

Francesco Carloni de Querqui's Autobiography

Francesco was born in Rome, Italy on February 8, 1945. His father, Tonino Carloni, was an Italian Diplomat. He was the son of a Florentine physician, Dr. Francesco Carloni, a well known radiologist who studied X-rays, and an American heiress, Eleanor Graham Allen. His mother, Isabella Guadagni, was the daughter of Florentine marchese Bernardo Guadagni and Madeleine Querqui, from Vendee', France. Isabella talked to her children only in French, sometimes Tonino would say a few words in English during family conversation. Both spoke perfect Italian, French, English and German. Isabella learned also Spanish during Tonino's 4 years of being Consul General of Italy in Caracas, Venezuela, from 1963 to 1967.

In 1949, Tonino was appointed Vice-Consul of Italy in Tunis, at that time, still part of the French Colonial Empire. Francesco did his kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade in a French Catholic School of Nuns. He was also taught a little bit of Arabic.

From 1953 to 1954, Tonino worked in the Italian Department of Foreign Affairs in Rome. Francesco attended 3rd and 4th grades in Italian in a Roman elementary school.

From 1955 to 1957, Tonino was Consul of Italy in Detroit, Michigan. Francesco attended 4th, 5th and 6th grades in St. Claire Catholic School in Grosse Pointe Park, where they lived, and learned perfect English. He also studied a year of Latin in the evening, during 6th grade, taught by Father Calogero, a Catholic Priest.

From 1958 to 1961, Tonino was Consul of Italy in Brussels, Belgium. Francesco attended the Catholic Secondary School Institute of St. Boniface in Ixelles, where they lived. He did 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th grades in the most difficult sector of the Institute, Greco-Latines, in French but he also had 4 years of Latin and Ancient Greek, grammar, translation and ancient authors.

From 1961 to 1963, Tonino was Embassy Counselor at the Italian Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel [In those years, many Western Countries, including Italy, did not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, to avoid political conflicts with the neighboring Arab countries]. Francesco did the last three years of Senior High School in the Catholic School of the Christian Brothers in Jaffa, and obtained his High School Diploma, in French and Latin and in Philosophy. He also learned a few words of Israeli.

In the winter 1963-1964, Francesco studied art and charcoal drawing at the art studio of Ms. Simi, in Florence. She had been the teacher of the famous Italian portraitist Pietro Annigoni, who did, among others, the prestigious portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. From 1963 to 1968, Francesco attended the Faculty of Political Sciences, named Cesare Alfieri, of the University of Studies of Florence, Italy. He prepared his Doctorate Thesis in Political Sciences with the title: "The relationship between Italy and France, from the end of World War II to the signing of the Council of Europe". It was the best Faculty of Political Sciences in Italy and one of the best in Europe. It was like Harvard in the USA. Its professors were often famous politicians or writers. Francesco's Professor of Modern History I and Modern History II, was Giovanni Spadolini, Leader of the Italian Republican Party, who became the 44th Prime Minister of Italy,

newspaper editor, journalist and noted historian. Francesco got 30+/30 at both exams with Spadolini.



Giovanni Spadolini, Italy's Prime Minister and Francesco's Modern History Professor at the University of Political Sciences, Cesare Alfieri, in Florence.

He prepared his Thesis in History of Treaties mostly at the Grenoble French Institute of Florence and at the French Embassy in Rome. He also spent two weeks in Paris, at the Cite' Universitaire. He got his doctorate with 108/110.

The Italian Department of Foreign Affairs chose his Thesis as mandatory text of preparation for the candidates preparing for the entrance examination in the Italian Foreign Service.

A week exactly after obtaining his doctorate, on July 5, 1968, while driving his Lambretta Super X Scooter from Rome to Florence, to join a Youth Corps camp in Switzerland, Francesco hit a guard Rail of the Autostrada del Sole ("Highway of the Sun") and lost his right arm. Unable to apply for the Foreign Service Admission test (in Italy, by law, disabled people cannot become Diplomats) he applied for a specialized course in Foreign Trade and obtained it, 4th out of 85.

After 6 months of course in Rome he was sent to do a market research for the Italian Institute of Foreign Trade in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. He also went to Madrid, Spain, for 3 months to refine his knowledge of the Spanish language.

From March 1971 to June 1972, he worked as a Trade Analyst at the Italian Trade Commission in Brussels, Belgium. While in Belgium, he attended the Art Academy of Ixelles in the evenings and obtained the first prize in charcoal sketches and drawings.

From July 1972 to September, 1973, he worked as a Trade Analyst at the Italian Trade Commission office of New York, U.S.A., at the 20th floor of the North Tower of the world Trade Center. He also attended the Art Students League in Manhattan.



Art Students League of New York

While he was in New York he met and married Shirley Jean Anthony, a Math and Geometry High School Teacher from Denver, CO. They now have 3 children, Tony, born in 1977, Billy, in 1979 and Beatrice, in 1981.

In the autumn of 1973, he applied for a High School Foreign Language, French and/or English, teaching position in Italy. He was the first in the graduatory in all of Italy. He taught French and English one year in a Hotel School in San Giovanni in Fiore and French Language and Literature for 5 years in a Scientific High School in Crotone, both in Calabria. In Crotone he also did oil painting, mostly portraits and landscapes, and sold quite a few to friends and customers and at an art exhibit he organized at the Art Gallery “Il Cubo” (“The Cube”).

Then he taught French 3 years in a High School in Pavia and English for 2 years in another High School in Pavia, in Lombardy, near Milan.

In 1984, Francesco and Shirley decided to move to Colorado USA, Shirley’s home state. Francesco applied for and obtained the US Citizenship in 1986. Francesco first worked as a gas station attendant, an Elementary School janitor, a security guard, an insurance salesman, and a high school social studies and French teacher in Bennett High School, Colorado. On December 15, 1987, Francesco was hired at Western Distributing Corporation by his cousin Vieri Guadagni and has been there ever since, enjoying every one of the different jobs he was assigned to do.

He first worked as an office desk customer service, then as a computer specialist, then in customer service and finally in the administration.

In the last twenty years he has worked as a historian of the 10 century old history of the Guadagni Family. Vieri has often sent him to Florence, Italy and Lyon, France. In Florence he has met with Marchese Vieri Guadagni Senior, as long as he was alive and Duca Giuseppe Torrigiani di Santa Cristina. In France he has met several times with Famous Guadagni Historian Edouard Lejeune, author of the best-seller “The Saga of the “Gadagne” (French historical translation of the surname “Guadagni”) in Lyon”, and Father Louis Vignon, Parish Priest of Charly and author of the “Vengeance of the Gadagne”, and General Charles Roure “Little History of Chateauneuf de Gadagne”, and the Mayors of Bouttheon, of Beauregard, of Lyon and of Chateauneuf de Gadagne, and two directors of the Gadagne Museums of Lyon, and the owner of the castle of Chateauneuf de Gadagne, and countless secretaries, restaurant owners, tourist guides, museum workers and so forth.



Guadagni Castles of Charly (left) and Boutheon (right), France

Francesco has written countless emails in French and Italian to all these people, precising the hour of his arrivals, time and daily schedules and so forth. But it was all great fun and very interesting. He has taken with him his cousin Carlo, his son Tony, his daughter Beatrice, his cousin Michael from Quebec, his brother Bernardo from Florence with his wife Carla, etc. He has traveled by plane, bus, car, motorcycle, bicycle, horse drawn carriage, subway, truck. Invited by the Guadagni historical committees in France, he has eaten in more restaurants you can imagine, drinking more bottles of quality wine and eaten more specialty succulent plates and hors-d'oeuvre you thought existed, but it was all worthwhile.

One evening in Detroit we had the visit of Antonietta Revedin Guadagni, mother of Tony Gaines, and grandmother of Vieri, Carlo and Tecla. We had her for dinner and sometime after dinner; she sat in the living room chair and wanted us three kids to sit next to her. Isabella was very happy, excited and touched. I think sometimes, abroad, Isabella missed the Guadagni very much. She was particularly attached to Antonietta, who was her father's sister-in-law. I think there was a time, in the late teens or early nineteen twenties, when the five Guadagni brothers, Guitto, Adriano, Bernardo, Tommaso, aka Bebe, and Luigi, were young, handsome, rich, daring and strikingly charming, all living together with their young spouses and children in Florence, La Traversa, Masseto and surroundings, and the world seemed theirs to get. My mother remembers those times of intense happiness and family ties, that slowly, and sometimes quickly, disappeared with the old Guadagni passing away and the young ones scattering all over the world. Her heart

cried silently and seeing Antonietta seemed like a mouthful of happiness of the old Guadagni paradise that maybe, for a few hours, with Antonietta's presence, was still there.

From 1957 to 1961, Tonino was Consul of Italy in Brussels, Belgium. We lived in Avenue de l'Hippodrome, 36, in a typical Belgian house, tall and narrow, attached to other houses on the right and the left, with a long narrow backyard in the back.



An old picture of Avenue de l'Hippodrome but nothing has changed. Our house was the 5th or 6th on the left, facing the Ponds of Ixelles on the right, little lakes full of ducks and geese.



Our house is two houses on the left of this picture but very similar to the house behind the parked grey truck on the right. There was a basement, opening in the back yard (which we don't see from here) where the servants lived, there were two bedrooms and a washing and ironing room, with a narrow staircase leading to the ground floor and a few steps leading to the back yard. There were also a few steps leading to the front door so that when the servants would come back with the groceries, they could take them directly to the basement without crossing the masters' quarters.

On the ground floor there was a living room upfront, the dining room with no windows in the center and the reading room in the back with a window on the back yard. A narrow long hall connected the entrance door with the three rooms and the kitchen in the far back.

On the staircase landing from the first to the second floor there was the bathroom and the toilet. On the second floor, there was the large living room facing the street (in Belgium the living room is usually on the second floor, while dining room, reading room and kitchen are on the first) which my parents had made into the bedroom for me and Bernardo. Then a large bedroom with two sinks and two bidets facing the back yard, where my parents slept, and a small bedroom in the corner, 6 steps higher than the second floor, where Eleonora slept.

Why was the bathroom separated from the toilet, and both were on the isolated landing, on the stairs, midway from the 1st floor and the second one, while the main bedroom had two sinks and two bidets next to the beds, in an elegant house, that we rented from Baroness del Marmol?

In spite of the almost daily rain, in Belgium, the Government puts a heavy tax on water. So to save money people flush the toilet only after #2. So if ten members of the family use the toilet only for #1 and nobody for #2, the toilet has an unbearable smell. That is why it is placed on a separate landing far away from where house members and/or guests sleep or eat. It is also separated by a closed door from the bathroom to allow people to bathe without breathing the stench of the toilet.

However the tax on water weighs heavily also on the bathing of the house members. We are talking about upper and middle class (and everybody else also). So the members of the Belgian families bathed only once a week, on Saturday or Sunday. And to save even more money, they filled the bathtub full but only once and everybody bathed in the same water, Mom and Dad first, older children afterwards and the younger ones last. That is why also the bathroom with the bathtub was on a separate landing.

Belgians are a clean people. So every day they wash their upper body in the sink using wet sponges to rinse and the lower body in the bidet. So every bedroom of an elegant house, instead of having its private bathroom, has its private sink and bidet. So my parents' bedroom with TWO sinks and TWO bidets was of the utmost elegance, it's like if your parents' bedroom had two showers, one for Mom and one for Dad!!!

However Isabella, as we pointed out elsewhere, did not change her habits or way of life of a Florentine noblewoman anywhere, so she could not care less about Belgian taxes on water, all of us, parents and children, would take a bath every day in clean water, without wasting it obviously by changing the bath tub into a swimming pool or taking endless showers just to cool off. We were not even told about this Belgian habit and for a long time I thought everybody in Belgium took a bath everyday as we did.

We went to school by bicycle. Belgium, like Holland, is mostly a flat country so it is easy. We were an exception because our school was on top of a steep hill. But after a few weeks of hard pedaling we did not even notice it.

During our stay in Belgium the most exciting event was the marriage of Prince Albert of Belgium, brother of King Baudouin, with Italian Princess Paola Ruffo di Calabria on July 2, 1959. Paola is closely related to the Torrigiani Family



Paola Ruffo di Calabria (1937-) Prince then King Albert of Belgium (1934-)

so indirectly also to the Guadagni. Paola's mother and Isabella had been great friends when Isabella and Tonino lived in Rome. So Tonino being now Consul of Italy in Belgium, this marriage between the Belgian Crown Prince and a cousin of Isabella was a great event also for

our family. Scores of Roman nobles came to Brussels for the wedding, parties were going on all the time in Belgian castles and palaces because of it and my parents were often invited. A cousin of Paola, Anne de Bellegarde, stayed in our house in the guest room on the third floor for a week. I think Paola's parents came to our house one evening for dinner. Us kids ate upstairs and were asked to be as quiet as possible. Prince Albert's older brother, King Baudouin, was married to Queen Fabiola from Spain but they had no children. At Baudouin's abdication, Prince Albert became King of the Belgians, but he abdicated on July 21st, 2013 in favor of his and our cousin Paola's oldest son, Philippe 1st of Belgium, (b.1960) who is now the new King of the Belgians (picture below)



King Philippe during his oath



Philippe's wife, Queen of the Belgians Mathilde d'Udekem d'Acoz



King Philippe in a more casual picture.



The Royal Palace in Brussels, Belgium.



The Throne Room.

When I was a teenager in Belgium, Isabella was worried that I did not have any friends. I was popular at school, but during my free time I enjoyed mostly reading, especially history books, and drawing, two activities in which I did not need friends. I was very close to my brother Bernardo and that was enough for me. Bernardo was very good in sports so he would sometimes drag me to play baseball with his friends, ice skating and swimming in Detroit, or tennis and ping pong in Brussels. So when my mother heard me talking about Pierre Vermeylen, a schoolmate of mine at St. Boniface, the school which I attended in Belgium, she immediately invited him to our house and for three summers in a row she invited him to spend the summer holidays with us at La Traversa. We became really best friends and were for 3 years in the same boyscout troop and patrol. His scout name was “owl” and mine was “okapi” (a wild African horse). Every January 1st he still calls me wherever I am, to wish me a Happy New Year and for us to talk with each other during an hour about what we did the preceding year.



Pierre Vermeylen



“Owl”



“Okapi”

From January 1961 to October 1963, Tonino was appointed Embassy Counsellor at the Italian Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel. After a four day trip on the “Saturnia” ship we arrived to the port of Haifa, Israel. Even though we were in January it was not cold in Israel. We moved to a hotel of the sea resort of Ramat Aviv, on the beautiful Mediterranean beach, close to Tel Aviv where the

Italian and most of the World Embassies were located. Only the U.S. Embassy and a few others were located in “New Jerusalem” which the Israeli had built a few yards from the Medieval, Roman and Jewish walls of Old Jerusalem, which the Arab legion of Glubb Pasha was able to retain for Jordan during the Israeli-Arab War of 1948, when the Jewish State of Israel was created.



Sir John Bagot Glubb aka Glubb Pasha (1897-1986)



Walls of Old Jerusalem.

A few days later my parents found an apartment to rent in Ramat-Gan, an Eastern neighborhood of Tel Aviv.



Ramat Gan, where we lived in Israel for three years. I presume that the above photo was taken recently; we were there in 1961, 13 years after the war of independence of Israel, when Ramat Gan and Tel Aviv barely existed. ALL the houses of Ramat Gan and Israel were like the 4 three story houses upfront. Elevators did not exist yet in Israel in 1961 so the buildings were never built more than three or four stories high. Sidewalks did not exist yet and roads were bordered only by desert sand. But the blue Mediterranean Sea was beautiful and so were the golden soft sand and the grey-green olive trees growing everywhere, flowing in the gentle Mediterranean breeze. Ramat Gan was a residential neighborhood of Tel Aviv. Our apartment was on the ground floor of a three story house with a nice big green lawn around it surrounded by a thick dark green hedge and just behind it was the only tennis court of the neighborhood.

Our apartment was a lot smaller than our houses in Brussels or Grosse Pointe Park but so was everybody else's. A few steps took us from a higher road to our front door. There started a short narrow hall with the bedroom of my sister on one side and Bernardo's and my bedroom on the other. The hall ended into three parallel rooms, the kitchen, smaller, on the left, the dining-room, larger in the center, and the living-room, the largest, on the right. All three rooms ended into our shady dark green back lawn with the bright red bottom of the tennis court visible in between the leaves of the trees of our yard.

On the left of the kitchen started a short narrow hall ending in the toilet in the center, the bathroom on the right and my parents' bedroom on the left.

Ours was a diplomatic neighborhood: the house next to ours was rented by the French Military attaché who took care of the "secret" forbidden construction of an atomic bomb and nuclear building plant in the desert of Beersheba, Southern Israel. On

the other side of the road was the house of our Ambassador marchese Vanni Revedin di San Martino, our cousin through Aunt Antonietta Revedin Guadagni. On the right of Ambassador Revedin's was the house of the Swiss Ambassador, next to the one of the American Ambassador. So a fat short dark skinned Israeli policeman was on guard day and night in our neighborhood, with a long barreled gun, peeking through a holster, attached to his belt.



Israeli policeman



Israeli Sherut



Tel Aviv Central bus station

For the 2 ½ years we were in Tel Aviv, Bernardo and I were enrolled in a French Catholic School of the Christian Brothers and Eleonora in a French Catholic School of nuns. Both were in Jaffa, the Arab part of Tel Aviv, the only one existing before 1948 and the creation of the State of Israel. Jaffa is a very ancient town dating from Biblical pre-Christian times. A “sherut” (Israeli word meaning a special kind of taxi which continues picking up passengers on its way until it is full) would come and pick us up in Ramat Gan and take us to the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station known as “Ha Tahana’ Hamerkazit HaHadasa’ “. There we would take a bus taking us to a stop in front of our schools (one next to the other) in old Jaffa,





Old Jaffa (the only one existing when we were in Israel) on the left. The convent of nuns and school attended by Eleonora in old Jaffa, above. Our school of the Christian Brothers was similar to it, without the towers, and its outer right wall was attached to the left courtyard wall of the above school of Nuns; the small white house on the left belonged to it. Eleonora, Bernardo and I used the blue little gate on the left to go from one school to the other. Several students were French, children of the members of the French Embassy and of the group of engineers building the secret nuclear Israeli plants in the Southern Negheb desert. There were also several young Israeli refugees from the ex-French colonies of North Africa and many local Palestinians, both Christian and Moslem.

As the number of students was dwindling, due to the diminishing number of Jewish refugees from Northern African ex-French colonies, the last two years of High School boys and girls were mixed in the same class. Some of our classes were in the Christian Brothers' school, others in the adjoining Sisters' school. It was fun and we learned a lot. Mother did not pick us up for lunch and bring us home to the formal most important meal of the day, served by a butler or a maid in formal attire, consisting of 1st course of pasta or rice, 2nd course of meat, except on Fridays, when we had fish, with two or three side dishes and fruit. Jaffa was too far from Ramat Gan for mother to pick us up for lunch and take us back to school in time for the afternoon classes.

Instead we had sandwich for lunch in the school courtyard. Mother, most of all our maid, was not raised in a typical American Family. More or less our lunch always consisted of two slices of bread and one slice of cheese in between them. However it was not a problem, because in the very hot weather of Tel Aviv, you lost most of your appetite at midday. We spent most of the remaining lunch break in the school courtyard, in the shade of the high school building and eucalyptus trees, playing basketball with French, Israeli and Palestinian schoolchildren, altogether with no problems. The Israelis spoke to each other in Ivrit (name of the Hebrew

language), the Palestinians in Arabic and everybody else (20% of the total student population) in French. I understood some of the Arab and Israeli calls and I realized how similar the two “Semitic” languages were. They are like Spanish and Italian. One day I was comparing them and found out that the numbers are almost identical and one of them, number four, ארבע in Hebrew or Ivrit and أربعة in Arabic is pronounced “arba” in both languages. “Here!” as in “throw the ball here” is “... כאן ” in Israeli (Sounds like ...”ena”) and “... هنا ” in Arabic (I don’t remember what it sounded like 54 years ago but it seemed similar to ...”ena” to me).

We learned how to count in Hebrew because when we were playing soccer or basketball, the scores were often kept in Hebrew by the Israeli schoolmates, and sometimes the Palestinians would keep them in Arabic

Here are the numbers from 1 to 10 in the two Semitic languages:

| Number | Pronunciation | Hebrew | Arabic |
|--------|---------------|--------|--------|
| One | Ehad | واحد | أحد |
| Two | Stein | اثنين | سني |
| Three | Shalosh | ثلاثة | شלוש |
| Four | Arba | أربعة | أربعة |
| Five | Hamesh | أربعة | خمس |
| Six | Shesh | 6 | ستة |
| Seven | Sheva | سبعة | سبع |
| Eight | Shmoneh | ثمانية | שמונה |
| Nine | Tesha | تسعة | תשע |
| Ten | Esser | 10 | عشرة |

One day, at the Religion Class, Brother Bernard was speaking about the differences and similarities between Christianity and Islam. We believe in “God”, he was saying, the Moslems believe in “Allah”. Ali’, a young twelve years old Palestinian immediately raised up his hand and said “Chefre’ (Arabic and Israeli students’ version of “Cher Frere” French for “Dear Brother”) “Allah” in Arabic means “God”!

The Israeli population was divided in three different groups, the Ashkenazi (from Central and Eastern Europe, Germany, Poland, Russia, and so forth), the Safardit (France and North Africa) and the Sabra (born in Israel). Our maid was Solange, (a Safardit from Morocco), she was tall, strikingly beautiful, always kind-hearted and smiling, she was married to a Safardit policeman from Libya, and she spoke French with us; then we had a Sabra gardner, of Ashkenazi descent, who spoke English, and then we had a fat Palestinian washerwoman, who spoke only Arabic and laughed heartily when we did not seem to understand what she was saying. She was always happy and good-natured. As the only word she knew in Israeli or any language other than Arabic was “Shalom” (“Peace be with you” or simply “Hi” in Israeli) we had nicknamed her “Shaloma”.



Negheb desert in Southern Israel – Ambassador Revedin liked to go there with his jeep and hunt gazelles. He invited us to go with him once. It was very fun: miles and miles of empty desert inhabited only by our jeep and the gazelles, and a few Bedouin nomads whom you would almost never see.

At the back of our back yard was a tennis court. So during the summer of our first year in Israel, Mother organized tennis lessons for us, and Bernardo and I played hours of tennis every day, from ten in the morning to three in the afternoon. What we did not realize was that in the Eastern South Mediterranean weather of Tel Aviv, similar to the one of Saudi Arabia, doing any kind of heavy persistent exercise during those hours is killing. And we ended up very sick at the French Hospital of Jaffa.



French Hospital of Jaffa.

The French director of the Hospital, whose children attended the same school we did, took good care of us and at the end of summer we were able to return home. From then on, we only played tennis from the end of the fall to the beginning of spring, mostly during the winter time, which in Ramat Gan is beautiful but cool.

When I think about my illness at the French Hospital of Jaffa I can't help remembering Napoleon visiting his soldiers, sick with plague in Jaffa on 3/11/1799 in artist Delacroix's famous painting (see below). The Jaffa painted by Delacroix, was very similar to the one I could see from my hospital window (the hospital where I was though was a lot cleaner and more modern than the one painted by Delacroix).



Italian Ambassador Revedin's wife became crippled during her imprisonment in a Nazi prison camp during World War II, so Vanni Revedin asked his cousin Isabella, my mother, if she could help him during the important receptions with international heads-of-state and political dignitaries at the Italian Embassy. After consulting Tonino, Isabella agreed and so for over 2 years she played the role of wife of the Ambassador of Italy at all the important receptions of the Italian Embassy in Tel Aviv.

Mother always wanted us to do sports. So she bought us a ping pong table which we always kept in the back yard except in November, the only rainy month of the year. Our French neighbors and schoolmates Philippe and Peterle' Lapousterle were always at our house playing ping-pong and it was great fun.

Mother would also take us to the beautiful endless Mediterranean beaches of Tel Aviv for sunbathing and to the safe Ramat Aviv Hotel swimming pool for swimming. The Mediterranean had a lower undersurface current that would pull you out towards the open sea. I remember once Bernardo paid not enough attention to it and suddenly he was far from the beach and had a hard time making it back.



Tel Aviv seaside beach.



Ruins of the Roman Port of Caesarea, Israel; we used to swim in the above port looking at the columns of the 2,000 year old City of Caesarea in the central upper part of the picture. Cousin Ambassador Revedin, fervent archeologist, was one of the main discoverers of the ruins of the port of Caesarea, which were buried under the sand. The 3 pictures below are also of Caesarea.



Ruins of Caesarea

In the fall of 1973 Tonino was appointed Consul General of Italy in Caracas, Venezuela. We left our dear Ramat Gan, our shady back yard and tennis court, the unending beautiful beaches of Tel Aviv, and the hot but always beautiful weather and intense blue sky of Israel, and returned to Italy by ship: five days with the usual stops at Cyprus and Athens.



Cyprus.



Athens

My parents left me in Florence to attend the University of Political Sciences “Cesare Alfieri”, considered the best in all of Italy, on their way to Caracas, Venezuela, where Tonino was appointed Consul General of Italy. My Father went with me to enroll me before leaving. In France there are two “Bacchalaureats” (abbreviated in “Bachots”), the first at the end of the 11th year of school, the second in the following year. I picked the “Classic Bachot B” for the first, which included 3 foreign languages and I chose Italian, Latin and English. The second Bachot was in “philosophy”, which I found very interesting. I did not care at all for Maths or Sciences, but I loved History. So Father decided that Political Sciences was the best University for me. And he hoped I would be a Diplomat one day, like he was.



University of Political Sciences, Florence.



Piazza (Square) Santa Felicità, with the Church of Santa Felicità in the center back with the elevated arched secret passage of Grand-Duke Cosimo de' Medici across its façade, to go from his "home" of Pitti Palace, over the Ponte Vecchio, into his office in Palazzo Vecchio. Zio

Cosimo two story apartment was on the highest floor of the house on the right of the church, and in the attic which we don't see in the picture. Above on the right you can see the narrow courtyard of that building. Zio Cosimo's apartment was the top floor on the center and left walls, and my bedroom was one of the two windows visible in the picture.

My first year of University I was living at Uncle Cosimo and Aunt Beatrice Rosselli Del Turco's house in Piazza Santa Felicita, Florence, facing the Ponte Vecchio entrance, 100 yards from it. The second year I lived with Aunt Tecla Bartolini Baldelli, in a large two-story apartment in her old palace in Piazza Santa Croce. The following three years I lived in an apartment of the Rosselli Del Turco in Piazza Santa Felicita with my brother Bernardo, who had joined me from Caracas, after having passed his Italian High School Diploma by correspondence.



Piazza Santa Croce: Palazzo Bartolini Baldelli, where Aunt Tecla and Nanni and Piero (and for one year Bernardo and I lived) is composed of the 2 attached 4 story buildings with a total of 8 windows (2+6) per floor and a big central balcony on the 3rd floor at the right of the picture. There is an attic on the 5th floor, on the right of the two white chimneys, with two bedrooms and a large ping-pong room and a private bathroom and a beautiful view of the Cupolone of the Duomo and of the tower of Palazzo Vecchio and of Fiesole in the distance. Bernardo and I slept in one of the bedrooms, the cook and the maid, Francesca, aka Checca, and Aurelia, in the other. Checca used to be Isabella's personal maid, however when Isabella, Tonino and children moved to Tunis, North Africa, Checca, who had probably never left Tuscany, excused herself saying it was too much of an adventure and became Aunt Tecla's cook. Aurelia had a sadder story. During World War II, the German SS had occupied her village. Some Italian anti-German guerrillas killed an SS in an ambush. The German Officer said that unless the Italian villagers captured the Italian guerrillas in three days and gave them to the Germans, he

would kill all the men of the little town, one of whom was Aurelia's fiancé', others were her father, brothers and cousins. The Italian guerrillas were not captured so the SS officer kept his promise and in a few seconds Aurelia lost her fiancé' and all her male relatives. Broken-hearted and desperate she became Aunt Tecla's personal maid and found refuge in the Bartolini Baldelli's household.

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My parents hired a maid for us, named Maria, who cleaned the house for us, washed our laundry, bought groceries, cooked and served us at the table. However she was married to a man, who was exactly my size. So she would steal my winter clothes for her husband in summer and my summer clothes in winter. On a Sunday morning I saw her walking with her husband, who was wearing a pair of brown corduroy pants that looked exactly like the pair I had lost a few months before because, according to Maria, "The dry cleaner could not find them any more. He often loses things". The following day I told Maria: "Your husband and I have the same taste in clothing. Yesterday I saw him wearing a pair of brown corduroy pants exactly like the ones I used to wear and the dry cleaner lost". However eventually Mother suspected her of being the thief of so many clothes "lost by the dry cleaner" and fired her. Adua, a new and honest maid, replaced her for several years, until we did not need her any more.

Bernardo and I would attend classes at the University of Florence. Thanks to our cousins Rosselli Del Turco and Bartolini Baldelli, we were introduced to the Florentine nobility and invited to parties and balls in palaces, castles and villas (Left picture below).





We also went to night clubs.

We played tennis and went skiing in elegant resorts in France, Austria, Switzerland and the Italian Alps.





Kitzbuhel, Austria



Selva, Italy



Zermatt, Switzerland



Abetone, Tuscany, Italy



Terminillo, Rome

During the first two summers I went and spent three months each summer at my parents' house in Caracas, Venezuela. It was a beautiful and fascinating experience. Caracas is a huge diverse city at 3,000 feet above the Ocean level. It is near the Equator so it is summer all year long, so even in the summer, as in every season, the days are only 12 hours long and it is night at 6 p.m. There is a huge contrast between the few, very rich, and many who are very poor and live in the "Ranchitos", poor neighborhoods, built on the sides of the neighboring hills.





Caracas Center (two pictures above, center and left); “Ranchitos” picture above on the right.

On July 1st, 1964, the day of my first arrival in Caracas from Europe, when all my family was out of the house, one or more thieves entered our house from the back courtyard and stole all of the family jewels, many inherited from the Guadagni ancestors several centuries ago, that my mother kept in her bedroom. Our two servants, Jose’ and Amparo, said they did not hear or see anything. As Isabella said, it was better that way, because also a long pointed pair of scissors was stolen, that could easily have silenced the servants forever if they had started screaming. Tonino and Isabella were going to call the Police but they were told it was better not to, because the police would have taken away anything the thieves had left behind.



Venezuelan Police

When a Venezuelan policeman needed extra cash he would stop any car next to him at random, and “invent” a ticket on them. The owner of the car had to pay it on the spot or else he/she would end up in a Venezuelan jail, which was not the best place to lodge in. My parents were advised to stay away from police cars for this reason.

I am not implying that all the Venezuelan Police are corrupt, I am just referring to what my parents were told by local inhabitants.







Pico Bolivar, highest mountain in Venezuela, 18,000 feet, in the four pictures above. The Merida cable car is the highest and largest cable car in the world (picture above on the right).

A friend of my father, Italo-venezuelan Egidio Campanini, who was an elementary school teacher in Italy, then came to Venezuela and made a fortune building roads, took Bernardo and I on a trip to the Andes Mountains in the West of the country and in the “llanos”, the immense flat lands of plains and jungles of the South, bordering with the Mato Grosso of Brasil. Bernardo and I climbed, by telepheric, to the top of the highest mountain of Venezuela, Pico Bolivar (16, 338 ft. above sea level). In half an hour we climbed from the temperate climate of Merida (5, 249 ft.), in the valley of the Chama River, to the cold, freezing, rarified air of a peak higher than the highest of the Alps or most of the Rockies. I am glad Campanini, who could not come with us because his smoke-damaged lungs could not survive at such an altitude, gave each one of us a heavy “poncho” (South American wool coat-blanket) and a thick woolen beret to cover nose and ears. The view from the highest peak of Central America was superb. The Andes Indians living around Pico Bolivar are red-skinned, not because of their Indian blood, but because of scarcity of oxygen in the air.

Venezuela is a mixture of races. The richest family of Venezuela, the Herreras, who owned such a huge estate in central Venezuela, that they needed their private airplane to fly from one part of it to the other, whom we met and were friend of Eleonora Pignatti, daughter of the Italian Ambassador, Count Girolamo Pignatti, and so of my sister Eleonora, were a mixture of indian and black. The sad thing is that members of the Indian tribes of the Amazonas Forests, when I

went to Caracas in 1964, were still captured by “indian- hunters” and sold as slaves for \$1,000 each.



Indians of Venezuela. I have always liked Indians, maybe because of the small percentage of Indian blood I have from my Anglo-American Grandmother Eleanor Graham Allen, so I felt bad for them.

The 5th President of Italy, Giuseppe Saragat (1964-1971 – in Italy the presidents of the Republic are in charge for seven years) decided to visit Venezuela.



President of Italy Giuseppe Saragat (right) with President Richard Nixon (left) and President Johnson (right)

He was the founder of the Socialist Party of Italian Workers. At the end of World War II, many German Nazis escaped to Argentina and many Italian Fascists to Venezuela. So they highly disliked “Socialist” Saragat and decided to assemble 300 of them and altogether blow a gigantic raspberry to greet President Saragat at his arrival in Caracas. Fortunately somebody warned Consul General of Italy Tonino about it, and he was able to rush and have all his friends convince the Fascists to give up their “raspberry”.

On Nov. 4th, 1966, we had the once every century flood in Florence, due to several days of rain making the Arno River overflow in Florence and the surrounding areas. The city was without food and running water for several days. We were living in a two bedrooms, two bathrooms, kitchen and large living room apartment with a beautiful view of all of Florence, mostly of the Ponte Vecchio which ended 100 yards from our ground floor main door of the building. We happened to have three guests from out of town on that day, my sister Eleonora, from her French boarding high school in Rome “Le Chateaubriand”, and two friends, Emmanuele Ratti and Pier Luigi Zucchini, from Milano and Faenza. So the first days, the five of us, with no running or drinking water in the house, and no food, had it kind of rough. Eventually loads of food from other towns and trucks of potable Mineral Water “Panna” (these last ones provided at his own expense by Uncle Cosimo Rosselli Del Turco, husband of Aunt Beatrice Guadagni) arrived and little by little the situation got back to normal and after several weeks of hard cleaning work both by private citizens, volunteers from all over the world, nicknamed by the Florentines “The Angels of the mud”, and public authorities, the streets and the basements and ground floors of the city were cleansed of their thick coat of brown-grey mud and life returned to normal. Unhappily many art works of the flooded museums and private homes were permanently damaged and ruined. We lost a good part of our Renaissance Guadagni-inherited furniture which was stacked in our underground basement.



Piazza Santa Croce in the flood; same with Piazza Duomo and the Baptistery; a man and a woman escaping from their flooded car.

The good thing about Isabella is that she did not seem to care too much about the loss of her jewels in Caracas or of her furniture in Florence. “They are just objects, she would say, people are more important...” and that made it easier for us all.



Cite' Universitaire de Paris – building by famous French architect Le Corbusier

I finished my University in five years getting a Doctorate in History of Treaties with 108/110 on “The relations between Italy and France (who had been enemies during World War II) from the end of World War II to the signature of the Treaty of Rome in 1953”. I did some research in Paris and lived in the “Cite' Universitaire”, where I met a French schoolmate from the Christian brothers in Jaffa, Israel, named Francis Teigner son of the Cultural Attache' of the French Embassy in Tel Aviv, and our neighbor in Ramat Gan, my schoolmate Philippe Lapousterle, with whom we used to play ping-pong in our back yard. My Doctorate thesis was printed and became one of the mandatory texts for the preparation for the Entrance Examination in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

However, as I mentioned above, I lost my right arm in a Lambretta accident, one week after getting my Doctorate in Political Sciences. On July 4th, 1968, in the evening, in Rome, I went to dinner and then to the movies with a friend of mine. I went to bed late and the next morning I went to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Rome, to get information on the entrance examination into the same Department, its date and mandatory program to study for it.



Department of Foreign Affairs, Rome

I left the Department at 2 P.M. and mounted my Lambretta and went on the Autostrada del Sole (“Highway of the Sun”) direction Northern, towards Florence, about 160 miles from Rome. I was tired and hungry for lack of sleep and food so I stopped at a Highway service station and had a toast and an espresso coffee. I was in a hurry to get to Florence, because next morning I had to get up very early to go to my first Peace Corps Volunteer Camp in Switzerland to repair a broken bridge which was the only way of communication of a poor little isolated Alpine Swiss village with the rest of the world.

However I fell asleep on my Lambretta on my way to Florence and hit a guard-rail sideways losing my right arm, several of my teeth and cutting wide open my lower jaw. I was in coma for a month, then quickly recovered. I could not be a diplomat any more because by law the Italian Department of Foreign Affairs cannot hire disabled people.

When I was attending Political Sciences in Florence, even though Maria cooked delicious lunches in our apartment of Piazza Santa Felicita, I would often go and have lunch at the University of Florence Canteen, where I could meet Israeli and Arab students from the Middle East and talk about the problems of Israel and of the Middle East. So now I wrote and published a one page article on the 3rd page of the “Giornale di Brescia” (“Newspaper of Brescia”) on “problems and discussions among Middle-Eastern students at the Canteen of the University of Florence”. The owner of the newspaper was a friend of Tonino’s.

After having read the article, three old Roman noble ladies invited me for dinner and suggested I go and find the remnants of Noah’s Ark, which nobody has yet been able to find, on Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey.

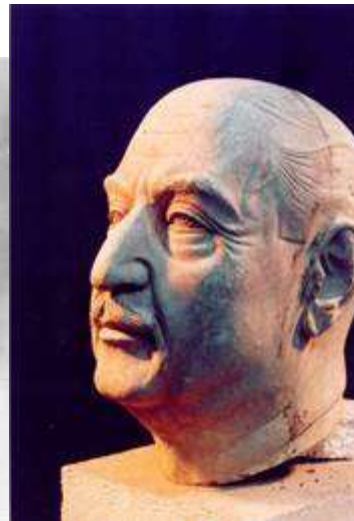


Mount Ararat is a snow-capped and dormant volcano, consisting of two major volcanic cones, Greater Ararat with an elevation of 16,854 ft. (on the right) and Little Ararat with an elevation of 12,782 ft. (on the left). The “Mountains of Ararat” have been perceived as the traditional resting place of Noah’s Ark since the 11th century. The traditional Persian name of Mount Ararat is ***Kuh-e-Nuh***, literally the “mountain of Noah”.



Noah's Ark

However, nobody has found the remnant's of Noah's Ark yet, so my job was to find them. When I went to see a friend of mine at the Department of Foreign Affairs, and told him about my project of going to Mount Ararat, he suggested that on my way there, I could stop in the mountains of Northern Irak, close to Mosul, and interview Mustapha Al Barzani, head of the Kurdish revolt movement against Iraki President Hassan-Al-Bakr. He suggested I should get to Irak by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Irak. He told me how everybody in the Governments of the Western World was worried about Al Barzani, because nobody had heard about him for so long.



Al Barzani as a young officer Hassan-Al-Bakr (1914-1982)

It was complicated to get visas for all these Arab countries, because every time, I had to show a document of Catholic Baptism to convince them that I was not an Israeli spy. Saudi Arabia was the strictest; a copy of my Baptismal certificate was not enough, they wanted the original document. Arab students from the University of Florence wrote "how I was a friend of the Arabs" in Arabic on my passport to impress their embassies in giving me the visa.

I was supposed to travel on a banana cargo from Naples to Cairo, to be in incognito.

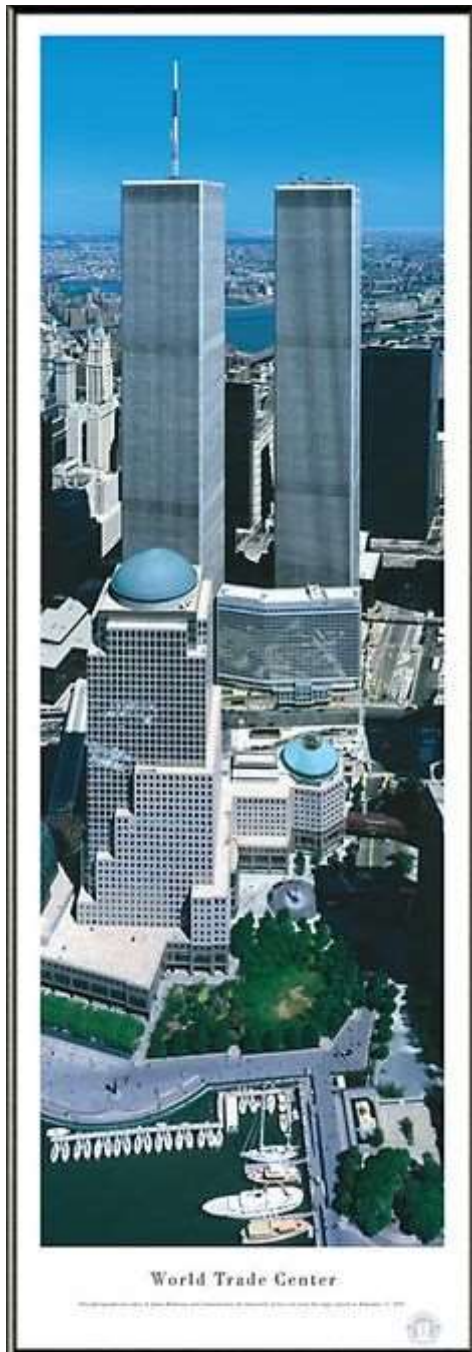
I was going to buy the ticket of the banana cargo when Lucio Caputo, Director of the Italian Trade Commission Office of New York, called me. He was a great friend of Tonino's who was at the time Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia and they used to see each other often. Lucio told me how my father was worried to death about this trip of mine that I might end up in an Iraki prison, because of my efforts to try and interview Al Barzani. So instead, listening

to Lucio Caputo's suggestion, I went to Madrid to learn Spanish to prepare for the Italian Foreign Trade Institute (abbreviated in ICE, Istituto Commercio Estero) scholarship Examination, for 3 months. I went to the University of Madrid, stayed paying guest at the house of Dona Julia de Eguren, and even started writing a novel in Spanish: "Los dos jovenes Medicos Dentistas y el hombre malo" ("The two young orthodontics and the evil man") to practice my written Spanish.

I passed the examination, 4th out of 85 candidates, and spent a pleasant year in Rome attending the classes in international trade. Then I spent 15 months working as a Trade Analyst, in French, at the Italian Trade Commission Office in Brussels, Belgium, and 15 more months working as a Trade Analyst, in English, at the Italian Trade Commission of New York



Italian Trade Commission at Avenue des Arts, Brussels, Belgium (they are at the fifth floor and you don't see them in the picture).



Italian Trade Commission in World Trade Center, New York, on the 20th floor of the North Tower. It was still there on 9/11 and the manager, Dr. Lucio Caputo, tall and skinny from Palermo, Sicily, the same manager I had when I was there, ran down the stairs full speed, exited the building and never stopped running until he heard an enormous crash behind him with smoke and dust and flying debris all around.

While working in New York, in 1973, Francesco met Shirley Jean Anthony, a young high school teacher from Denver, CO, who was teaching Math in a Black Ghetto high school in Long Island. Having been raised in Catholic Schools, Francesco was taught all his youth that one of the important goals of a good Christian was to help the poor and alleviate their sufferings. As

you read in his autobiography Francesco had never even had the time to think about helping the poor. And here he met this beautiful blond blue-eyed Anglo-American girl doing just that. He immediately fell in love with her and his love for her is still growing day after day after less than a year of dating and 42 years of marriage. After finishing his work period as a Trade Analyst in New York, Francesco went back to Rome to teach, Shirley followed him there and they got married on April 29, 1974 in a Roman Catholic Church, celebrated by Francesco's uncle Rev. Father William Porter Carloni. They have three children, Pierantonio, born in 1977, William Porter in 1979 and Beatrice Elizabeth in 1981.

From 1973 to 1983 Francesco taught French Language and Literature and English Language in High Schools in San Giovanni in Fiore (Cosenza), Crotone (Catanzaro) and Pavia (Pavia). Shirley taught English in private language schools in the same cities.



San Giovanni in Fiore (both pictures)

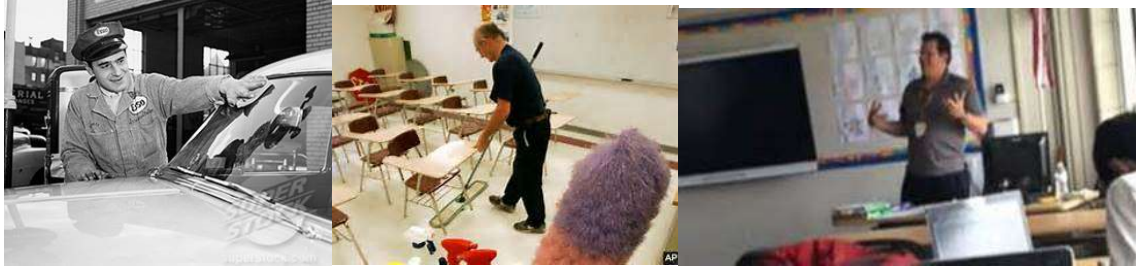


Crotona (both pictures); Island of Capo Rizzuto and old Crotona



Pavia: Covered Bridge over the Ticino River (left) and famous Certosa (right).

After 10 years of Italy, Shirley started getting homesick for her Country of origin and her family. In November 1983, Francesco, Shirley and their 3 children moved to Denver, Colorado, where Francesco became a U.S. Citizen on September 28, 1987. After being a gas station attendant, an Elementary School janitor, a High School French and Social Studies teacher in Bennett, Colorado, a security guard and an insurance salesman, he was hired by his cousin Vieri Guadagni at Western Distributing Incorporated, on December 15, 1987, and was salesperson, computer operator, administrative assistant and historian of the Guadagni Family.



Francesco's different jobs in Denver as illustrated above.

He is still working for Western, mostly translating Original Historical Documents from Italian, French and Latin sources, enjoys it very much and hopes to remain there for many more years. Shirley worked as a Supervisor at the City and County of Denver for several years and is now a happy retiree, Pierantonio is branchmanager at a US Bank in North Denver and is happily married with Simone Yzaguirre, who is a registered nurse, William (Billy) is a Catholic Priest in a Parish of Washington, D.C. and Beatrice is Assistant Principal at the Catholic School Ave Maria, in Parker, CO., and is happily married with Miles Skoogs, social studies teacher in the same school, and they have 3 children, Isabella (named after her beloved Guadagni Grandmother) 9 years old, Emilia, 7, and Francesco Junior, 10 months.

Francesco is very happy to live in the U.S.A. and to be an American citizen. Being a cocktail by birth, 5/16 Italian, 4/16 French and 7/16 Anglo-American, 0,01% American Indian, half Catholic, 1/4 Anglican and 1/4 Huguenot, having been raised in Rome and Florence, Italy, Tunis, North Africa, Detroit, Michigan, Brussels, Belgium, Tel Aviv, Israel and Caracas, Venezuela, being by his American grandmother, whose ancestors came to America in 1620, as Scottish Officers of the King of England, Colonial Gentleman and SAR (Son of the American Revolution)*, having studied in French (including 4 years of Ancient Greek and Latin, 9 hours a week), Italian and English and Spanish (in Madrid), a little bit of Arabic in Tunis and Hebrew in Tel Aviv, whose mother only spoke French at home, he loves living in multicultural, multiracial and multi ethnical groups in a multi-denominational country like the U.S.A. and would not change it for anything in the world.

*[while his wife Shirley is Pennsylvania Dutch (also highest and most ancient American Nobility, their ancestors having arrived in Pennsylvania before 1650 from Germany, and her uncle and aunt, in 1930, three centuries later, were still speaking German at home among

themselves), whose mother, Birchia Johnston, was from an old Anglo-American Family of large farmers in Georgia, probably slave-owners, who downsized their properties and moved to Kentucky, where they still live nowadays, a few years before the Civil War, and one of them fought in it but we are not sure if for the Union or for the Confederates)]

- THE END -