantly up to now.

Also S. Leonardo presents a very mild growth (3,63%) between 1991 and 2001, but its growth ends to be ephemeral.

Drenchia, with its 134 inhabitants, is today the smallest municipality of Friuli-Venezia Giulia⁸.

4.2 About the economic situation

Census data were considered only since the inclusion of these territories in the Italian kingdom. The Austrian empire did organize detailed and accurate Census, but recalling too ancient data seemed inappropriate. Moreover, we are dealing with the interconnection between economics and demography, and the reasons for Slavia underdevelopment and abandon are mostly to be found in the Italian period.

Decades of Habsburg administration had left important tracks, anyway, and had set up important guidelines of territory organization. The investments of the Austro-Hungarians for this region of their empire, in fact, were such to condition the future setting of the infrastructures of the whole Friuli.

Since the beginning of the XIX century, the Austrian administration had invested much in constructing roads and railways that would connect the empire centre with its periphery. In Friuli,

⁸ Census of 2011.

the main rail work was the so called Udine Bahn, that would connect Trieste to Wien through Pontebba, as a more straight alternative to the Südbahn⁹ and allow a possible connection in its northern stretch with a future line going North from the Brennerbahn and, South, with a line going from Trieste to Venice. The Udine Bahn was opened in 1879, when the Udine region had already become a part of the Italian kingdom. It was also used to transport the goods that were unloaded in the port of Trieste and were directed to Austria, thus representing an important hub also at an international level.

The building of the railway positively affected the whole Friuli territory in financing and creation of new places. Once the line was set in motion, the easier connections also attracted new factories that were established along the line, while factories that were already present on the territory could enlarge their business, selling their products on further located markets. If it privileged Udine and its outskirts, the railway route damaged Cividale, which would have become the main hub if the line going to Austria had followed a different itinerary, instead of crossing Pontebba.

After completing the Udine Bahn, other secondary lines were projected, that would connect the periphery of Friuli territory to the main railway. The Udine-Cividale line was opened in 1886. The line did not effectively cross Slavia, but it reached its outer territory and had important future outcomes on the development of the whole region. According to a further project, the line should have been extended, in the future, in order to connect with the Austrian railway that was in project to be built over the border, along the Isonzo valley. This would have allowed some further chance for Cividale and its valleys development¹⁰. But the project was never realized and the first World War cancelled it definitively.

Between 1915 and 1916, at the beginning of World War I in Italy, a narrow gauge railway line was implemented between Cividale and Caporetto, to transport soldiers and supplies to the battlefield. The line was seriously damaged during the war events, but was rebuilt and improved immediately after the war's end. At the beginning its use was restricted to military purposes, but after the war it was opened to the public and was a much appreciated service for the people of Valli del Natisone. Due to the high cost of maintenance, the line was closed in 1932 and replaced with a bus service.

The implementation of both railways and, later, roads allowed the employment of large amounts of workers to build the lines and the connected facilities (bridges, tunnels, stations etc.) The first World War, because of the destruction it caused, allowed such an increase of employment to happen twice in quite a short period. But one of the consequences of the opening of railway lines is

⁹ It connected Trieste and Wien, crossing Ljubljana.

¹⁰ L. Tessitori: "I processi di modernizzazione e la realtà urbana in Friuli", in Istituto Regionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia: *Friuli e Venezia Giulia. Storia del '900*. Gorizia : LEG, Libreria Editrice Goriziana, 1997, p. 74

that all the transportations, that were before entrusted to independent workers just owning a cart or a wagon and a beast of burden, were later institutionalized or requested a whole organization behind them.

We should also mention the fact that a railway, if on one side eases the movement of goods and stimulates investments, on the other side also eases the movement of people and breaks settlements isolation. Working in another place becomes a chance for the first time. A new access is open to the diffusion of goods that were previously unknown in isolated places. But also selling own products in faraway places becomes faster and cheaper. A general improvement of the economic condition of many families is possible. And if ideas always travel faster, a railway can open the way to major society evolution¹¹.

In general, especially since the second post-war period, Italian transport policy tended to privilege road transport instead of railway transport. This was aimed at promoting Italian automotive industry. A well articulated road network was present in Friuli, and also in its mountains, already since the Roman age.

The municipalities of the Friuli lowland were well connected with each other during the Austro-Hungarian period, and starting from the lowland many roads reached the mountain. The Cividale-Caporetto road had the status of county road. At the beginning of the XX century, national investments allowed the building of new infrastructures as bridges; the reconstruction following World War 1st allowed the building of bridges even on the rivers Natisone and Torre. Even if such works were mostly placed on the lowland, they attracted workers from the mountains for their building and later allowed a reorganization of the territory that affected the distribution of work for the whole region.

After this short foreword about the outcomes of the Austrian organization of the territory, the three periods that were earlier introduced from a demographical point of view will be now analyzed from the point of view of economy and development.

¹¹ About the railway works in the Alps and their impact on the mountain economy, see P. Guichonnet (edited by): *Storia e civiltà delle Alpi : Destino umano*. Jaca Book, 1987, pp. 282-307.

4.2.1. 1871-1921. The development of the Udine lowland and the post war reconstruction

As quickly quoted earlier, the performance of the lowland population between 1871 and 1921 is a growth and corresponds to a similar, but lesser growth also on the mountain. This period corresponds to the beginning of industrial installation in the Udine outskirts, but also to infrastructures like railways, roads, bridges and to root canal works far from the big town. The Ledra canal was built in 1881. For the first time, Friulian agriculture could benefit of irrigation, and Udine industry was allowed further development. It was enlarged in 1911.

In this period, many small textile enterprises, that were already present in the territory, start mechanizing and improve thus their production.

The final part of the period includes the post-war reconstruction works.

Important infrastructural investments were thus undertaken in the Friuli lowland. Yet the economic hub appeared not to be so attractive yet to the populations of the mountain, and its appeal was balanced by the development of valley bottomed centres. The Friuli mountain was still able to finance itself through the existing family-led small factories and handicraft laboratories, in textile (silk and cotton manufacturing) and wood activities but also in the production of knives, concrete, furniture and watches. These enterprises were usually not specialized in the production of single goods, but dedicated themselves to the whole production chain of the chosen material, up to trading their products by peddling in the lowland, even in faraway countries. Steel industries were also present in the Friuli mountain, thanks to the mines of the Canale Valley. And, finally almost every village hosted its own brickyard, mill and sawmill.

Along with the mechanization of the valley bottomed enterprises and the improvement of the communication routes, most of these activities were no longer affordable and slowly moved to the valley bottoms or to the lowland.

In the Torre Valleys, handicraft activities had always been present. In the considered period, the development of furniture and blacksmith workshops in the valley bottomed centres like Tarcento and its outskirts possibly contributed to the development of the surrounding mountain, keeping people in their own birth places and maybe increasing commuting rather than emigration.

Migration from the Friuli mountain is documented already in the XVI century¹². Migrants were mostly peddlers, selling their own production or specialized in holy images, and also weavers. The destinations they chose were mostly European, with a particular preference for Germany and Austria, but also Russia, Croatia and Hungary¹³. In the analyzed period, migration was thus already

¹² M. Puppini: "L'emigrazione dal Friuli", in Istituto Regionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

¹³ F. Musoni: "Gli abitanti. Il loro numero e la loro distribuzione", in O. Marinelli: *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie. Distretti di Gemona, Tarcento, S. Daniele e S. Pietro con Cormòns, Gorizia e la valle dell'Isonzo*. Udine: Società Alpina Friulana, 1912, p.134.

firmly considered as a mean for increasing a family income, but was seldom definitive. It was seasonal, instead, and the migrants were mostly men, who moved during the winter season, when field works broke¹⁴. This traditional flow changed at the end of the XIX century, when major infrastructural works in Europe required huge numbers of construction workers. The rhythm of seasonal migration had to change as a consequence, since building is usually performed in summer. This inversion had thus some influence on the progressive abandon of agriculture. Who had technical skills connected with building, like the mountain carpenters and wood workers, was advantaged in finding a destination. The destinations themselves changed slightly, still including Germany and Austria but at the same time spacing to further countries, like Switzerland, Romania and Russia, where part of the Trans-Siberian line was built by Friuli workers. The flows started being organized directly by the recruiting enterprises, which searched for workers in their same mountain villages.

Agriculture and breeding were performed at a subsistence level. The lands placed at a higher altitude, like in the municipalities of Taipana and Lusevera, were hardly productive. Some cultivation like corn, grapevine, chestnut and mulberry, which were mostly common in the lowland were thus completely lacking in this area. The most profitable crops were potatoes and beans, in a type which is typical of these valleys, together with carrots and turnips. Corn, grapevine and mulberry were present, instead, at lower altitudes, like in the Natisone valleys, where the milder climate allowed also buckwheat, fruit and chestnut. The latter was a typical product of these valleys and was peddled in the lowland, granting a great part of the mountain villages income¹⁵. The farming technique was anyway still primitive, lacking the necessary education and any farming machine.

Bovine breeding mostly contributed to the families subsistence. It was performed on small in fee plots, and also on undivided community owned plots (the so called *comugne*). The small surplus was sold in the valley bottom by peddling and earned enough for a living. During summer, so as in all the other Alpine communities, the farmers moved with all their cattle up to pastures placed on the high mountains, which in this region were called *planine* (in Slovene) or *stavoli* (in Italian). Only milk processing was performed collectively, at a community level.

In the lowland, agriculture was a matter of big properties, entrusted to farmers who rented it in a kind of prosecution of the ancient feudal system. It was thus conceived as cash crop, and no space

¹⁴ F. Musoni, *Nuove ricerche di antropogeografia nelle Prealpi del Natisone*, Udine, Tipografia Domenico Del Bianco, 1914, pp. 33-34.

¹⁵ F. Musoni: "Le condizioni agricole", in O. Marinelli: *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie. Distretti di Gemona, Tarcento, S. Daniele e S. Pietro con Cormòns, Gorizia e la valle dell'Isonzo*. Udine: Società Alpina Friulana, 1912, pp. 182-190.

was left to the production of hay. This had thus to be imported from the mountain grazing¹⁶. To mountain farmers, who were little landowners, the hay trade was an important income resource, so that it was given a priority above local self consumption¹⁷. For this reason, breeding remained at a subsistence level as well, and what might have become a source of well being never turned into the development factor it might have become.

With the abolition of the *comugne* in 1852, the plots were shared within the farmers: this is considered to be the original cause of the excessive fragmentation of land property in the Torre valleys, that still negatively affects breeding and agriculture of this territory¹⁸.

Among the other traditional mountain activities, the Natisone Valleys hosted several pits and brickworks manufacturing. Family led Piasentina stone pits exported their products up to Vienna and Budapest. Maybe as a consequence of a big fire that destroyed the village of Cepletischis, in the municipality of Savogna, in 1868, all the houses started being covered by locally produced bricks¹⁹. Brickyards were already present in almost each village, but some new were built after that incident. Technological development also granted an improvement to the performance of agriculture and breeding. The employment of pesticides and plant food increased the production of fruit, wine and mulberries for the breeding of silkworms. Bovine breeding substituted sheep breeding, improving the economic situation of many families²⁰.

Two important activities were improved in this period, that had heavy consequences on the mountain economy and, also, on its environment. The electric and concrete industry started being developed at the beginning of the 20th century, curiously both because of the initiative of the Friuli entrepreneur Arturo Malignani. In 1894 he had patented a system that allowed creating vacuum in electric light bulbs²¹. He had a hydroelectric power station built in Vedronza (in the municipality of Lusevera) in 1907, exploiting the flow of river Torre. This allowed the mechanization of many enterprises of the area. The request was so high that new turbines had to be built, exploiting the newly built Ledra canal. Later, he also began the extraction of marls in Valli del Natisone, starting

¹⁶ P. Gaspari: "Le campagne friulane", in Istituto Regionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia: *Friuli e Venezia Giulia. Storia del '900*. LEG Libreria Editrice Goriziana, 1997, p. 62.

¹⁷ F. Musoni: "Le condizioni agricole", in O. Marinelli: *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie. Distretti di Gemona, Tarcento, S. Daniele e S. Pietro con Cormòns, Gorizia e la valle dell'Isonzo*. Udine: Società Alpina Friulana, 1912, p. 191.

¹⁸ L. Bubba, in his essay about the alienation of the *comugne* properties in some hamlets of the Cornappo valley, reports the precise extension of each assigned parcel. Their small dimensions, and the high number of the assignees, are astonishing. See L. Bubba: "Sull'alienazione di beni comunali tra Villanova e Debellis", in Centro Friulano di Studi «Ippolito Nievo»: *Consuetudini e motivi storici del territorio di Taipana. Contributi per il convegno regionale del 1987 (Taipana, 7 dicembre)*. Grafiche Editoriali Artistiche Pordenonesi, 1987, pp. 47-58.

¹⁹ C. Podrecca: *Slavia italiana*. Riedizione a cura del Centro Studi Nediža S. Pietro al Natisone. - Trieste : Editoriale stampa triestina, 1977, p. 94. This is a facsimile reprint of the original published in Cividale in 1884.

²⁰ F. Musoni, *op. cit.*, pp 50-53.

²¹ The patent was later acquired by Edison. Udine, in 1888, became one of the first European towns to be electrically lighted.

the first industrial production of concrete in Friuli. Marls were carried to Cividale and there loaded on the train to Udine, where the concrete factory was placed.

Both the electric and concrete industry had pros and cons for the Friuli mountain. On one side, they created employment both for the building of their infrastructures and, later, by allowing the setup of new highly technologic activities in the area. But most of the activities were placed on the valley bottom, and, besides, they had a violent impact on the mountain environment, seldom even making the traditional mountain occupations impossible.

In the post war period, the people who came back after having been displaced in other parts of Italy found upon arrival a completely different situation from the one they had left. Infrastructures had been destroyed by the war operations. Villages and fields had been plundered by both the invading and the retreating armies. The one year permanence of the invader army had caused so many damages as the fights. Who had remained in the occupied territory had been forced to devolve his entire production to the army. But the destruction turned out to be an opportunity of employment and further development.

4.2.2. 1921-1951. From the world crisis to another post war period

The beginning of this period is still influenced by the outcomes of World War I and corresponds with a major economic crisis at an international level.

In Italy, it corresponds to the rising years of Fascism, with a consequent ban of Italy from most of the international markets.

During this period, Slavia faces a hard policy of discrimination by the fascist government towards the Slovene speaking population, that could be a reason for a progressive disaffection of the Slavia inhabitants for their home region, especially if considered that at the same time the migration flow to foreign countries was re-opened by the Italian government.

This period faces the outcomes of the several aspects of the industrial development that were analyzed before.

The lack of investments in the technical improvement of agriculture, the stable presence of factories in the Friuli lowland, the easier access to them from the mountain, thanks to the improved railway lines and roads encouraged people to move. In the meanwhile, the political situation, together with the re-opening of migration flows pushed Slovene people to move abroad. Considering the flow out of Slavia, we should remind that part of it was not a choice: people who were involved in politics, but also simple school teachers whose mother language was Slovene were banished in faraway centres of the South of Italy, or on off-centred small islands.

At the same time, also the lowlands face a certain movement of people. Production, in fact, starts being focused on industry rather than on agriculture. Lowland villages that are further from the productive barycentre start losing part of their population in favour of the Udine outskirts and of some new productive centres, whose set up also required major land reclaim with the consequent employment of lots of workers. The Danieli factory in Buttrio, producing steel plants, and the new chemical centre of Torviscosa are an example of that.

Villages that are still involved in big infrastructure projects like wetland drains and the rebuilding of the Ledra canal²² see their population enlarging.

Once the major infrastructure works, that were partially connected with the post-war reconstruction, were completed, also the lowland was affected by a minor economic decline, that possibly led people to choose for emigration. In the first post war period, out-migration was organized at an international level, through agreements between nations. France, for example, welcomed many Friuli workers in order to employ them in the post war reconstruction. The fascist government initially tried to control such migration flows, managing it by its own agency (the Istituto friulano per l'emigrazione). Later, internal migration was promoted and directed to the repopulation of single peculiar areas, like the freshly reclaimed Agro Pontino. Since the '30s, the flow was directed towards the Italian colonies of Libya and Ethiopia. Because of the further destinations, but also of the different social factors connected with migration, the migration flow in the period between the two World Wars started having a more permanent or long term connotation, thus involving also whole families. A peculiarity of migration from Slavia was female migration, of young ladies who moved to serve as house help for rich town families. They usually settled there and were seldom to come back at all.

4.2.3. 1951-2011. The Udine province on a crossroads: the abandon of the mountain and the miracle of North-Eastern development

The period between 1951 and 2011 faced the definitive fall of the mountain population, in a paradigm that sees the highest fall corresponding to the highest mountain. The valley bottomed productive centres had in this paradigm a double function. On one side, they attracted people from the mountain. On the other side, they also stopped mountain people from moving further or abroad and they kept in the place people who had the chance of commuting. Cividale is an example of such a trend, that heavily affected the economic strategies of people living in the Natisone Valleys. The population decline was more significant for the Torre Valleys, that lacked of a similar aggregating centre and whose inhabitants therefore moved further and, often, definitively. But the hypothesis

²² The canal had almost been destroyed during World War I and by a flood in 1920.

that the arise of such a centre might have been deliberately avoided in order to prevent a possible economic and cultural coalition of the Slovene minority sounds a bit extreme²³.

In the second post war period, migration flows kept being promoted and handled at an international level, through agreements with foreign governments. The destinations were located in a wider range, arriving to Canada, Argentina, Brasil and Venezuela, apart from the traditional destinations of France and Switzerland.

During the considered period, several lowland centres specialized in peculiar productions, like the Manzano area for chairs, and single big factories conditioned the development of whole areas thanks to the set up of smaller satellite factories, like Danieli in Buttrio.

A high number of very small craftsmanship enterprises coexisted with the great industrial plants. These small enterprises usually integrated production with trade, selling on their own their own products. Finally, also seaside tourism became a real source of employment during this period.

At a regional level, the '50s witnessed the starting improvement and enlargement of Zanussi²⁴ in the province of Pordenone, which is considered to have an important role in the simultaneous abandon of the Pordenone mountain. Possibly, some attraction was also performed on the Udine mountain.

Being a borderline region in a historical period when a dangerous evolution of the cold war was mostly feared, during the second post war Friuli had to face the expropriation of broad areas of its territory to be included in military servitudes. "More than one-third of the Italian army is stationed here, on 2% of the national territory. For every 15 citizens there is a soldier"²⁵. Thus broad areas of its territory were taken away from any chance of economic development, especially on the mountain. This is considered to be one of the reasons of the Friuli mountain underdevelopment by scholars who analyze the connections between underdevelopment and politics in Friuli.

C. Barazzutti, in *Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura*²⁶, makes a precise analysis of the trend of the number of operators and local production units between 1951 and 1991. Even if focusing at a level of Comunità Montana, the research highlights the abrupt decrease of the mentioned indicators in the Friuli mountain during the second post war period. Her explanation is that the economy of mountain villages had by this time ceased being village-centred, due to the economic and infrastructures evolution of the previous years. If previously almost all the products that were necessary to the village subsistence were produced and consumed in the village itself, by this time production in the village was no longer affordable and had therefore already moved to the valley

²³ P. Leon: "Economia e gruppi etnico linguistici", in *Provincia di Udine: Atti conferenza sui gruppi etnico linguistici della provincia di Udine*. Udine, aula magna I.T.I. Malignani, 5-6 maggio 1978, p. 43.

²⁴ Production of household electrical appliances.

²⁵ R. Strassoldo: "Regionalism and Ethnicity: The Case of Friuli", in *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Ethnicity and Regionalism (1985), p. 206.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 126-138.

bottom or to the lowland. At the same time, the improved communications and the relocation of the production had let peddling commerce disappear, that had previously been an important source of exchange of goods, information and ideas between mountain and lowland.

For the Valli del Natisone, Barazzutti notices that the number of local production units slumped homogeneously on the mountain, in the valley bottom and in the lowland. The number of operators, instead, only decreased in the mountain, while stabilizing or even growing in the valley bottom. A partial improvement was faced, also in the mountain, at the end of the 1970s, as a result of the reconstruction needed after the 1976 earthquake, which somehow doped the job market.

In the Torre Valleys, the trend was similar for both the indicators, but the decrease of the number of local production units was even worse than in the Natisone Valleys. Most of the dairy cooperative farms which had been opened in the 1950s and were the last survivor of a kind of breeding performed at a community level closed definitively in this period. The earthquake eventually destroyed most of the cattlesheds.

Thanks to the improved conditions, the migration flow out of Friuli as a whole slowed down at the beginning of the 1950s, to become again a temporary choice in the 1960s, and definitively decreasing in the 1970's. In 1968, the number of return migrants overtook the number of out-migrants. The flow out of Friuli mountain -and Slavia specifically- kept constant, instead, or got even worse²⁷.

According to P. Guichonnet, the real origin of the decline of the mountain traditional social community was in the opening to great economic spaces of the closed social system of self-sufficiency²⁸. This can be a rightful explanation from an economic point of view, but what seemed to collapse in the twenty years between 1951-1971 was a whole social model, that saw the village as the centre of all its inhabitants' needs. What people looked for when moving from it was not only to survive, or to enhance their income, but to improve their whole way of life. The village – and the mountain village, in particular – was no longer able to provide those basic services that had become essential in modern life.

The lack of services was possibly the most important factor conditioning the abandon of the mountain. Health facilities do not have the same function of employment to assure a family's supplies, but do have a role in conditioning the choice of where a new family can settle down. And culture and education have a key function in keeping a community united as a whole.

At the same time, the Udine lowland economy was going full sail ahead: development was achieved at all levels. Along with the improving manufacturing industry, small and medium enterprises and

²⁷ M. Puppini, *op. cit.*, pp. 531-532.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 334.

handicraft, the economic centres also started hosting services, cultural initiatives and commercial activities.

The per capita income had started to grow since the '60s. In the '70s, it exceeded the national average²⁹.

If urbanization was a widespread phenomenon of Italian economic boom years, the growth of the town of Udine was balanced by the simultaneous development of other centres surrounding it and we can say that Udine, even being an attractive industrial centre, never became a really big city, and was never affected by most of the problems connected with out-of control urbanization.

In the '60s, the textile sector slightly started to decline, while the mechanic industries and all the activities connected with the wood process and the production of furniture enlarged and successfully set to export.

At a national level, the economic crisis of end '70s and '80s affected mostly large enterprises, while small and medium enterprises had shown their ability to adapt to the new socio-economic situation thanks to their flexibility and alertness to meet the needs of the international markets. In order to support and capitalize these characteristics, a national law dated 1991³⁰ was promulgated, which provided an institutional framework to a reality that in Friuli had already been present for about twenty years: the industrial and craftsmanship district. The region Friuli-Venezia Giulia³¹ was the second one in Italy to identify four districts (for chairs, furniture, agricultural and food and knives production). None of them included mountain municipalities. Only the Piasentina stone district, created in 2002 and still the only craftsmanship district of the region, includes two municipalities placed in the Valli del Natisone (S. Leonardo and S. Pietro).

Since the years 2000, also the district model has become a victim of the major worldwide economic crisis, forcing many small and medium enterprises to close or make use of social security cushions. The Piasentina stone district, moreover, faces increasing administrative obstacles and slowdown because of the improved attention to the environment protection.

C. Barazzutti, in the third chapter of her *Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura*³², finds in the development planning undertaken by the regional administration another possible cause of the Friuli mountain underdevelopment. The region Friuli-Venezia Giulia was created in 1963. One of its first

²⁹ R. Grandinetti: "Processi di sviluppo economico e trasformazioni sociali nell'area friulana", in R. Grandinetti (edited by): *Il Friuli e la Venezia Giulia nell'economia e società italiana. Atti del Convegno di studio sui problemi economico-sociali della realtà regionale nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia organizzato dall'Istituto Gramsci Friuli-Venezia Giulia con il patrocinio dell'Università degli Studi di Udine e di Trieste*. Udine, 11-12 gennaio 1985. Udine, Coop. Editoriale "Il Campo", 1985, p. 57.

³⁰ L. 5 ottobre 1991, n. 317: Interventi per l'innovazione e lo sviluppo delle piccole imprese

³¹ Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia: *Profilo economico dei distretti industriali e artigianali del FVG*, Trieste, 2009.

³² *Op. cit.*, pp. 149-189.

economic planning programs³³ was aimed at transforming the whole region into a big, single, homogeneous area of intensive development, which would include all the productive activities without giving a priority to any of them. Development had to follow the pattern of five development axes. Within the five axes, some “poles” had to be created, that had to be territorial tools for each production area. None of the axis would reach the core of Friuli mountain³⁴, and none of the poles was placed on the mountain (but some of them were in the valley bottom).

Later, the Regional Law 24/1965³⁵ identified some areas where industrial zones had to be appointed in order to foster industrial installations. These areas coincided with the poles identified by the development program, but for some of the valley centred poles. Only the Regional Law 31/1969³⁶ had some positive outcome on productive activities placed on the mountain, since it provided single municipalities with the funds to set up industrial settlements. Two municipalities of the Valli del Natisone (Pulfero and S. Pietro) and one of the Valli del Torre (Lusevera) made capital of this investments.

Further, some regional laws³⁷ introduced preferential treatments for enterprises in the need for a loan aimed at acquiring industrial facilities. These investments, unfortunately, were only useful to those enterprises which were considered reliable, which were, thus, already sturdy and in state to offer a concrete warranty.

Also the Regional Law 35/1969³⁸ was a missed chance for Friuli mountain. This law included non repayable financing for new industrial plants in mountain areas. Contrasting unemployment and abandon of the mountain was its final goal. Unfortunately, this law was applied to all the municipalities that were considered “to reclaim” and “depressed” by other national laws³⁹, including thus also valley bottomed municipalities or even municipalities that are placed in disadvantaged parts of the lowland⁴⁰. The funds were thus dispersed among a high number of municipalities, thinning their effectiveness.

³³ Programma di sviluppo economico e sociale del Friuli-Venezia Giulia per il quinquennio 1966-1970.

³⁴ Only the axis that included Tolmezzo, Pontebba and Tarvisio would touch the mountain borders, but stopping at the valley bottom.

³⁵ Legge regionale 11 novembre 1965, n. 24: Apprestamento di aree e di infrastrutture per insediamenti industriali – Installation of areas and infrastructures for industrial plants.

³⁶ Legge regionale 19 agosto 1969, n. 31: Contributi a favore di Comuni e Consorzi tra Enti locali territoriali per infrastrutture a servizio di insediamenti industriali – Grants in favour of municipalities and consortia between local authorities for industrial plants infrastructures.

³⁷ E. g. the Legge regionale 11 novembre 1965, n. 25: Contributi sugli interessi dei mutui contratti per la costruzione, l'ampliamento e l'ammodernamento tecnologico degli stabilimenti industriali – Grants on interests for mortgage taken out for the building, enlarging and technological renovation of industrial plants.

³⁸ Legge regionale 30 settembre 1969, n. 35: Contributi per l'allestimento di nuovi stabilimenti industriali in zone montane – Grants for the setup of new industrial plants in mountain areas.

³⁹ L. 991/1952 and 614/1966.

⁴⁰ Even the municipality of Trieste benefited of the funds!

The same mistake affected funds granted in order to balance the differential between the operating costs of craftsmanship enterprises placed in the mountain and in the valley. Moreover, the differential was so slight that it was not able to compensate the real gap between the operating costs. Finally, a Regional Law dated 1966⁴¹ created a regional holding company having development as its main goal. It had to help out enterprises through the undertaking of shareholding in the risk capital, grant of easy credit terms and supply of technical and organizational assistance. Thus its functions were directed towards corporations and companies with share capitals, while it neglected partnerships – and mountain based enterprises were almost exclusively partnerships indeed.

Among the more recent legislation directed towards the mountain, the “Progetto Montagna”⁴² is another example of how the region tried to manage the mountain underdevelopment. Firstly, it granted subsidies to industrial, craftsmanship and services enterprises that wanted to improve their production or start new activities. Unfortunately, the number of requests was lower than expected and most of the requests were found out not to be eligible: maybe the mountain lacked already of new entrepreneurs, or of the necessary technical skills to respond adequately to the announcement requirements. Secondly, it granted support to employment and mobility by contributing funds to enterprises that hired mountain residents. But the number of requests appeared to be rather low. Moreover, the Progetto montagna included support to the improvement of tourism with peculiar attention to the specific area of Val Canale and Gemona. Also in this case, most of the requests were found out not to be eligible. Another intervention was the grant of scholarships to be used at the Universities of Trieste and Udine. The initial destination to mountain residents was later enlarged to all the residents of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, thus neutralizing its efficiency. Finally, Progetto Montagna included the creation of an agency for the economic development of the mountain (Agenzia per lo sviluppo economico della montagna - Agemont). The agency had several goals⁴³: shareholding in enterprises operating in the mountain; granting them financial support; granting them technical, administrative, education, training and organization assistance; associate with other institutions with the same goals, if operating on the mountain; granting assistance to public administrations; fostering projects aimed at simplifying access to credit by mountain placed enterprises; granting services of documentary research and information in socio-economic topics connected to the mountain; promoting cooperation between public and private institutions for the planning and fulfilment of socio-economic development projects in favour of the mountain. The

⁴¹ Legge regionale 5 agosto 1966, n. 18: Autorizzazione alla costituzione di una Società finanziaria per lo sviluppo economico della Regione Friuli - Venezia Giulia – Authorization for the creation of a finance company for the economic development of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region. The finance company was named Friulia S.p.A.

⁴² Instituted by the Legge regionale 31 ottobre 1987, n. 35: Provvedimenti per lo sviluppo dei territori montani – Measures for mountain territories development.

⁴³ www.agemont.it

agency, implemented since 1990, had thus a complex and ambitious bunch of targets. Up to the present, it is mostly criticized to have only dealt with industrial development, and specifically in big plants placed in the valley bottoms and in highly technological enterprises.

Barazzutti states thus that the regional action was not adequately directed to the real needs of the mountain economy and that even what could have turned into a useful tool to support the mountain was eventually invalidated by applying it to a too widespread area. Moreover, the regional administration focused specifically on industrial development, neglecting other activities that were important for the mountain and mostly peculiar of it, like agriculture, breeding and craftsmanship. For each failure, Barazzutti eventually reports data and outcomes, concluding the most exhaustive essay on the problems of the Friuli mountain.

Much has been written by scholars and administrators belonging to the Slovene minority about the reasons of Slavia underdevelopment. Their opinion is mostly biased by their identity and their historical background. Many essays are an example of this trend. Most of them connect the Friuli mountain underdevelopment with the attitude of the second post war Italian governments towards the Slovene minority of Friuli. Some of them even go further to the fascist persecutions to explain the abandon of Slavia. All of them agree in identifying the Italian governments' minority policies as a cause of the extensive emigration that affected Slavia between 1951 and 1971, that as a consequence destroyed Slavia economy. It is here important to remember that a significant impulse to the organization of Slavia social life was given by return migrants, who had personally experienced the outcomes of underdevelopment.

An example summarizing all these aspects is the speech⁴⁴ introduced to the conference about the ethno-linguistic groups of the province of Udine in 1978 by F. Clavora, D. Del Medico and L. Feletig, as representatives of the *Zveza Izseljencev iz Beneške Slovenije-Unione emigranti sloveni del Friuli-Venezia Giulia* (Union of the Slovene migrants of Friuli-Venezia Giulia). The choice of emigration as an economic development policy of the Italian government is introduced: since 1948, emigration was encouraged as a mean of reducing the demographic pressure and the deficit of the balance of payments. The regional reasons of underdevelopment are considered to be its peripheral position and the oppression of too many military servitudes. Finally, the regional administration is charged with an unbalanced planning of economic development. The *Piano Urbanistico Regionale*, published in 1978, is blamed for its lack of operative solutions and for its scarce efficiency in balancing the development gap among different areas of the region. Thereafter, some statistics is

⁴⁴ F. Clavora, D. Del Medico, L. Feletig: "Razmišljanja o socio-ekonomskih razmerah v Beneški Slovenij s posebnim ozirom na proces izseljevanja – Considerazioni sulle condizioni socio-economiche della Slavia friulana con particolare riferimento al processo migratorio", in *Provincia di Udine: Atti conferenza sui gruppi etnico linguistici della provincia di Udine*. Udine, aula magna I.T.I. Malignani, 5-6 maggio 1978, pp. 223-250.

introduced, proving Slavia worse underdevelopment if compared with the rest of Friuli. And, finally, even if admitting that the socio-political and economic trend is difficult at the moment in all of Italy and in all of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the most depressed situation of Slavia is stated to be due to a precise politic and institutional will of deconstructing the ethnic and linguistic characteristic of the Slovene minority⁴⁵. Slavia economy was specialized in wood craftsmanship and Piasentina stone quarrying, while agriculture, affected by the extreme fragmentation of the land parcels, provided only basic subsistence. This system is reported to have been thrown into a deep crisis since 1921 by unspecified decisions that were taken elsewhere, at a national level, in strict connection with the discriminatory policy of the fascist government towards the Slovene minority. Because of that, an internal migration flow emptied Slavia of its most active population. The definitive collapse of the population rate during the second post war is eventually ascribed to the fact that twenty years of fascist persecution had weakened in the Slovene minority members the conscience of their own identity, so that they didn't oppose to being displaced abroad and employed as "labour reserve"⁴⁶. The speech concludes by stating that Slavia territory was able to provide to itself and even develop until its Slovene inhabitants had been allowed to self determinate and lead autonomously their own community. The national government decisions aimed at depriving them of their own identity (for example, avoiding education in Slovene language) had finally led to the abandon of the territory.

Many essays written within the Slovene community have the same pattern of the just examined one⁴⁷.

A new attempt of restarting the Slavia territory economy was made in 2007, when the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia decided to develop a GAL, Gruppo di azione locale (Local action group), within the European Union program LEADER⁴⁸. The GAL includes the Torre and Natisone valleys and consists in a limited liability consortium with a shared private and public capital. It should be a reference for both public administrations and private initiatives with a public goal, like category associations, cultural associations or cooperative companies, in order to create enduring development conditions, supporting economic, cultural and social activities. It also has a function of local development agency and consulting for private initiatives and public administrations.

⁴⁵ F. Clavara, D. Del Medico, L. Feletig, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 243. The fact that the mountain, in general and not only limited to Slavia, can have functioned as a labour reserve is admitted also by R. Grandinetti, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁴⁷ For example: R. Ruttar: "Analisi della situazione demografica", in *Atti del convegno »Linee per la rinascita ed un diverso sviluppo della Slavia friulana«* Passariano, 24 maggio 1980, Trieste, EST, 1980, pp. 11-37.

⁴⁸ Acronym for Liaison entre Actions de Developpement de l'Economie Rurale, Link between Development Actions of Rural Economy, thus a program aimed at identifying in a certain territory the economic factors that can be supported in order to support a suffering economy. One of its basic requirements is horizontal partnership with the involved companies, and institutions.

Unfortunately this effort has been affected by important bureaucratic delays since its creation, first of all by the political decision, taken in 2010 at a regional level, to punt under temporary receivership the Comunità Montana that was its most significant partner, and afterwards by the consequent resignation of its board of directors, who objected the stalemate situation.

Since its creation, GAL succeeded in supporting several enterprises with obtaining quality certifications, acquiring electronic facilities; it supported the diffusion of sustainable tourism; it invested in the promotion of educational and publicity projects ideated by municipalities; and finally it also supported cross border cooperation. Future projects include investments that, at the same time, should improve the quality of life of the mountain inhabitants, in order to ease their permanence in their home villages, and also promote the environment protection and increase tourism. The present development plan should be completed within 2013.

A possible improvement for Slavia economic situation could actually really come from tourism, which has recently been endorsed also by the regional institutions. The natural environment surely allows a touristic development, being the territory rich of wild nature examples with craggy mountains, caves, river sources and waterfalls. Slavia history, arts and traditions might also be appraised by adequate investments. And, finally, Slavia has many wine and food products that would fit with the kind of tourism which is most popular in this moment. Surely an effort should be made for a sustainable kind of tourism, so that such a peculiar environment stays protected. This seems to be the direction chosen by the administrations that created the consortium Dolce Nord Est, including the Torre valleys municipalities of Lusevera and Taipana, together with other valley bottom and lowland municipalities. One of the projects of the consortium is the creation of an EGTC (European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation) together with the tourist agencies of the municipalities of Kobarid, Bovec and Tolmin, located over the Slovene border.

And cross border cooperation really seems to be the possible future solution for Slavia development. So as service implementation projects are being carried on across the border of Trieste⁴⁹ and Gorizia, cross border cooperation might be the way to come over the lack of essential services people of Slavia complain so much about. A project of transborder kindergarten for the families of Pulfero (I) and Kobarid (SLO) is already in an advanced stage, and restoration works are proceeding to adapt an old basic school in Pulfero. When this will be accomplished, the project also envisages a transborder rest house for old people of the same municipalities, placed in Kobarid.

A recent project of development just deals with a possible exploitation of the neighbourhood with a different economic system, taking advantage of the proximity with what is no longer a different nation but keeps on being a different system. In 2012, the mayors of the municipalities of the

⁴⁹ See for example the F4E – Friends for Emergency project, which involves the firemen of Trieste and Koper and deals with fire prevention and fighting.

Natisone and Torre valleys suggested the creation of a customs free zone. This area should benefit of tax breaks, creating a buffer zone, where the differences between the heavier Italian fiscal system and the more attracting Slovene system could merge and thus create a favourable environment for the establishing of new enterprises. The proposal was introduced to the Regional administration, after some other border municipalities had expressed the same need to avoid offshoring to Slovenia. The project is at the moment still being considered by the Regional administration, but might be a way to appraise this side of the region.

Chapter 5

Taipana: a case study

Taipana is a municipality of the Torre valleys. More specifically, it is located in the river Cornappo valley, in the Eastern Julian Prealps, in the province of Udine. Its territory covers 65,47 square kilometers, between 295 and 1.636 meters above the sea level. It includes the administrative centre (Taipana capoluogo/Tipana*) and seven other hamlets: Monteaperta/Viškorša*, Platischis/Plestišča*, Prossenico/Prosnid*, Cornappo/Karnahta*, Debellis/Debeliši*, Montemaggiore/Brezje* and Ponte Sambo. In the East, it borders the Slovene municipality of Kobarid (Caporetto in Italian).

The municipal charter envisages the promotion of social and cultural initiatives to preserve and endorse Slovene language, defending the historical, ethnic and cultural heritage of the local community¹. It also fosters cooperation and social, cultural and economic exchanges with the bordering Slovene communities².

Taipana is separated from the province centre, the city of Udine, by a 28 kilometres long road, classified as provincial road. It leaves Udine as a large, straight road connecting different villages and, as it climbs up the mountain, it becomes a real mountain hairpin turned road. Narrow mountain roads connect its hamlets. Many internal connections need some upkeep works. Many meandering hiking trails cross its territory, connecting the villages to the mountain tops and representing an important and widespread alpine connection.

The mountains surrounding Taipana cannot be considered high as an absolute value: the highest peak of the Gran Monte chain is only 1.600 metres high. Yet its karstic morphology makes of it a bare, arid, steep slope, not to be undervalued when trekking its long crest. And the mountains are dug by several natural cavities, many of whom have not been explored yet.

From a naturalistic point of view, such a wild environment has maintained its biodiversity of plants and animals. The mountains around Taipana host a rare species of orchid. Several sightings of bears are reported. A brown standing bear is also the symbol of the municipality. A municipal natural park has been created, including three SIC³ (Sito di Interesse Comunitario, Communitarian Interest Site), in order to protect this peculiar environment.

¹ Statuto del comune di Taipana, art. 4, par. A, comma 1.

² *Ibid.*, par. B, comma 2.

*Slovene or Po Našin names.

5.1 Population

The last available data about the municipality population, at the moment, date begin 2011. The inhabitants of Taipana were 699 on January 1st, 2011 – 364 men and 335 women⁴. The result of an age group analysis is reported in the following graph, showing the population by age group:

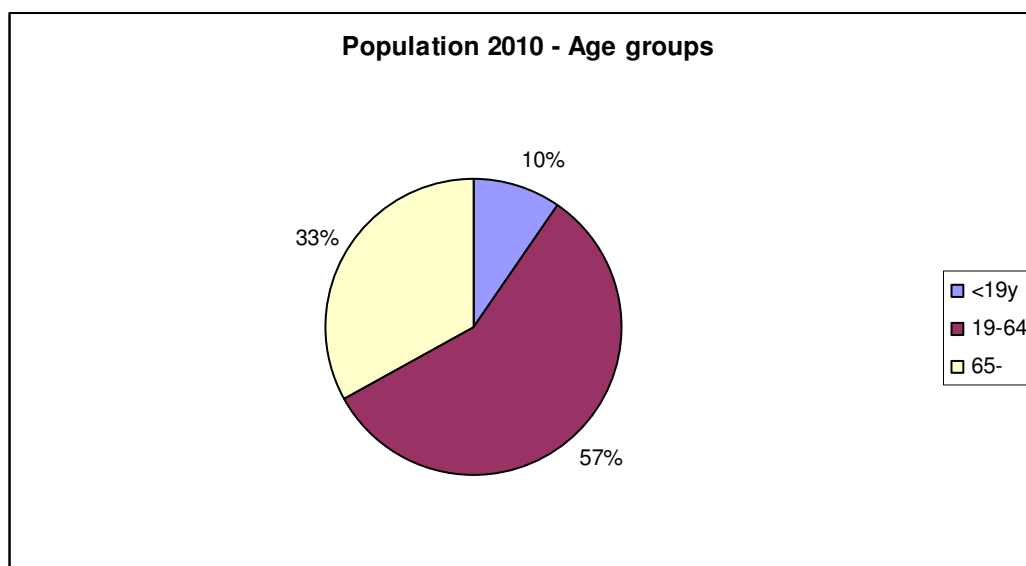


Table 4. The population per age group in 2010

Inhabitants aged less than 19 years were 73; those aged between 19 and 64 years were 423; the elders, aged over 65 years, were 245. The so called “Most elderly”, people aged over 74, were 113 and represented thus 16% of the population.

The ageing index⁵ was 366. That means that for 100 young people aged less than 15, there were 366 persons aged over 65 –that is 3,6 elders for each young person.

The dependency ratio⁶ was 57. That means that on 100 persons, 57 were aged under 15 or over 65 and were thus dependent on the rest of the society.

Only two newborn babies lived in Taipana on January 1st 2011, and were thus born in 2010 – a boy and a girl. In the same year, 17 persons had died (7 men and 10 women). The natural balance was thus heavily passive (15 persons less), if we consider the small number of inhabitants.

³ SIC it 3320017 – Rio Bianco di Taipana e Gran Monte; SIC it 3320014 – Torrente Lerada, including also part of the municipalities of Attimis and Faedis; SIC it 3320016 – Forra del Cornappo, including also part of the municipality of Nimis.

⁴ ISTAT data: <http://demo.istat.it/pop2011/index.html>.

⁵ Demographic ratio between the over 65 population and the under 15 population.

⁶ It measures the demographic burden on the active population. It is obtained by dividing the inactive population (aged less than 15 and over 65) by the active population (aged between 15 and 65) multiplied by 100. According to ISTAT definitions, a value of over 50% “indicates a situation of generational imbalance” [http://noi-italia2012en.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1\[id_pagina\]=16&cHash=fcd6979c40738237cc2b4cd320b93ba6](http://noi-italia2012en.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1[id_pagina]=16&cHash=fcd6979c40738237cc2b4cd320b93ba6).

The above quoted numbers give an idea of the kind of settlement. The municipal surface is rather large, in comparison with other municipalities of the Udine province. Taipana is, in fact, one of the broader municipalities of the whole province. But the number of inhabitants is rather low. Crossing this datum with the territory surface, the population density appears to be of about 11 inhabitants per square kilometre.

The municipality is composed by a number of hamlets which appears to be high, if compared to the number of inhabitants. But the hamlets number reflects an amount of inhabitants which dates back to different historical periods, and some hamlets are nowadays composed by just a few houses. Because of the territory geographical morphology, the inhabitants always used to live concentrated in the hamlets centres, while most of the territory didn't host any stable settlement.

Taipana is divided into two parts, which do not constitute two really separated hamlets, but are anyway distinguished from one another. They are called Borgo di Sopra and Borgo di Sotto ("Above" and "Below hamlet"). Also the hamlet of Monteperta is divided in Borgo di Sopra and Borgo di Sotto, and all the hamlets are divided into additional Borghi.

The population characteristics are thus similar to many other mountain off-centre villages. Few if any children are born every year; the population is ageing and sometimes lives in isolated single houses. Transport connections are inadequate. The services situation gives living there a scarce appeal.

5.2 Services

Public transport within the municipality and connecting the municipality with other centres is infrequent and insufficient. It is therefore not a valid alternative to the use of cars. The SAF⁷ buses only reach Taipana three times a day, in moments that are unsuitable with working hours. Not all of the municipality hamlets are connected by the transport line. To reach Udine, a change is required in Nimis. The requested time is more than the double than by car. Private car transport is thus the main and only way to stay connected to work places and services. But there are no gas stations in the whole municipal territory.

The administrative centre is located in Borgo di Sotto and hosts most of the (few) services. The municipality building includes a small museum of Taipana traditions and daily life. At the moment, it runs autonomously all the municipality services. From time to time, the city hall hosts cultural happenings like book launches.

⁷ SAF Autoservizi F.V.G S.p.A. is the transport enterprise connecting the Udine province.

Since it would be too expensive and technically difficult to organize a social service within such a small and off-centre village, the social services are handled within the Ambito Socio-assistenziale⁸ of Tarcento. This is an organization created by the municipalities of Attimis, Cassacco, Faedis, Lusevera, Magnano in Riviera, Nimis, Povoletto, Reana del Rojale, Taipana, Tarcento and Tricesimo. The seat is in Tarcento, 15 kilometres far away from Taipana. It deals with social assistance, welfare and social policies and runs the connected services. A social help desk is open in the municipality of Taipana once a week, for one hour. It organizes services and interventions on behalf of families, disabled and disadvantaged persons, elderly persons. The most frequently reported cases in Taipana deal with elderly persons.

Left of the municipality building, there is a pharmacy. It is owned by the municipality itself.

These three buildings (municipality, school and pharmacy) can be considered as the real institutional centre of the Taipana municipality.

The centre of Taipana also hosts a rest house for old people, in the so called Borgo Canada. The building, in fact, was a present of the Canadian government to the earthquake victims of 1976⁹. The rest house has quite a peculiar organization. It looks more like a residence than a hospital. In fact, it is currently named “Casa Famiglia” – Family House. It is composed by around twenty small flats, where the elderly live autonomously. Once a week, they are visited by a doctor and a nurse. Cleaning is also granted. In a research of the Friuli- Venezia Giulia region dated 2005¹⁰, the rest house is considered as the pull factor which brought to Taipana her foreign residents. This is actually not true, since there is no real rest house staff. The doctor and the nurse come from other places, and the janitor is a Taipanese and a foreigner, but that really doesn't make a difference.

Taipana centre is also the seat of a school, located just right of the municipality building. It consists of a pre-school and ground school. From an administrative point of view, it is a part of the Istituto comprensivo (comprehensive institute) of Tarcento. This means that the school doesn't have its own director and administrative services, which are located in Tarcento. Tarcento is only a few kilometres distant from Taipana, but the school is anyway not independent.

Other fundamental services have a seat in Taipana, anyway. A post office is present next to the municipality. Unfortunately, it is only open once a week and has one single employee. The whole population, and the employee herself, are fighting to keep the office open in spite of the economic reductions.

A police office (carabinieri) is also present. Also in this case, the inhabitants are struggling to keep it open. A police station in such a village had a meaning in the past, if we consider that the

⁸ Social and welfare assistance.

⁹ Many foreign countries hosting immigrants from Slavia made important donations.

¹⁰ Annuario statistico dell'immigrazione in Friuli-venezia Giulia, 2005, p. 148-149.

population has not always been so scarce and that this was a borderline area. But keeping a police station open in a village of 699 inhabitants, where no abuses or problems of any kind are usually reported, might seem economically inconvenient, especially now the Slovene borderline has lost its relevance. Yet there are some factors that must be taken into account. First of all, the population usually increases during summer, due to the presence of tourists and migrants coming home for the holidays. Moreover, the closer station is in Pradielis, in the municipality of Lusevera, about seven kilometres further. It is thus not so distant, but the mountain road makes short distances appear longer. And, finally, just when the present dissertation was being completed, a violent action took place in the village. During the night between January 10 and 11, 2013, the pharmacy was robbed. The sum of stolen money was not relevant (about € 500,00), but medicines were stolen and an attempt was made to force the drugs safe. And the damages made to the pharmacy room and equipment were onerous. This should let authorities think about a problem of security in the village at night, when nobody is wandering along the streets, no public exercises are open and thus the village might appear to be abandoned to itself. Nobody heard any noise, in fact, and the damage was only discovered the morning after.

An important institution is, finally, the Church. Almost each hamlet has its own church.

Monteaperta hosts the most important church of the whole municipality. Even if a modern church is present in the centre of the hamlet, originally dated XVI century but completely rebuilt after the complete destruction during the 1976 earthquake, the religious centre is still considered to be the *Chiesa della Santissima Trinità di Monteaperta – Sveta Trojica*¹¹, placed outside the centre, on the road leading to the municipality of Lusevera. Its relevance and affective attraction is due to its historical meaning. The church, in fact, was completed in 1348 and is a part of a medieval pilgrimage route called *Cammino celeste*¹² or *Iter aquileiense*, connecting Austrian, Italian and Slovene shrines. One of the main celebrations of the whole valley is officiated in this church, in June: the so called *Bacio delle Croci*¹³ is a centuries-old religious ceremony, where the neighbouring villages, traditionally coming from the Torre valleys and also from the Slovene Isonzo valleys, carry their own cross to celebrate forgiveness and brotherhood.

Taipana capoluogo hosts the church of SS. Giuseppe e Mattia Apostolo, which can still be considered also as an aggregating centre. Prossenicco has its own church of S. Leonardo, hosting one of the few examples in Italy of “Dressed Madonna” – a freshly restored statue of the Virgin Mary, composed by a very simple wood stick simulacrum, covered by sumptuous clothing. Platischis hosts the church of S. Giovanni Battista, whose ancient marble altar was found by chance

¹¹ Church of the Holy Trinity.

¹² The Celestial route.

¹³ Crosses kiss.

in 2001 after it had been removed during the after earthquake reconstruction. Also the church of the Beata Vergine del Rosario has a recent story: after being destroyed by the 1976 earthquake, restoration work only began in 2002 and the church was finally inaugurated in 2009. Also Montemaggiore had its church destroyed by the earthquake, and later rebuilt.

All the restoration works on the churches are an example of the deep devotion of the inhabitants of this valley, willing to make offerings out of their still poor incomes for something they consider really important, and a symbol of the community compactness.

Apart from these institutions, that have a rule in the organization of the community, a few other activities are present in the municipality centre.

5.3 Meeting places

A small café in the centre of Taipana is at the moment the only public exercise of the municipality administrative centre. A multisport association is also present and runs a soccer field and a tennis field. It has its own small recreation point. During summer, at mid-August, it organizes a sport and wine-and-food- festival.

The hamlets host rare – if any – leisure activities, instead. An agriturismo used to be open in Monteaperta until 2003, also hosting a pork meat festival in autumn. Recently, the municipality made an attempt of reopening it, through a real competition for the choice of the managers. The municipality requested a symbolic rent, but its other requirements were quite heavy: within three years since the contract signature, the manager should undertake improvements in new furniture and equipments for no less than €30.000,00. Moreover, the structure should have been transformed from a simple agriturismo into a food service also endowed with accommodation facilities. The municipality would contribute to the investments for the furniture and equipment of the restaurant with an investment of €70.000,00. The will of the municipality of creating development by attracting private investment and bounding the management to the territory was clear, but maybe a bit too demanding. A couple coming from the South of Italy eventually won, but was only in state to keep the exercise open for about one year.

Platischis, too, hosts a traditional tavern. Moreover, a former military barrack hosts a new organic food restaurant, serving locally produced meat and vegetables. This business started as a cooperative company, involved in sustainable development, valuing the territorial production and organic farming and was the first experience of this kind in Taipana. At the moment, pigs are bred in the wild and organic apple juice is produced by the firm itself, while products of other local enterprises are served in the restaurant. But the project includes an improvement of the agricultural organic production of fruit and vegetables.

The small hamlet of Prossenicco is very dynamic, in spite of its about 20 inhabitants. Many buildings survived the earthquake of 1976, thus Prossenicco still has a traditional structure. It hosts two taverns, and a brand new agriturismo, opened in 2011 in a building which had formerly hosted an Italian finance police barrack. The owner is a young man hailing from there and willing to let the hamlet live again.

The hamlets of Montemaggiore and Cornappo each host a tavern.

The traditional tavern, typical of Friuli, is thus the most common leisure structure of the whole valley. Apart from few cases, taverns are meeting points for mostly old people. For young or middle aged people, there is little other chance for social life than meeting in private houses.

Cultural activities are present in the municipality only as a result of the preservation of the local traditions. The cultural circle Naše Vasi (Our Village) is aimed to the protection of the local Slovene customs. It organized in the past courses of Slovene for adults, and runs a popular folk choir. The hamlets of Platischis and Prossenicco each have their tourist association. Their activities should be directed to visitors more than to local inhabitants, but they anyway represent a reference point and organize traditional events, like carnival parades or religious festivals.

Apart from these traditions oriented associations, a less committed cultural life is not to be found in Taipana, if we avoid including in the category the various summer festivals. The closest cinema and theatre are in Udine. Udine outskirts also host the nearest gyms and book shops. The nearest labour union is in Tarcento, the closer bank in Nimis.

Kids can find limited sporting facilities at the local multisport associations, but anything more original requires moving.

5.4 Tourism

It is easily noticed that the above mentioned aggregation points have usually a double role for the native residents and for tourists, even if traditional taverns and new B&B and agriturismo usually have a differently oriented appeal.

Some exclusively tourism oriented structures are also present. Taipana, Monteaperta, Ponte Sambo and Prossenicco host one Bed and Breakfast each. An *albergo diffuso*¹⁴ offers rooms in Platischis and Montemaggiore.

The hamlet of Campo di Bonis hosts an agriturismo connected to a very popular horse riding stable, which also organizes off-road tours.

A speleological shelter is present in the centre of Taipana: it is a very useful and comfortable reference for non-resident explorers of the many interesting neighbouring caves. It is run by a

¹⁴ It is a peculiar kind of hotel, quite popular in nowadays Italy. Services are placed in a centre, while rooms are scattered over different traditional houses of the neighbourhood.

speleological group from Gorizia. Finally, a World War 1st military hospital was recently renovated by some Italian Alpine veterans and converted in alpine shelter.

5.5 Economic activities

A few other small enterprises have a seat in the municipality. Many of them are connected with the food-and-wine production chain. A goat milk and cheese production was recently opened in Taipana by a young and enterprising girl. The products are sold to the neighbouring restaurants and also self-distributed in a shop in the municipality of Lusevera. In Taipana, a traditional beans farm and a flower rise are also present. In Monteaperta, another farm grows goats and organic vegetables. In Platischis, a cooperative organic farm grows pigs in the wild and then sells pork cured meats in its own rest point. It has a peculiar origin, since it started thanks to a cooperation of the municipality with the Regional agency for rural development (ERSA, *Agenzia regionale per lo sviluppo rurale*), the Chamber of commerce of Udine, the Torre Natisone GAL¹⁵, the University of Udine and even the WWF. 377 cadastral units, belonging to more than 500 owners dispersed all over the world, were attentively unified, thus fighting the excessive fragmentation of farming parcels that is one of the main problems of Slavia agricultural development. The so unified ground covers 10ha.

The food production chain is thus strictly connected with its territory and is characterized by its sustainability, the attention to the environment and to the newest orientations of farming. Yet it is a niche farming, of extremely peculiar or traditional products and limited to small amounts. It is mostly aimed at local consume, or at specific festivals.

The only other production branch present in Taipana is the building. In Taipana, three generic building enterprises are present. Behind them, a thermal and hydraulic enterprises and a mechanic enterprise. In Monteaperta, a plasterboard and painting enterprise and a carpenter are working. In Debellis, the only real factory of the whole municipality produces doors and windows.

These enterprises operate on the whole Udine province. Most of the enterprises are very small, usually as a kind of small craftsmanship and thus employing only the owner and his family.

The only exceptions to the wine-and-food and building monopoly have their seat in Monteaperta: a cleaning enterprise, a catering, which also runs the school cafeteria, and the extremely rare craftsmanship activity of a viola da gamba maker.

Most of the productive aged inhabitants have to earn their living by commuting, in lowland placed enterprises and services. But the most important payer in Taipana is the State, since most of its inhabitants are retirees.

¹⁵ *Gruppo di azione locale*. See chapter 3.

The last available statistical data about the municipality taxable income concern year 2010. The sample thus didn't include people, whose income was below the taxable limit, or people who did not collect any income, or people whose income was drawn and taxed abroad. The sample included 381 persons with an income. The gross amount of their incomes was of € 6.665.965¹⁶. It is like stating that each of them in that year earned € 17.496 – but 381 persons were only about the half of Taipana inhabitants that year. This value strikes when considered as an absolute value, if we compare it with our own income in a personal consideration. In a more objective way, we can consider that the mean income in the province of Udine that year was of € 22.655, in the region Friuli-Venezia Giulia of € 22.968, in Italy of € 23.241.

We can thus legitimately include Taipana in the definition of fragile area. It is a small mountain village, it is located on a borderline, it has been abandoned by many of its inhabitants in the past, it is affected by a long lasting economic depression and its inhabitants belong to an ethnic minority whose protection is a most recent and still questioned victory. All of these characteristics give it a precarious balance, between a natural paradise and human society collapse.

The municipality administration is doing its utmost in order to let its economy restart. At the moment, another project is providing the unification of 270 agrarian parcels, located around Platischis. It comes thus under a necessary land reorganization. It concerns the creation of a PIPA (Progetto di insediamento produttivo agricolo¹⁷). Expropriations have already been completed, to the detriment of 500 persons, many of whom live abroad and maybe had no idea of owning a parcel inherited by some forefather. The plot includes almost 13ha, which have become a property of the municipality. It will be rented to farmers willing to grow cherry and plum trees, or to breed goats and pigs. The project is being carried on with the cooperation of the Slovene farmers association of Cividale.

In addition to the excessive property fragmentation, another obstacle to the agricultural development is the nature of the territory. Because of the disaffection of the past decades to agriculture, and also to the massive depopulation, the territory has been neglected for a long time and woods have conquered a great part of it. It seems that nowadays 75% of the municipal surface is covered by woods¹⁸. The municipal administration would like to be able to win new ground to agriculture, even if considering the environment protection very important.

¹⁶ Source: Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, http://www.finanze.gov.it/dipartimentopolitichefiscali/fiscalitalocale/distribuz_addrpef/lista.htm?r=1&pagina=friuli.htm&anno=2012&pr=UD.

¹⁷ Project of agricultural productive settlement.

¹⁸ C. Del Bene: "Quadro geografico e storico", in Comune di Taipana: *Taipana Gente storia cultura – Taipana Ljudje zgodovina kultura*. Taipana, 2002, p. 18.

This dissertation deals with one of the municipality projects for the restarting of Taipana economy, and also of the social life which is the core of a community.

5.6 The Berra project

Searching demographic data about Taipana population, one percentage appears to mismatch with its generally depressing results: since a few years, the percentage of foreign residents in Taipana has grown up to become an amazing part of the total residents.

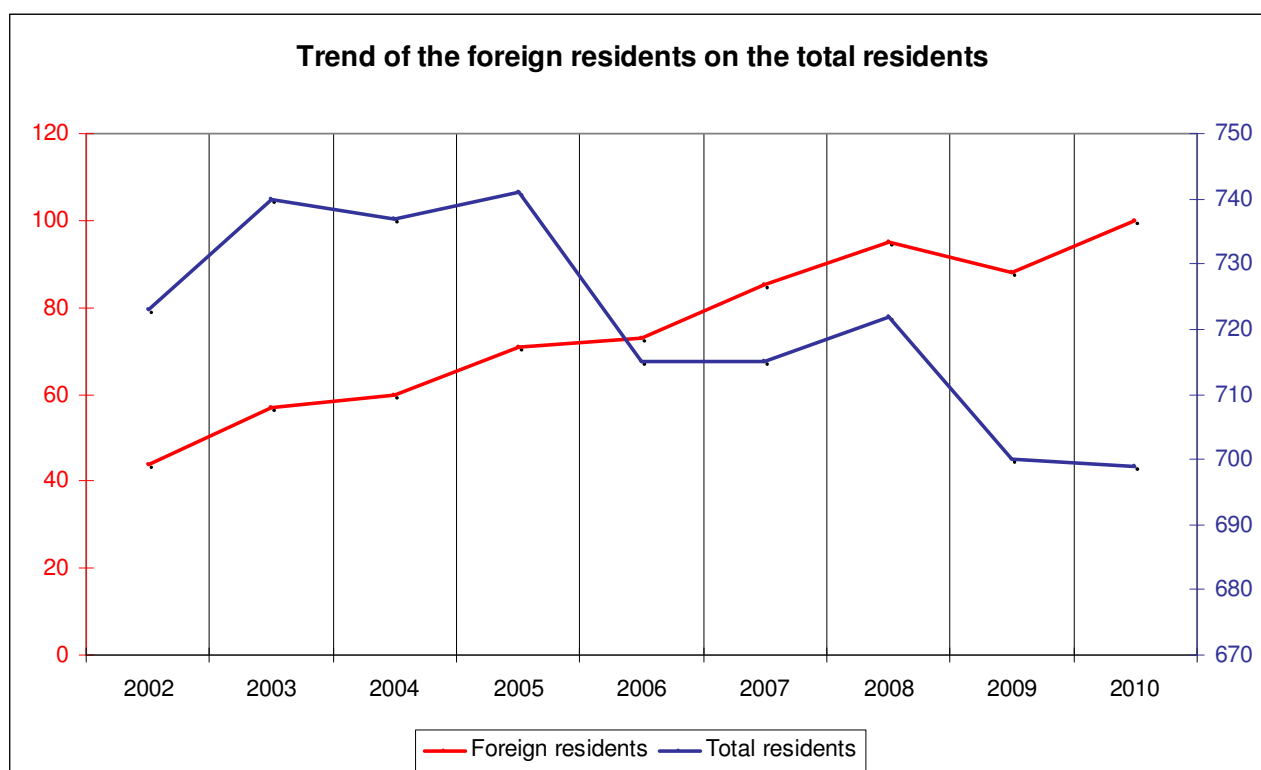


Table 5. Trend of the foreign residents of Taipana above the total residents.

Since begin years '00s, the number of the foreign residents has increased, and is at the moment rather stable, around the number of hundred units. If compared with the total number of residents, the foreign component is 14,31% of it. In 2010, Taipana was thus the highest ranking for percentage of foreigners on the total residents. In the previous years, it had competed for the top of the rank with the cities of Udine and Lignano Sabbiadoro, that in 2010 obtained a percentage of 13,54% and 13,78% each. At a regional level, Taipana is the eighth municipality in the rank of the highest percentages of foreigners on the total residents¹⁹.

¹⁹ Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia; Osservatorio regionale immigrazione; a cura di IRES FVG: *Annuario statistico dell'immigrazione Friuli Venezia Giulia 2012*. Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, 2012, p. 29.

Economic migrants usually search for the most suitable place to start a wealth improvement, and if money were the only pull factor of migration flows, there would be no reason for Taipana success. The high foreigners rate of Udine and Lignano Sabbiadoro is due to their economic appeal. Udine is, together with Pordenone, the industrial and manufacturing centre of the region and an important productive centre of the whole Italian North-East. The Udine belt still offers job chances, even if in a period of crisis it also suffers the outcomes of several enterprises bankruptcies and unemployment. Lignano Sabbiadoro fortune is grounded on tourism. It is nears to a ghost town during winter, but hosts thousands of tourists and second house owners during spring, summer and autumn. Tourism connected services are an important employment source for all the region and thus also for foreign workers.

At a regional level, the cities which score highest in the rank mostly belong to the Pordenone outskirts. Pravidomini, with its 21,8% of foreign residents in 2010, tops the rank. Its location half a way between Pordenone and Portogruaro sets it in the middle of the most important productive areas of the whole Italian North-East, and in a village where housing facilities are much cheaper than in the city centre. Moreover, it is also close to the city of Aviano, which hosts an American base camp whose services are partially supplied by Italian enterprises. Something similar can be stated about Prata di Pordenone and Pasiano di Pordenone, scoring 19,8% and 18,1% each. Vajont, instead, scoring 18,9%, is slightly more off-centred from Pordenone, but is located in the core of the knives district of Maniago. Also in this case, thus, the neighbourhood with a productive centre – even if in the middle of a heavy economic crisis – is connected with the cheap housing facilities in constituting a factor of attraction. San Giorgio della Richinvelda (14,6%) has a central position between Udine, Pordenone, Spilimbergo and Maniago. The other cities which forerun Taipana in the rank are Pordenone itself (16,3%) and Monfalcone (15,3%), a renowned shipyard city.

Taipana is nothing like that. Its immigrants were attracted by other factors, and by a clever, ambitious and farsighted repopulation project.

After discovering the peculiarity of Taipana foreigners statistics, investigating its reasons was not so easy. The scarce existing literature that had noticed the phenomenon, in fact, had given it a wrong interpretation. The Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia yearly report about immigration in the region, which was published in 2006 about 2005 data, mentioned the presence in Taipana of a percentage of foreigners over 7,5%. Further, however, it interpreted such incidence similarly to the case of Pulfero. It was thus considered as the result of the reception of refugees during the Yugoslavia collapse and the war in Bosnia. Hundreds of homeless refugees, in fact, had been displaced in some camps set up in dismissed caserns, a heritage of the cold war, in the Natisone valleys. Their permanence in the territory would have caused the high percentage of foreign residents. Moreover,

the report connected their stay with the presence in Taipana of a rest house. The chance of finding a job as caregiver would have kept there a high number of foreigners²⁰.

A further inquiry, carried on the field, allowed to discover that the real pull factor of such a high percentage of foreigners was due to a repopulation project, carried out by the municipality administration and, specifically, by the initiative of its mayor.

5.6.1 The mayor

The mayor Elio Berra was elected for the first time in 1999. He was re-elected in 2004 and in 2009. His civil list, named “Uniti per rinascere²¹” had a stick flower in its symbol. The competitor list, named “Taipana siamo noi²²” included in its symbol an Italian flag. In 2009, he was elected with the 58,38%²³.

Born in Taipana, Mr. Berra worked lifelong as a foreman in the installation of industrial sites. Always maintaining his base in Taipana, he spent long periods abroad, mostly in the former USSR countries. Being a migrant meant to him experiencing the value of work, connecting people beyond each one’s nationality and language. His Slovene mother tongue had made him ashamed in his childhood years, when pro-Italian propaganda was still stifling. As an adult, it turned into a strong point when it advantaged him in the relations with Russian speaking work partners, allowing respectful and fruitful relations that were not so certain for the other Italian partners. Definitively back to his home place, he became quickly involved in politics – where politics still mean a mission, the devotion to the common good, a responsibility towards a whole community.

He had to face a firm marginality, which had far back been caused initially by ethnic prejudices, and then by the rules of the territorial partition of modern economy. The result of a long lasting marginalization, thus. His approach was connoted by pragmatism. He broke up with a long tradition of complaints for the persecution of the Slovene community in the past, and also with the regrets connected with the reasons of the massive emigration. The need for innovation meant to him not only the application of new technologies, but a new approach to Taipana problems.

²⁰ Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia; Osservatorio regionale immigrazione; a cura di IRES FVG: *Annuario statistico dell’immigrazione Friuli Venezia Giulia 2005*. Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, 2005, pp. 148-149.

²¹ United, to be born again.

²² We are Taipana.

²³ Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia data: <http://elezionistorico.regione.fvg.it/>

5.6.2 Diversity and development policy

A critical point of view was reserved to the Slovene minority institutions, considered to have mostly neglected the Torre valleys in the past and to have a too complex, self-referring and bureaucratic structure to fit with the needs of a small and off centred community. Connections with the Slovene culture were enhanced by promoting relations directly with the Slovene backcountry. The first steps supported the reinforcing of the relations between the communities, through the joined celebration of religious and traditional festivities. The final aim is to effectively connect the transborder communities in order to allow shared services.

About the belonging to the Slovene minority, Mr. Berra's approach is pragmatic. If a stronger feeling of belonging has gone lost, and many Taipana citizens don't fully live their Slovene membership anymore, speaking Slovene might now represent an advantage, allowing being countrymen not only in one, but two nations.

The border is also considered as an opportunity, where the deepest meaning of the word "boundary"²⁴ meets its realization. Cooperation should involve the territory on both sides of the border, taking advantage of the different opportunities offered, for example, by the different fiscal systems. This kind of cooperation could represent a solution for a territory which shares, on both sides of the border, the outcomes of economic stagnation. This super-national view of the chances of development is a key point of Berra's project.

Many off-centred communities persecute development through the application of the newest products of modern technology, which have the power to connect operators with faraway placed jobs and allow services through remote connections. Taipana administration, instead, even if always keeping in line with the facilitations of modern technology, chose for development through the exploitation of the existing skills, abilities and potentialities. Investments were thus made, as seen before, in traditional activities like agriculture and breeding and in tourism.

Since begin 2012, Taipana became the pioneer of that savings policy which is wished for at a national level and is still so hard to achieve: at least 50% of electricity was saved by reducing public illumination at night. Half of the street lights, thus, are never switched on. The safety of street transports was obviously protected and the streets are never completely dark. The population supported the decision and no particular objections arose.

The reuse of existing facilities was preferred to the building of new constructions, both in the industrial and the residential field. Restoration or renovation of already existing buildings allowed the creation of new productive activities (like for example the agriturismo of Monteperta or the dairy store of Platischis, which became a bed and breakfast connected with the new organic farm)

²⁴ The term boundary means border, but with a connotation of connecting link rather than separating line.

and the accommodation of many not affluent families in municipality owned public housing. Building facilities are the main support the municipality administration is able to supply, by its own funds, to existing productions and projects for new enterprises.

Finally, the most innovative policy of the Berra administration dealt with the fight to depopulation. Anything possible was made in order to keep in the village the autochthonous inhabitants with the - insufficient- municipality capitals. But due to the progressive ageing of the population and to the difficult economic circumstance, the efforts were not sufficient to stop the abandon of the village. In this situation, Mr. Berra chose for a really innovative policy.

5.6.3 Pull factors

The village could count on a significant pull factor, due to the emigration of many of its residents and to the presence of buildings which had been erected to face the emergency caused by the earthquake: many houses were empty, and to be made easily available after some restoration works. The administration announced a new ranking for the attribution of public housing, whose main criterion favoured families with children. This simple decision changed the characteristics of Taipana population. In Taipana there are few young families, and few children. The ranking thus privileged foreign families coming from outside, stimulating them to move to Taipana and settle there. The announcement was not casually oriented: Mr. Berra broadcasted the event among the workers he dealt with in his daily work, giving thus the priority (if not the exclusive) to employed people who were already living in Italy and spoke some Italian. A kind of élite was thus chosen, possessing qualifications of reliability and stability and already connected to Taipana by friendship, professional and later even family links, or the common origin in the same town.

Another attempt of attracting new inhabitants was performed by sending an invitation to the Serbian Orthodox community of Trieste: the municipality was ready to welcome young families willing to settle there, offering very cheap housing facilities. But there was no real follow up.

Of course, foreigners were not meant to be the unique beneficiary of these facilitations. Avoiding any possible objection by right-winged or nationalist parties, the administration was open to any possible contribution to the repopulation, from wherever it might arrive. Some Italians also took advantage of the chance. But they were extremely few if compared with the number of the foreigners.

The first facilities hosting foreign residents were located in the so called “Centro sociale²⁵” in Monteperta. These small terrace houses, a municipal property, had been built to host the evacuated homeless of 1976 earthquake. Over time, most of their inhabitants had fixed their own houses and

²⁵ Social centre.

thus moved away, or had died. Some of the houses had remained in the possession of the old assignees and were used as second houses for the holidays. In this case, the assignment was cancelled, originating some dissatisfaction. Later, the so called “Case svizzere”, a gift of the Swiss Federation for the earthquake emergency, had the same function.

The project for the housing of new foreign residents envisaged another more ambitious development. The municipality would become a broker, a mediator between landlords of empty houses and new potential buyers: it would buy abandoned houses, renovate them at its own expenses, rent them and later re-sell them to new citizens. Specific funding was searched for, asking the cooperation of the Comunità Montana. But the request was not embraced and at the moment this branch of the project is still to be prosecuted.

Finally, we should remember that, behind the repopulation project facilities, an off centred village anyway allows finding accommodation at a lower price, thus some big families were encouraged to settle here because of the possibility of buying a house for the price that, in a bigger centre, could only allow buying a flat.

The purchase of a dwelling is an important step in the stable settlement of the new inhabitants, and therefore the municipal administration is doing what possible to support it.

At begin 2000s, the first foreign inhabitants settled in Taipana. They were not the first ever, since many Italian residents have actually a foreign citizenship, due to a past emigration experience. And many residents have an Italian citizenship even if born and grown up abroad. But this dissertation deals with people with no family ancestral connection with Italy – just migrants, people who left their home country to live in Italy.

The school has a key role in the repopulation project. The presence of new young inhabitants is an advantage for the school itself: since autochthonous children are really a few, foreign children at the moment allow the very existence of a school in Taipana. At the beginning of the school year 2012-2013, the total number of registered children was 32 – 10 in the nursery school and 22 in the primary school. Foreigners were 14, thus constituting the 44%²⁶. 5 of them attended the nursing school (50%), and 9 the primary school (41%). From the point of view of the repopulation project, the school should carry on most of it. It has, in fact, first of all a social function. And it should supply the necessary education to raise the children as Taipana citizens, growing in them the feeling of belonging to a community. The future of Taipana is entrusted to them: it is possible that their parents will one day decide to go back to their home country, where they possibly still feel to belong to, and where they may still have some family of friendship connection. But children who

²⁶ Data supplied by the Istituto Comprensivo of Tarcento, of whom the school of Taipana is part. With special thanks to Dr. Elena Romani for her cooperation.

are maybe born in Italy and grew up in Taipana might one day feel connected to its territory more than to what might appear just like a foreign country, a place they visited only during holidays.

The presence of a school right in the centre of Taipana capoluogo is thus a very important pull factor for the success of the Berra project. From the point of view of the newcomers, the chance of schooling their children in a quite safe and close to home place is one of the positive aspects for living in Taipana.

And finally an important pull factor for any kind of new inhabitant is the chance to live in a wonderful natural environment, free from pollution, more suitable to a traditional way of life, and in a small centre which is safe for growing children.

5.6.4 Weak points

The negative aspects of life in Taipana were already considered, and range from the lack of job places to the transport difficulties to the lack of services and recreation activities.

These weak points receive a different value when considered from the point of view of the new inhabitants, who usually are in a complete agreement with the mayor.

The off centred position of the village appears not to be a barrier to people who previously lived in bigger towns, usually covering long distances between home and their job. Their request for entertainment opportunities is limited, and the social chances offered by the taverns and the sport centre seem to be enough to them. The lack of services is easily overtaken by people who are accustomed to move to reach their jobs, and who therefore spend most of their working day far from Taipana and would thus not be able to take advantage of any service placed there, if there was any.

In the last months rumours have often been heard about the possible closure of schools with a small number of pupils, due to the State need to limit its costs. This policy of reduction of many welfare costs doesn't care about the possible outcomes for small, isolated, awkward communities, where public welfare is not a choice since there is no other real chance. Moreover, in such communities the school (the teacher, the director) often represent the State itself, or an important authority anyway. The priest, the physician, the teacher were in the past often a real reference point for small communities inhabitants. In the present time, the teacher can still be considered as an exponent of cultural and intellectual life.

In Taipana specific situation, the closure of the school might mean the failure of the repopulation project, since without school Taipana would not be different from many other mountain villages, and children would grow up as little commuters. Education within Taipana school is only possible until the basic school level, thus older children must anyway move to reach the "middle" school,

located in Nimis (11 km far). But then children might have already developed that sense of belonging which in the future might keep the village alive.

The beginning of the present school year (2012-2013) saw the closure threat become more immediate, since a minimum number of 20 children was required for the preschool and 30 for the basic school. Thanks to the little foreign residents, Taipana was able to reach the goal of having enough enrolled pupils.

The institution of a bilingual school would surely keep the threat distant, and this is maybe the reason why, when requested to express their binding opinion about it, all the parents of Taipana school children unanimously voted supporting the request. This might seem strange if we consider that Slovene is not the mother language, and nor even the traditional language, of all the foreign pupils families. But in this situation the community showed to be compact, and the foreign families maybe appreciated the chance to give their children some kind of special education, which might grant them more chances in the future.

5.6.5 Some statistics

According to the most recent demographic data, the foreign residents of Taipana were 100 on January 1st, 2011²⁷. There were 55 men and 45 women.

Considering their age groups, there is an evidence of how they can impact the village economic and productive life. The foreign residents aged between 19 and 64 years, thus in their full productive life, are 77 – that is the 77%. This value is not per se significant, but it has the merit of showing that foreign residents are mostly independent people, who do not constitute a burden for the society.

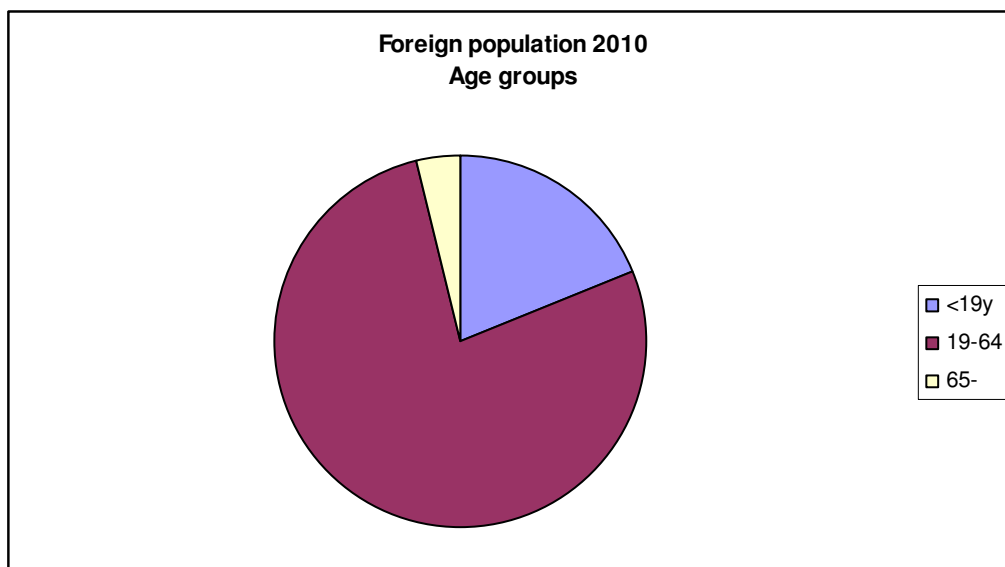


Table 6. The foreign population of Taipana per age group in 2010.

²⁷ ISTAT data: <http://demo.istat.it/strasa2011/index.html>

An important observation becomes possible if comparing the age groups of the autochthonous and the foreign population:

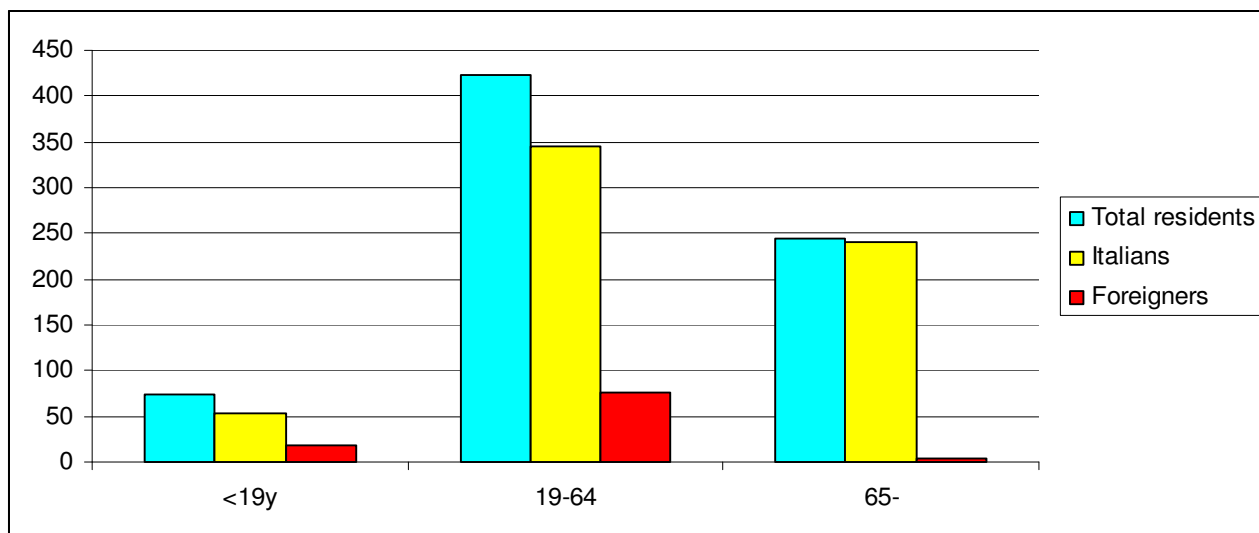


Table 7. The composition of the population

The weight of the foreigners included in the productive age group is not yet so significant in comparison with the Italians. Foreigners are only 18% of the total population belonging to the productive age group, thus we cannot state that their contribution to the economic development of the village is so essential yet. But the difference is more interesting if we consider the young population. Within this age group, the foreigners are the 26%. More than one child on four in Taipana is thus a foreigner. Finally, about the elderly, the foreign residents only represent the 2% of this age group.

In analyzing the demographic balance of Taipana resident foreigners, we must take into account the fact that the numbers are very small and thus also little differences can originate great percentages. Moreover, no data are easily available for the previous years, thus some imprecision is to be contemplated.

Anyway, an overview of the demographic balance of Taipana resident foreigners since 2002²⁸ allows some considerations.

First of all, the foreign population appears to be still quite unsettled. In the considered period, in fact, the new arrivals were 145 on the whole, and the deregistrations were 89. Of course this datum is not significant as an absolute value, since some foreigners were already present in Taipana before January 1st 2002, but the turnover looks quite high. The administration policy appears thus not to be

²⁸ ISTA data: http://demo.istat.it/index_e.html

so successful in creating new inhabitants. Many people are attracted to live there, but few decide to stay.

In all the considered years but 2009, the arrivals were more than the departures. In 2009 the migration balance was negative (27 departures vs 20 arrivals), and the number of resident foreigners decreased to 88 (in 2008 they had been 95). The temporary decrease was balanced the year after, when 18 new arrivals allowed the foreign population of Taipana to reach its record presence of 100 persons (only 6 persons left).

Immigration from other countries is the most common channel for new arrivals. This means that the new residents were previously officially residing in other countries. Statistical data cannot reveal any possible condition of irregularity. Immigration from other Italian municipalities seems to be much less significant: the new residents arriving from other countries were overall 92, while the ones arriving from other Italian municipalities were 44. But it is interesting to note that immigrants from other Italian municipalities were mostly men (30 on 44), while immigrants from abroad were mostly women (49 on 92, even if the difference is minimal). This could let us think that men who were already residing in Italy had their wives or families arrive from their home country, when they found a good place to settle. The remaining 9 registrations were due to 9 babies who were born there²⁹.

The analysis of the reasons for the deregistrations also offers some chance for reflexion. Most of the deregistrations were due to emigration to other Italian municipalities (65 deregistrations overall). Only 10 deregistrations were due to emigration abroad. This confirms that people who decided to leave Taipana just disliked living there, while they didn't consider their experience in Italy as completed yet.

In the considered period, the Taipana foreigners who acquired the Italian citizenship were six – two men and four women, of whom surely one as a consequence of her marriage to an Italian man.

Overall, the deregistrations concerned more women than men (46 women on 89 deregistrations), but once again the difference is minimal and thus not relevant to draw any conclusion.

Statistical data about the family life of Taipana foreigners are only available for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009. In 2007, the families with at least one foreign member were 34, and in 28 of them the foreigner was the head of the household – and in Italy that means, traditionally, a man, while a woman is considered the head of the household only if she is a single. In 2008, the families with at least one foreign member were 41, and in 33 the foreigner was the head of the household. In 2009, the families with at least one foreign member were 38, and in 31 families the foreigner was the head of the household. Most of the resident foreigners thus live together with their family, which is

²⁹ Immediately after birth, they were already classified as different...

usually a warranty for the stability of a settlement and an indicator of the willingness of carrying out a life project in place. Usually the first migrant of a family, be it a man or a woman, tries to make sure he (or she) has reached some economic stability and disposes of an appropriate dwelling before letting the family join him (or her). The prevalent presence of familiar groups is thus also an indicator of some professional stability for most of the considered group.

ISTAT data about the citizenship of the resident foreigners are only available since 2003.

According to municipality data, the first families who took advantage of the repopulation project came from Kosovo and are no longer present in the village, since they decide to move to valley bottomed centres.

Also in this case we must remember that we are dealing with small numbers. The most represented citizenship always had a number of members included between 17 and 37, and the lowest ranking citizenships often only have one member living in Taipana.

If we try to gather the countries of origin of Taipana foreigners in great geographical areas, we will notice that one permanent feature over years is the important presence of Eastern European citizens. In all the considered years³⁰, the most represented citizenship belonged to that area, which had many other members in the rank. The top was, in fact, occupied alternatively by the FYROM, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Romania. Among the Eastern European countries, thus, former Yugoslavia in particular had an important role and also its other countries³¹ had over time some representative in Taipana. But the variety of countries that had (or still have) a representative there is extreme. For the Eastern European countries, beyond the above mentioned countries, also Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Poland were represented there over time.

The presence of French and Belgian citizens can easily be identified with some return migrants.

Africa is only represented by the Ivory Coast and Morocco. Moroccan citizens are present since 2004, and since 2008 they are the fourth most represented citizenship after the above mentioned Eastern European citizens. At the moment, both Ivorian and Moroccan citizens seem to be permanently settled.

Some other citizenships that in the past years settled in Taipana are not so easily contextualized, instead. South America always had a few representatives, from Uruguay, Argentina, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. According to municipality data, some of them curiously belong to the amenity migrants category. Also the Far East has a few -but permanent- residents, from Thailand and Japan.

³⁰ 2003-2010.

³¹ Slovenia, Croatia and Kosovo.

And, finally, over the time we can find in Taipana also some migrants from Scandinavia (Iceland and Finland).

In the most recent available year (2010), the different citizenships present in Taipana were no less than 16:

	Males	Females	Total
Bosnia and Herzegovina	19	18	37
Romania	14	6	20
FYROM	6	6	12
Morocco	5	3	8
Croatia	2	2	4
Kosovo	3	1	4
Belgium	1	2	3
Finland	1	2	3
Japan	1	1	2
Poland	0	1	1
Slovenia	1	0	1
Ukraine	0	1	1
Ivory Coast	1	0	1
Thailand	0	1	1
Dominican Republic	0	1	1
Argentina	1	0	1
TOTAL	55	45	100

As stated before, most of the countries only have few representatives. Seven of them only have one. For some other of them we can suppose that their presence is due to just one family.

Some gender balance is present in general. It is quite difficult to consider what is balanced and what is not when dealing with such small numbers, where a national presence composed by two women and one man could let us state that women are the double than men.

It seems to be more appropriate to state that most of the less represented nationalities are composed by single persons or small families. Some of these persons live in Taipana because of an affective relation with an Italian resident.

Only for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina the number of citizens is such to allow recognizing a real gender balance. The Romanian citizens are, instead, an apparent example of lack of gender balance, since males are more than the double than females and there are the second most represented citizenship.

Finally, according to municipality data, no irregular migrants seem to be present in Taipana. Statistics always try to estimate the possible percentage of irregulars for each regular migrant, and the computations behind these appraisals are the most various. For example, hypothesis can be done comparing the yearly discovered arrivals by sea. In such a small community, control is much easier,

therefore the complete absence of irregular migrants can be agreed with. Safety control is easily mistaken with that social control that can be oppressive in small communities. A clandestine in town would quickly be identified as an extraneous element, so as any tourist or in transit person also is. Moreover, life for an irregular migrant would be quite difficult in a village where the chances of getting a job are really few.

The conformation of the village and the presence of many empty houses allows a scattered settlement of the foreigners within the autochthonous community. Moreover, the fact that the arrival of these new citizens was due to a repopulation project -and not to the facing of an emergency- avoided their concentration in a precisely defined or delimited place. We can notice that the biggest national groups tend to have most of their contacts with their countrymen, but this doesn't necessarily mean they isolate from the rest of the inhabitants.

Indio, paloma y gato
animal ingrato
(Panamanian proverb)¹

Chapter 6

Taipana today: a community?

How can we measure the cohesion of a community? How can we state whether people living close to each other form a community or just a neighbourhood? And – is this really the point, if we wonder about the future of Taipana?

When dealing with a community, sociology considers four parameters above all: its location, the sharing of a common heritage, common characteristics and a mutual engagement.

According to Tönnies², a *Gemeinschaft* –usually translated as *community*, even if the German term has further implications- is originated by a positive action, and has its own real organic life. It is a matter of birth, has a genuine, enduring, traditional connotation, and is “a living organism in its own right”³. So as in a mother-child relationship, a community is based on the pleasure and the habit of being together, and also by shared memories. So as in a wife-husband relationship, it is maintained by a mutual accommodation to each other. So as in a siblings relationship, it is eased by habit to each other, by the similarity to each other, and by the sharing of what Tönnies calls *Gedächtnis*, a term he uses with the meaning of *memory*, but also of communal reference platform, communal frame of values. The starting point of a community is blood kinship, that is a family relationship. In a second stage, it turns into a community of place, a neighbourhood, where people live close to each other and share the space they are living in. It might have the only purpose of satisfying material needs through the exploitation of communal goods. This community of place only eventually turns into a community of spirit, where the approach to the sacred is shared. This is the highest type of community. A kind of friendship, based on mutual knowledge, is involved in this ultimate community, which does not necessarily fulfil any material need, but is rather a matter of a free choice for a relation where communal feelings are shared, there is mutual understanding and a consensus about the community organization.

¹ An Indian, a dove and a cat – ungrateful animals. Also quoted in Shirley L. Arora: “Proverbs and prejudice: El Indio in Hispanic proverbial speech”, in *De proverbio*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1995, p. 7.

² F. Tönnies: *Community and Civil Society*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.

³ *Ibid*, p. 19.

A neighbourhood of people living alongside is what Tönnies calls a *Gesellschaft*, instead –that is, a society. It is something transient and superficial: “a mechanical aggregate and artefact”⁴. Differently from the above quoted community of space, society does not entail any kind of unity at all. Individuals within a society remain separated. Contacts are avoided, and everybody only cares for himself. A society is based on the equity of every debit/credit exchange, just like it was a commercial transaction. The only common value can be identified in the will of meeting an exchange. The society thus ends up being a simple sum of exchanges, performed by separate individuals who work all together.

Weber deals with the concept of community as a natural consequence of his deep analysis of social relations⁵. He considers what he calls *Vergemeinschaftung*, a term which means *communitization* and is nowadays used, for example, to indicate a process of transfer of responsibility in a specific matter from a new EU member state to the Community. It is thus not only a condition, but a process which allows something to become communal, when previously it was not. For Weber, a social relationship belongs to this category when it is a result of a feeling of belonging together⁶. Common qualities, a common behaviour and even a common heritage are not necessarily involved in such a relationship. The latter can facilitate it, but by itself it is not sufficient to create a communal relationship⁷. A social relation belongs to the *Vergesellschaftung* category, instead, which means a *sociation*, the process of formation of an association, when the social action behind it is raised by a rational decision, or rational interests. Most of the relations, anyway, have a double connotation of communal relations (with an affective base) and rational associative factors.

For Talcott Parsons, the plurality of individual activities is such that any definition of each of them needs to be limited in time and space. Therefore, the core, the starting base of an individual activity is necessarily limited, and the other activities are performed by “commuting”⁸ from it. This central point is what Talcott Parsons calls a community: it is a delimited territorial space, chosen by a number of persons as a life base. The spatial delimitation is thus one of its main characteristic, and the communal choice of different persons to locate their primary activities in it is not further analysed in its gathering function.

Durkheim is considered as the main ground breaker in the community studies, yet in his “De la division du travail social”⁹ he doesn’t use the word community (*communauté* in French). He

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Max Weber: *Economy and society. An outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁸ Talcott Parsons: *The social system*. London, Collier-MacMillan limited, 1964, p. 91.

⁹ E. Durkheim: *De la division du travail social. Étude sur l’organisation des sociétés supérieures*. Paris: Félix Alcan, éditeur, 1893.

analyzes the different types of social group through the social bond which keeps them together, and the juridical aspects which connote such bonds. His mechanical solidarity connotes a group whose characteristics are those of a community, like communal traditions, beliefs, activities and rules, and also communal positive feelings towards the group members, and negative feelings towards who doesn't belong to the group. Cohesion in such a group is taken for granted because of its foundations, but is also rooted in its strict normative system. As a consequence of market development and the division of social labour, the individual roles in society became complementary to each other and needing for a connection with each other. The old mechanical solidarity based model of community became obsolescent and was replaced by the organic solidarity. This is a contractual relation based on individual interests, where social solidarity is just "a spontaneous covenant of individual interests"¹⁰. Yet Durkheim acknowledged the fact that no group can only be based on interest, if nothing halts egoism, consciences are in contact only superficially and moral bonds are lacking. Any covenant would then only be temporary; human beings, in fact, cannot gather in any group without building personal ties, which allow them to compensate the fact they are not self sufficient. This is what the not-contractual presuppositions of a contract are.

Of course, many scholars dealt with the kinds of social groups, and even more ones dealt with the study of society. But the concept of society is too wide for this dissertation, which only tries to search the interactions between old and new inhabitants of what can very precisely be defined as a small community. Or not?

From a historical point of view, a community is a socially isolated group (like persecuted religious communities, or communities that are perceived as strangers for any reasons), or a geographically isolated group (living in places which are difficult to reach).

From an anthropological point of view, a community is connoted by its customs and traditions, and by its being anyhow a separated group.

One of the most significant recent approaches to the theory of community is the study of social capital. It is defined as the resources (capital) resulting to an individual from his social relations. It is not a matter of exploiting other people's wealth, but of considering each personal relation valuable and enriching in itself. Social capital has been considered from different points of view. R. Putnam focuses on its outcomes for the society rather than for the empowerment of a single individual. He deals with the consequences of social relations even at a political level. One of his essays considers these interactions in the political Italian system. In *Making democracy work*¹¹, he

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹¹ R. D. Putnam, R. Leonardi, R. Y. Nanetti: *Making democracy work: Civic tradition in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, 1994.

states that a higher level of social capital expresses a more participative kind of democracy, while a lower level of social capital would express a more hierarchical, authoritarian political system. An interesting offshoot of the social capital analysis analyzes the impact of migrants' social capital on the receiving society¹².

In the present day, the idea of community has been covered by post modern meanings. A community can be a group of people sharing nothing else but a communal ideal. And the most common use of the term is nowadays the expression "virtual community", a group of people sharing not even a communal ideal, but only a tool, a vehicle of their expression and creativity.

If the term society deals with the whole complex of personal interactions, a community is a more limited group, where all the interactions of a society are theoretically possible, but which, as a community, is only considered from the point of view of peculiar interactions which connote it as such and differentiate it from the rest of the society.

This dissertation deals with what could be defined as a community from a very classical point of view: an ethnically connoted group which lives in a secluded village.

Before the arrival of the new foreign inhabitants, Taipana could have been considered as a typical example of traditional community, whose members homogeneously shared their history, traditions, beliefs, economic system, and a peculiar language. But in order to find this ideal stereotype of community working in the reality, we must go back to a very old past.

Over time, this social system was challenged by attempts of forced assimilation, by the collapse of its economy and by the abandon of its youngest and strongest people, who chose to migrate. Every threat left this community weaker, more reduced in its number, and increasingly torn within. Ethnic divisions separated those who felt Italian from those who felt Slovene, and both from those who felt just Torre valleys inhabitants and *po našin* speakers. Politic divisions separated members of different partisan brigades. Ideological divisions separated communists from Christian Democrats, and both from extreme right militants. Spatial divisions and a different approach to the future separated those who migrated and never came back, from those who left and came back after the earthquake, from those who left but didn't go so far as to avoid a visit, and from those who just remained. Economic divisions separated who kept working there, carrying on traditional activities or trying to start something new, from who commuted every day to the valley bottom. And finally, if we just consider a simply geographical approach, we'll notice that these small villages, which all together are no bigger than one single urban neighbourhood, have always been divided into "Upper" and "Lower" hamlets, each of whom is divided into even smaller hamlets (*borghi*). In each of them, the belonging is hamlet-based rather than municipality-based. If asked, a person who lives

¹² J. P. Lesage and C. L. Ha: "The impact of Migration on Social Capital: Do Migrants take their Bowling Balls with them?", in *Growth and Change*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (March 2012), pp. 1-26.

in Monteperta will declare to be from Monteperta, and will express a kind of detachment from Taipana as a whole. The municipality centre, just like the other hamlets of the municipality, is considered just another village, without any connection with his/her home.

6.1 Social structure

Apart from the historical evolutions, which didn't act in favour of social cohesion within it, Taipana today is a village of 699 inhabitants with the most various social structure. If only considering the old inhabitants, we find:

- People who have led most of their life in Taipana. Most of them are elderly people, previously busy with traditional occupations or former commuters, who nowadays live of retirement funds.
- Retirement return migrants, having come back after long term migrations abroad (France, Switzerland, Belgium) or in other parts of Friuli – or Italy.
- Return migrants who came back after the earthquake and thanks to the regional contributions. At the moment of the return, they were middle aged, workers, with family and children often born abroad, who came back with them.
- Return migrants who do not belong to the former categories: people whose return is not connected with the earthquake and whose professional life is not over yet. The distance they covered can also be minimal (some have lived in other municipalities of Friuli).
- Second house holders. Some of them were born in the village but moved away, and still possess the ancient family house. They reside somewhere else (in the valley bottom, in town or also abroad) for most of the year, and use the family house as a holiday house.
- Ghost residents: people who still have the residence in the village but do not live there anymore since eves, or people who bought a holiday house here and established their residence for fiscal reasons.

If we consider the new inhabitants, we shall also include:

- Internal migrants: Italian citizens hailing from other parts of Italy. Some are children of old public security workers who moved here for their job, and are therefore present since a long time. Some are newly arrived migrants, called up by the repopulation project.
- “Real” migrants: foreigners, called up by the repopulation project, but not to be simply defined as economic migrants.
- Affective migrants: people coming from somewhere else, in Italy or abroad, who settled here because of an affective relation with a village inhabitant.

- Amenity migrants: people whose settlement here was only motivated by a lifestyle choice.

The list includes ten categories. This gives an idea of the extreme social variety of this small village. As considered before, hundred inhabitants are foreign citizens.

Is it possible then to consider Taipana as a community? Are geographical isolation and the belonging to an ethnic minority sufficient factors for the existence of a community, even in the presence of so many internal segmentations?

At first sight, a kind of cohesion should exist within the old inhabitants. The new ones, when they are Italian, do not speak *po našin*. But the geographical isolation has consequences on a level of hamlet, thus gathering the inhabitants of each single hamlet. A quite strong cohesion, in effect, proves to be present in each of the hamlets. Some of them are composed by a very reduced number of inhabitants, and due to kinship bonds they are similar to big enlarged families.

6.2 The hamlets communities

Religious celebrations are organized within the hamlets, and the presence of a church in each of them is a symbol not only for the religiousness of the inhabitants but also for their cohesiveness, which is centred on the hamlet with its church and excludes thus who does not live there.

Carnival, for example, is a very important celebration for the people of Slavia, and even here in the Torre valleys it is still performed according to an eves long tradition. Along its modern playful meaning, where masking gives a chance to joke and prank, deeper traditional meanings also keep being performed. The inlaid and painted wooden masks represent archetypes of the traditional rural culture. The main character is the *Pust*¹³, a sylvan figure halfway between a human being and a spirit, covered with leaves, moss and corn cobs. The devil is another important presence, its face covered by a terrifying mask with horns and long teeth. The other characters represent the basic elements of rural life, disguised like anthropomorphic and animal figures: flowers, chickens, roosters, bears, cowbells, cobs... In the past, real natural components were cobbled into the clothes of the characters. Nowadays they are reproduced with fabric or plastic fringes which simulate the natural shapes and colours.

Even such an important event in Taipana is not celebrated at a municipality level. A parade is organized in the most lively hamlets, and the Carnival group of Prossenico has taken in some of the past editions to the renown parade of Pulfero, in the Natisone valleys.

¹³ Slovene word for Carnival.

Other religious celebrations, such as the Epiphany (here called *Polovin*¹⁴) and Candlemas, keep being significant gathering moments for the hamlet communities of Taipana and Monteperta. The *Polovin* of Monteperta had disappeared with the migration of a great part of the village inhabitants, in the 1960s, but has been recently brought to life again. It recalls the Friuli tradition of lighting fires at the Epiphany eve, and the direction of the fire smoke gives a prophecy for the prosperity or misery of the following year.

In the already mentioned Bacio delle Croci of Monteperta, all the hamlets are represented each by its own cross.

During summer, a number of food and wine festivals gather many residents and tourists. A sports festival is held in Taipana capoluogo at mid-August, with a soccer competition for amateur teams. The few civil celebrations don't seem to achieve resounding success, instead.

The young Italian inhabitants complain about the lack of gathering places like modern cafés in their residence hamlets. And in general, as seen before in chapter four, the municipal territory lacks of any cultural attraction for young people.

We can thus state that organized sociality here has only traditional (or old fashioned?) criteria: the tavern, the choir, the religious festival...

All this gathering chances are of course open to anyone, and surely no limit is given on the basis of personal citizenship. Yet they are attended almost exclusively by old inhabitants – the Italian ones.

6.3 The new inhabitants

The new foreign inhabitants follow different religions. Some are Christians, but follow different nominations of Christianity. Some are catholic, some are orthodox, some are protestant. Some are Muslim. A communal celebration of religious feasts is thus impossible and not even desirable to them. Religious celebrations are organized at home, with relatives or countrymen. For the major celebrations, like Christmas, some return back to their original country.

The same situation affects civil celebrations. Often, being away from their country for a long time weakens the bonds with State related celebrations, like Independence day or similar, especially if they fall in working days.

Together with their ethnic segmentation, the fact they spend relatively little time in the village does not foster the creation of relationships within the village itself. This of course is valid towards both other foreigners and Italians.

Differently from the Italians, the new foreign inhabitants see no problem in the lack of amusement activities. As seen before for their approach to services, they do not even expect to find anything

¹⁴ Or *Polouin*. The name recalls the ancient custom of dancing around the big Epiphany fire, asking for bread and wine: “*pan e vin*”.

“ready”, close to home and easy to make use of. The use of private transport is something they take for normal, since they commute to work. There is thus nothing unusual in using the car to reach their favourite café, or cinema, or any other leisure chance. From the point of view of social or cultural activities, they are maybe also less demanding. When free from work, they enjoy spending some time with their family and friends, thus meeting in private houses rather than in public places. In comparison with the Italian citizens, who have maybe interiorized a more consumerist way of life, their needs are easier to fulfil.

Social life is shared thus with the enlarged family, with relatives, co-workers or countrymen. Further choices of meeting people are not requested and, when existing, they are seldom attended. As seen before in chapter five, the new foreign inhabitants belong to sixteen different citizenships, mostly geographically and culturally far from each other. What they could feel as their community is just a little group of persons, composed by the ones they enjoy spending their free time with – thus their family, colleagues and countrymen.

If we consider all the foreign inhabitants of Taipana, the only communal factor that allows taking them as a group is their being foreign. From a subjective point of view, this factor is fictional. There is no way they can feel as one single community together with someone who speaks another language, comes from a faraway country, lives a different culture, especially where this differences are multiplied by sixteen and nothing connects each other on an ethnic or national base.

The foreigners of Taipana will probably not act as a single group, unless some external input forces them to. For example, the arise of a communal need might persuade them of the necessity of gathering together. This could be, for example, some request of recognition by any local authority. Or, suddenly, something could happen that might let the foreigners of Taipana feel threatened, and this could again force them to take shared reactions. For example, a sudden (and, at the moment, quite unlikely) escalation of hate towards them by the Italian inhabitants could raise in them the feeling of living the same situation of all the other foreigners, no matter their origin, and thus encourage their cohesion.

But from an objective point of view, the foreigners do form a compact group. If considered by the rest of the inhabitants, their alterity is clear. Therefore they are perceived as a community only by contrast: they are not Italian (nor Slovene), they are different from “us”. Not everybody has the knowledge and also a little curiosity which are necessary to look beyond the stereotype of “alien”. Few are able to make a distinction between the different nationalities – for most of the Italians, the furthest recognition is telling a Slav from a North African. A juxtaposition of persons coming from different countries finds itself out, thus, being perceived as a unique single group, with own culture, customs and background: the one of being “different”.

This is especially true for the only compact settlement of foreigners living in the same neighbourhood, which on a very different scale might be misjudged as a ghetto. The “Centro Sociale” of Monteperta is the only settlement within the municipality to be only inhabited by foreigners. Also in this case, the extremely small dimensions of the situation necessarily lead to an explanation. The Centro Sociale is a municipality owned housing estate, composed by some twenty small apartments. Built after the earthquake, around the church, right in the middle of what had been conceived to become the village centre, it was immediately perceived by the people of Monteperta as an extraneous body due to its modern architecture. Now it is exclusively inhabited by foreigners, the feeling of hosting an alien entity has become as strong as possible. Aesthetically, it is easy to identify its inhabitants as foreigners since every single apartment hosts a dish to enable watching foreign televisions. During Sundays and holidays, a number of children play in the courtyard – amazing, since the old inhabitants are mostly elderly, indeed. Yet the Centro Sociale is definitively not a ghetto. The lodgers commute for working, their children go to school, contacts are held with relatives and friends living somewhere else. None living there feels to be secluded.

We cannot state if perception of living side by side with what is too easily identified as an out-group has raised any kind of cohesion by contrast among the Italians – until now, the feeling of belonging to an élite in-group is still far to emerge, and would require a social cohesion which is maybe impossible in this village for the above quoted reasons.

Sharing the spaces of a small village appears to be not enough for raising any form of contact between Italians and foreigners, especially when the shared spaces are open spaces (the village), since no other structure gathers Italians and foreigners, young and old.

Also from a professional point of view, little contact is possible between Italian and foreign residents. Most of the foreigners work in the building. Women also have an occupation, mostly as cleaners or house help, and chose to work especially when the number of their children makes an extra income necessary. When unemployed, they actively look for a new job. Italians lead the few farming enterprises present on the municipal territory, and who commutes is often an employee or a specialist technician.

A number of practical situations works thus against the rise of a compact group which might act as a social body.

If asked, the Italian inhabitants declare there is no integration, and ascribe it to the fact that foreigners form an apart group, only spending time with their countrymen. But if further questioned, many admit having some neighbourhood bonds -or even friendships- with single foreign persons. The contradiction is quite common in interethnic relations. We can believe we know nothing about a foreign community, forgetting we actually know much about single

community members. What can be perceived as a compact extraneous group is not so monolithic if we think that it is composed by single human beings, some of whom are persons we have every day contacts with.

Also in Taipana, in fact, many neighbourhood relations are working quite well, at a personal level, granting help to both Italian and foreign citizens in the small glitches of everyday life.

The point of view about ethnic and social relations within the village is completely overturned when asking foreign inhabitants. They admit spending most of their time with relatives or countrymen friends, but they will declare not to feel like an apart group. If asked in detail, they declare to feel well integrated.

So different approaches raise some doubts about what is really going on in Taipana.

Possibly, the old Italian inhabitants feel to be somehow the owners, or at least the landlords of the village. They feel thus flooded by the presence of so many unknown people who are even planning to stay. Some perceive a possible evolution where they might be no longer the owners. Or, in reverse, some feel the village is giving too much to people who will soon move away and leave the village even poorer than before. The municipal administration is in many cases charged with having taken an illogical decision. Surely, this feeling of detachment has never grown into negative reactions towards the new inhabitants.

The new and foreign inhabitants are carriers of different cultures, and also different needs and expectations. As seen before, they have a completely different approach to the lack of meeting places and recreational activities. Similarly, they also have different expectations towards social relations. Their need for sociality is satisfied by their group of relatives and countrymen friends. The welcoming approach of the municipal administration represents for them an indicator of goodwill towards them, and the demonstration of the fact that their presence is heartedly embraced. Nothing even barely resembling to racism episodes ever took place in the village. The lack of any kind of trouble is perceived more positively that it actually is.

This is also the point of view of the municipal administration. The administration is concerned with the outcome of the project, and would like to have the resources to do something more, for the development of the village and its territory and in particular for the new inhabitants. The fact that no law and order problems occurred until now is comforting and maybe a bit soothing, while the attention for social issues should always be high in such situations.

Personal contacts are surely a starting point for the evolution into a normal society in Taipana. The forming of a single community appears to be difficult, even within the only Italian inhabitants. Such a wide differentiation of backgrounds, needs, desires and ambitions are unlikely to lead to mutual feelings or belonging together at a level of group. But friendship relations spontaneously grow at a

personal level, and mutual contacts based on personal interests can slowly let a simple juxtaposition of persons develop into a modern society: we can be present at the realization of the models the fathers of sociology taught us.

6.4 The economic impact on the territory

Of the 18 enterprises having a seat in the municipal territory, 4 are owned by foreigners. So as the other numbers dealing with this municipality, also this one is only a very little number. But by now one should be used to think of this territory in terms of micro dimensions, thus one shouldn't be surprised in noticing that enterprises owned by foreigners represent the 22% of all the existing enterprises.

Foreigners' investments space from the building, to the services, to the touristic accommodation capacity. Except one, all the enterprises give work to other people apart from the owner. Workers are mostly countrymen or members the owner's family, but this is not exclusive.

Apart from the enterprises having a seat in the municipality, one foreigner owns an activity in another neighbour village.

Measuring the impact of their presence in financial terms is impossible, since there is no bank in the village and thus the savings of all the inhabitants are entrusted somewhere else.

Surely, their presence has an important impact in the upkeep of real estate. The Centro sociale of Monteperta has been renovated also in prevision of their arrival, and some new council housing has recently been open in the hamlet of Debellis. Newcomers who buy a house here contribute to the safeguard of buildings that otherwise would slowly crumble down.

Also Italian newcomers contribute to the possible success of the Berra project: the manager of the pharmacy is a lady from the South of Italy. In a village filled with old people, the pharmacy is an important reference point.

This is the positive impact of the presence of foreign inhabitants on the economic system of the village.

Negative outcomes can hardly be observed: foreigners appeal to institution even less than Italians. No law and order troubles are reported. Subventions are granted by the municipality to an equal number of Italians and foreigners.

Maybe the most important impact of the presence of so many newcomers (Italians and foreigners) is their contribution to the demographic balance. This has important outcomes on the maintenance of services. In this case, we should think by contrast: if there were no foreigners, the village would have hundred inhabitants less, and it would thus be more difficult to fight against the closing of the

post office and of the *carabinieri* station¹⁵. But the institution which would more than the other risk its life is the school. The enrolled children are at the moment the double of what would be without foreigners – this means that foreign children are about the half of the total enrolled children. Moreover, the school is the place where we can really attend the birth of a new community.

6.5 The school

The above described frame justifies the huge importance the municipal administration gives to the role of the School. The school is possibly the only place where so different persons meet and share a communal goal.

The school building, placed next to the municipality building, hosts a nursery and a primary school. It is surrounded by a little playing area, with a slide and a seesaw. The school is dedicated to Armando Diaz.

A dining service, run by a Bosnian lady holding a contract with the municipality, cooks on site and serves food with great care with the cultural and religious prescriptions of all the hosted children. The service is paid by the families according to their income. In case of economic difficulties, families are helped by the municipal administration.

The school doesn't have a gym, but a room within the municipality building has been converted to that use, so children just have to move to the neighbour building.

The municipality grants a school bus service, which connects all the hamlets where school children live. It is also used for school trips.

The school doesn't have a computer room, nor a stable internet connection. Two personal computers can be used for lessons and teachers work.

The nursery school hosts children aged from 3 to 6 years. The lessons are scheduled in the morning, from 8.30 to 13.30.

The children compose one single class, including all the age groups. Since they are so young, no specific plan was organized to ease the participation of the foreign children to the school activities. Young children have great ease in learning foreign languages, and anyway communication can still be a problem also for the autochthonous children. Rather than concentrating on possible differences, the teachers chose thus to focus their attention to what can be a problem for everyone, which is the first experience of separation from the family.

The rare situations of communication problems have usually been solved thanks to the help of other children, and only in the last years the school benefits from some regional funds for the integration of not Italian speaking children, which allow the cooperation of a linguistic mediator.

¹⁵ See G. Lendaro: *Flussi migratori a Taipana, I rapporti tra minoranze etnico-linguistiche e nuovi arrivati*. Tesi di laurea in Sociologia delle migrazioni. Università degli Studi di Trieste, A.A. 2011-2012. p. 70.

The five foreign children (on ten) who attended the nursery school at the beginning of the school year 2012-2013 all belonged to Eastern European families (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Romania). Two of them were born in Italy. Two of them were in Italy since one year; the last one was in Italy since almost two years.

The primary school is organized in multiple classes: the number of pupils is not high enough to form single age group classes, thus only two classes were created. One includes the 1st and 2nd year, the other one the 3rd, 4th and 5th year. The lessons are scheduled full time, from 8.30 to 16.30.

The school management, heading to the Istituto Comprensivo of Tarcento, faces the presence of many different nationalities in the school through the “Progetto interculturale”. This tool aims at “promoting a culture of integration, welcoming and anthropologic confrontation, through a didactic approach careful for the diversity of each, the participation to initiatives aimed at mutual knowledge, the creation of projects aimed at learning Italian as L2 by students who just arrived to Italy, and the participation to projects of linguistic and cultural mediation carried on by other institutions”¹⁶. Deep care is thus reserved to mutual knowledge, treating all the students as equal and needing to learn from each other.

All the foreign students (nine on twenty-two) who attended the primary school at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year belonged to Eastern European families (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Kosovo). Five of them were born in Italy. One was in Italy since two years. One was in Italy since three years. One was in Italy since five years. For the last, it was not possible to discover the moment of entry in Italy. According to the school teachers, the longer the period they passed in Italy the easier their participation to the school activities. This is not as obvious as it might seem. Students who were born in Italy or have already lived there for most of their life are eased in the communication in Italian, and depending on a previous presence in the Italian school, due to their age, they have a different approach to the school rules and to regular study.

In both the nursery and the primary school, the greatest problems of communication involve the families, rather than children themselves. An interpreter is often required – usually a relative who has lived in Italy for some longer time. Children themselves can act as interpreters, but their comprehension is limited by their young age.

In the nursery school, some difficulty is met in explaining to parents the Italian school system, and the same importance of school and its rules. In the primary school, difficulties deal with homework and the need of regularity in the school attendance. Most of the families, in fact, follow the movements of the head of household, thus cases have been noticed of children going for a holiday

¹⁶ <http://www.ictarcento.com/sito/progetti>

in the country of origin in the middle of the school year – and without making the school administration aware about their possible return.

The family life project has a heavy weight on how seriously the school is taken by children. If the family hasn't yet permanently settled, school will be lightly taken, and little importance will be given to the connected duties. It is just considered as one of the many intermediate stops the family still has in program to make.

Any attempt to involve the families in the school management and decisions has also proved to be hard. This is valid in general for all the families, since most of Taipana inhabitants work somewhere else and thus it can be a problem for them to have meetings in the village during working hours. Meetings held in evening hours had in the past a greater success. Greater difficulties have been noticed in meeting with the foreign families: they rarely take part to parents assemblies. But if singularly summoned, they won't miss the meeting. Their approach seems to be of commissioning to the school a great part of the children education, without any need of interacting with it.

In general, foreign families are reported to join enthusiastically every proposal of new learning opportunities. The request for bilingual teaching also falls in this situation: Slovene learning is considered by the foreign families just like one more chance for their children. But some decisions are reported which are more difficult to understand: Friulian learning was also unanimously joined when proposed, and, in some cases, Muslim families signed up for their children to join the lessons of Religion. What was suspected to be a mistake or a misunderstanding was instead confirmed upon request.

Some mistrust is noticed for the respect of food prescriptions, instead. Usually, Muslim children don't eat at the school canteen.

Welcoming foreign children is a widely common matter in nowadays Italian school. Taipana seems to the operators to be a peculiar case because of the stability of the foreigners settlement. A turnover of children is surely present, and not many of them fulfil here the whole school cycle. But operators are confident that the percentage of foreigners will always be high in Taipana school, and can thus improve their training and become increasingly accustomed in intercultural work.

The high diversity rate of all the school classes allow each student to be simply considered as a person, carrier of a peculiar character and peculiar characteristics rich with his/her being different from the others. This approach allows finding quick and concrete solutions in case of learning difficulties. In the past, similar problems risked to be too easily ascribed to the fact a child was not Italian.

Nowadays, it keeps being difficult to tell language problems from real understanding problems. If Italian school faces increasing difficulties in the recognition of the role of a teacher as an authority,

foreign children have possibly assimilated a more traditional model of authority and are therefore shy in admitting not to have understood something. It can thus be complicated for a teacher to distinguish a child who doesn't understand a lesson because his skills in the Italian language are not sufficient, from a child who doesn't understand the subject of a lesson and needs to be explained again, and from a child who doesn't understand a lesson but doesn't ask for a further explanation because he/she is afraid of bothering the teacher, which in his/her country is perceived as an important authoritative figure.

In a situation where much is demanded to the scholastic institution, both by the municipality and by the families, a certain stability of the teaching staff would be desirable. The school environment is reported to be rather serene, and favourable to effective cooperation. At the moment, all the staff comes from other municipalities, and distance is the worst reported problem. In the past, the municipal administration helped teachers with grants for the purchase of car gasoline. Nowadays, budget reductions have made such subsidies impossible. The teachers must thus be extremely motivated, when they chose to keep working here. After some years of stability, the present school year faced the turnover of about 50% of the teachers. Some chose to move because of the off-centred position of the school, but some also chose to come back to Taipana after having worked somewhere else for a few years.

The children form a quite homogeneous group, including them all. Strong solidarity bonds have been noticed between them. This is maybe eased by the presence in the same class of different age groups: cooperation between younger and older children is obvious and spontaneous.

Impulsively, they can form minimal groups with other children speaking the same language, but this is never an exclusive bond. A case of gang-like youth group has been noticed in the past within school students belonging to the same foreign family group, but these were sporadic and isolated cases and the number of the group members was necessarily very small. Moreover, the case involved students with peculiar situations.

The school of Taipana only hosts children from Taipana and its hamlets. The closest middle school is located in Nimis, and hosts children from Nimis and Taipana. The municipality granted school bus brings the students from Taipana to Nimis. Some children from Taipana go to the Nimis school even earlier, at the primary school, when it is easier for their families to carry them on the way to their jobs.

These few considerations about the school of Taipana give some food for thought. While adult Italians and foreigners appear not to have much to do with each other, children do form a compact community. This surely encourages the municipal administration. The latter appears to be extremely involved in the problems of the school. All the possible investments are undertaken in order to keep

the children on site. The school is invested of a great responsibility, since it is often also the only contact between the foreign families and the administration. From this point of view, its role seems to be not enough supported. At the moment, the only available support is the linguistic mediation, and the teachers relate to the families by themselves. They all are extremely prepared, experienced, high skilled and had a specific education, but cultural mediation should not be their job. The presence of a professional cultural mediator could represent for them an improvement and facilitation, and could give some more chances to the Berra project.

6.5.1 A bilingual school?

In 2011, the municipality questioned the school kids parents about the possibility to ask for the opening of a bilingual (Italian-Slovene) school. The intention was to allow within the school of Taipana the creation of an experience like the bilingual school of S. Pietro al Natisone. All the parents agreed –Italians and not-, so an official request was placed to the Autonomous Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia. That would grant the protection of the Slovene minority pupils, as requested by the law no. 38 of 2001. But as a consequence, it would also allow the preservation of the whole school, since the number of pupils requested to keep a school open is lower if they belong to the Slovene minority, thanks to the law no. 38 itself. The request was positively welcomed by the Region, but unfortunately arrived in a period of economic crisis and financing reductions. The debate about the creation of a bilingual school is therefore still stuck in a bounce of responsibilities between the regional administration and the regional school office.

The Italian public school is overall undergoing a long period of reforms, whose key point is a budget rationalisation – and consequent reduction. In such a context, any possible change must necessarily be low cost – or no cost. Both the regional administration and the regional school office agree about the opportunity of creating a bilingual school in this territory, but they also agree about the impossibility of creating new jobs in the school workforce. This problem could easily be solved by changing the present job for a number of Italian mother language teachers with an equal number of jobs for Slovene mother language teachers: the creation of a bilingual school doesn't require anything else, from an economic point of view. Yet the administrative procedures for the creation of a specific ranking haven't started yet: the fact that rankings are structured at a national level doesn't help.

Another problem emerged since, more or less at the same moment, also the municipality of Lusevera asked for its school placed in the hamlet of Vedronza to be transformed into a bilingual school. In two underpopulated municipalities, with an extremely low number of school children, where the opening of every school year is a struggle against the minimum required number of

students, a joint request might have had a heavier impact. The mayor of Taipana is actually favourable to a merging of the two schools, with the creation of a new school located halfway between Taipana and Vedronza. Mr. Berra's practical approach is quite forward-looking also in this case: he is afraid the territory might completely lose the chance of hosting a school if all the institution won't cooperate. He is aware that the number of children might not be sufficient in the future, and is already working to find a possible alternative. The mayor of Lusevera, instead, is extremely strict in the decision of keeping the school on site and autonomous, being afraid that an opening on this point could be followed by other merging attempts at an institutional level.

At the moment, an improvement in the hours of Slovene language teaching was financed anyway, thanks to appropriate regional funds. But it seems to be increasingly hard to find teachers with the necessary skills in the Slovene language who are also available to move here instead of working in Trieste or Gorizia.

It is interesting to note that cases of Slovene (or *po našin*) speaking children are hardly reported. Children speak Italian with each other, and also at home. A century long tradition seems to have gone slightly lost, and the need for a bilingual school appears therefore to have a different meaning. For the Italian families whose origin is in this territory, it represents a connection with their history and a need not to see their identity disappear forever. For the rest of the inhabitants, it only represents one more chance of giving their children a more complete European education. From this point of view, there seems to be an agreement between the families and Mr. Berra.

The fact that the agreement of the school children families about the request of a bilingual school was complete seems to be thus originated by some opportunistic considerations, rather than by the will of cohesion and struggle for a common goal. Anyway, it allows some optimism about a possible success of the Berra project.

6.6 Over the school

Interaction between children is always easier and freer of prejudices and stereotypes than between adults. Apart from the school activities, true friendships grow between the children of Taipana, equally to other more homogeneous environments. And some cohesion exists among them, both within and outside the school. These kinds of relationship go over languages and citizenships, and see children just behaving like children.

Going back to the initial question of this chapter, it seems to be possible to state that Taipana children do form a community. In some situations, they are reported to have acted together for achieving a common goal – playing together with children of other villages, who consequently asked to reciprocate the visit and went to play in Taipana. But children seldom have a concrete

weight in orienting a family decision, and much in the evolution of this spontaneous gathering depends on the families' life projects.

Some families complain about the absolute lack in the municipal territory of any activity for children. Nowadays, town children are busy with a number of recreational and also educational activities, ranging from sports, to music, to arts and to the study of foreign languages. And they grow up in protected environments, safe but lacking of any contact with nature. In Taipana, the situation is opposite. Children can freely play outside, and this can hardly be identified with a dangerous situation. The small soccer field in Taipana capoluogo is an ideal space for children games, but no organized activity is available. Their games are spontaneous and uncontrolled. They are familiar to cows, sheep, goats and chickens, but they have no chance of following any course apart from catechism. When they grow up and meet students from other villages, in the middle school of Nimis, the difference is clear.

In the past years, summer camps have been organized by the school, in cooperation with the Ambito socio-assistenziale of Tarcento. The participation of Taipana children was higher than for the other involved villages. This can highlight the children need for socialization, and also the families need for integration, apart from the convenience for working parents. And this is valid in general for all the families, notwithstanding their citizenship.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

The original hypothesis wondered if a migration flow which is strongly encouraged by the municipal administration can have a positive impact on the indicators of well-being of a territory, like its economy and its services. Moreover, its impact on the receiving society was also questioned. The receiving society is in this case study an ethnic minority, thus a peculiar process of migration impacted on a peculiar kind of community.

In order to verify the hypothesis, the historical and economic reasons of underdevelopment were investigated; moreover, a historical review showed that the minority group who inhabits this territory is characterized by a discussed and not universally shared perception of its peculiarity.

The study was carried on with a combination of sources and field research.

The empirical indicators were introduced framing each of them in its real context. They were measured by indirect observations, analyzing the data supplied by the involved institutions, and by direct observations, interviewing the institutional representatives and people involved in the migration flow and in the migration reception – actively or passively.

Minimalism is the main characteristic of all the measurements involved in this research. It was quite common, in the drafting process of the present dissertation, to notice that small numbers originate great percentages. Therefore the statistical result of many indicators can hardly be considered as significant: this is possibly one of the limits of the present research.

Another limit can be identified in the extreme peculiarity of the case study. Taipana is a small village, placed in a border area, morphologically characterized by hardly accessible mountains, inhabited by an ethnic minority which hardly survived a century long process of assimilation, halved by emigration in the past, affected by economic underdevelopment, receiving a great number of incoming foreigners at the present time, who are coming from a high number of foreign countries: all these characteristics make its model hardly exportable in different situations. This dissertation could thus be considered a neat intellectual speculation, and a work which is an end unto itself.

Hopefully, instead, it can in the future represent an approach to the outcomes of the Berra project, which might be useful to the municipal administration in identifying the weak points which can be improved and the strong points which can be expanded. From this point of view, the research is

innovative not because of its methodology, which is rather classical instead, but because an analysis like this had never been done before.

The hypothesis about the positive impact of the migration flow on the well being of the territory was confirmed: immigrants in Taipana, Italians and foreigners, are ready to invest in this territory. They buy houses, improve the upkeep of the real estate, open enterprises. They don't create law and order problems and don't burden on the social services and on the institutions. Their simple presence grants the opening of several services. And they contribute to fighting the ageing of the population, representing thus also an investment for the future.

The hypothesis about the impact of the migration flow on the receiving society is rather controversial. Its indicators, in fact, are only partially empirical.

Until now, the newcomers' arrival appears not to have perceivably impacted on the relational aspects of the receiving community. The inhabitants of the municipality of Taipana seem to be organized as a community only at a level of hamlet. Even in the hamlet of Monteperta, where the presence of foreigner newcomers is more evident, nothing seems to have changes in the interpersonal relations between the old inhabitants.

Part of the old inhabitants perceives the newcomers as the last of a century long series of ordeals the community had to bear. Part supports proudly the innovative approach of the municipal administration to the problems of the village. Most of them stay basically indifferent towards a group of persons they hardly have some contact with¹.

Anyway, the problems of the municipality are overall perceived as something that the arrival of new foreign residents can hardly solve.

From an objective point of view, the foreign residents can be considered to form a community only at the extremely limited level of personal relations: with relatives, colleagues, countrymen. Yet they mostly show to feel belonging to the village community: the fact that their arrival was encouraged and supported by the municipal administration, and that there were no rejection episodes makes them feel basically welcomed.

Their approach to the problems of the village is completely different from their Italian neighbours: Possibly thanks to their recent arrival, the lack of meeting points and of work chances, for example, is considered as a matter of fact and not as a worrisome symptom of decline. Their expectations were not disregarded.

Children are a case apart. Possibly thanks to the outstanding job made by the school, the children group might allow a glimpse of success of the Berra project. The cohesion within the school

¹ See G. Lendaro: *Flussi migratori a Taipana, I rapporti tra minoranze etnico-linguistiche e nuovi arrivati*. Tesi di laurea in Sociologia delle migrazioni. Università degli Studi di Trieste, A.A. 2011-2012. p. 70.

children group is such that, only in this case, we can state that the newcomers' arrival has allowed the birth of a new community.

The children have been allowed to meet each other in a protected context, where each one is considered to be a special as a person and not because of its origin or language. They can thus spontaneously and freely form a group where the bonds of solidarity and helpfulness are evident. The contribution of the foreign children is also evident: without them, the school would probably already be closed.

What strikes in reading the past and present history of Taipana is the emerging of an eves long contrast: on one side, the complex and sometimes violent events of its past, whose recklessness is common to other borderline places, but here lasted longer. Besides its unwieldy experiences, a quite complicated solution for its present: the convergence in a small place of the most variegated people, busy with keeping this village alive.

On the other side, the not only apparent quietness of its natural environment and the harmony of its inhabitants, who like the crystal pendants of an ancient chandelier live mostly separate lives, without crashing and without ever invading each other's space, but gently lighting up each other and the surrounding.

The history of this territory is a continuum of interactions and accommodations between these two elements. Its society has been able to adapt to a sometimes hostile evolution, and is still here, and still able to renew itself.

7.1 The future of Taipana

The success of the Berra project depends from many factors, beyond the evolution of any form of cohesion within its inhabitants.

Italy at the moment lacks of a stable government. Whatever the evolution of the Italian political situation, the economic and social situation requires a general reflection about the organization of institutions and local administrations. This surely doesn't turn in favour of little local situations like Taipana. The permanence of the school, the post office, the police station could in the future not be beyond the good results of the repopulation project. The same survival of an independent municipal administration is at the moment not granted.

Economic development is connected with the existence of an autonomous municipal administration only in the fact that an administration based on the territory is more likely to be well-intentioned and also able to deal with the territory problems. It is anyway the hot-spot of the future of the village.

The Berra project of repopulation appears at the moment to be strictly and personally connected to Mr. Berra himself: many foreigners owe allegiance personally to him, thus the future of his project might be conditioned by his permanence on the political scene. Much depends on the course of time: as time goes by, and upon unchanged conditions, the foreigners' settlement has more chances to become more stable or definitive.

At the moment, the project was implemented too recently to state if it succeeded or failed. Surely, it seems at the moment to have succeeded in the fact it has attracted young families. Thanks to the bonds within the children group, the youngest inhabitants of Taipana have the chance to grow up serenely, and naturally coming to feel belonging to this territory. At the moment, they are in the condition to develop an identity disconnected from their being Italian, or Romanian, or other. They have the chance to be, simply and only, the Taipaneses of the future.

Annex 1

Voices from Taipana

Hereafter three interviews are reported. They represent three points of view about the present situation of Taipana, and also give some gaze about possible future scenarios.

Personal details are omitted, in order not to make the subject recognizable.

1.

G. C. is a 41 years old male. He is Italian. He arrived in Taipana two years ago with his wife and son of 3. Both have a university education. He opened a small service enterprise, where both his wife and him work.

“Theoretically the inhabitants of Taipana are 700, but actually most of the residents don’t live here. Many went away about ten years ago. And most of the present residents will go away soon. A couple of newcomers had taken over an agriturismo in Monteperta, but they closed and went away. The experience lasted a very short time, do you know why? There are no inhabitants, thus no customers. They had even made some restoration works.

In Montaperta there used to be a family who had a years long tradition in food service, but they gave up.

Here enterprises only survive if the State helps them.

You know what’s the problem? In Friuli, I noticed that the rents were exaggerated. Here, for a house, I pay 400€ per month. I was told that the price is low. It’s not a flat, it is a house, but it needs some restoration works. Let’s say that, where we come from, a house in the outskirts does not have an exaggerated price.

Here, I see that the prices for houses are decreasing. Also the rents are decreasing. If you want to rent a house in Taipana, you’d better rent it in Udine. Here, you are asked for 400€ per month, and in Udine you’re asked 500€. But you must remember that anyway who works must drive down to the valley bottom every day. And also children must go to school down to the valley bottom.

You must go down, because here there is no café, no service, nothing.

Before coming here, I used to eat bread every day. But now, I only shop it on Monday, and in the following days I can’t eat bread. We might learn how to do it ourselves, but here bread is difficult

to bake. We tried also with pizza. My wife likes baking cakes, for example. But here they don't rise, neither does the bread. It is too dump!

Here something has been done for the survival of the village. In the past, they tried to repopulate it, but now the abandon is general.

There is a twinning with the Slovene village of Bregonza. They organized some transborder projects for children in the past, but they ended up in nothing.

Teachers arrive every morning at eight o' clock, but I think the nursery school will close soon.

Here there's nothing. Someone has lost his job - someone of these extra EU citizens. I don't know how to call them, they're not Italian, but there are different ethnic groups: there are Romanians, Bosnians, Croats...

For the people I know, on 700 residents surely only 400 live here. Anyway 25 elderly persons live in the rest house, and these ones I don't include them. So the inhabitants are about 430. About 70 of them are not Italian. There are even some Italians who married a foreigner, and I don't include them: they own a house here, they live here and they have a job.

Earlier, there were many Argentineans. For example, an Argentinean man lives close to us. He has bought a house here. He is about 60 years old.

There are some Romanians who will probably go away. Earlier, there were many Argentineans here, but they went away, because at the beginning they had found a home, but then they found something cheaper in the valley bottom and moved there.

I have noticed something: that people who are going to stay here are the ones who bought the house. The ones who rent a municipality flat, or have these grants, will go away.

I was talking with a Bosnian lady who told me that her daughter stops working at three o'clock in Nimis, and the bus to come back home only arrives at six. That's how life goes here. I don't want to make discriminations, but the approach to the users is not correct. This lady said that her daughter has a job in Nimis, thus if they have the chance to find a house there, they will move.

Carnia is gold in comparison with the place we come from, yet services here are worse. This village is only 30km far from Udine, but there are no roads to reach it directly. (...) You can't believe it!

For the job I do, I have contacts with lots of people.

You asked about these people who arrived here. I don't know. The mayor placed some calls on newspapers. Today, I tell you what the situation is like. People complain because there's no work. They came here and they settled in this municipality because here houses were cheap. The municipality had made some public housing available for only 60€ a month. There was some convenience. But now there is no request for man power anymore.

As far as the foreigners are concerned, the elderly are persons who have worked abroad, then have come back here to live. They have a different kind of problems: here, we have no urgent medical care. If you need to undergo a medical check-up, it's a problem. But they feel connected to this earth. For example, a person I know has spent 40 years in Swiss. About 50% of who lives here, I'm sure they come from Swiss. Once they retire, they come back here. They live very long, there are persons who were born in 1918.

Younger people, between 40 and 50, we are about 40.

In the school, from the first year of the nursery school to the last year of the primary school, there are about 30 children. We are at the limit of reality. We try to do our best. We have only one service here, a male nurse, who makes even more than he should do. Imagine a person of 80 who has to make some check-up. He always tries to help.

The environment is a positive aspect of living here. People are good, we try to help each other. For example, I buy bread on Monday, but if my neighbor goes down, she buys it for me. Old persons are always helped when they need, for example, to buy medicines. And if someone is admitted to the hospital or cannot travel, we take turns. For example, up there lives an old man who is not from here. He is alone. If his car doesn't move for days, everybody worries for him. They wonder if he is sick and go to visit him. In town, nothing like that happens. People realize you are dead only when you stink. Here there are many gossips, but they're constructive. You know, they do it if someone is in a need.

For the foreigners, it's different. I don't know how they are. They don't integrate. Maybe I'm exaggerating. I give you a personal example. My son, we leave him often with a Romanian lady. She and her husband are extremely good persons, they have children, they are extremely careful with education, even if they work in the buildings. We feel safe when our son is with them. And they are Romanian. But we have no other relations apart from our children. Going out for a pizza together is out of discussion, there is a wall between us. Sometimes we swap something; our son spends all the afternoons with them. Sometimes she leaves her children with us, but not often, she thinks they can bother us. She thinks that maybe something can happen when she is not there. My son and her children usually stay at home with her, they play together, she always gives my son something to take home. She's a good person. Very slowly, some contact is possible. Do you understand? But saying that all Romanians are like that is too much. I just see that they are a bit apart. I think it's the same for Italians who go abroad. They maybe create some relations, but it's temporary. Even I feel a foreigner here. And we are foreigners to the others. When we speak our dialect, none can understand us. Anyway people from here are not bad (...)

Taipana is different from the other villages. For example, if you go to Monteaperta, they are more like Austrians. I read it on a book, but I lent it to someone and it never came back. Every hamlet is different. In Taipana capoluogo, people are more Slovene, like the ones of Kobarid. Thus imagine, even in the same municipality there are great differences.

I was told that earlier there were 12-13 carabinieri, and there was a guardia di finanza station. Even in the past, many alien persons lived here and had other cultures. I noticed that even people from Nimis are different from people of Taipana. But I can't tell you if they're better or worse. In Taipana it is easier to enter the community. It is difficult to make a distinction, but who arrives here is always welcomed. In Taipana, people are used to diversity, to welcoming. Earlier, the municipal seat was not even here, it was in Platischis. The municipality is divided into smaller villages, so they are used to face diversity.

In my opinion, most of the old inhabitants here have lived abroad, so they see foreigners in a different way. For example, there's a finanziere who lives here, he is from Tricesimo. He worked here and when he retired he decided to stay here. He preferred to stay because people were more friendly.

So, already in the past there were many people coming from outside, while in Nimis this didn't happen. People from the valley bottom go shopping to Udine, while people from Taipana go to Nimis. The elderly say that Nimis built its fortune thanks to people from here. While they, from Nimis, went shopping to Udine.

If we earn enough for a living, we are going to stay here. I feel good, the place is quiet, we familiarized with the surroundings, but anyway even if we are both involved with this enterprise, we must earn enough. We must also think for our son. If we stay here and every month we spend all that we earned... But if at the end of the month we succeeded in keeping something, our idea is to stay. We must also wait and see what happens to the school. Because if our son has to go to school to Nimis, we must equip ourselves, because going to Nimis four times a day is a problem.

For example, there is a couple who already lives here since ten years, they come from C.¹. They arrived because the mayor had placed a call on the newspapers, or I don't know. The man had a job, but he lost it. Now he makes some social work. He is considering what to do in the future: here the shop is closed, the tobacco shop is closed...

I can be rude: I think culture is the last concern. Eating comes before. Do you understand? We cannot think about culture in Taipana, when these people need to live. I think that first you must let them feel good and only after that you can offer them culture.

¹ Big Italian town.

Now European funds have been given to cut some woods in order to create new grazing. I think that these European politicians should come here and see the place.

Consider the difference between Taipana and Lusevera. We checked the map: living in Lusevera is easier. Lusevera is 4km far from Tarcento and the road is wide. There are no hairpin turns. While you have seen the road that leads to Taipana from Nimis. Imagine it with snow.

Contributions should be given to ease the life here. For example for the heating, or the chance not to pay taxes. People complain because, until two years ago, the Comunità Montana subsidized 300€ contributions for the heating. But two years ago they stopped.

An enterprise placed here and one placed in Nimis pay the same taxes and have the same costs.

The lady who owns the tavern is about 80, or 75. When she retires, the tavern will close. So in this village the post office will be closed. The carabinieri station will be closed. The mayor said that the municipality is ready to renounce to the rent for the carabinieri station, on condition that the station stays open. At the moment, the rent for the police station is supported by the regional administration. So we are also risking not to have the carabinieri anymore. The only service which stays open in the afternoon is the pharmacy. They have to deal with every possible emergency.

You know what is my project for this village? Let's close the municipality, close the school, close the nursery school, close everything and build a big hotel for elderly people. The rest house is working very good. We must take a radical decision: should this village go forward or backward? Now the municipal administration is not supporting young people to come here. To let young people come here, you must provide them with something. If they have so much money, they should ask for a building permit. They should build 50 cottages. A building permit costs 300€ per square meter, so the houses will cost about 40.000€. Because if I live in Udine, why should I move to live here? I could come only during weekends, and start to think about when I'll be older. The goal of Taipana should be to attract middle aged persons, about 50 years old. People who are projecting their future and can decide, for example: "The 200.000€ house in Udine, I leave it to my son. I go to live in Taipana, because I can go walking, go for mushrooms, go out with the dog..." Or build rest houses.

But young persons, why possibly should they come here? Thus you cannot open a gym, or a swimming pool, or a factory. Where is craftsmanship? It disappeared. If I wanted to become a craftsman, where should I find my customers?

I heard the municipality is taking part to a European call, which will provide about 2 or 3 million € to cut the woods and create grazing: this is like thrusting money out of the window. Take these 3 million € and build 50 cottages. Give them in extended loan. Let people come here. (...)

Any shop, here, can only sell products for elderly people. If they sold products for young people, or educated people, nobody would buy them.

If there are untenanted houses, they should not be given to extra UE citizens. They should be given to people who have already settled down, people who come to stay for a long time.

In the 1990s, things were going well because there were many enterprises which needed man power. So it had a meaning to let these people come here. But now that even the last few enterprises are going to close, the project for Taipana should be reformulated. We should attract people who can't stand the city anymore, because they risk to be robbed, there's no parking place... retired persons, who have nothing to do and in the morning stand up at nine o'clock and go out for a walk. Attracting man power in Taipana is meaningless.

A young person who must leave at 6 o'clock in the morning to go to the University, and then comes back at 10 o'clock in the night, must have an extremely strong willpower to live here. Thus we should try to let middle aged persons come here, who go out with the dog and care for the garden. I can see no alternatives.

People who come from other parts of Italy and work in Udine, why should they come to live in Taipana? In Taipana, even if rents are lower, you must go up and down and that is very expensive. For these little villages of Carnia, it would be better to say "I deny my origins, I don't care, I take as a model the European towns of 20-30.000 inhabitants", because all the reforms are made for the big towns. (...)

The State must take a decision. But the State doesn't want to take responsibilities. They just give us a little oxygen and they let us die slowly.

In the municipality, here, there were 5 clerks. When they retired, they were not replaced. Now there is only one. When the policeman retired, he was not replaced. Services disappeared slowly.

We must decide whether the village must survive or not. We must make an attracting policy. (...)

Also to let the emigrants come back, we should do something attracting. I don't mean that the State should give us money, but I think it should give more advantaged conditions for the enterprises. In Taipana, there's not even a grocery. (...) Some planning should be made at a regional level. Regional politicians should come here and see the place, then decide what to do with it. For example, they could give contributions for the opening of new shops. Now the nursery school asks the families for money for the purchase of didactical materials...

Many speak po našin and I don't understand them. Some also speak friulian. Po našin speakers are mostly old, but there are also some young persons who understand it. When I speak about young people, I mean 50-60 years old people, because people of 20 don't exist here.

There are many people who come from the South of Italy. About 10 persons come from Campania. Some come from Sicily. The lady of the café, her husband and brother in law are from Rome. The municipality clerk is also from Sicily. The teachers of the school are all from the South. They usually don't stay here for more than one school year. But working here can be convenient: here a class is composed by six children, while in town classes are of 20.

Here people are friendly, but they tend to form little groups.

For example, when somebody dies, you don't learn about it. You don't know if John Doe or Jane Doe died, because nobody tells you. They don't hang posters. I complained about this, because I wanted to know about funerals, and I was answered: "Why should you come to the funeral?" Where we come from, when somebody dies we try to be helpful. We go to the church together, and bring food to the family. Friends send coffee. This tradition doesn't exist here. When you die, there is a funeral and then it's over. But consider that: when I die, maybe I knew someone my family is not aware about. Thus posters are useful. But here there are no posters. Where we come from, the family brings flowers, you stay close to the dead person's family, in case they need something.

It's the same with marriages: here, when there is a marriage, nobody tells you. Do you understand? Where we come from, we tell to everybody "I'm getting married". This doesn't mean I want to be invited to all the marriages. I mean that these Bosnians and Romanians possibly don't succeed in integrating because the community is too secretive.

I also noticed that many become heavy drinkers. All of them, Bosnians, Croats, people from here. That's something I really can't stand. I don't know if it only happens in Taipana, or also in the rest of Friuli.

Apparently there are no law and order problems here, but it is impossible to perceive what is going on. There are some gossips, but things are not reported to the police. People in Friuli don't like gossip, thus things are not renowned. It looks like nothing happens. Maybe I think lowly. For example there could be some neighborhood problems.

Foreigners are mostly suspicious. I mean the Romanians, because the Argentineans are more sunny. Thus you can understand them much more, because they speak. But the ones who don't speak, there are no relations with them. How can you understand them? You can only make hypotheses. People from Maghreb? There aren't. Maybe there are, but I don't know them.

Anyway, there is a general discomfort. (...) I see this village as a person who is slowly dying. If I need some help, I have none to ask to. The village is in a phase of no way back.

We should think about a model like Lombardia. Over there, small villages of about 1.000 inhabitants grow increasingly every year, because people quit Milano, they sell the flat or leave it

to their sons, and move to find a better way of life. Just imagine how life is here in winter. There is snow, and roads are difficult to go, and you must put the chains to the car wheels...

Since there is no work, young people can't come here. If we want to make a protest, it must be extreme or nothing. When a change is needed, you must do it all together - or you don't.

Politics here is not real politics. Usually a politician weighs for the votes he brings. But here we are only a few, and politics don't bring votes. The mayor here is not a politician, he is more like a family friend who is able to express himself better, and represents us better.

If who lives here wants to let the village grow, they must get a move. We gave our little input: we came here and opened a small enterprise. We left the certain for the uncertain. We brought our son in a place where life is good, but it poses me problems for later. I really don't understand what they want to do. I think most of the times we are our own bad: if we prefer going shopping to a big shopping centre, we make a mistake. There are people who say "I don't like the shopkeeper here, I go down to the valley bottom". The day will come when they will be obliged to go down, because here there will be no shop anymore.

At a national level, the policy is to let this small villages disappear, to let them die and enlarge the cities instead, like Brazil with its favelas.(...)"

2.

A. B. is from Kosovo. She is 36. She lives here with her husband and two children. She has a high school education. She speaks very good Italian, with a foreign accent but at the same time also some Friulian accent.

"Earlier there were more foreigners here, now only a few have remained. We are in Italy since 10 years, and in Taipana since 6. We lived in Tolmezzo before moving here. And we bought this house. Taipana is more quiet. I got used to it, I like it. I could never live in Udine: the quality of life is better here. We do well here. We can go walking, and also for the children it's better. There is the school, there is a post office. Yes, maybe it's uncomfortable to go down, but you don't necessarily need to do it every day, and we have a car. We never go to Kosovo for holidays: actually we don't go there since 3 years. In summer it's good to stay here, we sometimes go to the sea with the children. We are used to stay here by now. Children have their friends here, and they have their school. We have everything we want: there is a sports field, everything is near.

The sports field is not run by a sports society: everybody can use it. But sometimes sport races are organized, and then you have to pay a sort of tax, you must get a membership card. They organize sport races for kids, and parties, and children can play.

Winter is a bit worse. In summer, there is some more people, and traffic. Tourists come here for the holidays. But in winter there is only us, who live here. We all know each other in the village.

I had a small enterprise, for two years, but I had to close. People prefer to use services, or go shopping, in the valley bottom, so I closed. I thought it was a good idea to open an enterprise here, since there are no others, but eventually I had to give up.

After closing my enterprise, I worked as house help for an old lady for some time, but now I work with a relative who has a building enterprise. I keep the books, make some accountancy, keep all the documents in order. The enterprise is already open since 12 years and has 6 workers. We all belong to the same family. There is a crisis, and we prefer to give work to people we know, and who really need it. There is surely one other building enterprise in Taipana, owned by an Italian. He has one worker, also from Taipana.

Children meet each other often, they play together, celebrate birthdays, at home or also in the little room under the café – it is actually a restaurant-café, they also serve food. It is not really full of customers, but the lady holds on. At least so there is a café open...

Here there are only Moroccans. I really get along with everybody, for example when there is a party or a celebration, or we go out together. Also the Italians, when there is some celebration we are always invited. But most of the foreigners don't speak so good Italian. Also my sister in law, she lives here since some time, but she doesn't speak Italian so well. I also attended a course of Italian, so it's easier for me. It often happens to me that I have to help someone as an interpreter.

We have the intention to stay here: our children were born here, this is their home. We also bought the house... Going back to Kosovo? And for what? Why should we? Our children are born here, they are used to stay here, they speak Italian like it was their mother tongue. Their school is here. They also learn some Slovene at school, but not that much.

Last year they wanted to change a bit the school, so that, since the present year, lessons would be held half in Italian and half in Slovene. But the families disagreed. Why should Slovene be useful to our children? We are interested in English: it will be useful when they grow up. And also German. But Slovene is only spoken here. And the people from here speak more dialect than real Slovene.

Everybody speaks dialect here. The young maybe don't, I don't think they do. The elderly speak dialect, but only with each other, because it's impossible to understand it. I sometimes listen to them and I don't understand a word. Some also speak Friulian: I can't speak it but I understand it – I speak just a few words. But if they are speaking dialect, they immediately stop when somebody else is present, for example when I am there, or there is someone else. Because there are also many people from the South of Italy, and they don't speak Slovene, nor Friulian, nor anything else than Italian. Once I had to take the bus to go to Nimis, and in the bus there were people speaking dialect

with each other. But they noticed me and they said: "The lady doesn't understand, thus let's go on in Italian". They are very respectful. Anyway I didn't notice any difference in living with a linguistic minority.

Our older son was born in Tolmezzo, while the younger was born here. We bought this house and slowly made some restoration works. My husband also works in the building, so he did the works. We equipped the basement room to welcome friends and give little parties. But we still have to make some works. There is always something to do, and when we finish something we maybe decide that we want to change... But we decided to keep a traditional style, with the stove. The stove is very important, it keeps the whole house warm. It can even be used to cook. It helps saving some money, because there's plenty of wood around here. They say that the woods must be kept clean and so we make something useful for us and for the environment. So my husband goes to collect the wood. Maybe it's polluting, but it's natural... It's not like gas, that you have to pay for it. Because it can be really cold here, thus the heating is very expensive.

We don't miss any service here: there is a post office, and if we need a bank we go down to the valley bottom. Sometimes it can be difficult, if you realize that you forgot to buy something, like pasta for example, but usually being well organized is sufficient.

We arrived here because my husband knew a person who lived in Debellis. When he learnt we wanted to buy a house, he let us come here to see this one. The first time we came, I was a bit concerned by the road. But then we made all the documents ready, and we obtained a mortgage by a bank, and we left Tolmezzo. We only came here once to see the house, and we immediately decided to buy it. It took only about one month to have all the documents. The house was a mess, on the ground floor there had been a shop, years before. So we had to rearrange the spaces. When we moved, works hadn't started yet, so we only brought a little of our stuff. But at least we could live here, in our home. Only later we could bring all the rest of what we owned. The first night, we went to collect wood and we slept here, because I liked this house so much. It was autumn, and I was pregnant. But living in your own house is different...

We don't miss anything: in 15 minutes by car, you arrive to Nimis. We never asked for help to anybody, nor to the institutions, nor to other people.

The mayor would like lots of people to come here, and there are many houses for sale, but maybe the road worries many. Young people don't come to live here. And this is a problem.

I see no negative aspects in life here. People are good. They are not many, but they are all good. They are good old people... Our neighbor is a bit strange, he is an old Italian man, he never talks, he must be over 60 or 70. He never speaks, but sometimes he screams in the middle of the night. He is noisy, and this is a problem. He wakes the children up. This is a bit of a problem.

There are no associations here, nor between Italians nor between foreigners. I don't know if that would help integration. I don't feel the need of any intercultural mediator. The mayor is always very helpful and welcoming. I don't think that other families feel the need of an intercultural mediator as well. We help each other a lot, and that's enough. And many have relatives here, brothers or sisters or cousins, so there is no need for external help.

Having some more activities for children would be nice. Summer camps are organized, and sport races, but only during summer. Children play soccer, and it would be great if there was some association to organize a soccer team. Some years ago there was something like that, but it didn't last long. Fortunately, the school organizes a lot of activities. For example they go to ski, or make some trips. On the 1st of May, some sport races are organized.

At mid august, a festival is organized in the centre of Taipana. We go there to dance. But there are no activities for children.

We never organize any celebration connected with our origin. We are only a few, and it would be silly to ask for municipality permissions or things like that when we can easily celebrate at home. Maybe in Udine there are festivals, but we never went there. On Saturday and Sunday we rest a bit, we have more time to stay together, and cook, and do the homework with our children. We don't need anything else, and we don't feel like doing anything else. We are absolutely not homesick, so we don't need to meet our countrymen that much.”

3.

E. M. is Italian. She is 42. She was born in Belgium, where her parents had moved many years before. The whole family came back after the 1976 earthquake. She is a high skilled technician and works in Udine.

“All the foreigners who live here are because of our well beloved mayor (laughing)...

In Monteperta some terrace houses had been built around the church, after the earthquake. They were allocated to elderly people. They were called “The social centre”. Slowly, many lodgers died; some completed the restoration works of their houses and thus moved away. So, many of these houses were empty. The municipality bestowed them to extra EU citizens, also in order to repopulate the valley.

There is no integration at all, apart from the children at school. Most of the autochthonous inhabitants are old, thus they seldom move from their house.

We see their women walking around, because the women don't work. Men work in the building, instead. There is a building enterprise which has a seat in Monteperta.

I perceive it as a kind of ghetto: the foreigners only hang around with other foreigners. And they don't speak Italian, so it is really difficult to communicate with them.

In Monteperta there are no pubs or other places where people could meet and socialize. There is a café in Taipana capoluogo, but it's far from the other hamlets and only people from Taipana go there. There used to be a small café even in Monteperta. The owner is married to a Thai lady. She is very kind, and sometimes she cooked Thai food for her customers. But they didn't earn enough for a living, and they had to close. Now there is absolutely no place to meet friends.

I am quite sceptical about the present our mayor gave us. I don't know personally any of these foreigners, but I think that in order to repopulate the valley some more recreation activity would be more helpful, otherwise the risk is great that soon also the old inhabitants will move to the valley bottom. The fact that there is absolutely no activity for young people is the biggest of our problems. There used to be an agriturismo in Monteperta. It was the only place where we could meet, but at least we had a place. Now it is closed. I think the mayor should care about that, before letting other people come here.

I don't mind commuting, I am used to it and it's not a problem for us to go shopping in the valley bottom. We love our village. It would surely be easier for us to move somewhere close to Udine, but we like to stay here: in the evening, when you climb up the road from Nimis to Taipana... it makes you feel like you were on holiday. Some years ago, we moved for some time to R.² Life was impossible there: day and night there were people on the street. It was so noisy we could hardly sleep. And we suffered for the pollution. Yes, reaching our job was some faster, but because of the traffic of the Udine outskirts, it was not as fast as we had expected. We came back here as soon as we could".

² Village of the Udine outskirts.

Annex 2. Interview guidelines

Framework: for every interviewee, ask or note:

- Citizenship
- Age
- Gender
- Marital status
- Number of family components
- Dwelling type
- Employment
- Education
- (If foreigner) Level of Italian language

All the interviews were carried on in Italian.

Interview guidelines for the new inhabitants:

Background and personal data:

- Perché si è stabilito/a a Taipana
- Dove viveva prima di trasferirsi qui?
- Se straniero: quando è venuto/a a vivere in Italia e dove?
- Dove sono nati i suoi figli?
- Se uomo sposato: sua moglie lavora?
- Se sposato/a: come si trova sua moglie/marito a Taipana?
- Se è un imprenditore: ha dipendenti italiani o stranieri?

Life and sociailty in Taipana:

- Quali sono gli aspetti positivi della vita a Taipana?
- E gli aspetti negativi?
- A Taipana, frequenta persone della sua stessa nazionalità o provenienza?
- Se straniero: a Taipana, frequenta persone non italiane ma di nazionalità diversa dalla sua?
- A Taipana, frequenta persone italiane?
- A Taipana, frequenta persone che parlano il po našin?
- Conosce i suoi vicini di casa?

- Che rapporti ha con loro
- Ha mai chiesto il loro aiuto?
- Loro hanno mai chiesto il suo aiuto?
- E con altri Taipanesi?
- Fa parte di associazioni con connotazioni etniche?
- Fa parte di associazioni con sede a Taipana?
- Celebra le festività religiose legate al suo paese d'origine?
- Dove? Con chi?
- Celebra le festività civili legate alla suo paese d'origine?
- Dove? Con chi?
- Partecipa alle festività di Taipana?
- Frequenta abitualmente un posto di ritrovo a Taipana?
- Ha sostenuto spese per la manutenzione o restauro della casa in cui vive?
- In caso affermativo: ha chiesto contributi per ristrutturazioni edilizie?

Institutions:

- Qual è il suo rapporto con le istituzioni di Taipana?
- Qual è il suo rapporto con le istituzioni al di fuori di Taipana?
- Da quando è a Taipana, ha mai chiesto aiuto a qualche istituzione?
- Ha mai chiesto aiuto a servizi sociali?
- Troverebbe utile una presenza maggiore di servizi sociali a Taipana?
- Troverebbe utile a Taipana la presenza di un servizio di mediazione linguistica?

A gaze to the future:

- Intende restare a Taipana?
- Se no: intende restare nel Friuli Venezia-Giulia?
- O intende restare in Italia?
- O intende tornare al suo paese d'origine?
- Se ha figli: vorrebbero restare?

Children

- Se ha figli: vanno a scuola a Taipana?
- Al di fuori della scuola, frequentano bambini italiani o stranieri?

- Fanno attività extrascolastiche?
- E' d'accordo con l'istituzione di una scuola bilingue?
- I suoi figli seguono le attività integrative in Sloveno?
- Quanto influisce sulla sua decisione di restare o no la presenza o meno della scuola?

The Slovene minority

- Percepisce la diversità etnolinguistica di Taipana?
- Che cosa ne pensa?
- Le causa complicazioni, ad esempio a livello linguistico?
- Ritiene che, per questo motivo, gli abitanti di Taipana siano diversi dagli altri Italiani che ha conosciuto?

Interview guidelines for the old inhabitants:

Background and personal data:

- E' sempre vissuto/a a Taipana?
- Se è un imprenditore: ha dipendenti Italiani e/o stranieri?

Life and society in Taipana:

- Quali sono gli aspetti positivi della vita a Taipana?
- E gli aspetti negativi?
- Cosa ne pensa dell'arrivo dei nuovi cittadini stranieri?
- Conosce stranieri che abitano a Taipana?
- Ha amici stranieri che abitano a Taipana?
- Frequenta persone che abitano a Taipana?
- Conosce i suoi vicini di casa?
- Sono Italiani o stranieri?
- Che rapporti ha con loro
- Ha mai chiesto il loro aiuto?
- Loro hanno mai chiesto il suo aiuto?
- E con altri Taipanesi?
- Fa parte di associazioni con connotazioni etniche/della minoranza slovena?
- Fa parte di associazioni con sede a Taipana?
- Partecipa alle celebrazioni delle festività di Taipana?

- Frequenta abitualmente un posto di ritrovo a Taipana?

Institutions:

- Qual è il suo rapporto con le istituzioni di Taipana?
- Troverebbe utile una presenza maggiore di servizi sociali a Taipana?
- Troverebbe utile a Taipana la presenza di un servizio di mediazione linguistica?

A gaze to the future:

- Intende restare a Taipana?
- Come vede il futuro di Taipana?

Children

- Se ha figli: vanno a scuola a Taipana?
- Al di fuori della scuola, frequentano bambini italiani o stranieri?
- Fanno attività extrascolastiche?
- E' d'accordo con l'istituzione di una scuola bilingue?
- I suoi figli seguono le attività integrative in Sloveno?

The Slovene minority

- Parla il *po našin*?
- Che cosa pensa della diversità etnolinguistica di Taipana?
- Ritiene che gli abitanti di Taipana siano più o meno disposti all'accoglienza a causa del loro vissuto storico?

Bibliography

- AA. VV.: *Passato e presente degli Sloveni in Italia*. Trieste, EST-ZTT, 1974.
- M. Ambrosini: *Sociologia delle migrazioni*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2011.
- D. Andreozzi, R. Finzi, L. Panariti: "Lo specchio del confine. Identità, economia e uso della storia in Friuli – Venezia Giulia (1990-2003)" in *Il Territorio*, n. 21-22, 2004.
- L. Arora: "Proverbs and prejudice: El Indio in Hispanic proverbial speech", in *De proverbio*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1995.
- C. Barazzutti: *Irresistibilmente attratti dalla pianura: il degrado dell'economia e della società montana del Friuli*. Udine: IRES FVG, 1993.
- W. Bätzing: *Die Alpen. Entstehung und Gefährdung einer europäischen Kulturlandschaft*. München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1991.
- W. Bätzing: *I processi di trasformazioni di ambiente, economia, società e popolazione attualmente in corso nelle Alpi*. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit, 2002.
- R. Bauböck: "Cultural Minority Rights for Immigrants", in *International Migration Review*, VO. 30, No. 1, pp. 203-250.
- M. Beismann, R. Löffler, J. Walder und E. Steincke: "Amenity Migration und ethno-linguistische Minderheiten in den italienischen Alpen: Ein Zwischenbericht", in *Innsbrucker Bericht*, 2008-10, pp. 129-142.
- M. Benson: "How culturally Significant Imaginings are Translated into Lifestyle Migration", in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 2012, pp. 1-16.
- M. Benson and K. O'Reilly: "Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration", in *The sociological review*, 57:4 (2009), pp. 608-625.
- L. Bergnach, P. Petricig: *La Benecia ad una svolta: emarginazione o sviluppo?* Cividale: Quaderni Nediza 8; Editoriale Stampa Triestina, 1985.
- L. Bergnach, E. Sussi (edited by): *Minoranze etniche ed immigrazione: la sfida del pluralismo culturale*. Milano: F. Angeli, 1993. (Atti del Convegno Minoranze autoctone, minoranze immigrate, tenuto a Gorizia nel 1991).
- B. J. L. Berry: "Urbanization and Counterurbanization in the United States", in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 451, (Sep., 1980), pp. 13-20.
- A. M. Boileau, R. Strassoldo, E. Sussi: *Sociologia delle relazioni etniche*. Gorizia: Istituto di sociologia internazionale, 1975.
- A. M. Boileau, E. Sussi: *Dominanza e minoranze. Immagini e rapporti interetnici al confine nordorientale*. Editrice Grillo, 1991.

A. Borsdorf, R. Hidalgo, H. Zunino: "Amenity Migration: a comparative study of the Italian Alps and the Chilean Andes", in *Journal of Sustainability Education*, Vol. 3, March 2012.

M. Bufon: *Confini, identità ed integrazione. Nuove prospettive per l'alto Adriatico*. Trieste: Istituto Sloveno di Ricerche, 2002.

M. Bufon: "Sviluppo regionale e sviluppo etnico: il caso degli Sloveni in Italia". In *Rivista geografica italiana* 98, 1991, pp. 437-454.

M. Byron and S. Condon: "A Comparative Study of Caribbean Return Migration from Britain and France: Towards a Context-Dependent Explanation", in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1996, pp. 91-104.

K. V. Cadieux, P. T. Hurley: "Amenity migration, exurbia, and emerging rural landscapes: global natural amenity as place and as process", in *GeoJournal* (2011), 76, pp. 297-302.

F. Capotorti: *Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*. UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/384/Rev.1, para. 568, 1979.

Centro di studi Ippolito Nievo: *Consuetudini e motivi storici del territorio di Taipana*. Udine, Atti del convegno regionale 1987, 1987.

Centro studi Nediza: *Storia della Slavia Italiana*. Trieste, S. Pietro al Natisone, 1978.

F. P. Cerase: "Expectations and Reality: A Case Study of Return Migration from the United States to Southern Italy", in *International Migration Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer, 1974pp. 245-262.

CIPRA: *Noi Alpi! Uomini e donne costruiscono il futuro*. Cda & Vivalda editori, Torino, 2007.

F. Clavora, R. Ruttar: *La comunità senza nome. La Slavia alle soglie del 2000*. Zveva slovenskih Izseljencev Furlanije Julijske Krajine = Unione Emigranti Sloveni del Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1990.

F. Cognard: "Le rôle des recompositions sociodémographiques dans les nouvelles dynamiques rurales: l'exemple du Diois", in *Méditerranée* 107 (2006), pp. 5-12.

Convegno di studi sui problemi della minoranza slovena. Provincia di Gorizia, 1974.

F. Corrado: *Ri-abitare le Alpi. Nuovi abitanti e politiche di sviluppo*. Genova: Eidon edizioni, 2010.

F. Corrado: "Fragile areas in the Alpine region: a reading between innovation and marginality", in *Revue de géographie alpine*, 98-3 (2010), pp. 2-9.

F. Corrado e V. Porcellana (edited by): *Alpi e ricerca : proposte e progetti per i territori alpini*. Milano: Angeli, 2010.

R. Dapit: *La Slavia friulana. Lingue e culture. Resia, Torre, Natisone. Bibliografia ragionata / Beneška Slovenija. Jezik in kultura. Rezija, Ter, Nadiza. Kritična bibliografija*. Cividale/Čedad – San Pietro al Natisone/Špeter: Circolo culturale /Kulturno drustvo "I. Trinko", 1995.

- R. Dapit: “*Cultura materiale dell’alta valle del Torre*” in Società filologica friulana: Tarcint e valadis de Tor. Udine, AGRAF, 1996, pp. 209-220.
- C. del Bene, T. Venuti, G. Banchig, R. Ruttar: *Taipana : gente, storia, cultura. Ljudje, zgodovina, kultura*. Taipana: Comune di Taipana, 2002.
- G. Delli Zotti: *Relazioni transnazionali e cooperazione transfrontaliera: il caso del Friuli Venezia Giulia*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1983.
- T. Denton: “Overcoming barriers and challenges to immigrants: the Manitoba model”, in “*Rendez-vous Immigration 2004: Proceedings of a conference held in St. Andrew’s, New Brunswick August 2004*”, pp. 455-469.
- G. Depangher (edited by): *Minoranze e cultura*. Trieste: Istituto Gramsci del Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1991.
- H. de Vos: “Community and Human Social Nature in Contemporary Society”, in *Analyse & Kritik* 26/2004, pp. 7-29.
- Y. Dinstein: “Collective Human Rights of Peoples and Minorities”, in *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Volume 25, Issue 01, January 1976, pp 102-120.
- C. Dunstmann, S. Bentolila and R. Faini: “Return Migration: The European Experience”, in *Economic Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 22 (Apr., 1996), pp. 213-250.
- E. Durkheim: *De la division du travail social. Étude sur l’organisation des sociétés supérieures*. Paris: Félix Alcan, éditeur, 1893.
- Ente friulano di economia montana: *Le Prealpi Giulie: Ricerca per un piano comprensoriale*. Udine, 1968.
- EURAC Research: *LISI: Legal Indicators for Social Inclusion of New Minorities Generated by Immigration*. Bozen, 2003.
- T. Favaretto and E. Greco (edited by): *Il confine riscoperto: beni degli esuli, minoranze e cooperazione economica nei rapporti dell’Italia con Slovenia e Croazia*. Milano: F. Angeli, 1997.
- R. Firmani: *Lidia e il cosacco*. Camposampiero: Edizioni del noce, 2009.
- F. Fornasaro: “Le valli del Natisone: una peculiarità geo-etnica alle soglie del 2000”, in *Letterature di frontiera* (1999) 2/IX, pp. 169-177.
- A. Gasparini: *La sociologia degli spazi. Luoghi, città, società*. Roma: Carocci editore, 2000.
- B. Ghosh (edited by): *Return migration: Journey of Hope or Despair?* Geneva: United nations, IOM, 2000.
- R. S. Glorioso and L. A. G. Moss: “Amenity Migration to Mountain Regions: Current Knowledge and Strategic Construct for Sustainable Management”, in *Social Change*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2007, pp. 137-161.

- G. Gmelch: "Return Migration", in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 9 (1980), pp. 135-159.
- H. Gosnell, J. Abrams: "Amenity migration: diverse conceptualizations of drivers, socioeconomic dimensions, and emerging challenges", in *GeoJournal* (2011) 76, pp. 303–322.
- P. Grandinetti, R. Grandinetti: "Friuli: arretratezza o sviluppo? Analisi del "modello di accumulazione" dell'area friulana", in *Qualestoria* VII, n. 1 (marzo 1979) pp. 5-9.
- R. Grandinetti (edited by): *Il Friuli e la Venezia Giulia nell'economia e società italiana: atti del Convegno di studio sui problemi economico-sociali della realtà regionale nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia organizzato dall'Istituto Gramsci Friuli-Venezia Giulia con il patrocinio dell'Università degli studi di Udine e di Trieste : Udine, 11-12 gennaio 1985. Udine : Cooperativa editoriale Il campo, 1986.*
- J. P. Grossutti: *I "rientri" in Friuli da Argentina, Brasile, Uruguay e Venezuela (1989-1994). Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, ERMI Ente Regionale per i Problemi dei Migranti*
- Gruppo di studi Alpina: *I quattro gruppi nazionali del Friuli Venezia Giulia. Bellinzona, 1975.*
- R. Gubert: *Problemi delle minoranze in situazioni confinarie: il caso del Friuli Venezia Giulia e del Trentino Alto Adige. Atti della Conferenza Internazionale sulle minoranze, Trieste 10-14 luglio 1974, 1979-1981.*
- P. Guichonnet (edited by): *Storia e civiltà delle Alpi: destino umano. Milano: Jaca Book, 1987.*
- J. Halliday and M. Coombes: "In Search of Counterurbanisation: Some Evidence from Devon on the Relationship between Patterns of Migration and Motivation", in *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1995, pp. 433-446.
- B. A. Hoey: "From Pi to Pie: Moral Narratives of Noneconomic Migration and Starting Over in the Postindustrial Midwest", in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2005; vol. 34, no. 5, October 2005, pp. 586-624.
- D. R. Holmes: "A Peasant-Worker Model in a Northern Italian Context", in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Nov., 1983), pp. 734-748.
- Inštitut za Slovensko kulturo/Istituto per la cultura slovena: *Mi smo tu ... tuka, ... izdë, ... kle, ... tle, Špeter/S. Pietro al Natisone: Inštitut za Slovensko kulturo/Istituto per la cultura slovena.*
- Istituto di Ricerche Economiche e Sociali Friuli Venezia Giulia: *Il contesto socioeconomico della montagna friulana negli anni della crisi. Luglio 2012.*
- Istituto Regionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione nel Friuli-Venezia Giulia: *Friuli e Venezia Giulia. Storia del '900. Gorizia : LEG, Libreria Editrice Goriziana, 1997.*
- I. Jogan: *Territorio e etnia. La questione degli Sloveni nella politica urbanistica del Friuli-Venezia Giulia. Milano, Franco Angeli, 1991.*
- R. Koopmans and P. Statham (edited by): *Challenging immigration and ethnic relations politics: comparative European perspectives. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.*

- W. Kymlicka: *Multicultural citizenship: a liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1995.
- G. Lendaro: *Flussi migratori a Taipana, I rapporti tra minoranze etnico-linguistiche e nuovi arrivati*. Tesi di laurea in Sociologia delle migrazioni. Università degli Studi di Trieste, A.A. 2011-2012.
- J. P. Lesage and C. L. Ha: “The impact of Migration on Social Capital: Do Migrants Take Their Bowling Balls with Them?”, in *Growth and Change*, Vol. 43, No., 1 (March 2012), pp. 1-26.
- B. Levin: “How much diversity in our schools?” in *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2008, vol. 89, no. 5, pp. 394-395.
- O. Marinelli: *Guida delle Prealpi Giulie*. Udine: Società alpina friulana, 1912.
- N. McIntyre: “Rethinking Amenity Migration: Integrating Mobility, Lifestyle and Social-Ecological Systems”, in *Die Erde* 140 2009 (3), pp. 229-250.
- V. Melik: “La storia della Slavia italiana”, in *Quaderni Nediza* n. 3, Trieste, EST 1978.
- A. Melucci, M. Diani: *Nazioni senza Stato : i movimenti etnico-nazionali in Occidente*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 1992.
- P. Messerli, T. Scheurer et H. Veit: “Between Longing and Flight – Migratory processes in mountain areas, particularly in the European Alps”, in *Revue de géographie alpine/Journal of Alpine Research*, 99-1 (2011), pp. 2-4.
- C. J. A. Mitchell: “Making sense of counterurbanization”, in *Journal of Rural Studies* 20(2004), pp. 15-34.
- A. Molaro Ferrari; edited by C. Del Bene: *L'Alta Valle del Torre*. San Pietro al Natisone: Comunità Montana del Torre, Natisone e Collio; Lusevera: Comune di Lusevera, 2004.
- L. A. G. Moss (edited by): *The Amenity Migrants: Seeking And Sustaining Mountains And Their Cultures*. Wallingford: CABI, 2006.
- F. Musoni, *Nuove ricerche di antropogeografia nelle Prealpi del Natisone*, Udine, Tipografia Domenico Del Bianco, 1914.
- F. Nazzi: *Alle origini della “Gladio”: la questione della lingua slovena nella vita religiosa della Slavia Friulana nel secondo dopoguerra*. Udine: La Patrie dal Friul, 1997.
- T. and S. Nuñez: “Nuove popolazioni rurali: Rural Users, Transumanti, Nuovi abitanti”. Paper presentato al convegno *Ripensare il rurale: nuovi bisogni, innovazioni e opportunità per lo sviluppo sostenibile del territorio*, 25-27 giugno, Altomonte (CS) (2009).
- K. O'Reilly: “The Rural Idyll, Residential Tourism, and the Spirit of Lifestyle Migration” in *Conference Proceedings of Thinking Through Tourism*. London Metropolitan University: ASA, 2007.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, 1992.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 1966.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: *Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation*.

T. Parsons: *The social system*. London, Collier-MacMillan limited, 1964. First published in 1951.

M. Pascolini: “L'alpeggio nelle Alpi orientali: modelli storici e situazione attuale. Una prospettiva geografica”, in *La Ricerca Folklorica*, No. 43, (Apr., 2001), pp. 71-81.

N. Perini (edited by): *Atti del Convegno Europeo Innovazione nella tradizione: problemi e proposte delle comunità di lingua minoritaria*. Udine-Codroipo, 14-16 settembre 1989. Udine, 1991.

M. Perlik: “Alpine gentrification: The mountain village as a metropolitan neighbourhood”, in *Revue de géographie alpine/Journal of Alpine Research*, no. 99-1 (2011), pp. 2-13.

P. Petricig: *Per un pugno di terra slava*. Trieste: EST/ZTT 1988.

P. Petricig, V. Z. Simonitti: *La comunità slovena del Friuli*. Trieste, Juliagraf, 1974.

N. Piquemal, B. Bolivar: “Discontinuités culturelles et linguistiques: Portraits d'immigrants francophones en milieu minoritaire”, in *International Migration & Integration* (2009) 10, pp. 245-264.

C. Podrecca: *Slavia italiana*. Riedizione a cura del Centro Studi Nediza S. Pietro al Natisone. - Trieste: Editoriale stampa triestina, 1977. (Riproduzione facsimilare dell'ed. Cividale, 1884).

Provincia di Udine: *Atti: conferenza sui gruppi etnico-linguistici della provincia di Udine*. Udine: 5-6 maggio 1968. Udine: Chiandetti editore, 1969.

P. Purini: *Metamorfosi etniche: i cambiamenti di popolazione a Trieste, Gorizia, Fiume e in Istria: 1914-1975*. Udine: Kappa Vu, 2010.

R. D. Putnam, R. Leonardi, R. Y. Nanetti: *Making democracy work: Civic tradition in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, 1994.

A. Raffaelli: “Autoritarismo ed anomia in una zona di confine”, in Istituto di Sociologia internazionale/Institute of International Sociology, Gorizia: *Confini e regioni: il potenziale di sviluppo e di pace delle periferie/Boundaries and regions: explorations in the growth and peace potential of the peripheries*. Atti del convegno “Problemi e prospettive delle regioni di frontiera”/Proceedings of the Conference on “Problems and perspectives of Border Regions”, Gorizia, 24-27/3/1972. Trieste: Edizioni Lint, 1973, pp. 433-440.

C. Raffestin: “Un enjeu européen: vivre, penser, imaginer les Alpes”, in *Revue de géographie alpine*, 1999, Tome 87, N° 1, pp. 21-30.

R. Rajzman: "Citizenship Status, Ethno-National Origin and Entitlement to Rights: Majority Attitudes towards Minorities and Immigrants in Israel", in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36:1, pp. 87-106.

Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia; Osservatorio regionale immigrazione; a cura di IRES FVG: *Annuario statistico dell'immigrazione Friuli Venezia Giulia 2005*. Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, 2005

Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia; Osservatorio regionale immigrazione; a cura di IRES FVG: *Annuario statistico dell'immigrazione Friuli Venezia Giulia 2012*. Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, 2012

Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia; Osservatorio sulle trasformazioni economiche e sociali del Friuli Venezia Giulia; a cura di IRES FVG: *Lo sviluppo locale in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Riflessioni dal territorio*. Trieste: Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia, 2011.

Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia: *Profilo economico dei distretti industriali e artigianali del FVG*, Trieste, 2009.

J.-G. Rioux: "Immigration in Acadia" in "*Rendez-vous Immigration 2004: Proceedings of a conference held in St. Andrew's, New Brunswick August 2004*", pp. 255-262.

R. Ruttar: "Analisi della situazione demografica", in *Atti del convegno »Linee per la rinascita ed un diverso sviluppo della Slavia friulana«* Passariano, 24 maggio 1980, Trieste, EST, 1980, pp. 11-37.

S. Salvi: *Le lingue tagliate*. Milano: Rizzoli, 1975.

D. Sedmak, E. Sussi: *L'assimilazione silenziosa*. Trieste: EST/ZTT, 1984.

G. Simmel: *Sociologia*. Torino : Edizioni di comunità, 1998.

P. Stefanutti: "I cosacchi sotto le Alpi", in *Millenovecento*, n. 29, march 2005.

E. Steincke: "Potential for conflicts in areas of ethno-linguistic minorities of the Eastern Alps", in *Annales Ser. hist. sociol.* 11 2001 2(26), pp. 259-266.

E. Steinicke, L. Cirusuolo, P. Čede: "'Ghost Towns" nelle Alpi orientali. Il fenomeno dello spopolamento nella zona montuosa del Friuli", in *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, 114 (2007), pp. 549-570.

E. Steinicke, J. Walder, R. Löffler et M. Beismann: "Minorités linguistiques autochtones des Alpes italiennes: Nouvelle législation, Nouvelles identifications, Nouveaux processus démographiques, Nouveaux patrimoines: objets, acteurs et controverses" In *Révue de géographie alpine* 99-2, 2011.

A. Stockdale: "Migration: Pre-requisite for rural economic regeneration?", in *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22 (2006), pp. 354-366.

A. Stockdale: "Rural Out-Migration: Community Consequences and Individual Migrant Experiences", in *Sociologia Ruralis*, Vol. 44, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 167-194.

- I. Stone and C. Stubbs: "Enterprising expatriates: lifestyle migration and entrepreneurship in rural southern Europe", in *Entrepreneurship & Regional development*, 19, September (2007), pp. 433-450.
- P. Stranj: *La comunità sommersa. Gli Sloveni in Italia dalla A alla Z*. Trieste: Juliagraf, 1992.
- R. Strassoldo and B. Cattarinussi (edited by): *Friuli: la prova del terremoto*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1978.
- R. Strassoldo: "Regionalism and Ethnicity: The Case of Friuli", in *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Ethnicity and Regionalism (1985), pp. 197-215.
- F. Tönnies: *Community and Civil Society*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. First published in 1887.
- K. Torkington: "Defining lifestyle migration", in *Dos Algarves*, 19, 2010, pp. 99-111.
- K. Torkington: "Place and Lifestyle Migration: The Discursive Construction of 'Glocal' Place-Identity", in *Mobilities*, Vol. 7, No. 1, February 2012, pp. 71-92.
- G. Valussi: *Gli Sloveni in Italia (Slovenci v Italji)*. Trieste: Lint, 1974.
- G. Valussi: *Minoranze a confronto, contributi alla geografia delle minoranze etniche sui due lati della frontiera italo-jugoslava*. Udine: Istituto di geografia della facoltà di Lingue e Letterature straniere dell'Università di Udine, 1978.
- Z. Vidali: *La tutela globale e gli Sloveni della provincia di Udine*. Slovenski raziskovalni inštitut, 2002.
- B. Vukas: "Protection of Minorities", in M. I. Glassner (edited by) *The United Nations at Work*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998, p. 75-102.
- J. Walder, R. Löffler und E. Steincke: "Autochtone ethno-linguistische Minderheiten in den italienischen Alpen im Lichte des aktuellen demographischen Wandels", in *Europa Regional* 16 (2008), no. 3, pp. 178-190.
- A. M. Warnes & A. Williams: "Older Migrants in Europe: A New Focus for Migration Studies", in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32:8, pp. 1257-1281.
- M. Weber: *Economy and society. An outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978. First published in 1922.
- I. M. Young: "Five faces of oppression", in I. M. Young: *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 39-65.
- P. Zanini: *I significati del confine*. Milano: Mondadori, 1997.
- N. Zuanella: *Gli anni bui della Slavia: attività delle organizzazioni segrete nel Friuli orientale*. Cividale del Friuli: Società Cooperativa Editrice Dom, 1996.

Web sites

www.agemont.it

<http://www.ambitotarcento.it/>

<http://bur.regione.fvg.it/newbur/>

<http://www.comune.taipana.ud.it/>

<http://demo.istat.it/>

<http://www.dom.it>

<http://elezionistorico.regione.fvg.it/>

http://www.finanze.gov.it/dipartimentopolitichefiscali/fiscalitalocale/distribuz_addirpef/lista.htm?r=1&pagina=friuli.htm&anno=2012&pr=UD.

<http://www.ictarcento.com/>

<http://www.lintver.it/>

<http://www.mismotu.it/>

[http://noi-italia2012en.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1\[id_pagina\]=16&cHash=fcd6979c40738237cc2b4cd320b93ba6](http://noi-italia2012en.istat.it/index.php?id=7&user_100ind_pi1[id_pagina]=16&cHash=fcd6979c40738237cc2b4cd320b93ba6)

www.novimatajur.it

<http://seriestoriche.istat.it/>