

“Che bello andare”. The joyful diaspora of an Italian family, from 1975 to today.

Giovanna Rosso Del Brenna, Genova/ Italy

ABSTRACT

The unforgettable phrase that gives the title to this testimony was pronounced, at age 6, by my daughter Giulia during one of our first car trips in the “Nordeste” of Brazil. Since then it is an integral part of the family vocabulary, permanently defining our migrant state of mind, by vocation and by nature.

We moved from Milan to Rio de Janeiro in 1975, with our 3 children aged 6, 5 and 1. Certainly also for economic reasons but above all for the sake of adventure. The job proposal made to my husband - the project of the turbines of the great hydroelectric plant of Itaipu - was very tempting. This was almost immediately joined by a scholarship for me from Foreign Ministry followed by a contract of associate professor at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica.

We returned to Italy in 1988 because we wanted our children - who in Rio attended the French school - to carry out university studies in Europe and then freely decide their future.

Right now just my husband and I live permanently in Italy. The eldest son is moving to Milano the (after experiences in Australia, Finland, Brazil, United Kingdom and France, The daughter (an EU official) lives permanently in Brussels, and the youngest son is a photographer in Paris. The third generation - 5 boys and 3 girls - works and studies in the United Kingdom, Finland, France, Switzerland and the United States. And during the holidays... travels.

CV

Giovanna Rosso Del Brenna is an art historian. After her first studies at the University of Genoa on the Genoese palaces of the sixteenth century, she devoted herself to research on urban history, first as an assistant to Eugenio Battisti at the Polytechnic of Milan, then as an associate professor at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC/RJ), where her work on the city earned her the honorary citizenship. Back in Italy, she devoted herself of industrial heritage, as a contract professor at the Catholic University of Milan and the University of Genoa, while pursuing her research on the transfer of urban models and the emigration of European artists to America, collaborating as a visitor with the Pablo de Olavide University of Seville, the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and the Faculty of Architecture of the University of São Paulo. She is a member of the scientific committee of CISEI, a contributor to the Brazilian portal Vitruvius and the author of around hundred contributions published in books, conference proceedings and specialized journals.