



FINAVAL

TO KNOW OUR THE SEFARERS

INTRODUCTION

Every year, thousands of ships ply the oceans of the world. Transmarine technology has indeed shrunk the miles between our continents, making it possible to transport virtually anything from one shore to the next. The success of an operation, however, lies in the seafarers and crew that make it happen. Throughout every journey, there are lives that inhabit these vessels and they, too, have something to offer from one individual to another.

Getting to Know the Seafarer: A Guidebook for Onboard Relations is inspired by a cultural awareness program undertaken by FINAVAL. S.p.A. It is designed to help our seafarers to achieve a better appreciation of their colleagues from different country. Familiarizing oneself with the cultures that surround him can contribute to better work relationships as seafarers traverse the globe, spending weeks and even months in each other's company.

As in every country, culture and history influence a people's collective persona. The following pages attempt to draw a picture of seafarers based on their value, mores and manners.

Fabrizio Mazzucchi
Crew Manager Finaval S.p.A

I have read carefully this work and I find it extremely meritorious. Definitely for the contents, but first of all for the purpose. An example to follow not only to shipping companies, but for anyone to employ people of different nationalities.

Examples like these should be promoted primarily by any institution, public or private, who knows the meaning of globalizations in all its innermost meaning and want to spread the effects and values. Essential for the times that we live. In this sense all the more appreciated this initiative will be absolutely private, whose sole purpose is to ensure dialogue, understanding and coexistence among people who surf for us.

People who are forced to live from day to relate in particular to a form of forced to live together for months on board ship.

Our assistance is intended to ensure that their well-being also relate in mutual understanding, help the way they work and ultimately the way we work and the good results of our company.

The book is written in three hands, one Italian, one Indian and one Filipino, because the talk of connazionali ensure its authenticity. Why the reader perceives the true nature and character of the main subjects of this work: our seamen

Gabriele Arveda
Human Resource Manager – Finaval S.p.A



UNDERSTANDING ITALIAN SEAFARERS

by
Fulvio Costigliolo

The author of this part of booklet, Fulvio Costigliolo, is a marine engineer with a Title of Surveyor and Expert in ships' averages, Hull & Machinery c/o the Chamber of Commerce of Genoa. He has served as a Junior Engineer on board from 1962 till 1974, to become the Chief Engineer .

In 1975, he become Technical Superintendent in the Villain & Fassio in Genoa and till 2011 he has covered the same position in few Company with the duties of Site Manager for New Building too.



The more and more frequent employment of the mixed crew, with the seafarers originally of different nationalities, gave rise for the Owners to the problem of preservation of the good cohabitation on board. For the successful ship's management it is very important to create the harmony among the heterogeneous components of the crew.

All the problems that are characteristic of the racial integration in a national territory are amplified on board the vessel where the space that each person can devote to his own necessities is much more reduced. Unavoidably, the cohabitation in the public spaces is much more accentuate and the intolerance for the other people's usages favours the incomprehension which is to the detriment of the good proceeding of the life on board.

The absence of the family and of the usual friends encouraged the former seafarers to find among the colleagues on board those acts of good neighbours which were missing. The diffusion of the mixed crew has originally limited also this custom that was of great help for the seaman in facing the long period of engagement.

Only the commendable effort of several ships' operators in trying to understand and to solve the problems created by the living together of so many people in a so restricted space, has mitigated the negative impact of whom has lived the diffusion of the heterogeneous crew.

The best way to favour the integration among the various races has been to make known their prevailing customs, so that those who are approaching them for the first time, can evaluate what is suit for their own emotional behavior and try to keep themselves away from what could create problems of incomprehension and of living together.

Several Owners are engaged to diffuse on board their vessels the information on the usages, the customs, the way of thinking, the faith, etc of the majority of the nationalities from which the seafarers are coming and the results already obtained are more than satisfactory.

Also our Company, Finaval S.p.A., has given commencement to her own program of "Cultural Integration among the Crew Members" on her vessels by means of the distribution of pamphlets concerning the Indian, the Filipino and the Italian nationalities.

Chapter 1: FOREWARD

Mutual knowledge among crew is one of the essential conditions for harmony and good relations on board, with the latter being crucial for successful ship management.

The increasing use of multinational crews with staff coming from several different nations has prompted ship owners and operators to promote integration between the various ethnic groups of seafarers employed on their ships by distributing pamphlets that summarize their most common customs, traditions, way of thought, religion, etc. The same reasoning applies to understanding Italian seafarers, where information on the way they interact with others, their most common personality styles and even some idiomatic expressions that cannot be found in dictionaries should accelerate on board familiarization with colleagues from other nations.

The purpose of this booklet is to offer assistance to those who are interested in having a quick general idea of the "Italians" that one can come in contact with on board. Many people, including former sailors, have cooperated in carrying out this work, without the help of anthropologists, sociologists or psychologists. The knowledge that has now been collected in these few pages has been acquired through long onboard experience and turnover of many crews with the hope that it can be of assistance to foreign seafarers who are part of the Finaval fleet and who come in contact with Italian colleagues for the first time.

The term "mixed Italians" was used deliberately to introduce the concept of an Italian nation intended as a cluster of regions and cities whose inhabitants combine to form one homeland although they are still influenced by the customs and ways of thinking deriving from their past history.

Italy was unified only 150 years ago after centuries of foreign domination that kept them divided, favouring the use of different languages (at least three: French, Spanish and German), not including the many dialects that have shaped the manner of expression, customs and even their personality. Generally speaking, seafarers from northern Italy are more pragmatic whereas those from southern Italy are more fatalistic but also more patient in times of hardship - this is due to the influence of Austrian domination in the north and Spanish domination in the South.

The Southern Seafarer is more fatalistic and more submissive but this should not be misunderstood as a weakness in their personality to be used to one's advantage as this may provoke a strong unexpected counter-reaction.

The Northern Seafarer is more rational and tends to ask himself if an action is needed or if it is strictly necessary before doing it. This attitude should not be interpreted as a lack of will in undertaking work or being challenged.

Obviously, these are merely general features that can even be disputed by the people whom one is in contact with themselves.

The conception of time is also different. In the South, time is intended as a succession of moments without a fixed point of beginning or completing an action so that what cannot be done today will be finished tomorrow. This is the concept of "maniana" that the Spaniards have passed on to Southern Italy and which needs to be mentioned because it seems to also be adopted by international rules to protect

the crew. Each shift has a necessary period of rest, and that is the case even if the operations underway have not yet been completed.

It should also be pointed out that the country stretches geographically from north to south by about 1300 km through plains and high mountains, with climatic variations that change people's spirit of adaptation to their environment. For example, Italians' reactions to heat or cold differ based on the geographical location of their hometown, just as Italians have dissimilar feeding patterns to better suit the local climate. The requirement and custom of a "siesta" or "nap" in hot climates is perhaps most felt by Southern-Central seafarers compared to those coming from the North, while the cold northern climate is better tolerated by Northern Seafarers.

Of course it is not an easy task for a foreigner to understand that despite the fact that Italy is a sole geographical expression, its Italians are so different and the Northern and Southern areas have not yet been ethnically unified. This booklet is intended to give its readers basic knowledge of the Italians who are most commonly part of the seafaring crews.



Chapter 2: KNOWING ITALY

Italy is a peninsula of about 301,336 km² with 60 million inhabitants, situated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea that stretches from latitude 47 ° North (approximately) to latitude 36 ° South (approximately), having two major islands (Sicily and Sardinia) and dozens of other smaller densely-populated islands which supply qualified seafarers in all categories of on board services.

Politically speaking, Italy is a republic with a bicameral system, divided into 20 regions, 5 of which have special status.

The country has a great seafaring tradition that dates back to Roman times, when Roman ships dominated the Mediterranean, extending their trade across the Straits of Gibraltar and sailing to the North and South.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the four Maritime Republics (Amalfi, Pisa, Venice and Genoa) controlled all the commerce of the Mediterranean Sea for centuries, establishing trade by sea with the entire world as it was known at that time.

Today, Italy is the seventh-largest economy and is part of the Western defence system NATO where its navy ships of national construction play an active role. The shipbuilding industry is flourishing, and it specializes in the construction of large cruise ships, military vessels and fast ferries.

Most major cities located by the sea have nautical institutes which provide training for the rank of Marine Officers and many also have professional schools which offer preparation for other ranks as well.

There are two great Italian navigators who discovered the New World: Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci (who gave his name to the continent, America).

It is said that the magnetic compass was introduced to the Western world by people from the Amalfi Coast. (Southern Italy).

The propeller for marine engine propulsion seems to have been invented in Trieste (when the city was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire).

Most seafarers come from regions and cities scattered along the coast, with a higher incidence in the areas that have ancient maritime traditions. The seafarers' hometown distinctly characterizes their habits, customs, language and even their social behaviour.

There is, however, a minority of "inland" seafarers who come from cities that are located far from the coast – they are viewed by their colleagues with an air of superiority which is completely unjustified.

These seafarers have usually chosen to work on board because they have a strong fascination for the sea. The extraordinary devotion they draw on when carrying out their tasks helps them obtain the same results as their coastal colleagues, the latter who have acquired seafaring knowledge from the simple fact of living in maritime coastal centres.

Chapter 3: KNOWING THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

(From Southern to Northern Italy, passing by the Centre and the Islands)

Broadly speaking, we will try to mention the most salient information that distinguishes seafarers according to the three main geographical areas in which Italy is traditionally divided: South - Centre - North.

3.1: Italians from Southern Italy and Sicily (Sicilia)

From the historical point of view, southern Italy along with its large island Sicily, was ruled by a royal family of Spanish mother tongue, but the influence of this language on the local dialects were relatively modest, with the exception of some words that have come to be used idiomatically.

ADDIMURARI (TO DELAY) FROM THE SPANISH “DEMORA” –
ISARI (TO RISE) FROM THE SPANISH “IZAR”-
MANTA (BLANKET) FROM THE SPANISH “MANTA”-
SCUPETTA (SHOTGUN) FROM THE SPANISH “ESCOPETA”
PARACCU (UMBRELLA) FROM THE SPANISH “PARAGUAS”
STRUPPIARISI (TO GET HURT) FROM THE SPANISH “ESTROPEAR”

The influence of the Spanish language was more prominent on the other great Italian island, Sardinia, where the proximity to mainland Spain and its Mediterranean islands favoured sea trade, promiscuity of populations and transfer of the Spanish vocabulary despite the fact that the island was part of the Piedmont kingdom of French mother tongue for centuries. Particular but quite intelligible to other Italians is the Sicilian dialect, used especially for informal conversation between fellow countrymen - it has introduced apparently unkind words to the onboard Italian language which have by now become universally and warmly accepted by co-workers.

How can one not accept the interjection “minchia!” (fuck) from the mouth of a typical Sicilian? With this expression, the speaker absolutely does not intend to be offensive towards the interlocutor.

As a general rule, the use that Italians make of dialect should not be regarded as a form of rudeness. By speaking in dialect, fellow countrymen are not trying to isolate themselves from other onboard colleagues – they are simply using it as a means of communication that is more comprehensible as it allows the other party to transmit sensations, ideas and nuances which the Italian language cannot convey (often because the speakers master their mother tongue less than their dialect). In Southern Italy, there are several training centres that prepare excellent seafarers for all ranks on board, who bring along with them their customs and dialect which is markedly characteristic of their hometown.

Our company has seafarers from Pozzallo, Riposto and Trapani, who also have experience on fishing boats, proven familiarity with nautical ropes and equipment in general, and great resistance to fatigue.

According to recent surveys the town of Pozzallo is the Italian municipality that has the highest ratio of residents and seafarers and is also home to a historic "Nautical Institute" (La Pira).

If there are a sufficiently large number of Sicilian seafarers onboard and the cook is Italian, it is likely that some dishes of the local cuisine are prepared and enjoyed on board. Pasta with sardines or pasta with "quails" is always appreciated not only by Sicilians but also by the rest of the crew. If the chef is not Italian, it is also possible that some willing and able volunteer gives a Sicilian food crash course to the foreign cook, and if the ingredients necessary are available, succulent local delicacies can be prepared.

The art of preparing cannoli with cream when ricotta is not available is quite well known also among eastern cooks and is always an unexpected and pleasant surprise at the table. On the opposite side of the country, there are the flourishing centres of Apulia (Puglia in Italian), which perhaps more in the past than now, supplied great engine staff and seafarers. Their dialects are distinctive, almost incomprehensible to those who are not from the South-Eastern part of Italy. Trying to decipher a conversation in dialect among seafarers from Puglia would be a waste of time for those who are not familiar with the Italian language.

Who would think that it is an Italian speaking when hearing the following expression? "Scitt(e) nu grait(e) e fusciatinn(e)"= Scream and Run (used when one is facing a situation where it is better to leave or stay out of)

Normally the Apulian people are accustomed to cultural exchanges with countries bordering the Adriatic Sea (Greece, Albania, Montenegro, etc.) therefore socializing for the Levantine people with Italian and foreign colleagues comes easy to them as well. One of the most famous maritime centres from the Apuglia region is Molfetta. People from this region are great fishermen and fish eaters. Those who have not been infected by the computer frenzy still practice fishing as their favourite leisure time activity, angling astern when the ship is stationary in the harbour. They are even willing to sacrifice their rest period for fishing, sometimes even at night (fishing light). If the bay is full of fish, a seafarer from Molfetta who fishes astern the ship secures a good fish meal for the entire crew.

It is interesting to mention that "stern fishermen" have always been the terror of engine officers because there is always the danger that the lines get hooked up and wound around the propeller shaft, damaging the outer seal of the oil box. A while ago with turbine plants, when the ship propeller was in constant slow rotation at anchorage, many chief engineers prohibited hanging fishing lines on the stern.

The custom of eating raw fish (with a little lemon juice or even without) was introduced by seafarers from Molfetta long before the arrival of "sushi" from Japan.

People from Molfetta are also great eaters of vegetables: beans, chickpeas and roasted pumpkin seeds. Yes, they also eat chickpeas, at least on the ships which have not been subjected to the tradition that binds chickpeas with rough seas and storms encountered along the route. Finally is it worth mentioning the very rich and valuable community of Neapolitans which embody all the seafarers from the Campania region and the numerous islands of the Gulf of Naples.

We should note in particular the seafarers from Sorrento and Amalfi who embody the glorious traditions of the Marine Republic of Amalfi, of which they are proud descendants. The seafaring profession as a traditional line of work has always been a source of pride for these people, who have lived in perfect symbiosis with the sea for centuries.

People from Procida (Procida Island) were famous as engine officers for steam propulsion plants (turbine personnel) but today, these seafarers have adapted to all ship types.

Moreover, Campania is home to the largest concentration of shipowners, thereby promoting the development and increasing professionalism of the crews that rotate on their ships. The Neapolitan is traditionally in good spirits, using animated slang expressions on board.

However, the festive and expansive character typical of Neapolitans should not be interpreted as a lack of seriousness on the job or of little commitment.

The Spanish "philosophy" of life has been rooted in the Neapolitans perhaps more than among any other southern Italians. **Man must work to live, not live to work.** It is only fair that there is a break where one can disconnect from work-related problems on board after work.

Another common form of expressing good mood among the Neapolitans is singing. To many, this may be a disturbance or it might seem inappropriate because of the belief that it takes attention away from the job at hand. Instead, for them singing frees their mind from other thoughts and concerns that can actually create distraction, especially on board where loneliness and distance away from family is a heavy burden. Speaking of Neapolitans, let's not forget the many forms of superstition and measures used to ward off the evil eye and all its consequences. For example:

- Making the hand gesture of the sign of the horns to ward off the evil influence that can be passed on from the person they're talking to or which came near them.
- Touch horns
- Walk under a ladder

These "pagan" beliefs should not be considered as a form of folklore or lack of seriousness on the part of those who practice them. The horn hanging at the workplace, perhaps next to the image of the patron saint should not be criticized because in addition to being superstitious, the Neapolitan is also very religious.

About the Patron Saint, we must specifically mention San Gennaro whose protection the Neapolitans rely on and entrust the dearest people in their lives. Do not be surprised if they also curse him if anything in their life or at work does not go as they wish. Hence the famous expression "damn to San Gennaro!" The Neapolitan dialect is quite understandable and is generally not a big problem if used instead of the Italian language.

The terms " tira a campà " (live from day to day) and "a umma a umma" (secretly, without anyone's knowledge) are now part of the lexicon known and used by many Italians.

In addition, there is a whole series of Neapolitan sayings and proverbs such as:

- A femmena è comme 'a gatta: scippa e fuje - A woman is like a cat, it scratches and runs
- A ogne casa nce ave 'a sta 'na croce - Every household has its own troubles
- Chi vo' male a' chesta casa hadda muri primma che trase - Whoever wants to hurt this house must die before entering
- 'O pesce fete d'a capa - The fish stinks from the head
- 'O purpo se coce cu ll'acqua soja - The octopus is cooked in its water (sooner or later the chickens are coming home to roost)
- Ogne scarrafone è bello 'a mamma soja - Every cockroach is beautiful to its mother

Even food is influenced by the hometown, a phenomenon that affects the population at large and consequently also the seafarers.

Normally Italians from the South tend to be more "pasta" eaters than those from the North, where rice and other grains are common. An Italian from the South does not dislike a daily plate of spaghetti, therefore an "expert" cook should not only prepare a good risotto but also a steaming plate of spaghetti with tomato sauce as an alternative.

On ships with mixed crews (Westerners and Easterners), Eastern cooks should also adopt this simple conduct to "conquer" the sympathy of Italians, especially those from the South. In the past more than now, it was customary for sailors to bring some homemade culinary specialties for colleagues to savour after boarding or after obtaining a license.

One could rest assured that "the suitcases of Southern seafarers" always contained some delicacies, whether sweet or salty. This was the case because even the sweets of the South are different - they are sweeter and have a prevailing almond base.

Friendship and hospitality are very important values for southern Italians. Onboard this translates into invitations to one's cabin for a chat about topics beyond work-related activities while enjoying a soft drink in good company. Usually these invitations are made with sincerity and warmth- rejecting them would be a serious lack of respect. The guest should not feel obliged to immediately repay the host, who can be visited "empty handed". Reciprocating the invitation at the next favourable opportunity is usually a sign that the guest has enjoyed the visit.

For Southern seafarers, family and relatives are a matter of ethics and honour, therefore they do not particularly like getting into heated conversations about issues that involve them. When angry, one should avoid using certain expressions that make reference to mothers or sisters (as frequently done in the North although the attribution is purely literary).

3.2: Italians from Central Italy and Sardinia (Sardegna)

Seafarers from Central Italy and Sardinia have never been and perhaps are still not as numerous as those from the rest of the Peninsula. Consequently, we do not have any peculiar features to highlight. Perhaps we can consider seafarers from the cities surrounding Campania (for example, Formia, Gaeta) similar to those from Naples, whereas the Tuscans from Livorno, Pisa and the island of Elba can be considered as analogous to those from northern Italy, of whom we will mention more later. Only the dialects, which the Tuscans regard as the real Italian language, distinguish Central-Italian seafarers from their national colleagues. But we must point out that both the Tuscan and the "Romanesque" dialects are relatively comprehensible even for those who are in the process of learning the basics of the Italian language.

Their tendency to socialize with the people around them leads them to get acquainted with their colleagues easily and quickly. One of the peculiarities of seafarers from central Italy which can affect their interaction with others is that they speak frankly, without reserves or beating around the bush. "Yes" and "No" are used in the pure sense of the literary expressions. The nuanced meaning of "maybe", "we'll see," "perhaps," "I do not know" is not usually part of the lexicon they adopt to interact. This direct and sometimes blunt manner of expressing their point of view might seem as a form of detachment from the listener but in reality it is not so. Perhaps it comes from mastery of the language that central Italians enjoy compared to the rest of the Italians (the local dialects have more resonance with the mother tongue compared to the rest of the country), therefore every time they want to communicate a nuance that comes to their mind, they immediately find the most suitable linguistic expression and do not use the simple "Yes" or "No" to convey a shaded belief. Be careful not to misinterpret any reference made to the gods of the Catholic religion in times of hardship or excessive euphoria. The use of "Madonna bona" or "Dio bono (Good Lord)" should not be regarded as a curse but as a cry for help or a form of thanksgiving the heavens.

There are many traditional dishes that seafarers from central Italy prefer and that the chef prepares when many of them are on-board. Some dishes have now been incorporated in international menus such as the Roman spaghetti "all'Amatriciana" and Spaghetti "alla Carbonara". Even eastern cooks have by now become more or less experts in preparing these delicacies and periodically exhibit their knowledge by delighting the table with a steaming plate of spaghetti.

When fresh fish is available on board, perhaps because it has been caught in the harbour, the cook could prepare a spicy fish soup with croutons to remind the Tuscans (if any) of their local dishes with an imitation of the typical "Caciucco" from Livorno. Doing so would make everyone happy, not just the Tuscans.

Sardinia is an entity in itself.

Proximity with Spain has influenced customs and traditions more profoundly than the reign of Piedmont and Sardinia, of which it has been part of for centuries.

The Sardinian language does exist and it belongs to the group of Neo-Indo-European languages. There are also many dialects that differ quite markedly from area to area (Campidanese, Gallura, Sassari, Alghero, etc.).

These have been more or less influenced by the Spanish language as attested by the following words:

- Casu – cheese, from the Spanish Queso
- Ventana or Bentana – window, from the Spanish Ventana
- Mesa – table, from the Spanish Mesa

Isolation from the rest of the nation due to the relatively few connections with the mainland have meant that, even on board, Sardinian seafarers have a tendency to live relatively apart from the rest of the crew. This should not be taken as a sign of distrust of the people that surround them. In fact, courtesy to colleagues and respect for onboard hierarchy are at their utmost.

Be careful not to define people from Sardinia as "sardegnoli" because "sardegnolo" is an epithet for a certain breed of donkeys found on the island.

In general, people from Sardinia do not have a great seafaring tradition; in fact, they are more anchored to the earth which has always given them everything necessary for survival without creating the necessity to turn to the sea. Seaborne shipping has almost exclusively developed locally between the island and the mainland and the seafarers who have chosen maritime professions on vessels operating inter-continently are not so numerous as to constitute a characteristic cluster.

In Sardinia there is a community of people and a large "colony" of seafarers from Carloforte (S. Pietro Island, south west of Sardinia). People from Carloforte do not consider themselves as Sardinian but rather as Genoese because their ancestors were a community of Genoese deported on the island of S. Pietro.

Almost all of them love to speak the dialect of Liguria with its characteristic Genoese accent, just as their customs are typically Ligurian, including the abundant use of "pesto" which we will mention later when dealing with seafarers from the Ligurian Sea.

The people from "Carloforte" do not make strong friendships with their fellow "Sardinians" and vice versa, but this should not be seen as a sign of personal hostility. The small community of the island of St. Peter has suffered isolation from Sardinia and the rest of Italy for centuries due to the vast sea that divides them. This isolation has therefore influenced their behaviour with respect to choosing whom they make first contact with.

Daily interaction with people from "Carloforte" reveals that are worthy of esteem and friendship.

It may seem strange but one of the dishes that people from "Carloforte" love eating is "Couscous" because their community has lived for centuries on the island of Tabarca in Tunisia before being deported to the island of S. Pietro. For this reason, they have been jokingly nick-named "tabarchini". Calling a person from "Carloforte" a "tabarchino" is not an offense – on the contrary, it puts a smile on their faces because it implies that the history of this community is well known to the interlocutor.

3.3: Italians from Northern Italy

As far as seafaring traditions are concerned, people from Northern Italy cannot be considered as homogeneous because of the historical division that has shaped them for centuries. Broadly speaking, the area stretching from the Ligurian to the Adriatic Sea can be divided into three main areas having different maritime traditions:

- The Trieste region, which embodies the tradition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where Trieste was the maritime capital.
This territory lost Istria with its many islands that had a thriving maritime tradition (just think of Lussino and its important shipowners), supplying many numerous and able seafarers.
- The Veneto region, which embodies the tradition of the glorious maritime republic of Venice.
- Liguria, which has handed down the tradition of the old Maritime Republic of Genoa.

The maritime tradition of an area is reflected by the presence of nautical institutes for Officers and professional institutes for other specializations but also for other related activities from which the youth can learn and perfect typical seafaring tasks. These include ship repairs, technical studies, fishing ports, shops selling nautical publications and materials, boat fairs, etc.

With regards to the three traditional seafaring centres, we shall name the three main cities: Trieste, Venice and Genoa, without detracting anything from the many towns that flourish around them and which supply many seafarers. Among these, we should mention for example Monfalcone (Gorizia) in Trieste, Mestre and Chioggia in the Gulf of Venice, Camogli in Genoa and La Spezia in Sarzana.

What distinguishes seafarers from these three regions are the dialects they use to address their fellow countrymen and at times even other parties, their willingness to familiarize with colleagues, and in part, their eating habits.

The dialects of Trieste and Veneto are relatively understood by other Italians and quite decipherable even to those who are not Italian but whose language is similar to ours. The mother tongue of the royal family that ruled these lands for centuries (German) left few traces, confirming the belief that the imposed domination was not felt by the population.

Just as with other dialects, there are some words and expressions that do not have an equivalent in the Italian language, which we will mention below so that a listener can follow the general idea of the conversation. These expressions are common to both dialects, that of Trieste and Veneto:

- V`a in mona – Let's leave out the literal translation as it is not polite but the general meaning is "Go to hell" expressed without any sense of bitterness or hatred towards those to whom it is addressed.
- Ti te son incocalido? - (Trieste) o "incocalio"(Veneto) to say or ask if a person is dazed, confused. The recipient of this expression should not necessarily feel

insulted as it is also used in good-natured way, to incite the person. It all depends on the context in which it is used.

These two dialects use such characteristic words that Italians from other regions will not fail to remark when communicating with their North-Eastern colleagues:

- Bisi - peas – (Veneto)
- Folpo - octopus – (Veneto)
- Luganega -sausage – (Veneto)
- Peoci - mussels – (Veneto)
- Papùza - slippers – (Triestino / Veneto)
- Trapoler – schemer – (Triestino)
- Vixavì – in front of – (Triestino)

People from Trieste stand out because of their knowledge, more or less perfect, of the Slavic languages from the neighbouring countries, including Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian. They are able to establish quite friendly relations with their colleagues from these areas despite recent historical events.

Some culinary traditions of North-Eastern Italians differ substantially from their colleagues from other regions. Cornmeal (polenta), for example, is typical of these places but almost unknown to the Centre-South. The nickname "polentone" used to refer to a Northern-eastern seafarer means someone eating cornmeal and does not constitute reason for resentment - at most, it puts a laugh on one's face, almost with pride. However, when used for seafarers coming from other Italian regions, the same epithet could be understood as a person who moves with difficulty or slowly, and the reaction of the person receiving the comment will obviously be very different.

If there is a relatively large community of North-Eastern seafarers on board, a periodic meal of "polenta" would be highly appreciated. It can be simply cooked as a side-dish to a steak "alla ciappa" (= on the grill).

Central European cuisine is primarily the prerogative of seafarers from Trieste. A good "Yota" (soup), tasty "white wùrstel (sausages)", or a delicious "strudel" or "stinco"(pork shank) accompanied by beer (one or more) is the pride of those who come from the far eastern corner of Italy but these dishes are also appreciated by seafarers from other Italian regions. It is hard to find on-board chefs who know how to tackle these dishes or who dare to prepare these delicacies for crews that are not composed of seafarers from Trieste.

The expansive personality of North-eastern seafarers is widely recognized. They always have a joke handy but that should not be misconstrued as a lack of respect of the other person. In general, one should be prepared to respond to a joke with another of the same tone, without resentment and without misunderstandings.

Seafarers from the Ligurian Sea (that is from the North-West) are like the antithesis of their North-Eastern colleagues. There are profound differences in the Ligurian dialect (in all its forms ranging from one end of the region to the other) with respect to that of the rest of Italy. Affinity with the French language and the dialects of South-Eastern France predominates in Liguria.

Seafaring words from the Ligurian dialect are more commonly known as "Genovese" given that Liguria has always been part of the Maritime Republic of Genoa, stretching from Nice (west) to Sarzana (East). These words have by now entered into common Italian usage. Some of these terms were imported from other foreign languages (especially Arabic) and introduced in the Genoese dialect before becoming incorporated into Italian and even English. For example:

“Vira” and “Virare” (from Arabic) = to change course.

“Ammaina” and “Ammainare” (from Arabic) = to lower, to haul down.

Many common words of the Genoese dialect have been acquired from France, with which the Republic of Genoa has had alternating periods of business relations, both good and stormy. Likewise, some phonetic expressions are actually French as they do not exist in the Italian language. A Western Ligurian version called Monegasque is traditionally spoken in the Principality of Monaco, where it is taught in schools.

A special mention goes to the typical expression that unites all Ligurians: "Belin" and its nuances "in Belin" and "cu Belin". Without keeping the word to the literal meaning, we can translate these expressions as "Damn!".

It is best not to use this expression but one should be aware that if heard in a conversation, it should not be considered an insult or disrespect.

The Ligurian cuisine is typical of a region that is sandwiched between the mountains and the sea with poor lines of communication with the fertile plain behind it (Po Valley) and where the produce grown in the mountains have always been few and poor. Consequently, the Ligurian cuisine is essentially poor, and everything tends to be used with no wastes.

In this regard, there is even a famous joke where a non-Ligurian colleague is asked if he knows why the seagulls which follow the ships of the Genoese use a single flying wing. The answer is because the other is used to bring along something to eat as the Genoese ships do not discard any food leftovers.

The typical dish from Liguria that is by now known to all onboard cooks and that is quite often served onboard vessels with Italian crews, without distinction of region of origin, is "pesto". It is a green sauce made with basil, cheese, olive oil and a bit of something else that is available to season pasta. It is even sold in pre-packaged jars easy to store, therefore it is quite easy for a cook (whether eastern or western) to make a seafarer from Liguria happy. There are no other typical regional dishes that are prepared onboard, unless there is a strong community of Ligurian seafarers and cook.

The personality of the Ligurian seafarer is also rather reserved and propensity for socializing with colleagues is quite scarce.

This reluctance to familiarize rapidly should not be misunderstood as a display of pride, but rather as introversion.

However, daily encounters in a confined environment like a ship usually makes Ligurians establish good and lasting relationships.

It is said that once you have earned their trust, Ligurians become trusted and sincere colleagues which you can always count on.

The strong seafaring tradition of the inhabitants of the villages located between the cities of Genoa and La Spezia gave rise to one of the largest Italian fleets of sailing boats based in Camogli at the beginning of the previous century. Since then, the sailors of the "Riviera di Levante" have become expert navigators. Although the era of the "Camogli" fleet has ended, the Ligurian "Riviera di Levante" continues to supply excellent seafarers who fill all crewing ranks. The seafarers of Camogli have the reputation of being great money savers. They hardly go (or went) on shore leave to avoid spending money to such an extent that the expression "Camugin" has become synonymous with money saver, in an almost stingy kind of way.

Chapter 4: ITALIANS FROM ALL OVER ITALY

Italian seafarers have now acquired the pride of belonging to a nation that has shrugged off the poverty that the Second World War had left behind and when sailing was for many people the only source of livelihood, to which misery was the only other alternative. This situation had adversely affected relations between Italian seafarers with their colleagues from more prosperous nations for decades.

Today they are aware of the expertise they can offer in the conduct of ships on-board and demand to be treated respectfully even when being ordered. They are reluctant to accept orders placed without a minimal form of personal respect. It is therefore best to avoid forms such forms as "Do you understand what you have to do?", "Do as I said!" or "Hurry up!" etc. In issuing orders, it is always best to be as diplomatic as possible.

If a seafarer must be criticized, it is best to do so in private, without exposing the person to the criticism of his colleagues, superiors or subordinates.

Shortly after the reprimand, a tap on the shoulder or another brief exchange of words makes the person understand that the previous action only referred to that specific moment and that there was nothing personal to it.

A word of appreciation for the work of a colleague, without exceeding in compliments, is always a good way to maintain relations.

In general, Italians are not excessively patriotic. Perhaps, the only time when they feel part of a single nation is when the national football team is playing in a soccer match. For the rest, they usually have a sense of belonging to their region, or even to their city. However, it is possible that nationalism is roused in multi-racial communities therefore it is best to avoid epithets against Italy and Italians.

Even when meant jokingly, it is always better to avoid saying Italy is "Mafia" or Italians are "mafiosi". As a best-case scenario, the reaction of the listener could be a broken smile, but the effect it produces is not one that encourages a peaceful coexistence.

4.1: Italians and the English language

With respect to work, communication with foreign colleagues generally occurs in English as petty officers usually have a sufficient knowledge of the language and ratings also know the basics as well. Body language is quite typical of Italians and the use of the hands and body makes up for their poor command of the English language (monkey language) which helps them to make themselves understood and avoid misunderstandings that could have negative consequences.

The use of gestures in an excited manner should not to be understood as a lack of calm and impatience but rather as reinforcement for the idea that the Italian national wants to convey to support his belief. The more an Italian gesticulates, the more he is passionate about his belief and the more he intends to share that with his audience.

When a certain amount of trust has been established between the speakers, Italians also use relatively common gestures belonging to the "Monkey language" repertoire which are more or less polite, but which might be incomprehensible to foreign colleagues. These include:

- Placing the left hand on the right forearm and closing/opening the right arm to say: "don't even think about, not a chance in hell that it's going to happen!"
- Beating the forehead with the fingers of the right hand to say: "are you crazy?!" – "you're nuts!" - "who makes you do it!"
- Placing the right index finger on the nose to say: "be quiet!"
- Placing the right hand on the stomach and moving it around to indicate: "I'm hungry!"

Regardless of the degree of mastery of the English language, Italians always keep a certain distance in their personal relationships with colleagues and do not like talking about their personal issues so it is best to avoid questions or matters that affect them intimately. If a question was asked during the course of a conversation that is undesirable for the interlocutor and the answer received seems evasive, it is advisable not to insist on further explanation and to change the subject so as not to arouse resentment.

Even the seafarers' pronunciation in English maintains the intonations of one's own dialect. The region of origin is normally easily detected by the ear of a fellow Italian colleague.

4.2: Italians and drugs and alcohol

Among the evils which afflict humanity, to which Italy is no exception, a prominent place is occupied by the use of alcohol and drugs, especially among the youth. However, this problem does not seem to be paramount among Italian seafarers. Whether because of the strict limitations and controls imposed by shipping companies and local authorities in ports or because of the fear of losing one's job and of being marginalized by one's colleagues if discovered, we can state that drugs

and alcohol are not vices that afflict the Italian crew. This does not mean that some people do not overuse alcohol during shore leave as a reaction to the long abstinence on board (ships on which the use of alcohol is not allowed). However, it is the responsibility of the people in command of the vessel to identify the weakest elements and take the appropriate corrective action.

4.3: Italians and gambling.

Gambling, in general, is not a reason for concern for those who manage Italian crews.

The widespread use of playing cards is diffused in many regions of Italy, and the seafarers carry them on board, at times, even setting up tournaments. Usually what is at stake does not go beyond the satisfaction of having prevailed on the opponent or a drink offered to those who lose. It should be noted that even the playing cards differ based on an Italian's geographical origin- in fact there are several decks of cards with different figures that differ from region to region.

A ship is a community that has been isolated from the rest of the world, family and friends and it is a good practice to encourage parlour games that promote familiarization among the crew, help avoid the emergence of contrasting personality traits and help distract the mind from personal problems which can be magnified by isolation in one's cabin. In order for an Italian to give his maximum performance at work and feel as if he belongs to the vessel, one must know how to motivate him as he must feel as if he is part of the company, whether it is intended as a single navigating vessel or as all the corporate ships. To promote the seafarer's sense of attachment to the vessel, it is best, wherever possible, to offer some of the following pastime activities:

- A well-stocked video store and library, with frequent updates/arrivals.
- A gym with suitable equipment.
- Recreation rooms, with a smoking corner.

4.4: Italians and the family

The family comes first in the seafarer's hierarchy of needs. The Italian seafarer will show attachment to the ship and to the company if the corporate interests do not detract from the requirements of the Family. Appropriate remuneration, punctual monthly remittances, appropriate alternation between embarkation and disembarkation periods, and workplace certainty (certainty of embarking after a rest period) all help in making the seafarer feel as if he is not just a seasonal worker but an active component of the mechanism that makes the company operate successfully. Even if the ship is old and not in an optimal state, or needs constant work, no obstacle is insurmountable for a well-motivated seafarer- rather the obstacles are seen as challenges of which to be proud of once they have been

overcome. If the seafarer's mind is free from thoughts, the happier he'll be if the work he must carry out is more challenging and more extensive.

In the hierarchy of values, personal pride comes immediately after the family.

It is important to recognize the merit of each seafarer in order to ensure that all seafarers feel as if they are part of that mechanism that makes the vessel and company operate successfully.

An Italian does not tolerate well those who take all the credit for the smooth running of the vessel. The ship sails well when all the crew contributes to its success.

Offering seafarers that carry out the same tasks different compensation (bonuses or extra work hours) should be avoided. A different remuneration, regardless of the amount, can be interpreted as a different scale of values.

4.5: Italians and nutrition

We have already discussed in detail the culinary customs that differentiate Italians in the first part of this booklet. Among those which unite them are coffee, which should be served strong, and bread, which must be fresh of the day.

Almost all vessels are equipped with one or more kettles for boiling water for "American" coffee- an item which Italian crews usually leave behind to accumulate dust. Their yearning is only for strong coffee, either espresso or "moka." Any shipowner who intends to use Italian crews should take precautions to equip the ships with the "moka" machine and to periodically supply the mix needed to make strong coffee. The "ritual" of a cup of coffee is sacred to all Italians. A good strong coffee for breakfast awakens Italians and better prepares them to face the day's work.

The smell of freshly baked bread in the morning, even before breakfast, is characteristic of ships where Italian seafarers predominate. Many cooks, whether Italian or otherwise, usually prepare focaccia in addition to bread.

A kneader of a sufficient capacity is a vital tool for vessels that predominantly employ Italian crew.

Long shelf-life bread is rarely used to accompany an Italian's main meals.

Regardless of personal preferences which differ according to the hometown of each seafarer and which cannot be fulfilled on a daily basis, the meals that are served on board are mainly based on starchy foods (pasta), legumes, vegetables, meat, fish and fruit. A first course usually consists of pasta (long or short), seasoned in a variety of ways.

A second course plate of fish or meat with a side-dish usually follows. Side-dishes usually consist of potatoes or salad (depending on availability).

Olive oil is the most appreciated seasoning/dressing.

Pizza should be offered with a certain frequency as a second course.

The type of fruit that is served depends on the vessel's location and on the available supplies but in general, all fruits are welcome as long as they are fresh and not canned.

