

Tale of two cities and two continents

Abstract

In this work, globalisation and immigration are discussed. One case is examined for its global value of impact of civilisations. Immigration from Africa is a daily concern for every citizen living around the Mediterranean Sea. Immigrants are distributed by governments in all big and small cities, but the inclusion process is too long to be visible, so contrasts and even hate between residents and refugees are diffused emotions. Refugees don't work, they are maintained by EU, meanwhile citizens are affording an unending crisis with unemployment, decrease of revenues and, at the same time, increase of prices. The two cities are Ferrara in Italy and Lagos in Nigeria; the first one, the untroubled cultural UNESCO heritage, the second, the most dangerous city of the world.

Keywords: globalisation, immigration, unemployment, political, economic, vanishing

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Introduction

Globalisation is today particularly involving migration issues both for political reasons and economic options. Migration is nevertheless not without consequences for the sending, like the receiving areas. The major displacement of people since the WWII is changing the way of life of Western countries, impoverishing them, without enriching the poor areas of origin. Many sure facts of the previous years of economic boom, gained with strong political battles, are vanishing, like assured jobs, increasing budgets, public security and efficient public services. Intangible personal and social aspects are also menaced, like respect for the persons, social cohesion, local identity and cultural pride of traditions. Social change is a natural process, but it has to evolve in a systematic and organized way. The melting pot of today is, at the opposite, revolving societies in a ground-breaking way, shocking stabilized organizations and turning upside down the future development of all the civilizations, instead of producing innovation.¹ Institutions and States are researching solutions, but the phenomenon is so rapid that only provisional and unsatisfactory answers are found.

Globalisation and immigration

In this work we intend to examine how the processes of globalization and immigration affect the social order and the sense of historical identity of local communities. The theme has largely been discussed.²⁻⁸ but we examine here a new case with few scientific references, since it is, for the moment, only a popular discussed situation. The increasing interest in international migration and the African dimensions of that migration in Europe has received considerable attention by scholar's recently.⁹ Italy might offer useful insight into the social and economic dimensions of irregular African migrants working in the city's underground economy.¹⁰ The debate on migrations encompasses geographical determinants, since migrants can impact different local conditions, which could be or not be the basis of equity and integration. Certainly a forced imposition of new inhabitants is absorbed with great difficulties, when the number of newcomers is so high.⁸

Fan¹¹ debates on labour immigration which involves concerns over ethnic interactions and tensions, and security issues of illegal immigration and border control. He arguments on migration having

demographic, economic, and social impacts on both sending and receiving areas. From our part, we can entirely rely on the words of Claudia Manenti¹² "The idea of sustainability is based on the need to preserve the natural resources for the future generations. If it is valid for environmental resources, it should also be applied to the maintenance of place identity which plays a direct key role in shaping both individual and community identity. When the typical features of places are preserved, their peculiarity is highlighted, as well as the relationship between the human beings and the living environment. Such a heritage, in relation to the place features, can be an important life anchor for future generations as a part of history and tradition, especially now, when relationships are characterized by high mobility and virtualization."

The place dimension emphasizes the place characteristics of attachment, including spatial level, specificity, and the prominence of social or physical elements.¹³ Place attachment concept and definitions are synthesized by Scannell & Gifford¹³ into a three-dimensional organizing framework: person-process-place. First: the attachment is based on individually and collectively meanings; the second dimension is the psychological process: how, affects, cognition, and behaviour are manifested in the attachment. The third dimension includes place characteristics: attachment to, and nature of a place.

The sense of space

Globalization could be a good thing, but may also be a global turmoil. Globalization is based on free movements of people, money and things, but freedom has to be regulated and organized, since freedom, without borders, even virtual ones, may be transformed into war, because of the huge number of people on the Earth. Global connection needs rules, orders and better policies or a constructed net. In social terms, globalization has been converted today into irregular migration flows, and, in economic terms, every political unity, tries to escape the crisis with contingent solutions. Probably we can speak about a global war, since fundamentalist Muslim bring terrorism all around the world, and poor escaping wars and poverty bring social disruption also all around the world. Today the Muslim extremism is following its goal of a global war against infidels. The UN High Commissioner, António Guterres, recognizes this as an "age of unprecedented mass displacement".

The reaction of countries, globally, including EU Member States, to the worst refugee crisis since World War II, has been a “shameful failure”, with the bulk of responsibility falling on a handful of countries—Amnesty International states. That makes a great burden on few Mediterranean States, which, affected by the crisis, are not more able to sustain hundreds of thousands of immigrants. This is particularly true for Greece, Malta, Spain, Italy.⁵ Begum Özkaynak,¹⁴ tells about the multi-faceted urban problems influenced by global economic integration, about the needs and the struggle of countries to be competitive in the global marketplace, like hypothesised by Cohen¹⁵ in 2004. According to Begum, local strategies have to be formed and reformed again. Nowadays solutions have to be found to face the waves of millions of immigrants. Facilities must be created, both for accepting or refusing them, for temporary hosting or for creating ways of integration. Certainly the life of all will change very fast, surely economy will never more coming out from crisis, our lifestyle must adapt to a melting pot. Our ethics, our nutrition, our education, our politics, our languages will surely change, in some ways into better, in some others, probably worse ways. In many western cities, migration is producing the conditions of the bidonvilles of the third and fourth world. Nice and elegant cities are surrounded by an even larger zone of migrant settlers, and are characterized by an increasing inequality and poverty. Some of these zones contain millions of citizens who lack basic services, security and health care. Crank & Jacoby¹⁶ consider they are vulnerable to high levels of crimes of all types, and especially organized crime. Albaneses¹⁷ states that the globalization of organized crime is upon us. Development, education, lifestyles, religions of the different States are so different that a global understanding is only a mere utopia, like it is everyday demonstrated by terrorist attacks. Alkimim¹⁸ is asserting that “crime is both a factual and perceptual component of the urban landscape, seemingly both a societal pathology and the consequence of economic disparity between social groups. Crime has a spatial structure that can be revealed by mapping. Urban crime has a spatial multiplier effect that changes the values and perceptions of how people see urban space, and which jeopardizes the quality of life of a city’s inhabitants”.

Ferrara

We aim to focus the problematic of immigration clash or, eventually, integration based on a case study in an area about which we have personal knowledge.^{19–22} The situation we will discuss is in Italy, being Italy one of the most, or probably the most involved country which saves boat people in the Mediterranean Sea. Ferrara is an ancient city, which had known great fame during the Renaissance, thanks to the enlightened dynasty of the Princes of Este. Its “grandeur” had started during the medieval age, but in the sixteen century it was one of the principal cities of Italy, based on a rich agriculture and the special fertility of the Po River basin and delta. The huge historic period had stimulated an incredible flourishing of arts and literature, whose imprinting is vital until today. The cultural heritage has made people proud of the city traditions, increasing the educational background, affirmed by the resonance of the six hundred years of University. The most renowned faculty of medicine has gained large resonance for research and innovation. At the same time, the city has passed through periods of tranquillity and quality life style. Every year the remembrances and costumes of the past are remembered in a special event and city celebrations. This has created a fundamental social identity and local cohesion. This peculiarity had evolved towards negative implications during the bourgeoning period of

industrialisation. The economic and social tranquillity assured by vast grains productivity didn’t push towards industrial transformation, which arrived quite late and partially, introduced by international finance. Until today, economy remains especially based on the primary sector, incremented by a tertiary sector, persisting the secondary sector in a limited percentage, letting today the provincial economy as one of the last developed of the rich region of Emilia-Romagna. This situation has converted Ferrara into a fragile city, with declining economy, rising unemployment, falling birth rates, increasing ageing with cumulative costs of social assistance. In facts, after the collapse of the Russian scenario, many health workers, especially from Poland or Ukraine have arrived, applying for domestic aid, offering assistance for the large number of elders, even if, historically, migration had always occurred only from the surrounding countryside. We are now at the second generation of East Europe immigrants, following the relatives arrived during the wave generated by the Russian Federation collapse. The fluxes are continually changing, at the present; the major ethnic group is that of Nigerians. It seems difficult to find the origin of the immigration of this category. Probably one cause resides in the low price of housing, due to the decrease of buildings value for the international crisis and for the one of the highest rate of ageing population in Italy, which, connected to one of the lowest birth rates of the world, doesn’t let young relatives who could inherit their properties.²³ The prices for renting, or buying houses is expensive, but also for maintain them along the years. If no one occupies the residences, the landlords prefer to rent them at a progressively lower prices, accepting also people without references. Houses have become, in previous years, very expensive, specifically after the nomination of Ferrara as UNESCO heritage. Ferrara is one of the few cities in the world to be protected and nominated for the entire dimension of its walls circle. The walls also are of outstanding values, and are also protected and maintained by the urban and States’ administration.

Immigration and price of housing

Accetturo²⁴ examine the impact of immigration on segregation patterns and housing prices in urban areas. The authors develop a spatial equilibrium model that shows how the effect of an immigrant inflow in a district affects local housing prices through changes in how natives perceive the quality of their local amenities and how this influences their mobility. They test the predictions of the model by using a novel dataset on housing prices and population variables at the district level for a sample of 20 large Italian cities. They find that immigration raises average house prices at the city level, while it reduces price growth in the district affected by the inflows. These findings are consistent with a negative effect of immigrants on native’s perceived local amenities. A particular case about buildings value variation and occupation over times concerns a skyscraper, constructed in a strategic position in the city centre of Ferrara, near the railway station. It had been a discussed case between administration and population, during its construction, since its shape is too divergent from the urban style and from the typical low profile of an ancient city of medieval origins. Even its colour diverges from the red dominating bricks, especially since the two towers’ colour is similar to that of the cement. Just after its construction, the middle classes feel pleased to reside there, but with the course of time, the costs of the maintenance increased rapidly, being the building a popular – say - low price structure, constructed in a hurry, in times of lack of residences accessible for the inhabitants coming from the countryside. Being the only one skyscraper in the city and surroundings, the services

of maintenance were not at all appropriate, or progressively more expensive than foreseen. Being a building with only private flats, and any offices or enterprises' lofts, some private owners felt unable to correspond the requested amount of money.

Due to this series of causes, renters and owners started to abandon, little by little, the small flats, hard-pressed by the fact that our legislation is requesting that if someone doesn't pay the common expenditures, others co-habitants have to pay for him. The costs of services had tremendously increased in the last decades, especially those of electricity and hitting, which in this location were centrally managed and distributed towards each apartment. The prices of this tall building continued to descend, until a second wave of Chinese population, who principally appreciated the diminution of costs, dominated the housing market and bought the major parts of the ill-reputed edifice. With people interested in the low prices, instead of high quality residence, the maintenance of this building and others had fallen in charge of the local administration, which pays rent and restoration of flats occupied by the poorer citizens and immigrants.^{3,25} A new class of assisted citizens substituted the first tenants, until the picture of today, when the majority is formed by African residents. African residents are quite exclusively young men, of the last immigration, who, as refugees, are not requested to work. They enjoy all the night inside and outside, along the garden adjacent to the towers. The consequence of that is that all the city quarter has initiated a descending way of decadence. Bars, hotels, restaurants, shops are closing, due to the danger of people who during the night become drug smugglers.^{4,26} This reflects the results of Adel & Salheen²⁷ who studied that "Crime differs from community to another, even within one community it doesn't occur equally in all places and nor by the same way. It is also concentrated in some places more than others, while other scholars have drawn the attention to its relation with the built environment. The fact is that this nationality is dominating and controlling the city. Groups of young men in their twenties patrol every night the streets by bikes, demonstrating to have perceived the characteristic of the local identity, being bicycle the preferred mean of transport in this completely flat plain. Bikes are evidently stolen, since the police correlate this habit with the increasing robbery in garages, fact never occurred before. A confirmation is that stealing is not correlated with the theft of cars which, at the opposite, has decreased. We can suppose that foreigners don't have the national driving licence. A curious fact is occurring, depending on this: temporary residents steal bicycles, as confirmed by police, but they abandon the old bikes when they can find better ones. National residents, who have lost their mean of transport, re-collect the abandoned bikes, making a circle of bikes' life. Residents don't buy new ones, since they attract more the thefts.

The games of young Africans become, on the other part, more dangerous. They assault women for stealing pockets and telephones, they afford in groups policemen, and since many police forces are represented by women, it becomes easier to block them during their duties. This makes civilization going back of centuries, since we know the African women are not respected, both in families and in society.²⁸ Being the area, frequented by African, near the railway station, police has decided to close the entrance during the night. Residents are very disappointed by this situation, they criticise the inability of the local major to manage the situation and they think police be unable to control the public order. They ask for the military forces, as the ultimate and only feasible solution. Refugees are allowed to stay two years in western countries, but, before, they have to demonstrate by

law their state of political refugees. If this position is not confirmed by law, immigrants have the possibility to apply several times, so times passes. By confronting the citizens, the major has asserted that immigrants represent richness for the city, even if citizens don't think so. The assertion derives from the economic crisis which seems never ending. The richness is determined by the money that EU gives to the member States to afford the immigration emergency. The money consists in about 37 Euros per day for every person. This is more than a daily salary of a national worker who, in a counterpart, has to maintain home and family. The reality is that money doesn't pass through the hands of refugees; money finish in the pockets of NGOs, who, under the appearance of "humanitarianism", host in public spaces, and nourish with catholic aids the crowds of refugees. These last ones don't see any money; it is said that they are gifted only two dollars a day, which have to be spent in the facilities, in which they are hosted. So the money comes back to the nationals. It is difficult to make a total evaluation of the aids, since it has been discovered that official registers have been modified in order to demonstrate to have more immigrants, than in reality. Some calculations tell about 3 billion Euros per year, entering only in Italy. The danger is that the criminal organizations which are patrolling the part of the Mediterranean facing Africa could profit of this "legal" mean of revenues. Certainly, the more Southern islands, which, at the beginning of the fluxes, opposed the hosting policy, today are very quiet and seem to be content of the unending arriving guests. If they were once regarding the people saved on the sea, as a menace for their main activity, which is tourism, today they have a peak season all the yearlong, thanks to them.

The two faces of migration perception by the inhabitants

National residents in Italy are continually discussing this situation along two fronts. The governing party is in favour of accepting all the immigrants, the opposition strongly and totally opposes every newcomer. The fact is that Italy is tied with the duty of respecting the EU Dublin Agreement which has designed, as hosting countries, only five States on the Mediterranean. One program on a famous TV channel, send journalists every day to a different locality in Italy, to taste the judgment of the population. Being this channel directed by the opposition, the main voices are those of the opponents of the immigration policy, who present cases of economic and social degradation. The TV program presents cases of fights similar to a civil war, with upset people who refuse even the idea of having immigrants, and discuss the illegal behaviour of most of them. To close the discussion, people in favour of accepting all immigrants offend the opponents with the judgment of "racism" but this concept could be referred to a 'blood and soil', or probably better, "soil nationalism" of the mainland Europe, which intends not to accept people grown up without civil education in lands exploited by political corruption and expecting that Europeans solve situations both in Europe and in the origin territories. Vincenzo Ruggiero²⁹ agrees with who rejected the automatic association between immigrants and criminality, observing that, at most, the criminality of non-nationals increases along with their growing integration within the society of the host country. I don't agree on that hypothesis, since it is not question of integration, but of progressive acquaintance with the deficiencies of the trial court system which permits skipping among laws.

This reflects the research of Alkimim¹⁸ who examines the question of whether the geography of actual criminal acts is echoed by peoples'

perceptions of crime, what might be termed their “spaces of fear”. The authors ask how the fear of crime is associated with reported urban crime. Surely in a city of peace like Ferrara, the fear is perceived as major, because the low cases of crimes in previous times. Another reason is the age of population, since fear is more related to aged population. Davoudi & Wishardt³⁰ affirm that without the regulation or, at least, management of types and destinations of immigration, demographic imbalances will not be addressed at the regional level. Furthermore, while the freedom of movement may have some macro-economic benefits and address population imbalances in some (mainly metropolitan) areas, pre-existent trends undermining both socio-economic cohesion and sustainable patterns of development are unlikely to be resolved. Alkimim¹⁸ in relating about Viçosa -Brasil, confirms a question similar to the city of Ferrara, in explaining how reported criminal acts reveal a clustered geography, focusing particularly on the downtown area, where there is a concentration of urban wealth and potential victims are more numerous. Offenses against property are focused on downtown, while offenses against the persons were located mostly in peripheral areas. The widespread feeling of insecurity in the city’s neighborhoods, reflecting the fear of becoming a victim of violence and crime, was common throughout his studied city. Results confirmed the conclusion of past studies showing that the fear of violence and crime are not directly related to increasing numbers of criminal reports. Sites with higher incidence of crimes are not places with higher levels of fear. Albanese¹⁷ shares the opinion that transnational organized crime poses a national security threat and that emphasis should be placed on the need to enhance intelligence sharing, protecting the financial system, and strengthen investigations and prosecutions.

Degradation instead of innovation

Ferrara is always on the stage of this communication’s images and radio discussions. A city, famous for its peace and tranquillity, has become one of the most dangerous in the nation. It seems that the only feasible and productive solution may be cooperation among citizens and the police forces. Malaguti³¹ “formally attests, with unprecedented severity, that “now the immigrants who commit crimes in our houses have full control of the territory and that the police are no longer able to guarantee the safety of citizens”. Considerations on the condemnation of the “mafia system”, established by the drug dealers who now find a more rentable commerce on human beings, are alternated with criticism towards the municipal administration and the police, in particular the municipal police which, according Malaguti,³¹ “gave up, with the backing of its master, to the work for which it is paid by citizens. In a “normal” country the commander should resign, and declare his inability to perform the duties in the public interest for which he was designated. A whole piece of the city is no longer available to citizens, but it is now territory run and controlled by criminals and illegals.

UNESCO

Ferrara, city of the Renaissance, and its Po Delta, situated within the Emilia Romagna region of Italy, is a remarkable cultural landscape, declared UNESCO site.³²⁻³⁵ The city had been an important medieval centre, a free city with its own laws and even its own mint, but only under the noble Este’s family, during the Renaissance, it become an internationally known capital with great importance thanks to the arts, economics, ideology and religion, being tied to the Vatican. The court flourished in splendour and for two centuries was on a par

with cities such as Florence and Venice or with other great European courts in France or Spain. The brilliant court of the Este attracted leading artists, poets and philosophers and became a major centre for the development and practical application of ‘new humanism’ in Italy.³⁶ The humanist concept of the ‘ideal city’ came to life here from 1492 onwards by the architect Biagio Rossetti, who created the first “modern city” of the world, according to the new principles of perspective. The completion of this project marked the birth of modern town planning and influenced its subsequent development. The Ferrarese architectural school exported urban design views and elements, such as walls and fortresses, into the planning of other Italian and European cities.³⁷

The property is protected under national cultural heritage legislation: (Legislative Decree 42/2004). The Regional Management and Supervision undertakes monitoring to ensure compliance with the national legislation.³⁸ At the regional level, there are three specific planning systems. The Regional Landscape Plan (PTPR) establishes regulations with regard to the historical-cultural identity of locations and the surrounding landscape. The Po Delta Park Plan’s aim is to protect the areas of natural importance.³⁹ The Provincial Territorial Plan (PTCP) identifies the synergies and actions needed to develop traditional economic activities and tourism in a manner that protects the character of the environment and the countryside. In addition, the Municipality of Ferrara has an approved Urban Planning Tool that identifies the whole of the historic city inside the walls as an area of cultural interest, and consolidates the high degree of protection that has been in place since 1975. The management of the property is coordinated through a multi-level government Site Steering Committee. The Committee is responsible for preparing and implementing the annual Management Plan. A key aim of the Management Plan is to increase public awareness, particularly of local residents and workers, with regard to the extent of the property and its “outstanding importance.”^{40,41}

All this contrasts with the reality of everyday life, when the municipality indistinctly accept every illegal immigrant doing nothing to contrast degradation.⁴² The famous cultural background of Ferrara and its renowned life of peace and tranquillity is every day confronted with the immigration of one of the most dangerous community of the world Pakes.⁴³ The majority of immigrants come from Nigeria, where the most populated city with 13 million of inhabitants is Lagos, ascertained as the most dangerous city in the world. Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa, with 181,5 million of inhabitants, divided into 250 ethnic groups; it has a percentage of 92,95 people under the age of 55, and 43% under the age of 14. Life expectancy is of only 53 years; Children under 5 years of age are undernourished for 19,8%, and 29% of children, aged 5-14, are in working conditions. Education expenditure are not available, meanwhile literacy accounts for only 59,6% (CIA World Facts Book)). Nigeria is the second country in the world of people living with AIDS. It is a transit point for heroin and cocaine intended for European, East Asian, and North American markets; safe haven for Nigerian narco-traffickers operating worldwide; major money-laundering centre; massive corruption and criminal activity (CIA, cit.). Correlation with economic data lets us expect better conditions for the population since the GDP per capita is six thousand dollars, in an economy which is the largest of Africa, accounting in 2015 for 1,1 trillion of dollars, with large revenues deriving from oil since 1970.

International participatory Aids

Nigeria nurtures a large part of international migration, but it has large revenues from oil, probably the gains foster a large corrupted administration, since even the Italian national oil company had to pay an incredible amount of money to extract resources. More, the nation is propelled by many international organizations, which are:

ACP, AfDB, AU, C, CD, D-8, ECOWAS, EITI (compliant country), FAO, G-15, G-24, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, MINURSO, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, NAM, OAS (observer), OIC, OPCW, OPEC, PCA, UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNIFIL, UNISFA, UNITAR, UNMIL, UNMISS, UNOCI, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO. Furthermore, the country exports more value than imported one, and an average of GDP per capita of 6 thousand dollars per year could permit a satisfactory level of sustenance, according to African standards Steffensmeier⁴⁴ Surely the reality is worse than foreseeable from official data, if we look at other rates: Underweight children account for 19, 8%; children (5-14 years) under labour condition account for 29%; probably more challenging is the number of children per woman which is of 5,19. Surely, these demographic data could solve many ageing and decreasing population threats of the old Europe, but the process would be fruitful only in conditions of peace, honesty, equity and integration, which is not the case today Zheng⁴⁵ since too divergent are the conditions of the two continents. This is not involving racism, it concerns centuries of different ways of life, different political situations and different systems of education.

Conclusion

Europeans have on their shoulders millennia of fights against dominators, dictators and conquerors, centuries of battles for human and civil rights, preparation for skilled works, and efforts for studying and surviving in a, probably excessive, framework of global competition. Africa is not able to sort from poverty, illegality, exploitation, corruption; the last chance is migration, but probably also this option would fail, because Africans would expect resurrection from others, instead of battling for themselves by themselves.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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