

such as shops, libraries and access to public transportation. In the absence of adequate governmental regulation, soaring demand drove up land values and rents to levels that hit hardest the new immigrants and the urban poor. At the same time, construction of public housing was neglected, accounting for a mere 15% of the new buildings.

In addition to the problems of housing and social services, the influx of rural southerners into the city after 1955 also led to new cultural and ethnic tensions that fragmented and complicated the long-standing divisions of social class in the Piedmontese capital. Without connections and with limited skills, the new arrivals had to accept the lowest wages and the worst jobs. Local workers and the Communist party viewed them as politically unreliable threats to the unions, while the upper-middle classes blamed them for the rise in crime and other social ills. Since most of the immigrants came from rural villages, they had predictable problems in adapting to industrial work rhythms. These initial difficulties helped fuel negative stereotypes of southerners as people reluctant to work hard, lacking in drive and ambition, and happy to live off public aid. To make matters worse, the southerners brought with them customs and manners that aroused fear and disdain in an indigenous population proud of its city's traditions of order and decorum. The customarily reserved Piedmontese tended to assume their own cultural superiority over the backward immigrants, whom they judged to be congenitally irresponsible and lacking in self-control.

Although some landlords posted signs that announced "*non si affitta ai meridionali*" (we won't rent to southerners), most local residents reacted more with impatience than open hostility towards their new neighbors. They tended to blame the southern immigrants themselves, rather than rapid industrialization or inadequate public services, for the growing social problems that beset the city. In this perspective, the poor health of immigrant children was the product of their parents' ignorance; overcrowded housing conditions resulted from southerners having too many kids or from their lack of respect for the property of others, while crime in their communities was a natural outgrowth of southern character traits and primitive codes of honor. The local media, parties, and employers all seemed to agree that the immigrants must renounce their old regional cultures and accept the rules of civil society in Turin. For their part, however, the first waves of new arrivals from the south dreamed of returning home and thus showed little inclination to give up their old values and customs.

Cultural tensions and divisions within the city began to ease by the early 1970s with the gradual standardization of life styles that led most