

Project : 'A tale of two twinned cities: Corato and Grenoble '

**Webinar organized by the association Atelier Généalogique on
September 24, 2021:**

“Where do we go from here ?”

"How can descendants of emigrants contribute to the documentation of emigration history, by collaborating in migration studies ?"

(Numbers below correspond to the timing of the webinar recording)

Communication of **Marina Labartino**, journalist and partner of the Atelier Généalogique in Corato: *comments on the current situation of the project 'Tale of two twinned cities : Corato and Grenoble*

01.20.50 Good evening to all,

I am Marina Labartino, journalist and member of the Editorial Committee of the website Emigrazione-Corato.Org, which has set itself the goal of enhancing what Coratino emigration has generated in the world and ensuring access to historical and genealogical information.

I congratulate Prof. James Smith, president of the association Atelier Généalogique, creator of the initiative and Louis Lafranceschina, computer scientist and webmaster, who made it a reality.

I also congratulate James for the organization of this interesting webinar that not only brought to the attention of a wide audience, the intent to promote studies and dissertations concerning a broad reconstruction of the history of emigration from Corato in the world, but also gave the privilege, to those who had the pleasure of following it, to listen to the authoritative opinion of experts in the field.

Emigration is a theme that has always been close to my heart and to which I am doubly attached for personal and professional reasons.

First of all because I am the daughter of emigrants from Corato to Turin and then, in my turn, a "returning" emigrant from Piedmont to Puglia.

And during my journalistic career, emigration has been one of the topics I have dealt with the most, trying, through interviews and the narration of events, to act as an umbilical cord between the community of Corato scattered throughout the world and the city where its roots are.

I would therefore like the opportunity to add a few more details to what has already been said.

It is true, compared to the amount of data that could be collected to write the history of emigration from Corato throughout the world, there is still very little literature.

However, I listened attentively to Prof. Stéphane Mourlane listing a series of volumes and exhibitions that could be brought together in a homogeneous work, obviously to be integrated with new information.

For Corato, the starting point was the booklet "*When we were the illegal immigrants*".

To this could be added the countless articles published over the years in LO STRADONE, organ of printed information of Corato that in 2019 celebrated its 40th year of age, many of which were reported in my thesis, having as its theme "Studies

on change in the analysis of acculturation processes", discussed in March 2013 with the supervisor Prof. Mauro Pacetti of Rome, professor of sociology and journalist. The seventh and eighth chapters are dedicated, respectively, to the acculturation of Coratini in the world and the acculturation of foreigners in Corato. Invited to publish it on the Emigrazione- Corato website by James, I have already sent him the entire work which, despite its 175 pages, will soon be available online to all.

With regard specifically to the history of Coratino emigration to Grenoble and the surrounding area in three major waves, it should be noted that the late Victor Fusaro, who died in 2012 at the age of 86 years, arrived as a child in Grenoble with his mother and two brothers, has made a detailed narrative in the 650 pages that make up the book by his signature "Raconte-moi. Ton Quartier. Images du passé."

This is why we must appreciate the perseverance and obstinacy with which James Smith has involved so many prestigious institutions in this research project, including the COMITES (Committee of Italians living abroad) in Lyon. And we are very proud to learn that the vice-presidency is entrusted to Jean Philippe Di Gennaro, whose surname testifies to his Coratini origins.

It must also be said that the project is making good progress. Yesterday, there was a meeting with the mayor of Corato, Prof. Corrado De Benedittis, who, once convinced of the validity of the initiative, involved the competent departments and immediately gave instructions to quickly digitize the volumes of the ancient municipal archives containing the passport visa applications of Corato citizens about to emigrate, in order to create a digital archive easier to consult.

The project of economic and tourist development presented on the same occasion by Mr. Joseph Marzocca was also welcomed by the first citizen, as it is in line with what is being planned in conjunction with the city of Grenoble.

We were also satisfied with the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere we experienced during the meeting with Don Peppino Lobascio, rector of the Chiesa Matrice, who was willing to talk to the Corato Chapter College, the Cultural Assets Commission of the Archdiocese of Trani and the Archbishop Monsignor D'Ascenzo, so that the archives kept in the Chiesa Matrice could be more easily consulted.

With this in mind, I wish everyone well in their work and hope that everyone, wherever they live, will be able to preserve their origins and know how to coexist with the cultures of others, keeping their own and their dignity intact. Thanks for your attention.