

# AMMENTU

Bollettino Storico e Archivistico del Mediterraneo e delle Americhe

## L'emigrazione insulare del Mediterraneo occidentale in America Latina dal XIX secolo ai giorni nostri

A cura di

Martino Contu, Juan Guillermo Estay Sepúlveda, Sebastià Serra Busquets



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Foto di passeggeri italiani a bordo di una nave giunta al porto di Montevideo (Prima metà del XX secolo). Fonte: AGNU,MRE, *Listados de pasajeros provenientes de Italia y Francia*.

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## Migration of fishermen, seamen and merchants from the Island of Capraia to Latin America in the XIX century

Emigrazione di pescatori, marinai e commercianti dall'isola di Capraia all'America Latina nel secolo XIX

Emigración de pescadores, marineros y comerciantes de la isla de Capraia a América Latina en el siglo XIX

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### Abstract

Since the middle of the 16th century the Island of Capraia, located between the Island of Corsica and the coast of Tuscany, has been part of the Republic of Genoa. In the 17th century the inhabitants became fisherman, selling their catch as salted fish in Genoa, Corsica and Leghorn. In the first half of the 18th century with their small boats, called *gondola*, they developed an intensive mercantile traffic among Corsica, Genoa and Leghorn. Fishing and mercantile traffic brought to the island a sustainable economy with a growth of the population.

Starting from the French revolution the inhabitants of Capraia were forced to leave their island due to the slowdown of the sea traffic and commerce with Genoa, Corsica, and the Tuscany coast.

In the first migration wave, between 1805 and 1820, the islanders moved first to Corsica and from there to France and Central America. A small group settled in the Island of Puerto Rico where from seamen they became small landowners.

A second wave of migration, starting from the middle of the 19th century, was directed to South America, mainly Argentina, where they could make their living as seamen and merchants.

### Keywords

Migration, Capraia, Corsica, Puerto Rico, Latin America

### Riassunto

Fin dalla metà del secolo XVI l'isola di Capraia, situata tra l'isola di Corsica e la costa della Toscana, ha fatto parte della Repubblica di Genova. Nel seolo XVII gli abitanti divennero pescatori, vendendo il loro pescato come pesci salati a Genova, Corsica e Livorno. Nella prima metà del secolo XVIII essi con le loro piccolo imbarcazioni, chiamate *gondole*, svilupparono un notevole traffico mercantile tra la Corsica, Genova e Livorno. La pesca e il traffico mercantile portarono ad una economia sostenibile che produsse un aumento della popolazione.

A partire dalla rivoluzione francese gli abitanti di Capraia furono costretti ad abbandonare la loro isola a causa della diminuzione dei traffici marittimi e del commercio con Genova, Corsica e la costa della Toscana.

Nella prima ondata migratoria, tra il 1805 e il 1820, gli isolani si spostarono prima in Corsica e di lì in Francia e nell'America Centrale. Un piccolo gruppo di capraiesi si stabilì nell'isola di Puerto Rico dove da marinai divennero piccoli proprietari terrieri.

Una seconda ondata migratoria, a partire dalla metà del secolo XIX, si diresse nell'America del Sud, principalmente in Argentina, dove essi si guadagnarono la vita come marinai e commercianti.

### Parole chiave

Emigrazione, Capraia, Corsica, Puerto Rico, America Latina.

### Resumen

Desde la mitad del siglo XVI, la Isla de Capraia, situada entre la isla de Córcega y la costa de la Toscana, ha formado parte de la República de Génova. En el siglo XVII, los habitantes se convirtieron en pescadores, vendiendo su género como salazones en Génova, Córcega y Livorno. En la primera mitad del siglo XVIII, estos mismos habitantes, con sus pequeñas embarcaciones llamadas góndolas, desarrollaron un importante tráfico mercantil entre Córcega, Génova y Livorno. La pesca y el tráfico mercantil condujeron a una economía sostenible que produjo un aumento de la población.

A partir de la revolución francesa, los habitantes de Capraia se vieron obligados a abandonar su isla debido a la disminución del tráfico marítimo y del comercio con Génova, Córcega y la costa de la Toscana.

En la primera oleada migratoria, entre 1805 y 1820, los isleños se trasladaron primero a Córcega y, desde allí, a Francia y a Centroamérica. Un pequeño grupo de ciudadanos de Capraia se estableció en la isla de Puerto Rico donde de marineros se convirtieron en pequeños terratenientes.

Una segunda oleada migratoria, a partir de la mitad del siglo XIX, se dirigió a Sudamérica, sobre todo a Argentina, donde se ganaron la vida como marineros y comerciantes.

### Palabras clave

Emigración, Capraia, Córcega, Puerto Rico, América Latina.

Capraia, a small and rocky island situated between the Island of Corsica and Tuscany in the Tyrrhenian Sea (see image Island of Capraia~1800), since the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century has been part, with Corsica, of the Republic of Genoa. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the inhabitants of Capraia (*Capraiesi*) were around 250, mainly peasants, shepherds, and few fishermen. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the increase of the use of fish in the diet of the Italians the *Capraiesi* discovered that with fishing they could make a better living. The population started to increase and the inhabitants were able to build an important fleet of small fishing boats called *gondolas*. The fish, mainly anchovies, salted and pickled, were sold in the ports of Genoa and Leghorn. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the Corsicans started a long fight against Genoa, the *Capraiesi* took advantage of the situation and were able to transform part of their fishing boats in passenger and cargo boats to carry goods and passengers among the ports of Corsica and Genoa and the ports of the northern coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea. In this activity the inhabitants were carrying not only goods for third parties but also their own goods purchased in the Italian ports and resold in the Corsican ports. The population of the island reached a peak of around 1500 people.

In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the Republic of Genoa, with the treaty of Versailles, transferred Corsica to the French Kingdom, the activity of the Capraia merchant fleet started to decline as France preferred to use its own merchant fleet to move goods and passengers between the ports of France (mainly Marseilles) and Corsica. Some seaman from Capraia found jobs in the French merchant fleet, transferring their families to Bastia, the nearest Corsica port to Capraia. When in the year 1797, in the aftermath of the French revolution, the old aristocratic Republic of Genoa was transformed by Napoleon in the democratic Ligurian Republic under the strict control of the French Republic, the island become a stronghold of the French corsairs as a safe port for their vessels and as storage of the goods of their seizures. In the year 1800 the French troops occupied the island to stop the English fleet from taking over the island and threaten from there the coast of Northern Italy. In 1802

Napoleon imposed to the weak Ligurian Republic the transfer of the island to the French Republic.

For thirteen years, till 1815, Capraia was part of the French territory, linked administratively to Corsica. Life on the island became very difficult for the inhabitants and many seamen transferred their families to Corsica, mainly to the city of Bastia. When in 1815 with the treaty of Vienna, after the fall of Napoleon, the island was assigned to the Kingdom of Sardinia, the economy of the island deteriorated even further.

In the period 1800-1820 more than 400 people, whole families, left the island to French Corsica looking for a better living. Initially they settled in Bastia but afterwards the majority moved to small villages in the Cap Corse, the northern part of the Island of Corsica, making their living as small merchants or seamen. In the years 1816-1818 some of the Capraia seamen, who in the previous years used to sail in the French merchant fleet, applied to the French government to get the French nationality in order to continue to sail in the French merchant fleet. This was the first step of the decline of the population of the Island of Capraia. As we shall see in more details, the migration to Corsica was not successful for all the emigrants: some of the young *Capraiesi* after a brief stay in Corsica decided to follow the migration of Corsicans to Puerto Rico in the period 1818-1828.

The economy of Capraia continued to deteriorate even after the big migration to Corsica. During a visit to the island in 1837, Carlo Alberto, King of Sardinia, could realize the level of poverty of the population, but he left only a perpetual small benefit for the poor. When on march 17, 1861 the kingdom of Italy was established, one of the first acts of the Italian government was to create on the Island of Capraia a plant to manufacture cigars to alleviate the poor conditions of the inhabitants. The cigar plant was established on December 1862 and in 1865 was employing more than 100 people, mainly women. But the cigar plant did not last for many years and it was shut down at the end of 1867. In the middle of the century the population of the island dropped to approximately 700 people. Many had already left the island to find a better living in other parts of Italy. Some migrated to Sardinia, Island of Maddalena, Sassari, Cagliari; others to Genoa and Leghorn where they settled their families and could find an employment in the Sardinian merchant fleet. Others, generally seamen, could find a new life in one of the ports of the Mediterranean Sea where Sardinian ships used to harbor, like Istanbul and Izmir in Turkey, and Alessandria in Egypt. As we shall see, a big wave of emigration from the island occurred between 1850 and 1890 when regular shipping lines were established between Genoa and the major ports of South America. The establishment, in 1873, of an agricultural convict colony did not provide any substantial relief to the economy of the island and the population continued to decline and, in 1895, it was of ~280 local people. In a letter from 1891 sent by Lorenzo Lamberti from Capraia to a friend living in Argentina, he said that the living conditions on the island were so poor that in a few years the island would become a desert.

The memory of the emigration from the Island of Capraia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was lost after the Second World War. Only in the last few year the request of information on their ancestors coming from descendants of emigrated people brought the interest of some researchers to investigate the story of the hundreds of *Capraiesi* who were forced to leave their island looking for a better living in far away countries.

This work is based on information coming from different sources: baptism, marriage and death registers from the Capraia parish and town archives, the Historical Records

Collection of Familysearch.org, original documents and recollections provided by the emigrants' offspring.

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Corsica was a poor island and could not offer to its inhabitants many opportunities to make a decent living. Several *Capraiesi* who had migrated to Corsica in the period 1800-1820 decided to move to continental France, while others decided to follow the Corsicans in their emigration to the Americas. It is the case of a group of young *Capraiesi*, born in Capraia and linked by family ties, who moved from Corsica to the Island of Puerto Rico in the years 1818-1828. They were seamen who initially continued to sail in the local merchant fleet and later on became small land owners and merchants. They took advantage of the Spanish law of 1815, the *Real Cédula de Gracias*, which granted foreigners of proved Roman Catholic religion, some arable land (2.4 hectares per member of the family and 1.2 hectares for each Negro slave they owned) and the Spanish nationality after five years of legal residence on the island. It is the case of Andrea Cunio, Giuseppe Filippi, Gio Leonardo Solaro, Giuseppe Sussone, and Natale Luccari, all seamen and sons of seamen, who settled in the western part of the island (today the municipalities of Aguada, Rincón, and Añasco). Till 1873, when the so called *Ley Moret*, which abolished slavery, was enforced, the Negro slaves were an important component of the Puerto Rico economy. They were the majority of the workers in the sugar plantation. The slave owners were compensated with an indemnity for each Negro freed.

**Andrea (Andrés) Cunio** (Capraia 1780 - ?), son of a seaman who moved his family from Capraia to Bastia, settled around 1818 in the town of Aguada where, for a while, he made his living as seaman among the Caribbean islands, carpenter and peasant. In 1830 he got the certificate of domicile and some land from the Spanish government and married the local Maria Concepción Avilés De Soto. Later on he alternated his activities as seaman, owner of a small boat, and farmer.

**Leonardo Solaro**<sup>1</sup> (Capraia 1796 - Añasco 1856) in the period 1802-1803 was registered as ship-boy in the port of Capraia but later on he moved with his sister to Bastia, at that time the biggest port of Corsica. He arrived in Añasco in 1820 from Cádiz and there he opened a small general store while he continued to navigate as captain and ship owner among the islands near Puerto Rico. In 1822, he could afford to build his own house in Añasco bringing some construction material from the Island of Saint Thomas. In 1824 he married in Mayagüez the local Magdalena Prats from whom he had nine children. In 1830 he got the naturalization and a piece of land in Añasco from the government. He continued to navigate as captain of sailing-ships which were carrying Negro slaves from the Caribbean islands to Puerto Rico to work in the sugar plantations. He was very active in the local community and with the earnings from his activities he could enlarge his farm. In 1856 he died of cholera which was striking the Island of Puerto Rico in that period. Leonardo left to his heirs one Negro slave for whom they received an indemnity of 200 pesos when he was freed. He was a sort of elder of the community of *Capraiesi* who settled in Añasco.

**Giuseppe (José) Filippi** (Capraia 1788 - Añasco ~ 1868) son of a seaman, in the period 1802-1803 was registered as ship-boy in the port of Capraia but later on he moved to Bastia. He arrived in Añasco in 1820 coming from the Island of Saint Thomas. During the first years of his stay in Puerto Rico he worked as seaman and a peasant. In 1830 he owned a small shop in Añasco and in the same year he applied

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<sup>1</sup> The surname Solaro became Solari in Puerto Rico.

for the Spanish nationality which he got with some land. In 1845 he married Luisa Solari daughter of Leonardo Solari with whom he had a son. In 1854 he asked his nephew Antonio Filippi, born in Bastia from his brother Stefano, to come to Puerto Rico in order to help him in farming coco-palms and in running his general store. He owned some Negro slaves, most probably imported by Leonardo Solari, whom he left to his wife and son. He was active in the Spanish local community and maintained a strong friendship with Leonardo Solari who named him as one of his testamentary executors. He left to his heirs four slaves for whom they received in 1876 an indemnity of 900 *pesos* when they freed them.

**Giuseppe (José) Sussone** (Capraia 1792 - Camuy before 1885) was the son of a captain of small merchant boats registered in the port of Capraia. In 1807 Giuseppe Sussone was embarked in one of these boats with his father. He arrived in Mayagüez in 1821 and there in 1826 he married Bernarda Prats, sister in law of Leonardo Solari who attended the marriage as witness. In 1830 he obtained the certificate of domicile declaring that he wanted to open a general store and build his house in Añasco. Afterwards he moved to the town of Camuy where his four children were born.

**Natale (Nadal) Luccari** (Capraia 1809 - Rincón before 1885) was the nephew of Leonardo Solari. He was the son of a caulker who moved from Capraia to Bastia in the period 1815-1818 with his wife Maria Domenica Solari, elder sister of Leonardo Solari, and his children. Natale Luccari arrived in Añasco in 1828 and there he opened a small general store. In 1830 he got the certificate of domicile and some land which he ran as a farmer. He married the local Gregoria Carrero from whom he had six children. In 1856, his wife died of cholera and from the same disease he lost three Negro slaves. After the death of his wife he moved to Rincón and remarried there with the local Francisca Espinet.

In later years, around the middle of the century, some relatives of the first wave of migrants, born in Corsica from Capraiesi parents, reached them in Puerto Rico.

**Antonio Filippi** (Bastia 1829 - Añasco 1880) nephew of Giuseppe Filippi arrived in Añasco in 1854 called by his uncle and there in 1869 married Rosa Solaro, daughter of Leonardo Solaro, from whom he had four children. He owned a small farm and a grocery. In 1876 he freed one Negro slave and received an indemnity of 200 *pesos*.

**Giovanni Leonardo Luccari** (Tomino, Corsica 1824 - Rincón 1856), brother of Natale Luccari, born in Tomino (Corsica) where his father was working as caulker after the transfer from Capraia. Around 1845 he immigrated to Puerto Rico most probably called by his brother and settled in Rincón where, in 1856, he died of cholera.

**Pietro Luccari** (Bastia 1818 - ?), brother of Natale Luccari, immigrated to Puerto Rico around 1845 most probably with his brother Giovanni Leonardo. In Añasco he married the local Francisca de lo Dolores. On January 1851 was godfather at the baptism in Rincón of his nephew José Nicodemus, son of Natale Luccari.

As we have seen, the majority of the *Capraiesi* immigrated to Puerto Rico settled in Añasco where they formed a small community where the bonds between them were strengthened by marriages in their adoptive country. In the first years after their arrival the life of the first wave of *Capraiesi* was not easy as they could only continue to work in the local merchant fleet, which was moving goods and passengers among the islands surrounding Puerto Rico, or to run small general stores. Later on, when they were able to get some land from the government they could improve their living but, natural events like cholera and frequent earthquakes and hurricanes, had a terrific impact on their family and properties. They were not able to expand their properties in order to be competitive with the local Spanish owners of great

properties (*Haciendas*) and slowly their heirs, between the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were forced to sell their properties and move to the big cities on the island or emigrate to the United States.

As we have already said, in 1815 the Island of Capraia with the territory of the old Republic of Genoa was assigned to the Kingdom of Sardinia and the island was included in the Duchy of Genoa which, later on, became the Province of Genoa. The *Capraiesi* maintained a strong link with Genoa where some of them could find a job as seamen on the ships that were arriving there.

In 1818 the Sardinian government abolished the customs barrier between Piedmont and Liguria and applied tariff on the foreigner ships arriving in the ports of Genoa and Savona. This new legislation benefitted the Sardinian merchant navy which started to trade with South America, mainly Argentina with its main port of Buenos Aires. The stream of information, arriving in Genoa from Argentina, on the opportunities offered by this new country, opened the way to a flow of migration from the Sardinian Kingdom of which, as we shall see, a great number of *Capraiesi* took part. They became part of the first wave of Ligurian emigrants who, after reaching the ports of Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Rio de Janeiro decided to settle in Buenos Aires and in the villages along the two main rivers Paraná and Uruguay. This wave of emigrants and the increased commercial relations between Argentina and the port of Genoa forced the Sardinian government to open a Consulate in Buenos Aires in 1836.

One of the first of this wave of *Capraiesi* emigrants was **Antonio Chiama** (Capraia 1811 - ?), who landed in Rio de Janeiro in 1837 while engaged as seaman on the South American brig *Felis*. In Rio de Janeiro he joined the expedition organized by the corsair Giuseppe Garibaldi to help the Republic of Rio Grande do Sul which was fighting against Brasil. Antonio Chiama was a member of the crew of the small vessel (*sumaca*), called *Mazzini*, which made a long and dangerous navigation along the coast of Brazil and Paraguay till the La Plata River. There Giuseppe Garibaldi, injured in a previous fight with the Paraguayan navy, decided to land in the Argentinian port of Gualeguay. The crew of the *Mazzini* was jailed and after a short trial Antonio Chiama was released and disappeared.

Later on, starting around the year 1860, many *Capraiesi* arriving from Genoa in the port of Buenos Aires or Montevideo decided to move to other places where they could develop activities linked to their previous experience of seamen and merchants. They moved with their families, wife, children and sometimes elders, thus cutting all bonds with the native island: only the memory of the pleasant place where they have been born was left to their offsprings. Nevertheless they did not forget their parents still living in Capraia sending them, from time to time, some money from their savings in order to provide them with some resources in the last years of their life. In the period of one year between 1855-1856 the remittances collected in the chancery of the Italian Consulate in Buenos Aires to be sent to Capraia amounted to 80 ounces of gold equivalent to 6560 lira of that time. Most probably this amount was only a part of the total remittances, because other ways to send money might have been used like through the seamen of the ships connecting Buenos Aires to Genoa. The remittances of the emigrants were a major resource for the *Capraiesi* still leaving on the island.

After 1860 the emigration of the Ligurian to South America had a new development with the establishment by the Compagnia Transatlantica of a regular shipping line between Genoa and South America with steam ships to carry goods and emigrants.

The *Capraiesi* settled in villages along the rivers Gualeguay and Parana in the provinces of Entre Rios and Corrientes where they could participate in the traffic and commerce that was developing along these two rivers. They sold their properties in Capraia and, with the money they could get and some saving, they were able to pay the cost of the trip and to initiate an activity in South America.

As we shall see the *Capraiesi* who settled in the new world practised activities which were similar to the ones they and their parents used to practice in Capraia: mainly seamen and merchants.

### **2.1. Argentina, Buenos Aires**

Among the first wave of Ligurian emigrants there were some *Capraiesi* who arrived in Buenos Aires in the period 1840-1850. They made their living as seamen in La Plata River, whalem<sup>2</sup> or merchants in the town of Buenos Aires.

**Giuseppe Princivalle** (Capraia 1817 - ?) was patented as first class master in the Sardinian merchant navy when he was eighteen years old. In 1838 being in Genoa with his father Michele, who in the same year had transferred his family to La Maddalena (Sardinia), decided to emigrate to South America and embarked on a vessel to Montevideo. He was sending letters to his parents in which he wrote that he was making good business and money and he was looking forward to coming back to Italy. In his last letter to the family, in 1848, he said that during the war between Buenos Aires and Montevideo he was captured and lost all his possession. From researches organized by his family it appeared that, after the war, he was freed but remained short of any means.

**Domenico Gallettini** (Capraia 1809 - La Plata River 1848), master and owner (*Patrone*) of the whaler *Clarina*, died in 1848 on the shores of La Plata River near Montevideo. In 1843 he married by proxy Santina Sarzana in Capraia, as most probably he was already settled in Argentina. When he died his wife was still leaving in Capraia.

**Giuliano Cuneo** (Capraia 1809 - ?), resident in Buenos Aires, was master and owner of the whaler *Raggio*. In 1848 he recovered and buried the body of Domenico Gallettini. In the same year his daughter Caterina Giovanna Domenica married in Capraia, in absence of his father, Gio Batta Costantino Doderò captain of the Sardinian navy and commanding officer of the Island of Capraia and its Fort. His nephew Luigi Francesco Costantino Doderò emigrated to Peru in the mid 1870s, as we shall see later on.

**Antonio Padovano Sarzana**, (Capraia 1821 - Buenos Aires 1848) a merchant resident in Buenos Aires, died on the sardinian schooner *Carmen* in 1848, while the ship was approaching the port of Buenos Aires.

**Giacomo Dussol** (Capraia 1799 - ?), a merchant resident in Buenos Aires, in 1848 acted as witness for the death declaration of Domenico Gallettini and Antonio Padovano Sarzana.

**Pasquale Sarzana** (Capraia ~1789 - La Plata River 1849) a ship master, died on board of the Portuguese ship *Amazonas* which was cruising in the La Plata River in view of Atalaya, near Buenos Aires. In 1816 he married Maria Grimaldi in Capraia. Since 1825 he was living in Montevideo while his wife was living in Capraia where she died in 1870.

**Nicola Rinesi** (Capraia 1804 - Capraia 1879) a seaman, in 1831 married in Capraia Maria Luisa Morgana from whom he had two sons Pasquale and Giovanni. In 1857 he

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<sup>2</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the hunting of whales was very active in the La Plata River primarily for meat, oil, and blubber. Most probably the *Capraiesi* owned small boats just suited for that purpose.

was resident in Buenos Aires. In his late years he returned to Capraia and there he died.

All these *Capraiesi*, with exception of Antonio Padovano Sarzana, were married but left their spouses and children in Capraia. Most probably they formed in Buenos Aires a small community where the links of the same native place and common language created, for a while, some strong bonds.

Later on arrived and settled in Buenos Aires **Angela Maria Pisani** (Capraia 1854 - Buenos Aires 1908), married to Mariano Venturini. In 1889 she was in Buenos Aires where she died in 1908 of cerebral hemorrhage.

## 2.2. Argentina, Entre Rios, Gualeguay

The town of Gualeguay, along the river of the same name, was founded in 1783 and when the *Capraiesi* settled there, starting around the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was still a small town as is reported by William MacCann in his visit in the year 1848: "This town is situated on a river of the same name, but vessels cannot approach nearer than three leagues; it is about the same size as the town last mentioned [Gualeguaychú with about 2500 people], and numbers among its inhabitants three hundred Basques and Italians". Gualeguay was expanding very rapidly and in 1890 had a population of 11000, expansion mainly due to the arrival of migrants from Europe, the excellent condition of soil for agricultural production and the favorable conditions provided by the government (national and local), to the migrants willing to develop land. The port of Gualeguay, called Puerto Ruiz, was located nine kilometers south of the village.

**Simone Chiama** (Capraia 1824 - ?) was a seaman embarked on the vessels travelling between Genoa and South America. He married in Capraia **Maria Giuseppa Cuneo** (Capraia 1827 - ?). He was out of the Island of Capraia when his son **Giovanni Vittorio Ognisanti** (Capraia 1846 - ?) was born, while he was in Capraia when his daughter **Maria Stefana Fortunata** was born in 1849. He had one other daughter **Maria Chiama** (1855?). Around 1854 he settled in Gualeguay and, in 1860, he transferred from Capraia to Gualeguay his family - wife, three children and his mother in law, **Lucrezia Cuneo** (Capraia 1795 - Gualeguay after 1862). In Gualeguay he had two other children Mateo (1864) and Adelaide (1866). He established a shipping company which was connecting Port Ruiz (Gualeguay) to Colonia (Uruguay) and Buenos Aires. In 1885 he owned the paddle-steamer *Adelina* with a tonnage of 32 tons, registered in the port of Genoa. In 1886 he attended in Gualeguay the marriage of his son Mateo.

The oldest son of Simone Chiama, Giovanni Vittorio Ognisanti (Juan) was a very enterprising person taking part in the rapid development of Gualeguay. In the year 1869 Juan Chiama, was a merchant and married Maria Benito Abramor, with his mother as witness of the marriage, in the church of Saint Antony of Padua in Gualeguay. Juan Chiama, being successful in his merchant activities, in 1884 founded a farm which he named Capraia. The farm, five kilometers from the center of the town, had an extension of about 22 hectares, in which he built a dove-cote with 600 nests, a pen with 600 chickens, a warren for 500 rabbits, a shed for 400 beehives, and an modern incubator with alarm-bells to signal high temperature. In the farm there were fruit-trees and a wood. Juan Chiama was also trying to introduce in his farm the cultivation of tobacco, rice, manioc, sunflower, and castor oil plant. He had nine children all born in Gualeguay. He was very active in the local community: on November 23, 1890 he read a toast in verse at the official ceremony for the arrival of the first locomotive in Gualeguay; on October 6, 1912 he was a member of the

jury which assigned rewards for agricultural achievements in the Rural Exhibition in Gualeguay; on April 15, 1917 he was one of the speakers in the meeting organized by the Italian Society of Gualeguay to collect funds for the families of the deceased in the European War; on April 20, 1920 he read a salute to the flag during the celebration of the centennial of the death of General Belgrano in the Constitution square of Gualeguay.

Maria Stefana Fortunata (Estefana) Chiama married in Gualeguay the merchant Miguel Carboni born in Italy and had with him five children, while Maria Chiama married Michele (Miguel) Costa, born in Italy, with whom she had six children.

**Emanuele Gallettini** (Capraia 1828 - Gualeguay 1902) arrived in Buenos Aires, where he was active as seaman, around the year 1860 with his wife Luigia Cuneo (Capraia 1834 - ?), sister of Maria Giuseppa Cuneo, and his daughter Maria Domenica Gallettini (Capraia 1858 - ?). Later on he moved the family to Gualeguay and there, in 1869, his wife was working as dressmaker while he was absent, most probably embarked on a ship. In 1884 he was in Buenos Aires while, in 1895, he was registered in Gualeguay as merchant. They had two additional daughters, Luisa and Manuela, born in Gualeguay. He died in Gualeguay in 1902 of a brain attack. His daughter Maria Domenica Gallettini married an Italian, Eleuterio Casotti in Gualeguay in 1876, and then they moved to Victoria where, in 1895, Eleuterio Casotti was registered as baker.

**Francesco Cuneo** (Capraia 1823 - Victoria 1897) arrived in Gualeguay around the years 1837-1838. In 1854 he married in Gualeguay the Italian Luisa Antola and there he had four children. After 1862 he moved with his family to Victoria, a city North of Gualeguay on the Paraná River in the same province of Entre Rios. There he had another six children. In Victoria he was a successful merchant and owned a big warehouse. He was an important member of the local Italian community. In 1863 he was one of the founders of the *Sociedad Italiana de Socorros Mutuos*. Two of his sons were merchants, one was physician, and one became lawyer and judge. Francesco died in Victoria in 1897.

**Simone Cuneo** (Capraia 1808 - Gualeguay 1879), brother of Lucrezia Cuneo arrived in Buenos Aires on September 4, 1841 and from there he moved to Gualeguay, where in 1842 he married Rosa Perez Bergara and had six children.

Antonio Morgana (**Capraia 1818** - ?) was a seaman who married in Buenos Aires, around 1850, Maria Dolores from whom he had a daughter Catalina. Around 1852 he moved with the family to Gualeguay and there he had ten children. Most probably he was embarked in one of the ship which connected Gualeguay with Buenos Aires. He died before 1895 and his wife moved back to Buenos Aires.

**Antonio Chiama** (Capraia 1851 - ?), arrived in the agricultural district of Tala in the department of Paraná before 1895 with his wife Edelmira (1854 - ?) and two sons, Luigi (1877 - ?) e Giovanni (1880 - ?), all born in Italy, probably in Genoa. In 1895 he was registered as farmer.

### **2.3. Argentina, Corrientes, Bella Vista**

Bella Vista, a village along the Rio Paraná, was officially founded in 1825. The natural conditions of its port allowed the docking of big commercial boats, which could benefit of preferential custom duties. The establishment of foreigners opened the way to the development of a diversified agricultural economy. For the *Capraiesi* the small town was an ideal place to settle, as they could find a job as small merchant, an activity that they and their parents had practiced in their island.

**Sussoni Stefano** (Capraia 1820 - ?) in 1847 married in **Capraia Maria Giuseppa Trama** (Cagnano, Corsica 1827 - ?) whose parents were both from Capraia. Stefano moved, with his wife and daughter **Maria Paola Sussoni** (Capraia 1848 - ?) to Bella Vista around 1850. There Stefano Sussoni was a merchant and he had two other daughters **Maria Emilia** (1857) and **Maria de Los Angeles** (1863).

**Giovanni Maria Sardi** (Marciana, Elba Island ~1827 - ?) married in 1857 in Capraia, where he was resident, **Giuseppa Olivieri** (Capraia 1827 - ?). Around 1860 he arrived in Bella Vista with his wife and his mother in law **Maria Francesca Ramaroni** (Capraia 1805 - ?). In Bella Vista he was registered as carpenter in 1869 and 1895.

Also two brothers of **Giuseppa Olivieri** left Capraia, most probably with her and their mother, to emigrate to Bella Vista: **Lorenzo Olivieri** (Capraia 1824 - ?) and **Bartolomeo Olivieri** (Capraia 1835 - ?). They married on November 1st, 1868 in Bella Vista: **Lorenzo** married with **Maria Agostina Aglae Cuneo** (Capraia 1845 - ?) and **Bartolomeo** with **Maria Agostina Cuneo** (Capraia 1852 - ?). In 1869, both brothers were registered with their families in Empedrado, Corrientes as merchants. **Lorenzo's** family, after his death (before 1895) remained in Empedrado where his wife was registered as cigar maker. In 1895, **Bartolomeo** with his family was in Bella Vista and was registered as merchant.

**Pasquale Rinesi** (Capraia 1832 - ?) arrived in Bella Vista between 1862 and 1864 and there, in 1864, he married **Maria Paola Sussoni**. Then he moved for a while to Buenos Aires where in 1865 his son **Nicola** was born. He had twelve children. In 1869 **Pasquale Rinesi** was registered in Bella Vista as merchant.

**Giovanni Rinesi** (Capraia 1834 - ?), brother of **Pasquale Rinesi**, married in 1857 in **Capraia Filomena Arnaldi** (Cagnano, Corsica 1840 - ?) while his father **Nicolò** was resident in Buenos Aires. He emigrated to Bella Vista between 1862 and 1864 with his wife and their daughter **Felice (Felisa) Rinesi** (Capraia 1861 - Capraia 1904). He started to work as shoemaker (1869) and later he became a merchant (1895). They had at least four more children, all born in Bella Vista.

After 1868 **Stefano Cuneo** (Capraia 1829 - ?) arrived in Bella Vista with his wife **Maria Giuseppa Cuneo** (Capraia 1827 - ?) whom he married in 1851 in Capraia, and his five children all born in Capraia, **Maria Agostina Cuneo** (Capraia 1852 - ?), **Giuseppe Maria Cuneo** (Capraia 1854 - ?), **Maria Adelaide Cuneo** (Capraia 1860 - ?), **Maria Emilia Cuneo** (Capraia 1861 - ?), and **Ema Cuneo** (Capraia ~1868 - ?). In 1885 **Ema Cuneo**, then dressmaker, married **Ricardo Papi**. In 1889 **Giuseppe Maria (José) Cuneo** married in Bella Vista **Maria Isabel Amestoy**, born in Bragado (Buenos Aires). In 1895 **Stefano Cuneo** and **Giuseppe Maria Cuneo** were registered in Bella Vista as merchant.

In 1871 **Stefano Lamberti** (Capraia 1825 - Bella Vista 1871), died in Bella Vista hit by yellow fever while his wife, **Maria Giuseppa Cuneo**, was living in Capraia.

Around 1870 the two brothers, **Gasparo Cuneo** (Capraia 1850 - ?) and **Vittorio Luigi Cuneo** (Capraia 1852 - ?), arrived in Bella Vista. In 1875 **Gasparo Cuneo** married **Felice (Felisa) Rinesi** in Bella Vista. He was a very active person and devoted himself to river navigation and commerce. He supplied bricks for the construction of several public buildings in La Plata, new capital of the province of Buenos Aires. He became also agent for several Italian and French companies. In 1893 he returned to Capraia, for a short visit, with his son **Esteban** who received the first Holy Communion in the church of Saint Nicholas. On May 1895 he was registered as seaman, passenger on the Argentinian steam ship *Centauro* in the port of Rosario, province of Santa Fe. In November of the same year, he was captain of the postal steam boat **José Gilbert** of 402 ton deadweight. He owned houses in the town of La Plata and Corrientes. In 1901

his wife Felice returned to Capraia due to some health problems and there she died in 1904. Gasparo had four children Maria Josepha Fortunata (1877), Luisa (1879) who married a local of Italian origin with whom she returned to Italy, Esteban (1881) who lived in Capraia with his Argentinian wife from 1913 to 1921, and Juan (Giovanni) who returned to Italy in 1901 with his mother and there he settled, first in Capraia and later in Naples.

**Vittorio Luigi Cuneo**, after his arrival in Bella Vista, married, in 1876, Maria Lucia Rinesi (Capraia 1859 - ?). In 1882 he was working as merchant with his wife in Caapucú, Paraguay where his son Luis Maria was born. On January 1st he was in Caá Catí, a small town North of Bella Vista in Corrientes Province, with his wife and there his son Luis Maria, was baptized having as godparents Pasquale Rinesi and Colomba Descalzo.

After 1861 **Francesco Rinesi** (Capraia ~1826 - ?) arrived in Bella Vista with his wife **Francesca Cuneo** (Capraia ~1828 - ?) his son **Pasquale Rinesi** (Capraia 1856 - ?) his daughter **Maria Lucia Rinesi** (Capraia 1859 - ?), his father **Benedetto Rinesi** (Capraia 1799 - ?), and his father in law **Giovan Battista Cuneo** (Capraia ~1795 - ?). While in Capraia, he was registered as seaman in 1859 and as ship's master in 1861. In 1869 in Bella Vista he was registered as merchant. Maria Lucia Rinesi, married in Bella Vista in 1876, Vittorio Luigi Cuneo, born in Capraia. In 1869 Benedetto Rinesi owned in Bella Vista a grocery which he was running with the help of his grandson Pasquale Rinesi. Later on Pasquale Rinesi married with Colomba Descalzo and moved to the city of General Paz, Corrientes where both were registered as merchants. In 1892 with his family he moved back to Bella Vista where in 1895 he was registered as owner (most probably landowner).

On January 1865, **Domenico Salese** (Capraia 1828 - La Cruz, Corrientes 1865) died in the village of La Cruz, Corrientes and was buried in the local cemetery.

Around 1880 **Gasparo Stefano Cuneo** (Capraia 1852 - ?), a seaman, arrived in Bella Vista where in 1886 married with **Geronima Cuneo** (Capraia 1865 - ?). In 1895 they were both registered as merchant. **Maria Caterina Trama** (Capraia 1830 - ?), mother of Geronima, was living with them. They had three children Reinaldo (1889), Juana (1892), and Domingo (1898).

In 1895 **Carlo Frangioni** (Capraia 1845 - ?), married, was working in the city of Corrientes as seaman.

After 1880 **Pasquale Tomei** (Capraia 1862 - Bella Vista 1942) arrived in Bella Vista, where he married, in 1889, with Marina Olivieri of Italian origin. In 1895 he was registered as hairdresser. He kept contacts with his family still leaving in Capraia. He died in Bella Vista in 1942.

In Bella Vista settled the biggest number of Capraiesi in South America, as we can see from the following table based on the Argentina National Census of the years 1869 and 1895 for the urban population of the town:

Origin	1869	% of Total	1895	% of Total
Argentina	1446	92.3	3827	93.5
Europe - Other	26	1.7	95	2.3
Italy - Other	77	4.9	151	3.7
Capraia	17	1.1	21	0.5
Total	1566	100	4094	100

From the register of the Argentinian National Census of 1895 in Bella Vista it appears that the families of the Capraiesi were grouped in some particular districts of the town. From the numerous marriages among the Capraiesi living in the town we can assume that strong bonds were maintained among them. The professions of the male *Capraiesi*, according to the two National Censuses, were as follows: merchants 10, shop keepers 2, seaman 2, barber 1, carpenter 1, unknown 3. The women generally were working at home growing the numerous children; the few professions registered were merchants 2 (working with their husbands), cigar maker 1, dress maker 1, hairdresser 1.

The *Capraiesi* were very active in the Italian community and five of them, Stefano Cuneo, Bartolomeo Olivieri, Pasquale Rinesi, Giovanni Sardi and Pasquale Tomei were among the founders of the *Società Italiana*.

#### 2.4. Peru

As in other Latin American countries, in the second half of the eighteenth century Peru launched legal provisions to encourage the influx of immigrants to solve the problem of the lack of manpower on the coast and colonize the eastern region of the country, but this effort was not as successful as in Argentina. Only a few thousand Europeans settled in Peru in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: in 1858 the Italian colony was second (3469) to the German (4472), and ahead of the French (2693), the Spanish (1397), and the English (1041). The majority of the Italian who immigrated to Peru was coming from the Liguria region, seamen and merchants, who initially settled in Callao e Lima. Some of them after the first years of settlement were able to convert themselves to farming with land acquisition: it rarely was a direct acquisition, more often they started as suppliers of existing farmers or as superintendent of the farm. Among the Ligurian who settled in Peru there were at least two *Capraiesi*.

**Simone Cuneo** (Capraia 1823 - Lambayeque 1866) on february 1844 arrived in Buenos Aires from Gualaguay with the bilander *Cristina*. There he became body-guard of Juan Manuel de Rosas, ruler of Argentina. Around 1847 he decided to move to Peru, and in 1849 established himself in Lambayeque, a town in the North-Eastern part of Peru, where he started to work as manager of a farm (*Finca*). In 1851 he married the local María de los Santos Ureña from whom he got three children. He was rather successful and was able to purchase one of the best colonial houses in Lambayeque which is known till today as Casa Cuneo. He died in Lambayeque in 1866 of a cerebral attack.

**Luigi Francesco Costantino Dodero** (Capraia 1851 - San Luis de Cañete, Peru, 1904) was the son of Costantino Francesco Dodero, a Genoese captain in the Sardinian Navy, who was the commander of the Island and Fort of Capraia in the years 1846-1850, and there he married, in 1848, Maria Caterina Giovanna Domenica Cuneo, daughter of Giuliano Cuneo who was living in Buenos Aires. After his birth the family moved to Genoa and there, after finishing school, he went to sea. Apparently he decided that his sailing days were over when he landed in the mid 1870s in Peru's principal port Callao, where, at that time, many Italian immigrants were living. In 1879 he married the local Margarita Sanches Mugarra in the town of Bambamarca. Then he settled with his wife in the small town of Cañete, a rich sugar and cotton producing area south of Lima. Chilean troops occupied the area in 1880 during the Pacific war but Dodero's family house and *hacienda* escaped major disasters. He became wealthy and was active in developing the town of San Luis de Cañete of which he became mayor in 1900-1904. He had nine children, of whom the oldest, Amadeo, succeed him

later on in his job as mayor, whereas a younger son became mayor of the town of Lince, in the province of Lima.

### **3. The sad side of emigration**

While many *Capraiesi* were rather successful in their efforts to find a new way of life in Latin America, others ended their lives alone in the new countries far from their families still living in Capraia, as it was the case of Domenico Gallettini, Antonio Padovano, and Pasquale Sarzana who died in the Rio de La Plata, or Stefano Lamberti who died in Bella Vista of yellow fever and Domenico Salese who died in the village of Cruz en Misiones.

Others could not even reach the new countries where they were hoping to find a new way of life, as it is the case of the entire Chiama family - father, mother and one son, who died, in 1870, on the wreck of the brick-bark *Manin Barabino*, full of emigrants, which caught fire while cruising from Genoa to Buenos Aires.

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