

Connections – Istrians after the World War II

ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM OF ISTRIA,
PAZIN

Leaving Istria

- Around 225.000 Istrians left Istria in the years after the World War II – mostly Italian Istrians but also Croatian (and Slovenian) Istrians who could not or did not want to accept new political and ideological reality
- Istrian Italians were often looked down upon because the new authorities often saw them as remnants of the previous fascist rule, and were often the object of reprisals.
- Although it was not forced migration in the literal sense, the feeling that they became foreigners in their own country, intimidation, fear, political persecution, humiliation, resulted in the fact that a large number of Italians from Istria opted for Italian citizenship (considering that Istria was annexed to Italy between the two wars) - and thus emigration to Italy

Emptied Cities, left by the people who were supposed to be the basis of post-war development



"Magical, enchanted Istria" is cited as a tourist attraction fact, but in fact it is about many desolate places where life in many cases has never fully returned.



Further consequences:

- Separated families - not only in the physical sense, but also due to conflicting ideological views
- Very difficult life of emigrants for years after leaving Istria in refugee camps
- Difficulties in overcoming the new life circumstances of the first generation, as well as discomfort and identity problems of the second generation.
- Complicated, sometimes conflicting relationship with a small percentage of Istrian Italians who remained in Istria.
- Fragmented, impoverished and desolate life for those Istrian Italians who remained
- Difficulties in overcoming the new life circumstances of the first generation, as well as discomfort and identity problems of the second generation.
- Political use of the issue related to exiled Istrian Italians

The fates of both those who emigrated and those of other Istrian Italians are combined in the exhibition, as one of the outcomes of the project.

The exhibition was based on testimonies of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation of Istrian Italians whose lives have been defined by this involuntary emigration.

The introduction to the exhibition was written by a historian working in the Centre for Historic research related to this national group in Istria.





A regional museum as the place of presenting silenced voices, of dialogue and presentation of different aspects of the related theme

