



Pannier, Stall, bookshop. An incredible and fascinating history beginning in the first half of 1800 made of men and women. They left their home with their panniers full of prints and books to go to the towns of the north of Italy. Even if they were illiterate, they were able to organize themselves so as not to create a vain competition. They also went to France, Spain and South America. Starting from the Risorgimento and until today, these men and women are the protagonists of the dissemination of culture all over the world.

Montereggio Booksellers Village



Associazione “Le Maestà di Montereggio”

Author: Giacomo Maucci

INTRODUCTION

Telling the story of a country is not easy, especially if you want to give a sense of certainty in what you write. All documents, manuscripts and photographic material becomes increasingly difficult when you want to go back in time. The help for the research comes then from the oral tradition and the personal memories but, as often happens, the time fills the tales of empty, inaccuracies and inconsistencies. To these sources then you add the news of those who have already written and researched the subject, sources, however, which are not always based on documented information.

These few pages are written thanks to the initiative of "Associazione le Maestà di Montereccio"¹ and intend to stop time and make available what we consider a real peculiarity in the history of Italian culture. Most of the Italian bookshops founded in the late nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century were founded by booksellers from Lunigiana², many of whom were born in Montereccio.

Our intention is to stop time, to relive memories and those human stories that have characterized a precise, difficult and important Italian historical period going from the Risorgimento to the post World War II reconstruction. we want to keep alive the memory of all those booksellers families, who emigrated and created books activities in different Italian towns.

We will to give a future to the faces, all the pictures that the descendants of these families gave us, and to all those documents that otherwise will disappear into oblivion. We thank all those who have put at our disposal material and those who continue to do so. The story is divided into two parts: an initial, preparatory to the second, talk about Montereccio, its history, its tradition and his "heroes"; the second will document the history of the booksellers history coming from Montereccio.

¹Voluntary Association founded in 2013. Its purpose is conservative restoration of artwork and preservation of the history and traditions.

²Lunigiana a land of the north of Tuscany located between Emilia and Liguria.

MONTEREGGIO MEDIEVAL VILLAGE (FIG. 03)

Montereccio of Mulazzo (MS) is a small medieval village of feudal origin situated on the crest of the Mount Carbon, about 600 slm, between old chestnut trees. The village is located in the historic region that takes its name from the ancient Roman city of Luni, Lunigiana.

We find Montereccio, from the first half of '500, represented with different names and in many Maps documents written in latin³, what is certain that it was a military check-point, along a path, through which the Casoni Pass linked the Via Francigena and Magra Valley to Vara Valley. In the Gallery Maps of the Vatican Museums, Montereccio is shown as the village with seven towers in the Liguria regional map by Ignazio Danti of the 1850⁴.

In the village you can still find some evidences of that age: the ancient church of Saint Apolinnare (fig. 02), the towers and the ancient doors and portals. In 1573 Montereccio became an independent manor.

In Montereccio there is also the medieval “Cammino delle Maestà”. A path along which you can see the precious and ancient Maestà⁵ (fig. 01)

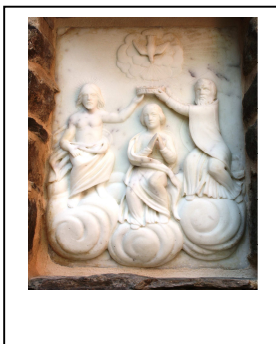


Fig 01 Sec. XVI one of Maestà “Coronation of the Virgin Mary”

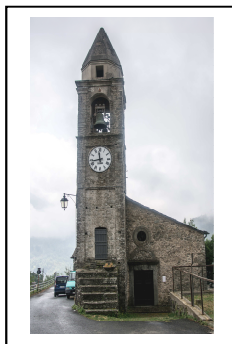


Fig 02



Fig . 03

³ Bishopric of Massa Carrara Historical Archive; Magini Giovanni Antonio, Italia, 1620, Biblioteca Vallicelliana; F. Govi, I classici che hanno fatto l'Italia, Milano, Regnani, 2010; Johann Carl Hemeling Caspirit, Lunigiana, 1730, Museo di Brno, Repubblica Ceca; Ferdinando Marozzi, Tavole della Lunigiana, 1751. www.montereccio.eu.

⁴ Gallery of Maps takes its name from the 40 maps frescoed on the walls, which represent the Italian regions and the papal properties at the time of Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585). They were painted between 1580 and 1585 on drawings by Ignazio Danti, a famous geographer of the time. Considering the Apennines as a partition element, on one side the regions surrounded by the Ligure and Tyrrhenian Seas are represented; on the other, the regions surrounded by the Adriatic Sea. The map of the main city accompanies each regional map. www.montereccio.eu.

⁵ Bas-reliefs in with marbel from Carrara.

MONTEREGGIO AND ITS TRADITIONS

A lot of men and women who gave their important contribution to Italian culture were born in Montereccio, a little village in Lunigiana. Some men fought in the Risorgimento war for the Italian independence. Others, as Ernesto Fogola⁶ (fig. 06) are heroes of the first world war. Francesco Fogolla⁷ (fig. 04), the only saint of the Bishopric of Massa Carrara, was born in Montereccio. He was bishop and martyr in China and was canonized by the Pope Giovanni Paolo II⁸

Very interesting is the “Festa del Maggio” (fig. 05), a tradition born in ancient times to celebrate the arrival of the spring and to propitiate the abundance of crops. The 1st of May men, boys and girls sing traditional folk songs in every house of the village and the owners of the houses use to thank them giving wine and food⁹.



Figura 04 San Francesco Fogolla



Figura 05 Canto del Maggio



Figura 06 Ernesto Fogola. He was the son of Fogola Giuseppe bookseller in Ancona

⁶ Maucci Giacomo, L'Aviatore Fogola, Almanacco Pontremolese 2015; Fogola Fiorella, PPVV Archivio Privato; Comunicato Gen. Cadorna, Bollettino di Guerra n. 832 del 03/09/1917; E.M. Baroni, Caffaro, 04/09/1917 Genova; Arnaldo Frascaroli, Corriere della Sera, 03/09/1917 Milano.

⁷ Luigi Lanzi, Francesco Fogolla Missionario e martire, Parma 1996; Luigi Lanzi, Francesco Fogolla apostolo in Cina, Parma, Convento SS Annunziata, 1997.

⁸ Osservatore Romano, 01/10/2000.

⁹ www.montereccio.eu.

MONTEREGGIO, THE VILLAGE OF BOOKSELLERS

It is interesting to notice that a good numbers of bookshops born at the end of the last century and the beginning of 1900 had been founded by men and women coming from Lunigiana. Entire families left from there and worked as ambulants; they left with their pannier and then they created a stall. Finally they opened some famous bookshops in many Italian towns. The tradition of booksellers in Montereccio was born in the first half of 1800 thanks to the fact that in Fivizzano developed a typographic tradition some time before than in many other European towns¹⁰. Furthermore Lunigiana, despite its position at the center of important communication routes, has never had an important town and this led people to go away.

In the first years of 1800, people migrated to the rural areas of the Po Valley¹¹. The famine of 1816/1817 changed their habits¹². Some men started to work as peddler. At the beginning, these men used to sell razor stones imported from Belgium¹³.

In the second half of 1800, this kind of trade started from Casale Monferrato in Piedmont where Giovanni Maucci opened a factory producing razor stones¹⁴ (Picture 12). Casale Monferrato will be the leaving point for all those booksellers who will open their bookshops in Piedmont. Furthermore the Ghelfi family opened a razor stones factory in Paris (picture 11).

In this world in constant development a very important role was played by risorgimental intellectuals, publishers¹⁵ and, unconsciously, the ambulant booksellers coming from Lunigiana. In the society of that time it was very easy to get a licence to sell books as no rules existed. Merchants, junk dealers and illiterates could get one¹⁶. In 1853, Sante Maucci was: farmer, dentist, razor stones seller and bookseller¹⁷. At first engravings and almanacs were bestsellers both in the towns and in the country¹⁸ (picture 10). These products costed like half a bottle of wine.

These booksellers started to sell their products in markets and fairs in a lot of towns of the north and center Italy. This gave them the chance to get in touch with the ideas of the new intellectuals of the Risorgimento. The new bourgeoisie and the young Italian aristocracy accepted to pay big amount of

¹⁰ 1470 books were printed with the first Italian furniture typefaces. Loris J Bononi, Jacopo da Fivizzano printer, Brescia 1971.

¹¹ G.B. Martinelli, Origin and development of the booksellers of Pontremoli, Pontremoli 1973.

¹² All over the Italian territory was characterized a year without a summer, this caused a great famine. Antonio Fossati, *Pagine di storia economica sabauda: 1816 -1860, Regno di Sardegna*, 1940.

¹³ In the first part '800 there was a major emigration to Belgium, Historical Town Hall Mulazzo.

¹⁴ Private Archive Maucci Giacomo.

¹⁵ Marino Berengo, *Intellectuals and booksellers in the city of Milan della Restaurazione*, Torino 1980.

¹⁶ Pomba Giuseppe, *Vieusseux Giampietro, Tenca Carlo*, *Written on the book trade in Italy*, Roma 1986.

¹⁷ Private Archive Maucci Giacomo.

¹⁸ Gabriella Solari, *Almanacchi, lunari e calendari toscani tra il '700 e '800*, Firenze 1989.

money to buy the book forbidden by the Austrian censorship. They became the best customers for the ambulant booksellers from Montereccio. For this reason the families Bertoni, Fogola, Ghelfi, Giovannacci, Maucci, Lazzarelli, Lorenzelli, Rinfreschi, Tarantola crossed the Alps with their panniers full of razor stones, and other products. They sold their goods in France and bought the forbidden books to re-sell them secretly in Italy: they can be considered as culture smugglers. The most requested books were those written by Mazzini, Mazzini, D'Azzeglio, Cattaneo, Rossetti, Pellico, Balbo but also erotic and romantic novels and the books written by Macchiavelli and Voltaire, furthermore in the Kingdom of Naples existed a counterfeit editions Market¹⁹ which were forbidden not only from Austria but also by the Savoy censorship and the Papal State, .

These booksellers used to cross customs and borders. In 1855 Luigi Fogola had the permission to go in the following countries, regularly quoted in his passport: Kingdom Lombardo Veneto, Duché d'Este, the Papal States, Piedmont, Empire of Austria, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Corsica and the Kingdom of Naples²⁰. In 1854 Luigi Fogola was arrested by the Estense authority, he had a very considerable amount of money for that age: 46 lire²¹ the cost of a pound of potatoes was 15 cents.

The history of these booksellers is amazing: these men were illiterate so we wonder how could they know and sell books. Concerning an oral tradition these men recognized books by their covers. So they had some difficulties when books changed publisher homes. Some of them learnt to read and write on their own. With the arrival of the new Italian State a school was established in Montereccio as well. The building for the school was given by Giovanni Maucci's family, the owner of the razor stones factory in Casale Monferrato (picture 09). The first official papers witnessing the existence of the school date to 1887. Giulia Tarantola born in 1870, the daughter of booksellers and wife of Giuseppe Fogola, the owner of the historical bookshops in Ancona, attended the school in Montereccio. Various papers, such as sales or purchase notes, attested how much the culture has been changing from that age to nowadays (picture 15 and 16). In 1843, the city hall in Mulazzo which belonged to the Stati Estensi, promulgated a law about copy rights (picture 12).

With the post-unitarian State, all the Italian towns become more modern and alive. This led to a series of very important economical, cultural and social changes. The booksellers become aware of these changes and some of them began to abandon the ambulant trade and established the first bookshops. From the Unity of Italy till the 1960's analphabetism decreased more and more. Men and women of all the social classes were potential readers.

At the end of 1800 Emanuele Maucci established the Casa Editoriale Maucci in Barcelona (picture 10). They chose this town because it was an important meeting point for all the literary, linguistic, cultural, ideological and commercial interests of that age. From Barcelona, Maucci started a business which led him to win the South American trade. Maucci had a very rich catalogue with European classic authors, commercial authors and cheap and important editions²². She opened a branch in Madrid and two books' distribution points in Buenos Aires and Mexico city, two towns

¹⁹ Copyright in Italian States was introduced in second part of '800.

²⁰ Historical Town Hall Mulazzo.

²¹ He had coins of different States: one Napoleone gold coin, 17 cavallotti coins, 1 Swiss franc, ½ Italy franc, 10 svanica coins. G.B. Martinelli Opera Citata.

²² He became the publisher, in Spanish language, of Carolina Invenizio. She was the most important Italian novelist. She had a large popular success between late 1800s until her death.

where some cousins and brothers in law were already working as publishers²³. His publishing houses were the first to use the press with the Linotype²⁴, which allowed to increase the productions and decrease the costs.

The Mauccis were not the only publishers coming from Montereaggio, In fact in all the families there is almost one of their members who started a business as publisher. Booksellers' family: Bertoni, Fogola, Ghelfi, Giovannacci, Maucci, Lazzarelli, Lorenzelli, Rinfreschi, Tarantola established some little but very dynamic publishing houses which offered alternative cultural models able to capture the reader's interests. Some of these books gave a very important contribution to the Italian culture.

The period going from the First World War brought not only death and destruction but also very important difficulties not only of economical kind. Some of these bookshops become a cultural meeting point and then the centre of the intellectual struggle during the fascist period. Some booksellers were pursued. During the Post war reconstruction had the chance to re-established their business thanks to their good names. A lot of publishing house gave credit to them. The number of bookshops and the editorial productions increased, some of these booksellers became stockists and distributors. A very curious thing is that bills among the booksellers were paid during the summers as everybody came back home in Montereaggio.

The great distribution, e-books and globalization denoted the end of an age. These booksellers who continues to run their bookshops have a personal relationships with their customers. These are places where you can breath culture.

In 1952, after a meeting among the booksellers from Pontremoli, comes up the idea of organizing the literary price called "Premio Bancarella" Witness of this event was the writer Oriana Fallaci. A lot of booksellers families came back to Pontremoli to participate to that great event. It was the first time that some of them met after a lot of years. During the inaugural speech the most important man of Montereaggio was rembered: Monsignor Francesco Fogolla who had contributed to make kown a very important book all over the world: the Gospel. The winner of the Premio Bancarella²⁵ should be the book which had been the most sold in the bookshops. The bookshoop's vote was the result of the relationship between his customers and himself. The winner of the second editon was Hernest Hemmingway. In 1953 the bookseller Lorenzo Rinfreschi suggest to build a monument for the booksellers in Montereaggio²⁶.

There are still some historical bookshops in Itlay, which were originally established by those men leaving form Montereaggio. Today in Montereaggio the name of the street have the names of the historical publishers. The villace has entered in the international circuit of the booktown. Every year

²³The cousins Charles, James, John the Baptist and Luigi founded the publishing house "Maucci Hermanos" and "Luis Maucci Y Cia"; brothers in law Alessandro, Carlo e Giulio founded the publishing house "Maucci Hermanos Mexico" and "Maucci Hermanos Y Hijos".

²⁴The linotype machine is a "line casting" machine used in printing. It was invented by Ottmar Mergenthaler. The operator interacts with the machine via the keyboard, composing lines of text.

²⁵Archivio Luce Video 1969: <http://senato.archivioluce.it/senato-luce/scheda/video/IL5000069822/2/Varietagrave.html>

; Archivio Luce Video 1960: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYKqa6MDUWM> .

²⁶ Interview with grandchildren Massimiliano Nencioni, Renato Tarantola, Lorenzo Sola.

it is held a Book Fair²⁷ and there is also a The Silent Book Contest²⁸. The Presidents of the Booksellers Union of Pomtremoli²⁹(picture 17) and the Premio Bancarella come from Montereccio. Also the writers³⁰, the authors and the book's artists³¹ comes from families of Montereccio. For this reason all these events would have no sense if the village lost its memory and its traditions.

We want to end this little history with the following lines representing what is Montereccio and what is its book:

"....For the last twenty years I have been writing books talking about atoms stories and unknown people, extraordinary scientists and mysterious populations, lands to explore and environments to save.

*Maybe one day I will write a book talking about Montereccio. "Montaresa" is for me first of all a place to love not a place to study. For this reason in that book, if I write it, the events and the memories will be mixed with fantasy, dreams and nostalgia. It won't be an historical book but most probably a fairy tale"*³²

²⁷ 2017 - 14^a Edition.

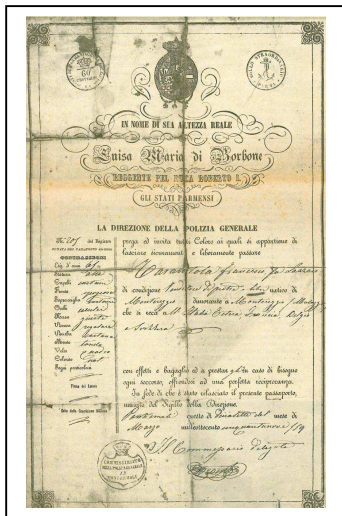
²⁸ 2017 - 4^a Edition.

²⁹ Roberto Lazzarelli.

³⁰ Marco Ciardi, www.unibo.it/sitoweb/marco.ciardi/pubblicazioni; Susanna Pighi, Il Mobile Piacentino, Piacenza 2003; Marco Pongan, Quali coloro i quali, 2003; Marco Pongan, D'estate, in luglio, 2009; Giovanni Scarpa, L'arte di vincere, 2015.

³¹ Gaetano Viscuso.

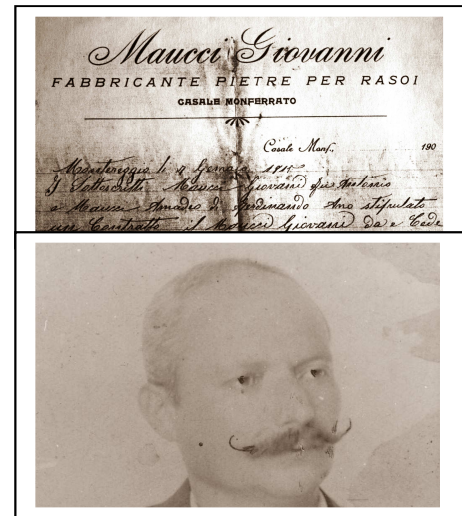
³² 2014 Letter written by Marco Ciardi in Assaociazione "Le Maestà di Montereccio" in occasione f the renovation bas-reliefs.



Picture 7 1859 License sell books and razor stones related to Luisa Maria di Borbone and Francesco Tarantola



Picture 8 1910 License sell books related by Town Hall Mulazzo to Bertoni Gio Batta domiciliato a Mantova.
Archive Ass. Le Maestà di Montereggio

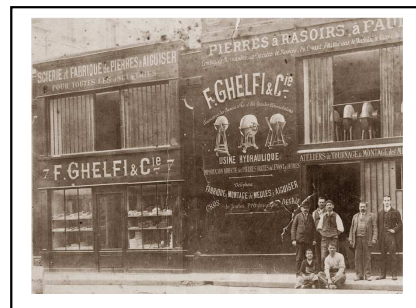


Picture 9 Lettera Intestata di Maucci Giovanni produce of razor stones in Casale Monferrato.
Private Archive Maucci Giacomo



Picture 10 First part '800

Almanac of thei Bacelli, it printed in Florence. Its price was like half bottle of wine



Picture 11 End part of '800

Parigi Ghelfi's brothers produce of razor stones



Picture 12 1843

States Estense. Low on the Coyright.

Archivio Privato Maucci Giacomo



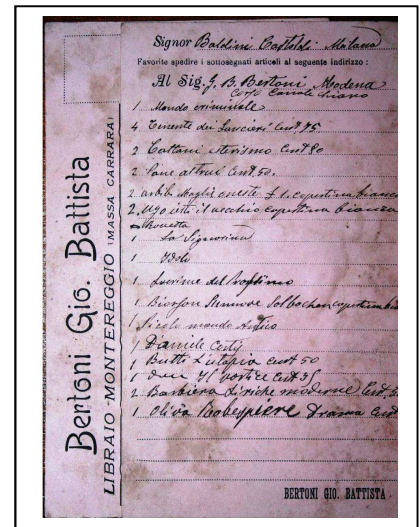
Figura10

Carolina Invernizio, Madre y Martin, Casa Editorial Maucci, Barcellona



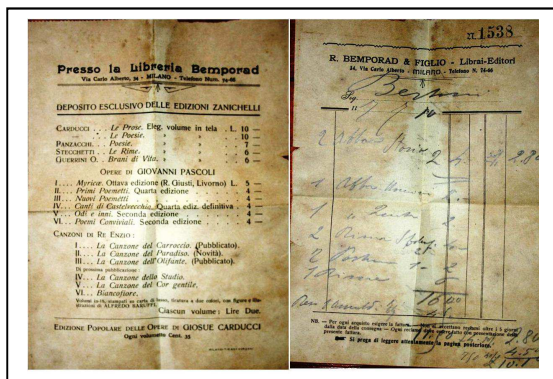
Picture 141911

The pupils in front of Montereccio' School



Picture 151911

Bookseller Berton Gio. Battista – books list.



Picture 161911

Publisher House Bemporad books list to Bertoni Giovanni Battista.

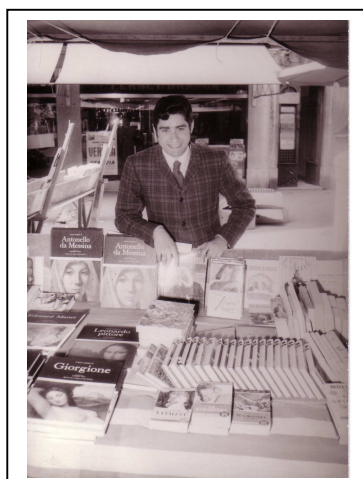


Picture 17

(upright) Roberto Lazzarelli Presidents of the Booksellers Union of Pontremoli



Picture 18 1927 License ambulant sell books Emilio Giovannacci



Picture 20 '70 Bookseller Bruno Tarantola - Venice



Picture 21 '50 Rinfreschi Bookseller Family - Milano

Associazione “Le Maestà di Montereccio” is a voluntary association and we depend on supporters like you. We look for supporters who wish to link their name (family, company, organisation) to the Montereccio Booksellers Village. You can also **donate in memory**.

Help us, so our history, culture, art and tradition will live in the future.

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